

---

## **A Discourse on Reproductive Technologies and Christian Advocate for Artificial Insemination in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century**

**Zachariah Bulus Takore PhD.  
Pastor Abdul Bitrus Ishaya**

---

### **Abstract**

*The ethical and theological considerations surrounding artificial insemination (AI) remain a subject of debate among Christian communities. This study explores the moral, religious, and societal implications of AI, particularly within the African context, where childbearing is highly valued. While some Christians support AI as a solution to infertility and a means to uphold family continuity, others argue that it disrupts the natural order established by God. Various religious perspectives are examined, including those of the Roman Catholic Church, Protestants, Jews, and Baptists, revealing diverse stances on the issue. The study highlights both the benefits and criticisms of AI. Proponents argue that AI has reduced infertility-related stigma, prevented polygamy, and provided a medical solution for childless couples. Critics, however, raise concerns about the involvement of third parties in conception, potential moral and ethical dilemmas, and deviations from biblical principles. The discussion extends to the moral implications of AI, questioning whether the process aligns with God's sovereignty or undermines divine will. Ultimately, this study underscores the need for Christians to approach AI with careful ethical consideration, guided by biblical principles. While medical advancements offer potential solutions, the final decision should align with personal convictions, moral integrity, and faith in God's plan for procreation.*

**Key words:** Reproductive Technologies, Christians, Artificial Insemination.

### ***Introduction***

Since after the fall of man in Gen 3, man has been faced with challenges of life and life never remained the same. To this effect, there are issues man will have to address in order to make life easier and comfortable for him. However, on whether a Christian should advocate for artificial insemination commonly depends on individual beliefs and understanding of the Scripture. On this premise, some Christians may view artificial insemination as consistent with their faith, particularly in the situation where couples who are faced with infertility and desire to make a family of their own; most especially in African context, where family is very important and cherished so much that an individual desires to have one. Hence, in Africa, it is expected that when an individual gets married, at the end of nine months, the couple should have begotten a baby. The absence of having a child by the end of these months is often being considered that the wife is the one having the problem. Nonetheless, there are things beyond human's control, but man has devised a means to mitigate some of the issues related to the problems that man is faced with. One of those issues is infertility which others may have concerns related to the marital context of procreation and the ethical complications involved, such as the potential for single parents or the handling of multiple embryos. It is essential for individuals to consider biblical principles and the ethical implications, as well as their personal convictions.

### ***What is Artificial Insemination (AI)?***

Different scholars define artificial insemination (AI) differently, depending on their backgrounds, but the underlining factor as the name implies is that the process is artificial and not natural. Artificial insemination is "impregnation not using natural intercourse, but using mechanical, artificial aids e.g. syringe,

used for the transfer of the sperm”<sup>433</sup> More simply, Oluwe, defines artificial insemination (AI) as the process in which “male gametes, the spermatozoa, are collected and introduced artificially into the female genital tract for fertilization.”<sup>434</sup> Also, Ekeke defines it as a process by which sperm is placed into the reproductive tract of a female to impregnate the female by means other than sexual intercourse.”<sup>435</sup> which further explains an alteration of the natural other of sexual intercourse, however, Ekeke further explains that AI was used primarily as an assisted reproductive technology to treat infertility but is now being increasingly used to enable women without a male partner (that is, single women or lesbians) to become pregnant and have children through the sperm provided by a sperm donor.”<sup>436</sup> All these definitions or considerations by the various above lined scholars are simply saying that it is a fertility treatment where there is an introduction of sperm artificially into the woman’s uterus, by passing the cervix so as to increase the chances of fertility.

### ***Religious Opinion***

On the issue of AIDs there are different theological stands to what each of the denominations or religious bodies stand upon based on their convictions and beliefs. “From a biblical perspective, Christians argue that the omniscient God knows the physiological, emotional and spiritual conditions of all people- including married couples.”<sup>437</sup> This is a very powerful school of thought. However, “the position of the Roman

---

<sup>433</sup> K. H. Peschke, *Christian Ethics: Moral Theology in the Light of Vatican 2*, vol. 2. Bangalore: Theological Publication in India. 2009, 295.

<sup>434</sup> S. K. Oluwe, *Modern Concepts and Terminologies in Sex and Gender Studies* (Lagos: Concept Publications, 2012), 15.

<sup>435</sup> Ekeke, E. C, *Issues in Biomedical Ethics: A Christian Perspective* (Calaber: Jochrisam Publisher, 2010), 57.

<sup>436</sup> Ekeke, *Issues in Biomedical Ethics: A Christian Perspective*, 57.

<sup>437</sup> Negrut, Paul and Tiberiu Pop, *Moral Considerations on Infertility and Artificial Reproductive Technics*, Journal of Ethics in Entrepreneurship and Technology Vol. 2 No. 1, (2022): 2-22 Emerald Publishing Limited 2633-7436 DOI 10.1108/JEET-04-2022-0009

Catholic Church was declared to the world in 1957 by Pope Pius XII who viewed the conjugal act as having a natural and God-given design that joins the love-giving dimension with the life-giving dimension.”<sup>438</sup> Even though among the Catholics there are different opinion to either go for artificial insemination or not. While others are against the natural God given design, the Catholic moral theologians “permit artificial insemination which is the use of a syringe to introduce the semen as far as possible into the uterine canal by the couple themselves”<sup>439</sup> which is to say even among the Catholics there are different opinions on Artificial Insemination. Even though the moral theologians are against other forms of artificial insemination, they condemned it for the reasons of masturbation.

Jewish leaders differ on this. Rabbi David Graubert, director of the Bet Din ecclesiastical court for Conservative Judaism in the Midwest is “more concerned about the commitment of the husband and wife to one another and to the child than about Artificial Insemination”<sup>440</sup> this seems reasonable thought provoking. The commitment between the husband and his wife and that of the Child is very important than just wanting to have a child. What happened afterward is key than artificial insemination. Protestants are also divided on the issue of artificial insemination. James Hefley writes that “the Lutheran Church of America in May 1970, concluded that “the decision rests with the persons who are involved.” Eight years earlier the United Presbyterian Church approved sperm donation.”<sup>441</sup> Joseph Fletcher, professor emeritus of Episcopal Theological School (affiliated with Harvard University), “holds that artificial methods of reproduction are inherently superior. He argues

---

<sup>438</sup> Larry R Thornton, *A Biblical View of Artificial Insemination*, Calvary Baptist Theological Journal I Spring (1986): 58. From <https://biblicalstudies.org.uk/articles-cbtj.php> (Accessed January 22, 2025).

<sup>439</sup> Thornton, *A Biblical View of Artificial Insemination*, 58.

<sup>440</sup> Hefley James, “*Artificial Insemination: Sacred or Sinful?*” Christian life, May, 1978.

<sup>441</sup> James, “*Artificial Insemination: Sacred or Sinful?*”, 59.

that “artificial” technology is in fact “natural” for if it was “against nature” the technology simply would not work. He sees no reason to leave man’s destiny to “blind chance”<sup>442</sup> Charles R Smith, a Grace Brethren professor at Grace Theological Seminary asserts, “The use of the husband’s sperm in this process does not raise any serious ethical considerations.”<sup>443</sup>

“Baptists are not unified in their position on artificial insemination. Commenting on AIDs which is fully understood and consented to, by the couple involved is Dr Wallace Denton, director of the Marriage Counseling Center at Purdue University and a former member of the Executive Committee of the Southern Baptist Convention: “I don’t see any moral dimensions to it at all. It depends on the personal preference of the couple.”<sup>444</sup> “In contrast to these Baptist’s considerations, E Robert Jordan, the pastor of Calvary Baptist Church of Lansdale, Pennsylvania and the president of Calvary Baptist Theological Seminary (independent Baptist) finds no fault with AIH but declares AID to be adultery. He warns of the possibility of incest in ignorance by some children of the same donor and of the legal complications.”<sup>445</sup> So the Baptists along with the Protestants, Jews and Catholics have various opinions concerning artificial insemination.

### ***What are the causes of Infertility?***

On the causes of infertility there are so many reasons that can lead to childlessness among couples today. It could be an effect of poor, dangerous lifestyle or what we consume that could result to medical challenge. However, “within a marriage, numerous obstacles may frustrate the natural parental desire

---

<sup>442</sup> Robert M. Nelson, “*The Ethics of In Vitro Fertilization and Embryo Transfer*” Christian Medical Society Journal Vol XIV, No 1, (1983): 22.

<sup>443</sup> Charles R. Smith, “*The Manipulation of Human Reproduction*” Spire Summer (Winona Lake. Ind: Grace Theol Seminary, 1981), 5.

<sup>444</sup> Hefley James, “*Artificial Insemination: Sacred or Sinful?*”, 64.

<sup>445</sup> Jay E. Adams, “*Artificial Insemination*” *Matters of Concern to Christian Counselors*, Phillipsburg, NJ. (1978): 1.

to bear children. Among the barriers are sterility, impotence, physiological (genital) impediments, the desire to avoid transmission of inheritable characteristics, and the danger of improperly matched Rh blood factors.”<sup>446</sup> All of these could serve as a factor that may lead to infertility among couples.

### ***Other Types of Artificial Insemination***

Out of many types of Artificial Insemination, here are few from the work of Akpanika, Ekpenyong Nyong and Anthony Okon Ben, from their article Christian Response to Reproductive Technologies: A Case Study of Artificial Insemination.

- Intra-vaginal insemination. This method involves the placement of the sperm in the woman’s vagina by artificial means.

- Intra-cervical insemination. This is a process where sperms are deposited or placed inside the cervix of the woman to impregnate her.

- Intra-uterine insemination whereby the sperm is deposited directly in the female uterus.

- Intra-fallopian insemination whereby the sperms are deposited or placed inside the pelvis near the mouth of the fallopian tube (Geisha et al, 179). Ekeke has pointed out that this is the most commonly used methods of insemination.

### ***Arguments in Favor of Artificial Insemination***

Some Christian scholars and theologians in support of artificial insemination argue that artificial insemination has helped in solving the problem of childlessness (infertility) in the society which has directly reduced the practice of polygamy, especially

---

<sup>446</sup> George P. Smith II, *Through a Test Tube Darkly: Artificial Insemination and the Law*, Michigan Law Review, Volume 67-127 (Issue 1) (1968): 130.

in African societies, by helping women who were incapable of conception to conceive.”<sup>447</sup> In this regard, it has greatly helped in reducing the rate of polygamous families due to the help of artificial insemination and also, help the women from mockery, societal abuse and in-laws impediment from some family rites or benefits. In Africa Children are very important because it is believed that they will keep the family name and blood line to the next generation when the father is no longer alive. Furthermore, “despite the option of adoption by childless couples, artificial insemination offers a better option of having and raising one’s biological child despite the odds. This gives a more fulfilling feeling of satisfaction than adopting someone else’s child.”<sup>448</sup> According to Nzeh, with in-vitro fertilization, a couple can have biological children of their own. Especially when there is no difference between a baby born through the in-vitro fertilization process and a baby born through a natural process.”<sup>449</sup> Nzeh believes that there is nothing wrong with both insemination and the natural way of conception. Murray further argues that “inherited diseases can be reduced through artificial insemination. According to him, fetuses used during in-vitro fertilization process are free from genetic diseases such as cystic fibrosis, down’s syndrome, sickle cell anemia and Tay Sachs disease with the help of genetic screening technology called preimplantation genetic diagnosis (PGD) or preimplantation genetic screening (PGS) when such genetic problem run in a parent or family history”<sup>450</sup> artificial insemination whether it is morally wrong or right, to a large extent it has mitigated troubled couples that are faced with childlessness, and it has also help in reducing diseases that are

---

<sup>447</sup> Smith II, *Through a Test Tube Darkly: Artificial Insemination and the Law*, 130.

<sup>448</sup> Smith II, *Through a Test Tube Darkly*, 130

<sup>449</sup> A. A. Nzeh, A. N. Manly, E. O. Anthony, In Vitro Fertilization in the Religious Perspectives: An Analysis. *International Journal of Religion and Culture (INJOREC)*.1(1). 2016, p, 44.

<sup>450</sup> Murray (2015), *7 Ways that IVF Benefits Infertile Couples*, From [www.ncfmc.com/7-ways-that](http://www.ncfmc.com/7-ways-that) (Accessed January 22, 2025).

genetically inherited from parents. Nonetheless, “It has helped men who had a problem of producing sperm during sexual intercourse with their female partner (wife) to have children and also women with minimal to mild endometriosis (that is where cells that are usually found only in the lining of the uterus (womb) begin to spread or grow into other parts of the woman’s reproductive system, which in most cases is responsible for infertility among women) to now have children through artificial insemination.”<sup>451</sup> Medical science has greatly help and improved the wellbeing of mankind on all ramification of life. It has also answered some of the questions of man related to health issues and proffer solutions to a large extent.

### ***Argument against Artificial Insemination (AI)***

There are strong argument against Christian couples advocating for artificial insemination. Some Christian scholars view it as going contrary to the will of God and going against natural other of things Orchestrated by God. In light of this, one of the strongest arguments against AI posit by Ayantayo is that,

Artificial insemination is that it involves a third-party and the Church does not approve a third party involvement in the procreation process such as egg or sperm donation or surrogacy. The fertilization of the egg in a glass container views children as mere products that can be produced and discarded at will rather than see Children as gifts from God. From the biblical perspective, God created man in his image...male and female he created them (Gen. 1:27) and endowed in them different sexual organs for procreation. This differentiation is what constitutes human nature and essence and destroying this in the name of experimentation means destroying the very image of God in humans. With this in view,

---

<sup>451</sup> Jacob Kehinde Ayantayo, *Fundamentals of Religious Ethics* (Ibadan: Sam Prints and Graphics Co, 2009), 59.

some Christian's scholars argue that the idea of artificial insemination runs counter to God's will for humanity."<sup>452</sup>

However, it is the nature and the image of God in the process of the procreation or in the seed being inserted through the means of syringe. Isn't the process of insemination displaying the power and the glory of God through man by giving him the ability to act according to God's will?

Though other scholars are of the opinion that artificial insemination will continue to encourage people to indulge the more into immorality and other ungodly act. Again, some scholars arguing on "moral grounds opine that artificial insemination encourages single parenting, surrogacy, gay marriages, lesbianism as well as making children bearing a lucrative business for some businessmen who store frozen sperm and egg for sell at high and exuberant cost."<sup>453</sup>

### ***Christian Responses on Artificial Insemination***

Christian considerations on ethical issues such as this are viewed from the authority of the Scripture as their "sola scriptura."<sup>454</sup> The Bible should be standard of our ethical values without compromise and it is on this ground that Akpanika, equated Kunhiyop (2008:46), opines that "Christian ethics and indeed, "all ethical norms come from God and as such, it should be treated with care since such norms are not based on human values and ideas but derived their content and sanction and dynamics and goal from God."<sup>455</sup> If all ethical norms came from God, our human values and ideals does not matter. Nonetheless, "from the Christian perspectives, the

---

<sup>452</sup> Ekpenyong Nyong Akpanika, and Anthony Okon Ben, *Christian Response to Reproductive Technologies: A Case Study of Artificial Insemination*, Vol. 3 No 1 (2020), 39.

<sup>453</sup> Akpanika, and Ben, *Christian Response to Reproductive Technologies*, 39.

<sup>454</sup> Akpanika, and Ben, *Christian Response*, 39.

<sup>455</sup> Akpanika, and Ben, *Christian Response to Reproductive Technologies*, 9.

problem of childlessness in the world today is not new. It is traceable as far back as the Old Testament times.”<sup>456</sup> There are a couple of cases which the Bible made mention of that we can relate with and of those is in regards to infertility however, the situation is not new to us, it has been there for ages. Couples should not see barrenness as a new phenomenon despite our desire to have the blessings of children. It is important that we guide our thoughts and actions by going for what is ethically and morally right. Therefore, “the remedy available for childless couples in time past was adoption or polygamy” . . . none the less, “the result of medical science now offers a variety of options to childless couples.”<sup>457</sup> Since other options cannot satisfy the desire of man, man is now on adventure to salvage the situation of Childlessness through medical science as a remedy to the heartache faced by humanity.

### ***The Moral Implication of AI***

What is morality? The term morality can be relative, because what an individual will consider morally right may be morally wrong to another person. More so, “as with other issues involving human procreation, an ethical analysis of the nature of artificial insemination transcends medical and legal considerations and anchors on the morality of artificial insemination on the divine purpose for human sexuality and the institution of marriage.”<sup>458</sup> What is the divine purpose for human sexuality and the institution of marriage? God design everything beautiful for human being to enjoy and marriage is one of the blessings and gift of God to man. However, the fall of man has changed the narrative of things in Gen 3. Even though God gave man dominion over nature In Genesis 1:28, God tells man who has been created in His image to “subdue” the earth

---

<sup>456</sup> Akpanika, and Ben, *Christian Response*, 9.

<sup>457</sup> Akpanika, and Ben, *Christian Response*, 9.

<sup>458</sup> Akpanika, and Ben, *Christian Response*, 10.

and have “dominion” over every living thing in it.”<sup>459</sup> Therefore, “it is proper for man to exercise this God-given responsibility of control over nature even though his control is limited compared to Adam’s before he sinned.”<sup>460</sup> In light with the responsibility of man, it still shows that man was given control and dominion by God over nature as asserts by Davis “the term subdue implies a degree of sovereignty, control and direction over nature. This call to rule is a call to advance civilization and regulate natural forces”<sup>461</sup> therefore, artificial insemination is still part of the control and God given responsibilities of man on mitigating the effect of childlessness among couples.

### ***The critical Analysis of Artificial Insemination***

Genesis 1:28: “And God blessed them, and God said to them, ‘Be fruitful and multiply and fill the earth and subdue it, and have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the heavens and over every living thing that moves on the earth” also in Deuteronomy 7:14 “You shall be blessed above all peoples; there will be no male or female barren (childless, infertile) among you or among your cattle” and God continue with his promises in Exodus 23:2 “No one shall suffer miscarriage or be barren in your land; I will fulfill the number of your days.” Then can we still hold on the truth of God words? What could the reason today where families are without Children? Is it a Sin when a barren couple seek to look for a child through other means? Are their going against the will of God? Should they continue to wait on Gods timing or should they go for artificial insemination? Through the above passages of the Bible we saw God making promise to his children even though we still see where Sarah became barren but God choses to bless Abraham with a Son in his old age whose name is Isaac. Rachael, Isaac’s wife was barren too and God still bless them

---

<sup>459</sup> Genesis 1:28

<sup>460</sup> Larry R Thornton, *A Biblical View of Artificial Insemination*, 63.

<sup>461</sup> John J. Davis, *Paradise to Prison*, (Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1975), 81.

with a Son. Therefore, when we go our way could it be that we are going against the will of God? Should one only consider the benefit of doing artificial insemination or the will of God for not giving him a child at when needed? What is Gods will concerning couples without a child? “The most explicit teaching of the scripture is that God is sovereign over his entire creation. In other words, he has absolute authority and rules over his creation. Meaning that since he is sovereign, he is all-knowing, all-powerful and free. There is no rival or competitor, no spirit or thing, that can determine his sovereign and loving provision for his creation. His kingdom rules over all (Ps. 103:19).”<sup>462</sup> By implication of the above quotation, it is apparently pertinent that one should learn to trust in God and in his sovereignty because God is all knowing, and all powerful. Whatever God has destined, no man can change it. But one could be tempted to ask, because God is all knowing should humans now fold their hands and wait when there is something they can do to remedy the situation? God gave man wisdom, and he uses that ability to be innovative in order to bring glory to God.

It is believed that artificial insemination is going against the natural order of God and when you go for artificial insemination it means you’re going against the will of God. However, is artificial insemination a sin? If the man gave his sperm and through the use of syringe or other means to be used on his wife is not considered a sin. While some believed that using a sperm from a donor is automatically a sin and Christians should not be party to such practice.

### **Conclusion**

What shall be the Christians response to these various situations? How can one know what is right? How is the morality of such practices be determined? Someone might suggest that the “Bible has the answer.” Indeed, that is true.

---

<sup>462</sup> Akpanika & Ben, *Christian Response to Reproductive Technologies: A Case Study of Artificial Insemination*, 10.

The grass withers, the flowers fade, science comes and goes, but the Word of God abides forever (Isaiah 40:8). That Word, which is a complete and perfect source of moral and spiritual information (2 Timothy 3:16-17), is eternally applicable to human needs.”<sup>463</sup> In as much as humans desire to have Children, their thoughts and actions should be guided by the truth, which is the word of God. Artificial Insemination may serve as a remedy to salvage the situation of barrenness but what is the Bible saying? The Bible may not categorically say anything in regard to AI but we should be guided because the Bible is our final authority and the source of our moral standard.

## Sources

- Adams, Jay E. “*Artificial Insemination*” Matters of Concern to Christian Counselors. Phillipsburg, NJ. 1978.
- Ayantayo, Jacob Kehinde, *Fundamentals of Religious Ethics*. Ibadan: Sam Prints and Graphics Co, 2009.
- Akpanika, Ekpenyong Nyong & Ben, Anthony Okon. *Christian Response to Reproductive Technologies: A Case Study of Artificial Insemination*. International Journal of Humanities Management and Social Science (IJ-HuMaSS) ·May 2021. DOI: 10.36079/lamintang.ij-humass-0301.110
- Thompson, Bert. *The Christian And Medical Ethics*. Montgomery, AL 36117 U.S.A.: Apologetics Press, Inc., 1999. Davis John J, *Paradise to Prison*, Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1975.
- Ekeke, E. C. *Issues in Biomedical Ethics: A Christian Perspective*. Calabar, Jochrisam Publisher. 2010.
- Smith, George P. II, *Through a Test Tube Darkly: Artificial Insemination and The Law*. Michigan Law Review, Volume 67-127, Issue 1, 968.
- James, Hefley. “*Artificial Insemination: Sacred or Sinful?*” Christian life, May, 1978.
- Thornton, Larry R. *A Biblical View of Artificial Insemination*. Calvary Baptist Theological Journal Spring 1986.  
<https://biblicalstudies.org.uk/articles-cbtj.php>
- Murray (2015). *7 Ways that IVF Benefits Infertile Couples*.  
[www.ncfmc.com/7-ways-that-ivf-benefits-infertile](http://www.ncfmc.com/7-ways-that-ivf-benefits-infertile).
- Negrut, Paul & Tiberiu Pop, *Moral Considerations on Infertility and Artificial Reproductive Technics*. Journal of Ethics in Entrepreneurship and

---

<sup>463</sup> Thompson Bert, *The Christian And Medical Ethics* (Montgomery, AL 36117 U.S.A.: Apologetics Press, Inc., 1999), 3.

Technology Vol. 2 No. 1, (2022) 2-22 Emerald Publishing Limited 2633-7436 DOI 10.1108/JEET-04-2022-0009

Nelson, Robert M, “*The Ethics of In Vitro Fertilization and Embryo Transfer*” Christian Medical Society Journal Vol XIV, No 1, 1983.

Nzeh, A. A., Manly, A. N. & Anthony, E. O., *In Vitro Fertilization in the Religious Perspectives: An Analysis*. International Journal of Religion and Culture (INJOREC).1(1). 2016.

Oluwe, S. K. *Modern Concepts and Terminologies in Sex and Gender Studies*. Lagos: Concept Publications. 2012.

Peschke, K. H. *Christian Ethics: Moral Theology in the Light of Vatican 2*, vol. 2. Bangalore: Theological Publication in India, 2009.

Smith, Charles R. “*The Manipulation of Human Reproduction*” Winona Lake, Ind: Grace Theo! Seminary, 1981.