1. My Desire & Conviction
   1. My desire to be a father & our ordinary love of children
   2. We are Pro-life in the full sense of it.
   3. Biblical foundation: Be fruitful + multiply (vs. Hedonism)
2. The Birth Mother’s Experience
   1. The average age of a woman who puts her child up for adoption
   2. The adoption process
      * 1. Contact an adoption agency
        2. Discuss adoption & options with an agency rep/social worker

A personal contact is provided to the prospective birth mother. This person will provide comprehensive counsel and support to the birth mother, even after the birth and placement has occurred (emotional, financial, etc)

It is also important to point out that the agency is not out to “make a sale.” They want what is best for baby and mother. Their counsel will reflect this by helping the birth mother evaluate her situation so that she can make an informed decision on pursuing adoption or parenting.

* + - 1. Customize Adoption Plan--

This includes choosing the adoptive family, deciding how much contact you want before and after placement, determining who you want involved in your hospital stay, etc.

* + - 1. Complete Social Medical Forms

Birth mothers are required to fill out forms to give as much information as possible regarding the birth parent’s social and medical history. It is understood that these forms may not be complete. They are also “on the honor’s system.”

* + - 1. Professional Adoptive Support

Birth mothers are not only given counsel on every aspect of the pregnancy and adoption process (arrangements for hospital stay, etc) they are provided with some pre-natal care & some financial assistance with pregnancy related expenses if needed.

* + - 1. Birth & Surrender

In Ohio a birth mother & father are not allowed to sign a formal surrender of their rights until 3 days after the birth. Once they do, they legally terminate their parental rights. If a birth father is not available to sign papers, the agency has to go through the legal process to have them terminated. Obviously, if the father wants to parent the child the child may not be put up for adoption.

1. The Process of Adoption for Adoptive Families (Agency: Adoption by Gentle Care)
   * + 1. Agency
       2. Paperwork & Profile
       3. Orientation
       4. Social Worker Visits
       5. Selection by the Birth Parents
       6. Placement
       7. Probation
       8. Finalization
       9. Pictures & Letters
2. “Open” Adoptions

Adoptions can either be “open” or “closed.” A closed adoption is one where the parties decide that the child will have no contact with the birth parents after the placement.

An open adoption is where both the birth parents and adoptive parents agree to some level of contact with the adopted child. The decision as to how much contact there will be will be set and instituted on good faith.

An open adoption is not “dual parenting” and the birth parent does not have a say in how the child is raised.

1. Bi-Racial Adoptions

Some say that children available for adoption should always be placed with a family with at least one parent of the same race or culture as the child. This, they say, is so the child can develop a strong racial or cultural identity.

Such a notion though, links a child’s inherent identity to his skin color or place of birth. Christianity, on the other hand, says that one’s identity is supra-racial/cultural; being grounded in his being created in the image of God.

One does want to be sensitive to a child’s personal wellness. If family members outside the immediate family (e.g. uncles/aunts, grandparents) demonstrate strong bigotry and would be hostile to a child of a different color/culture, it may not be best to pursue the adoption.

There are certainly cultural things that one does need to be aware of. For instance, black children have different hair than white children, and requires some knowledge of what it takes to style & maintain it. It is important that this is done because hair is quite an important think in black culture.

Pros: bi-racial adoptions help foster healthy cross racial relationships (particularly among siblings).

Cons: Racial questions will arise that need to be dealt with, some of which may not immediately be apparent to parents (e.g. black child who is pulled over in Alabama)

1. Government Regulation
   1. Laws regulating abortion: These do help promote adoption (as they did in the case of my children).
   2. Laws regulating adoption: These often interfere & hinder adoptions
2. Costs:
   1. Adoptions typically run $20,000-35,000, plus travel expenses
   2. Helps: Grants, loans, family support
   3. Hindrances: debt (i.e. student loans), materialistic lifestyle
3. Adopting Is A Glorious Experience!