

Part II: *Redeeming Childbirth*

Sample Excerpt

“Redeeming childbirth is something only the Redeemer can do, but we have to allow Him to. We like to take control over the planning of our births, and it is okay to prepare and plan, but we need to submit those plans to the Lord.

We can actively choose to participate with God by inviting Him to redeem our childbirth in whichever way He chooses for us. Our God has made us unique and we are all on our own spiritual journeys, but we must make the choice to surrender our lives to Him in every area and be careful not to compartmentalize Jesus.

What does redeeming childbirth look like in practical terms?

For some it will be embracing natural childbirth. For others it will be embracing an emergency situation and allowing God to refine them through it. Some may experience Him in a new way by intentionally incorporating worship, song, meditative prayer or collective prayer with a community of saints gathered together in their labor and birth. And to others, simply seeking first His kingdom may lead one to truly engage in opportunities for evangelism with care givers—whether in the hospital, birth center, or home. God can strengthen the

bond between a husband and wife, a mother and daughter, between sisters and friends through the journey shared together. Bonding together in this spiritual way benefits everyone involved, creating a deeper spiritual intimacy in the family. Sometimes what God chooses to do in your heart or the hearts of others in your life through watching you prepare is what is “redeeming.”

There are so many ways in which God can redeem birth. The Lord loves us all and deeply desires a deeper, more intimate relationship with us. More specifically, He wants to walk beside you through life, carry your burdens, protect you, and give you strength and guidance but most of all He wants your whole heart and soul to be fully engaged with His Spirit. God, our Father desires a deep relationship with all of His daughters—one with no boundaries...

Redeeming Childbirth is not a book just about natural birth, although there are many God glorifying testimonies to what He has done in and through them.

Redeeming Childbirth is more than just how you decide to birth your baby. It's about your intentions, your motives, your heart attitudes and your relationships.

In this very special season in a woman's life when she is with child and preparing for motherhood, there are many opportunities for growth—in relationships as well as spiritually.

Have you ever heard the term where your heart is, there your treasure will be? In childbirth your attitude, convictions and beliefs will be tested. If your heart is

focused on glorifying the Lord in childbirth, that truth will be revealed and shine brightly to all who are witnesses of it. Certain aspects of your heart can be reflected in your attitude towards pregnancy as well as how you labor. What you focus on when preparing for parenthood, how you react to pain and circumstances, how you treat others, how you view the birth process, how you view your body, your baby, your husband and your God (with regard to birth) all reflect heart attitudes (both good and bad) as well as potential areas of sin. This is exciting for one main reason—when we are honest with ourselves and choose to engage the truth within us, we can grow spiritually as we seek our Redeemer and allow Him to refine us. This is the sanctifying aspect of childbirth and motherhood—recognizing ones sin and selfishness and choosing to repent and allowing God to transform our hearts.

These questions are at the heart of Redeeming Childbirth:

Do we Christians birth any different from those in the world that don't believe in the redeeming power of Jesus? Can nurses and doctors tell we are different by the way we birth?

Why do we birth the way we do?

If we don't look different—why don't we?

Aren't we supposed to be the "light of the world"?

God wants to redeem childbirth in general. We can glorify Him and show the world the true power of our God as we worship and praise Him throughout labor and childbirth...

God does not have a cookie-cutter plan for any of our lives, let alone our births. But I think He does desire us all to “seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and all these things will be added to you.” (Matthew 6:33) God wants to bless us with all wisdom and knowledge, but those things will be given to us once we seek first His Kingdom. Our motives need to be righteous and for the glory of His Kingdom.

Childbirth is one of the beginning experiences that enter us into motherhood. To raise our child for His glory, having a Kingdom mindset, we need to be Kingdom minded as well and live it in every area of our lives, including how we view babies, pregnancy, labor and birth. Parenthood is a labor of love that never ends... I would encourage you to begin the journey of seeking Him as your main counselor and guide in this transition, now--in the beginning.

Inviting the Lord to redeem your childbirth begins by surrendering this journey and our wills to the Lord--it is giving it to Him, to let Him do with it what He wills. The beauty in this is that God has a personal relationship with each of us so His redeeming of our births will not look the same. He will custom-fit our birth stories if we submit them to Him.

Jesus wants to be the hero in your birth story, redeeming it. May He be glorified.