

P. 223, VI, H  
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## The New Reproduction

Recent developments in science have created new alternatives in human reproduction. We may consider here (1) artificial insemination by the husband (AIH), (2) artificial insemination by donor (AID), (3) surrogate motherhood (SM), and (4) *in vitro* fertilization (IVF). These may be combined in various ways,

Very little of ethical importance can be said about AIH. This is simply a way around certain difficulties in fertilization, and we can be thankful that it is available. AID, of course, is another question. It has been criticized as a form of adultery, because it brings a third party into the reproduction process. I don't agree with that assessment. Adultery in Scripture always involves sexual intimacy; that is why it is offensive. I do have a problem, however, with the man who makes the donation of semen. In making that donation, he is opening the possibility that he will beget children, but he will, in most cases, not know those children or take any responsibility for them. That raises questions with respect to I Tim. 5:8. His decision might be defended in the same way that we defend a decision to put a child up for adoption. But in the case of adoption, we usually have some idea of how the child will be cared for, the trustworthiness of the adopting family. One generally cannot make any such provision in a donation of semen.

The method of gathering that semen, normally masturbation, also raises some issues, though the biblical principles on that matter are somewhat difficult to ascertain.

SM is like AID, in that a third party enters the reproductive process. In this case, it is a woman, who agrees to carry the child and give it up at birth. As with an AID donor, the problem arises here of a parent bearing a child but being unwilling to provide for it. This is, I think, particularly difficult if the surrogate's own egg is used, if she is the biological mother of the child. But again, one may defend the procedure as analogous to adoption. Another difficulty is that SM fails to take account of the bonding process between a woman and the child in her womb. It is often very difficult for a SM mother to give up the child after its birth. That creates legal, as well as emotional, difficulties.

IVF is good in itself. There is no scriptural reason why a human egg should not be fertilized outside the mother's body and later implanted in her womb. However, in the usual practice, several eggs are fertilized, and after some observation one is chosen for implantation. The others are destroyed. On a biblical view of the personhood of the unborn child from conception, this procedure is the destruction of human life.\_