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Its Already Out of the Hands of God, Charlie

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“In this case, the woman won the jackpot,” said Heather Kowalski, spokesperson for the American Society for Reproductive Medicine. She was referring to Bobbi McCaughey of Carlisle, Iowa, who is currently awaiting the birth of septuplets.

Understandably, Bobbi and her husband Kenny, are the talk of Carlisle (population 3,200 and about to be 3,207). The McCaughey’s and their neighbors kept the impending births secret for several months, but when the story broke, the multiple pregnancy became international news. After all, medical officials believe there to be no surviving sets of septuplets, though reproductive technologies have increased the occurrence of multiple pregnancies.

Kenny, who works as a clerk for a local car dealer, is downright excited about the prospect of caring for seven newborns; a challenge few fathers could fathom. Right now we know that they’re all over two pounds, and the doctors have said 28 weeks is a magic line and after 28 weeks their chances of survival are really, really great.

Bobbi conceived the septuplets after taking the fertility drug Metrodin. When the multiple pregnancy was discovered, doctors warned the McCaughey’s that it was unlikely all seven would survive to delivery, much less out of the womb. “The 28-week mark is critical,” said the doctors, “and so the McCaugheys and their neighbors kept their secret to themselves until week 28 arrived.” Now the news is out, and the controversy has begun.

The furor over the McCaughey’s fertility explosion is not focused on the use of the fertility drug, or on the couples plan for raising their children. The great controversy is over the McCaughey’s refusal to abort some of their unborn children.

Kenny told reporters that doctors had recommended aborting some of the fetuses in order to increase the chance of survival for the others. This procedure, commonly recommended and applied, is called “reduction,” in the moral doublespeak of modern medicine.

The doctors were advising the McCaughey’s to follow established medical precedent. Since the womb is too small to allow seven babies to develop to full birth weight, simply remove some and increase the chances for those remaining.

But the McCaughey’s would not allow a reduction and insisted on carrying all the babies to birth, trusting God to take care of them, and praying that all seven would be born healthy and safe. “Were just kind of waiting to see what happens and just trust that Gods given us these babies,” said Kenny. “Its all in his hands.”

That was just too much for Dr. Nancy Snyderman, medical correspondent for ABC televisions Good Morning America. Appearing on the October 30 program, Dr. Snyderman vented her outrage at the McCaugheys decision. “At one point common sense must intervene over technology,” she asserted. Acknowledging that the possibilities of survival in these cases are greater than ever, Dr. Snyderman argued that its really high time that we look at survivability with quality of life.

“The answer,” she insisted, “is really quite clear. Now, I know its an unsavory thought for a lot of people, but selective abortion, where you literally think about not which fetuses to get rid of but how many to get rid of, is something that we really need to talk about openly in situations like this.”

Good Morning America host Charles Gibson seemed shocked by Dr. Snyderman's candid proposal, and reminded her of the McCaughey's decision to leave this in the hands of God. Dr. Snyderman's quick response was even more shocking: "But its already out of the hands of God, Charlie," she argued. "This is modern technology created by man, pushing the envelope. So I think its foolhardy to suddenly throw, 'Well, its Gods will.' That to me is a funny mix of medicine and religion and ethics and technology all in one."

Well, let it be said that Dr. Snyderman is obviously in no danger of mixing ethics or religion with her medicine. "This is none of God's business," she insists. In any event, it has been taken out of His hands. We humans have come of age, and we will make our own decisions about life and death. God should mind His own affairs and leave these important decisions to real experts, such as Dr. Snyderman.

She is the perfect specimen of the modern medical technocrat who sees the fetus as no more than an accidental collection of cells, a biological product of conception, a mass of often unwanted tissue and who sees herself and her medical peers as lords of all creation. Her comments reveal the unbridgeable gulf between the Christian worldview and modern secularism. A culture shaped by naturalistic humanism will define life on its own terms and to its own convenience. Such a culture will kill at will. What, after all, is a fetus here...an infant there?

To Dr. Snyderman and others who recommend and defend abortion, the seven little beings in Bobbi McCaughey's womb are no more than masses of cells with human potential. Her concern is how many to get rid of. But to the McCaughey's, these little ones are Kenneth, Nathaniel, Brandon, Joel, Kelsey, Natalie, and Alexis.

Mr. and Mrs. McCaughey, I, along with a great host of others, will be praying for you and for your babies by name. May those seven little cribs be filled with seven little miracles, and may your hearts be filled with joy and wonder for such is the Kingdom of God.

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