

RIGHT or WRONG? Baby shower for unwed mother

July 6, 2007

Posted: 7/06/07

RIGHT or WRONG? Baby shower for unwed mother

One of the unmarried teenage girls in our church is pregnant. Should we give her a baby shower, or does that send the wrong message to other young girls?

What a gift! Your church is about to welcome a new life into the world. This baby may be entering under circumstances that none of us would have chosen, but what a wonderful opportunity for the new mother and her infant to be surrounded by the body of Christ, who already are anxious to show God's love, grace and care.

[Previous Columns](#)

In your particular church, a simple shower may be very appropriate if that is how new life usually is celebrated. If you choose a shower, the emphasis should be on the baby, not on creating a party atmosphere appropriate to a teenager. You may find that in your case it is more appropriate to support this mother through some means other than a shower. You might choose to provide diapers, a week's worth of meals after the birth of the baby, transportation or childcare assistance, or other necessities. Whatever

method is chosen, it is important to show grace, love and care to a new child, as well as a very young expectant mother who probably is scared, ashamed, embarrassed and overwhelmed.

Your other point should not be forgotten, however. Parents, Sunday school teachers, youth workers and other church leaders have an opportunity to influence teenagers greatly. You are wise to consider how your actions will have an impact on others in the youth group. Your church has the opportunity to support and encourage this new family while still helping other teenage boys and girls make wise decisions regarding their sexuality.

It is incredibly necessary to set a good example and provide sound biblical teaching for other teenagers who are struggling to answer difficult life questions. Rather than ignoring this extremely sensitive issue, churches and parents must work together to continue the dialogue with teenage students about the appropriate expression of sexual intimacy within a committed marital relationship.

Perhaps your church should consider celebrating students who wait until they are married to have sex. It also is important to provide students with the tools they need to make wise decisions. Simply telling them that sex outside of marriage is wrong is not enough. Your teenagers need opportunities within a safe environment to talk about these sensitive issues. They need adults who are willing to listen and to teach as they explore these issues out loud before they are faced with making real decisions.

By creating an entire church environment that is not afraid to address this issue consistently, students will understand God's perspective on sex outside of marriage and the grace God provides during days that are both difficult and joyous.

Emily Row-Prevost, team leader/coordinator leader

Communications/spiritual formation specialist

Baptist General Convention of Texas

Dallas

Right or Wrong? is sponsored by the T.B. Maston Chair of Christian Ethics at Hardin-Simmons University's Logsdon School of Theology. Send your questions about how to apply your faith to btillman@hsutx.edu.

News of religion, faith, missions, Bible study and Christian ministry among Baptist churches, in Texas, the BGCT, the nation and around the world.