

# Birth Control

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The practice of birth control in the United States is widespread among both adults and teens. The Catholic Church for instance has long been criticized by women's groups for its stance against birth control and abortion, but has bravely maintained its posture on the issue for 2000 years despite such criticism. Others have been excessively liberal in their stance on birth control, distributing condoms and other means in an attempt to prevent unwanted pregnancies and disease.

## How Far Should a Church Go With Birth Control?

The question becomes how far should a church go in preaching for or against birth control? Should such a private subject be left to one's moral agency?

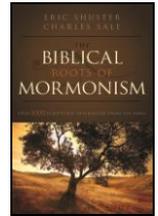
Consider the following position on sexual relations between a husband and wife and the use of birth control from the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints: "Sexual relations within marriage are not only for the purpose of procreation, but also a means of expressing love and strengthening emotional and spiritual ties between husband and wife. Husband and wife are encouraged to pray and counsel together as they plan their families. Issues to consider include the physical and mental health of the mother and father and their capacity to provide the basic necessities of life for their children. Decisions about birth control and the consequences of those decisions rest solely with each married couple. Elective abortion as a method of birth control, however, is contrary to the commandments of God" ("Birth Control," [lds.org](http://lds.org), accessed 10/26/07).

## Prayerfully Decide on Birth Control within Marriage

Safe sex is not the issue when it comes to birth control. The law of chastity is in force for everyone in that sex should be kept within the bounds of marriage. While birth control is a matter to be decided by the married couple, it must be understood that children are a blessing from God and "a heritage of the Lord" (Psalm 127:3). Their being born into loving and caring families is core to the plan of our Heavenly Father. When a husband and wife are considering how many children to have, which is their decision alone, they should take into account the "sacred responsibility to bring children into the world" and to "nurture them in righteousness" ("Birth Control," True to the Faith, (2004), 26). Adam and Eve were given the commandment to "be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth" (Genesis 1:28). Married couples are urged not to postpone having children for frivolous and exclusively self-serving reasons.

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