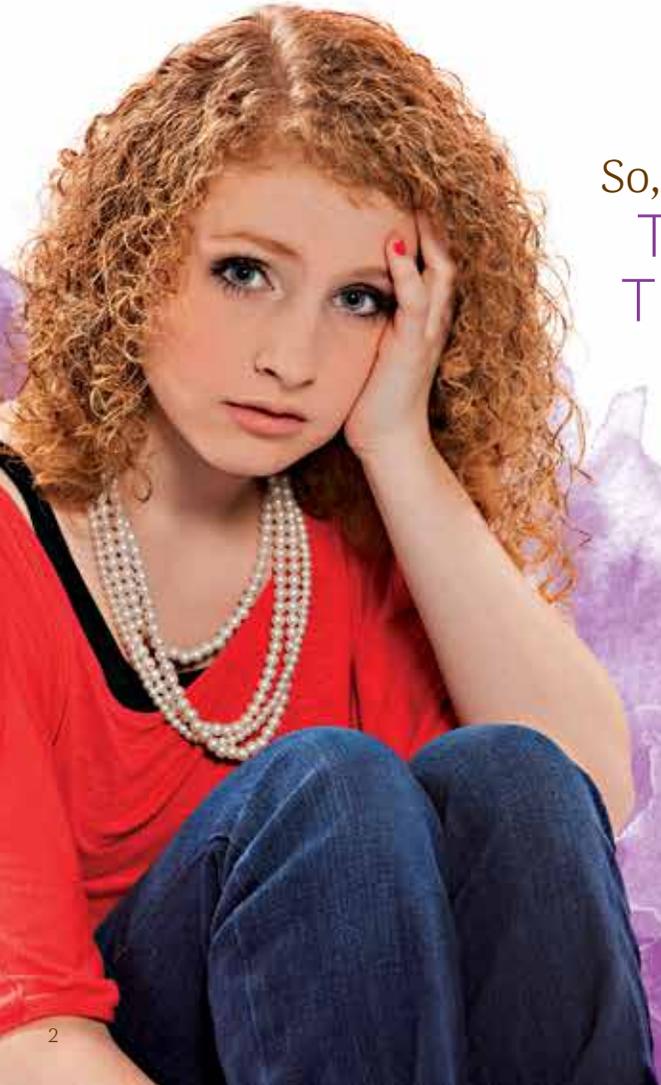
A woman with short blonde hair, wearing a black turtleneck, a red vest, and a teal skirt, is looking down at a black notebook she is holding. She has a brown leather bag with a patterned design slung over her shoulder. The background is white with a large, abstract purple watercolor splash behind her.

it's
YOUR
STORY

by Erin Smalley



So, you're pregnant.
**THAT WASN'T
THE PLAN.**

THIS ISN'T HOW IT WAS SUPPOSED TO BE.

This may be one of the most uncertain times in your life. You may feel like your life is spinning out of control—leaving you unsure of what you should do now that you have discovered that you are pregnant.

More than likely this was not the plan you had for “your story”—not now anyway. Maybe you thought you would never find yourself in this position—contemplating abortion. But now that it’s you and your body, your future and your decision—you may be left searching.

SO MANY QUESTIONS...

You may be feeling very alone right now—unsure who you can trust and confide in, and you probably have many unanswered questions. You may be wondering:

- “Is God real and does He love me, or is He angry and disappointed?”
- “What do I do now? What about my plans for my future?”
- “How does God feel about the life growing inside me?”
- “Is adoption something I should consider?”
- “Who can I turn to for help?”

WHAT DOES THE BIBLE SAY ABOUT MY STORY?

God understands the emotions you are experiencing each moment and each day of this pregnancy. We encourage you to keep reading—allowing Him to guide you through this uncertain time.

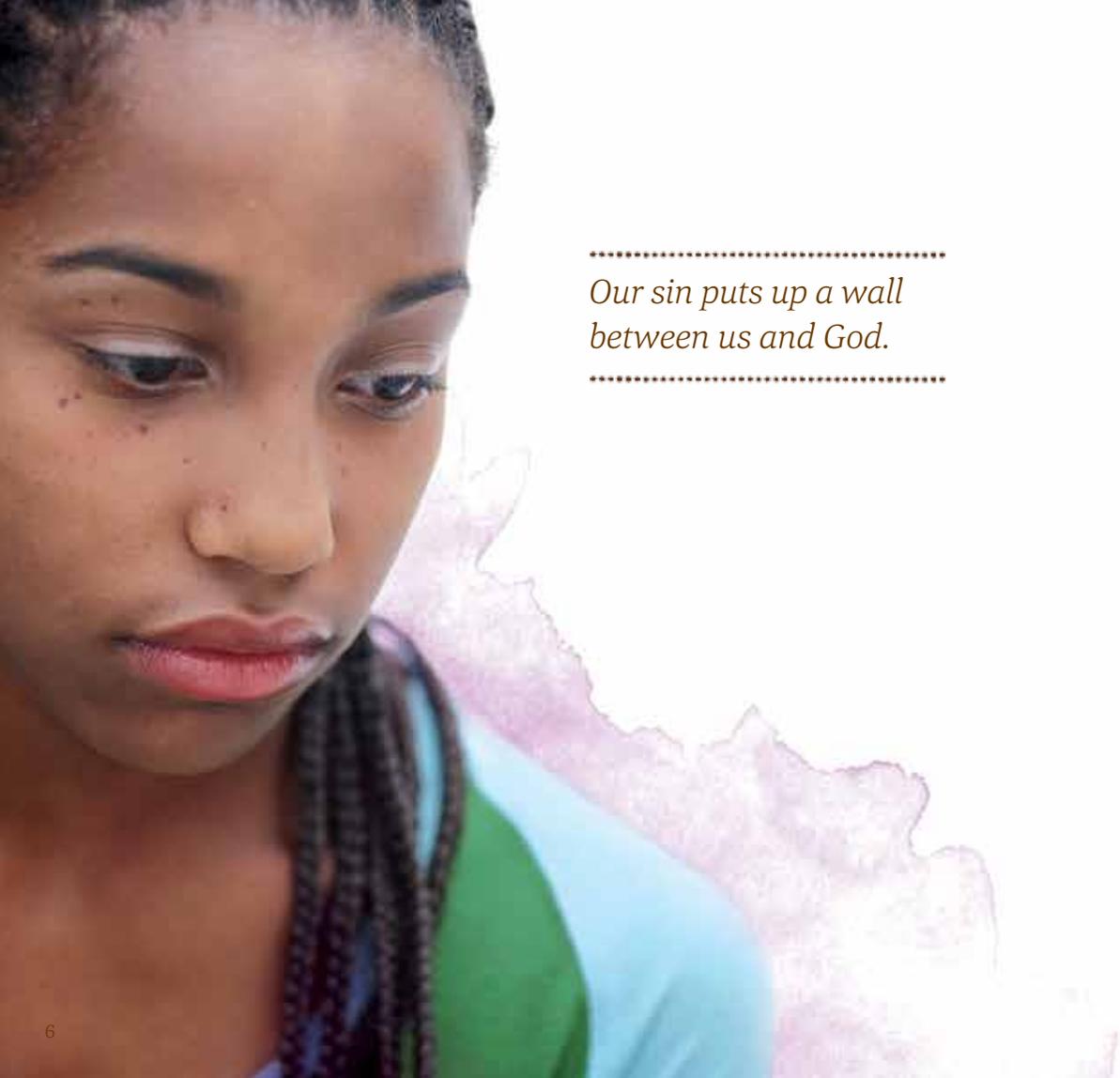
No matter how you're feeling, we can assure you that He loves you very much. And regardless of what is going on in this chapter of your life, He knows the larger story He has for you—which includes a bright and beautiful future. The truth is, God loves you and created you with a purpose—a purpose that is unique to you alone! He desires that you have a full and meaningful life. [These are the words God would say to you...](#)

*“For I know the plans I have for you,” declares the Lord, “plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future.”
Jeremiah 29:11*

“I came that they may have life, and have it to the full.” John 10:10

.....
*God knows the plans He
has for you. He created
you for a purpose.*
.....





.....
*Our sin puts up a wall
between us and God.*
.....

I FEEL FAR AWAY FROM GOD. IS HE HERE WITH ME?

Yes! He is here and He cares deeply for you—and He cares for your baby in the same way. The reason God sometimes seems distant is that our sin separates us from Him. It's much like when someone does something to hurt or offend you deeply—it puts distance between you and them.

As humans, we are not perfect, so you are not alone. Every single person who ever lived has fallen short of God's best for them.

*"For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God."
Romans 3:23*

CAN GOD EVER FORGIVE ME?

Yes! Because of His great love, God does offer His forgiveness to you. You may feel like you've made a mess of your life and that this is too big—even for God. But it's not. He can redeem any situation and can make something beautiful out of it. You just have to allow Him in.

However, God is always honest and holy, so He can't just pretend we haven't sinned. And He says that someone has to pay the penalty for our sin.

Here's the good news . . . He has paid that penalty for you, because of His great mercy and love! His Son, Jesus, died in your place on the cross, and God accepts that costly sacrifice as payment for your sin.

"For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord." Romans 6:23

"Though your sins are like scarlet, I will make them as white as snow." Isaiah 1:18 (NLT)

.....
*God paid a great price for
your forgiveness, because
of His love for you.*
.....





.....
*God wants to have
a relationship with
you—all you have
to do is ask.*
.....

SO, WHAT'S MY FIRST STEP?

God promises that if you seek Him, you will find Him. He is as close to you as the air you breathe, and prayer is simply talking to Him in your own words.

The first step is to agree with God that we've done wrong and to truly desire a change of heart and mind. The Bible calls this "repentance" and it really means to decide to turn and go the other way—like a U-turn!

"If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness." 1 John 1:9

"For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life." John 3:16

When we draw near to God, with a humble and honest heart, He draws near to us!

*"Here I am! I stand at the door and knock. If anyone hears my voice and opens the door, I will come in and eat with him, and he with me."
Revelation 3:20*

The choice is yours. Do you want to receive the forgiveness He offers?

WHAT DOES GOD SAY ABOUT THE LIFE INSIDE ME?

God created your baby with a purpose—a purpose that is unique to him or her alone! That plan doesn't end with simply being born—your baby's life is just the beginning of new generations of people who will be impacted by your choice. You may be uncertain how you feel at this point, but the Lord is very clear in the Bible about the value of each life. He knew that this child was growing in your womb—even before you did!

Just read what it says in *The Message*—a paraphrase of the Bible:

“Oh yes, you shaped me first inside, then out; you formed me in my mother's womb. I thank you, High God—you're breathtaking! Body and soul, I am marvelously made! I worship in adoration—what a creation! You know me inside and out, you know every bone in my body; you know exactly how I was made, bit by bit, how I was sculpted from nothing into something. Like an open book, you watched me grow from conception to birth; all the stages of my life were spread out before you, the days of my life all prepared before I'd even lived one day.” Psalm 139:13-16

DID YOU KNOW?

- At the moment of conception, your baby's gender, hair and eye color were already determined.
- Your baby's heart began to beat just 21 days after conception.
- One week later, the basic structure for his or her brain and spinal cord had already formed.
- Just six weeks after conception, elbows and fingers take shape. Tooth buds for baby teeth are growing and your baby's eyelids begin to form.

.....
*God loves your baby
in the very same way
that He loves you.*
.....





.....
Today, you can make a choice that affirms your life and the life of your baby.
.....

WHAT DOES GOD SAY ABOUT ABORTION?

Right now you may be considering abortion. You may feel like there's no possible way to have this baby—and there's no denying that there will be challenges.

Although abortion may seem like the best solution, we encourage you to see beyond the emotions and pressures you are feeling right now and think carefully about the new life inside you.

"There is a way that appears to be right, but in the end it leads to death."
Proverbs 14:12

"And God spoke all these words: [...] "You shall not murder." Exodus 20:1,13

"I have set before you life and death [...] Now choose life, so that you and your children may live." Deuteronomy 30:19

DID YOU KNOW?

There are families who would gladly adopt your baby, even if your pregnancy is a result of rape or if your baby has a disability, if you are not ready to parent. However, if you are considering parenting this baby, there are people who will walk with you as you are making this decision.

WOULDN'T AN ABORTION LET ME JUST GET ON WITH MY LIFE?

Here's the reality: life will never be the same for you, whether you have an abortion or choose to carry your baby to term. But each choice has an impact on you.

One choice is life giving, whether you choose to parent or to place your baby with an adoptive family. The other choice takes a life and—some women say—takes a part of your own soul with it.

SHOULDN'T A WOMAN HAVE CONTROL OVER HER OWN BODY?

Our world says, "It's your body—your choice! You have the right to have an abortion." The truth is, just because something is legal does not necessarily mean that it's right.

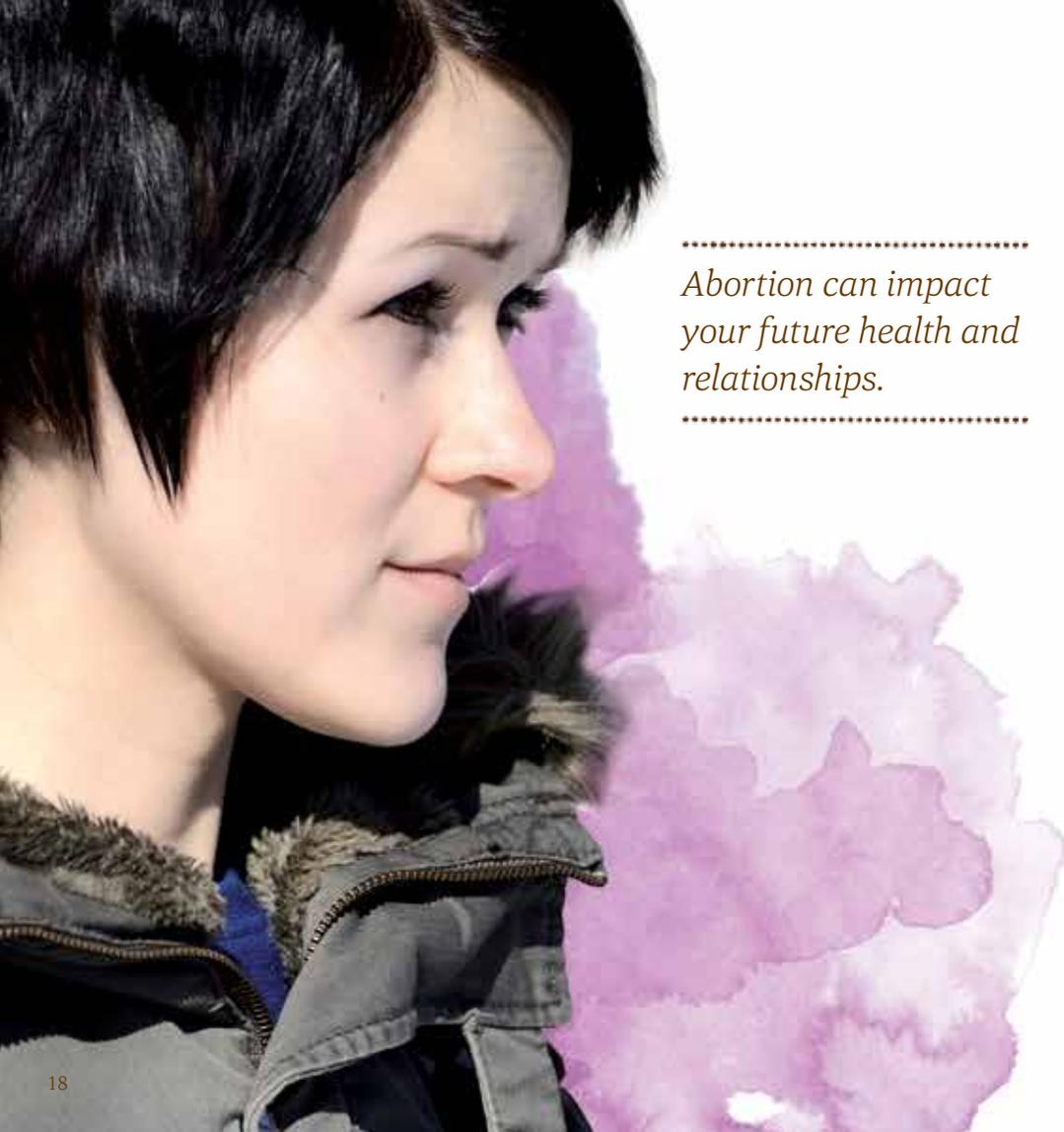
The child growing inside you is a separate, unique life, with its own DNA and heartbeat. Do you really have the "right" to decide his or her future?

"For every living soul belongs to me, the father as well as the son—both alike belong to me." Ezekiel 18:4

"You are not your own; you were bought at a price." 1 Corinthians 6:19-20

.....
*There are now
TWO lives,
and two stories,
involved in
the decisions
you make.*
.....





.....
*Abortion can impact
your future health and
relationships.*
.....

ARE THERE ANY RISKS OR COMPLICATIONS FOLLOWING AN ABORTION?

- Abortion is an invasive procedure that can damage reproductive organs and also cause infections and long-term problems that can put future pregnancies at risk.
- Women who have had an abortion are more likely to experience ectopic pregnancies, infertility, miscarriages and premature births than women who have not had abortions.¹

HOW DOES ABORTION AFFECT INTIMATE RELATIONSHIPS?

According to Dr. Priscilla Coleman, a college professor of Human Development and Family Studies, abortion impacts relationships in a number of ways:

- 10-20% of women experience sexual problems in the early months after an abortion and 5-20% of women report sexual difficulties a year later.
- 20-30% of women report psychological difficulties after an abortion, including anxiety, post-traumatic stress, depression, sleep disturbances and substance use or abuse.²



BUT I DON'T KNOW IF I COULD BE A
GOOD MOTHER.

Becoming a mother is a lot of responsibility and results in a lot of changes in our lifestyles. If it was all up to you, then you'd have reason to worry! But God promises to stay right by your side, helping you a step at a time. He will never leave you by yourself. You don't have to do this by yourself.

"All you need to remember is that God will never let you down; he'll never let you be pushed past your limit; he'll always be there to help you come through it." 1 Corinthians 10:13 (The Message, a paraphrase)

"Don't be afraid, I've redeemed you. I've called your name. You're mine. When you're in over your head, I'll be there with you." Isaiah 43:1-2 (The Message, a paraphrase)

.....
*Mothers learn by taking
baby steps, too, and
God will help you each
step of the way.*
.....

TODAY, YOU CAN MAKE A CHOICE THAT AFFIRMS LIFE!

Even if you've had an abortion in the past, you have the option of making a different choice for this pregnancy, sparing your baby's life and sparing yourself the additional hurt of another abortion.

It's your story . . . and your baby's story . . .
THE NEXT CHAPTER IS UP TO YOU.



About the author: Erin Smalley

Adopted as an infant, Erin Smalley has always been grateful that her birth mother loved her enough to choose life for her. After earning her bachelor's degree in nursing and working as a labor and delivery nurse for eight years, she went back to school for a master's degree in clinical psychology.

Erin works for Focus on the Family, speaking about marriage and parenting issues alongside her husband, Greg. They are the proud—and occasionally weary—parents of four children, including one who is adopted. They make their home in Colorado Springs, Colorado.

NEXT STEPS

- **Take good care of yourself.** Make an appointment with a doctor right away to begin prenatal care.
- **Make a plan for your baby that honors life.** Being a good mother means making good plans for your baby, whether that's parenting or choosing an adoptive family for your child.
- **Grow in your relationship with God.** Find a church that teaches the Bible. Read His Word and ask God to help you understand what He is saying to you.
- **Build a support system of women who know and trust God.** Find a local church where they often offer groups such as MOPS (Mothers of Preschoolers) or a group for new moms.
- **Seek guidance concerning your future relationship with the baby's father.** Just because you're pregnant doesn't mean that you have to rush into getting married. Take your time in order to decide if this is the man you should marry.

ADDITIONAL HELPFUL INFORMATION:

- To hear what other women say about their decision to have an abortion: **abortionchangesyou.com**
- To learn more about pregnancy: **AmericanPregnancy.org**
- To learn more about your baby's development: **EHD.org**
- To learn more about adoption: **iChooseAdoption.org**
- For resources that can help you learn to be a good parent: **FocusOnTheFamily.com**
- To connect with other new moms: **MOPS.org**



End Notes:

¹ Thomas Strahan, *Detrimental Effects of Abortion* (Springfield, IL: Acorn Books, 2002), pp. 168-206.

² Priscilla K. Coleman, Ph.D., "Does abortion hurt intimate relationships?" www.wecareexperts.org; 2008.

FOCUS ON THE FAMILY®



APPROVED BY THE
Physicians Resource Council

© 2013, 2017 Focus on the Family.
All models were used for illustrative purposes only.