

A Quick Fix with Lasting Repercussions

I was in the office on a Sunday, as usual, when my wife called to confirm that we were pregnant. I rushed home and desperately asked her: "What are we going to do?" I can't remember the precise moment in which we decided in favor of willfully killing our child, nor how the process of doing so proceeded, nor did I remember until much later that, while I have always asked for God's help in both easy and rough times, in making that decision I didn't consider him for even a second. I didn't consider that I could ask for his guidance, that perhaps I was doing something that he would not approve of, or that the pregnancy was his gift and desire. The Priest with whom I talk has suggested that perhaps I wasn't consciously able to bring such a question before God, as I knew beforehand what His desire would have been, and that it was easier not to consider His will or what I knew to be right, especially in lieu of the "practicality" of the decision.

My wife and I used logic, damn logic, to justify and to arrive at our decision: she had a year left on a Master's; I had decided to work part time in order to finish my dissertation which I had to have finished; we had been fighting for nine months prior; money; she had not quit smoking... Excuses. As if the baby were something we could sacrifice or put off in favor of some higher good. Later my wife was to tell me that she saw fear of the responsibility in my eyes, and that she was afraid of this fear that she saw. She warned me and saw the future: "Not only are we aborting our baby, we are aborting our love". I often wonder: If I had just stuck up for our child, and for our marriage... If I had just been man enough to be a father and to accept the responsibility that comes with such a gift from God...just for one minute, my wife would have felt supported and perhaps now we would be a happy couple with a toddler, and not a divorcing couple with huge regrets and animosity.

In her eyes it was too late to change our mind the next day, when I proposed three ways in which we could tweak or delay our plans and have the baby, three "solutions", word which to her suggested that the pregnancy was a "problem". "No, no, we've already decided. Let's get this over with", so I made an appointment at a "Women's Choice Center" or some place with a harmless euphemistic name of the sort, and we tacitly decided to not talk any more about the abortion.

From what I understand, in a stressful situation what we see as a quick fix, a way to get a potential stressor off the table, is often the attractive option, is not an attractive subject to deal with, and does not immediately suggest the repercussions of the decision.

Perhaps the worst result of this hasty decision is the fact that the dissolution of our marriage is inextricably linked to the abortion. I heard during my Rachel's Vineyard weekend that very often after an abortion the woman will become promiscuous or otherwise reckless or desperate, and that couples who abort are more likely to see an adulterous affair raise it's ugly head later on. Such was our case, and senseless and blame-laying as it may seem, I must believe what my wife affirms on every occasion in which we have a confrontation about the affair: the argument inevitably gets twisted back to the abortion, which for her was my rejection of our family, our catholic duty and of her dream to be a mother, reasons for which she was pushed to have the affair.

For any married couple considering an abortion as quick fix or perhaps as a way to buy time for more ideal circumstances for having a baby, I would much recommend to them to pray, to consider future guilt and marital problems, and to talk to the staff at Birthright, who are not there to judge or to force the idea of adoption or having the baby on you, but rather to help you explore your options. Had I done so, I might very well at this moment be a happily married...it's hard to write the word...*father*. The abortion was not a quick fix, and it's repercussions will remain with me as long as my child would have.

For a man suffering from an abortion, I would recommend a Rachel's Vineyard retreat. The ambience is accepting and is centered on healing, and in my case, the women there appreciated a male presence, as such suggested that perhaps their aborted children's fathers felt remorse and sadness which males are generally discouraged to express. I cried as never before that weekend, but the tears were cathartic. I went there expecting nothing but hoping for a miraculous solution, and what I got out of it was the affirmation that I'm not alone, that mourning is a process to be worked through, and the hard realization that, while I will never be completely over the abortion; healing can begin.

Ashamed and therefore,
Anonymous