

When infertility is a blessing

When I was growing up, all I ever wanted to be was a mother.

Not a veterinarian.

Not an astronaut.

Not a writer.

I wanted to be a mother.

That never changed. I grew up and met the most wonderful, giving man. We fell in love, got married, and waited to become parents.

It didn't happen.



As we realized we were dealing with infertility, I felt so helpless. I couldn't understand why two people who were so ready and eager to welcome a child couldn't become parents. Yet there we were, perfectly happy in our marriage, but experiencing the sadness and disappointment that comes with not being able to bear children.

Being open to God's plan seems easy until you realize it doesn't match yours.

From the beginning, we trusted in Him completely. We never considered IVF. After all, I thought, if He could place a child in the womb of a virgin in Nazareth, He could certainly send us a child, no matter what miracle was needed.

Then our miracle came. It wasn't a flash of light or a vision. It was more of a gentle, nudging whisper. It was one small sign after another. Tiny points of light popped up through the darkness, growing brighter as they lit the road to our becoming parents. Even before marriage John and I had spoken about adoption casually as a "maybe someday" sort of thing. But in our fourth year of marriage we noticed that adoption just kept coming up. As we started paying more attention, it seemed to be everywhere.

One day I came across the question, "Do you want to be pregnant or do you want to be a mother?"

The answer was obvious.



I kept thinking of that line in *Sound of Music* when Julie Andrews says, "When the Lord closes a door, somewhere he opens a window."

We climbed through that open window, and a new journey began. We found ourselves exploring questions about birth histories, medical needs, orphanage behavior, grieving and attachment, international travel, and piles and piles of

paperwork. A little more than a year later we flew to China to meet our first son. As I share this during National Infertility Awareness Week, I know our story is nothing unusual. But as I look back on those days of disappointment today, I see them in a much different light.

Years ago our infertility seemed like such a heavy burden.

Today, I see infertility as a blessing. Having children by birth was just another door that God gently closed. He asked us to trust, hope, and pray. As we waited, I never imagined that His plan would be so magnificent—so perfect for John and me. Our Creator knew us far better than we knew ourselves.



Last night after dinner our 3-year-old was sitting at the table, his bare feet draped over the arm of the chair. He grinned as he pointed to each of us and said our names, his big brother first “...and Mama and Baba and me! My family!”

Yes, little one. We are your family. Your father and I have been blessed beyond our wildest dreams. And we are so tremendously grateful for the journey that brought us to your brother and to you.



***Joining Theology Is a Verb and Reconciled to You for Worth Revisiting
Wednesday on Jan. 27, 2016.***