



Springs of Hope Virtual Retreat

10 Things We've Learned: A Couple's Infertility Witness

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- Grief- Grieving is so important. You are mourning a loss month after month. Each month can be another type of “funeral” loss. It is really difficult for people on the outside to see the loss of something that never was. Psalm 56:9 “My wanderings you have noted; are my tears not stored in your flask, recorded in your book?” Remember that the Lord stores our tears! They are so precious to him.
- Identity- you must have yourself rooted in your relationship with the Father. Allow Him alone to speak truth to your heart about who you are. Remember “I am God’s beloved daughter” or “I am God’s beloved son.”
- Recognizing motherhood and fatherhood in our lives- Every woman is born with an innate motherhood by virtue of her being a woman. Every man is born with an innate fatherhood by virtue of his being a man. It can sometimes feel like spiritual motherhood and fatherhood are a consolation prize to biological parenthood. This is a lie. Satan wants us to feel paralyzed, that you are not enough. We must renounce this lie. Spend time looking for the ways that you are called to live out your motherhood and fatherhood in your life.
- Forgiving others- It is inevitable, people will say things that hurt you. Be patient with them. Give yourself space when necessary to let the wounds heal. Realize that everyone struggles from some level of brokenness. Seek out people that support you and lean into relationships with those friends. Forgiveness is a process and a choice that we have to keep choosing continuously.

- Stay vulnerable with God and your spouse- Keep the lines of communication open. Also, make sure you stay open in your relationship with God. Prayer is an essential component.
- Fruitfulness- Be creative in ways that you live out fruitfulness in your marriage. Satan wants you to think that your marriage is worthless. Find ways to bear fruit to the world. We can participate in God's creative power with the ways that we bear fruit to the world.
- Trust- God has a plan for you. You are his beloved. He cares immensely for you. Reading Scripture helps to foster a deeper relationship of trust with God. There are so many couples in the Bible that struggled with infertility that want to be your companions... Abraham + Sarah, Isaac + Rebekah, Jacob + Rachel, Elisabeth + Zachariah, and a number of others...
- Stay Hopeful- It can be easy to crumble from the weight that infertility can put onto someone. Without Hope you will not be able to withstand this weight. Try to focus on each moment in each day. Looking into the future, it can be overwhelming and daunting to consider what God is asking of us. He wants us to live in each moment and follow his will. In each moment, he gives us the strength to follow out his plan. Jerimiah 29:11 "For I know well the plans I have in mind for you—oracle of the Lord—plans for your welfare and not for woe, so as to give you a future of hope."
- Be thankful- Thank God each day for the gifts that are currently in your life. It can be easy to see the bad things that are happening in your life and overlook the good that is happening. Remember to take your blinders off and see the full picture. Share a list of gratitude each night.
- Ask God for Healing- It is so vital to take our needs and our requests to God. God does have a plan for our restoration. It might look totally different than we imagine. We have to keep asking for Him to bring healing to our bodies and our souls. Be open to whatever healing looks like for you personally.

- Find a community in the Saints and friends that offer empathy. Don't settle for isolation. See Saints that struggled with infertility here:

<https://aleteia.org/2020/04/25/saints-who-suffered-infertility/>

Reflection Questions

- Do you ignore your pain related to infertility, or do you grieve through it? What does it mean to you that the Lord stores your tears? Do you believe it?
- How do you see yourself and your identity? Do you let your brokenness define you or do you see yourself as a beloved son or daughter of the Father?
- How do you live out your call to motherhood or to Fatherhood?
- How do you best communicate with your spouse? Is there any way that you could improve in communicating with your spouse?
- How do you best communicate with God? Does prayer feel burdensome? Is there anything that you can do to improve your prayer life?
- What specific ways does your marriage produce fruit? List them.
- Do you still have hope that God will take care of your needs? Do you spend time worrying about the future? Ask God to help you live each moment instead of trying to control the future.
- Do you trust God that will take care of your desires? What hold you back from trusting completely? How can you incorporate Scripture more in your routine?
- Is there anyone that you need to forgive? Take a moment to recall those people. Speaking forgiveness out loud has power. A good formula for this process is to say, “Lord Jesus, by your name and by your power, I forgive _____.”
- Have you ever taken the time to specifically ask God for healing? Alone, or as a couple? Praying for specific healing is powerful. Ask God to heal the parts of your body that are causing infertility. Pray over your spouse for healing. Ask God out loud to heal any spiritual brokenness or wounds you might have. Are you open to whatever form healing might take in your life?
- Who is in your inner circle of support? Who can you go to with your pain? If you don't have this, ask God to send you someone or search for a Saint friend.
- Do you have a routine of thanking God? If not, how can you develop one by yourself or with your spouse? Can you hold each other accountable?