

CALL FOR PAPERS

Special issue of *Christian Bioethics*

Parenthood, Eugenics, and the Body

Issue Editor: Nicholas Colgrove, PhD (NColgrove@augusta.edu)

Submissions are invited for a special issue of *Christian Bioethics* on the theme: “Parenthood, Eugenics, and the Body.”

Theme Description: There are a plurality of views of what it means to be a parent. There are a plurality of categories of parenthood as well: biological, genetic, adoptive, etc. This issue will examine the nature of parenthood from perspectives within the Christian faiths. Contributors may explore what it means to be a parent from a Christian perspective, how Christian standards of parenthood differ from secular standards (or other religious standards of parenthood), and how Christian parents can effectively navigate present-day bioethical challenges. Many of today’s bioethical challenges concern the bodies of children. These range from (1) questions at the start of life (e.g., regarding IVF, selective abortion, genetics, and eugenics), (2) questions throughout childhood (e.g., regarding gender-affirming care, decision-making capacity, and decision-making authority), and (3) questions at the end of life (e.g., regarding medical aid in dying for minors, the withdrawal or withholding of life-sustaining care, etc.).

Possible Topics: Given the aims of *Christian Bioethics*, essays in this special issue should engage with bioethical issues and “the content-full moral commitments that separate and give moral substance” to Christian faiths. Questions to explore include, but are not limited to:

- What does it mean to be a parent? How does a Christian account of parenthood differ from secular accounts of parenthood? Are there uniquely Christian ways of understanding distinctions between genetic, biological, and adoptive parenthood?
- How should we understand parental authority from a Christian perspective? Do parents have total authority to make medical decisions for their children? Or should the decision-making capacities of children be respected (at any age)?
- Given Christian (moral and theological) commitments about parental authority, how does parental authority relate to the role of the secular state? What are some uniquely Christian ways of answering the following two questions: when, if ever, is the state justified in overriding parental authority and why? When, if ever, is the state justified in making medical decisions for a child *without consent* of the child’s parents?
- How should Christian parents approach (or think about) gender-affirming care for minors, particularly if it is endorsed by the secular state and/or secular medical professionals? How should Christian parents respond when secular state officials (including school personnel) allegedly conceal from parents information about their child’s gender identity?

- How should Christian parents approach (or think about) conversion therapy, particularly when it is condemned by the secular state and/or secular medical professionals? How should Christian parents think about the sexual orientation and gender identity of their children generally?
- What is the relationship between being a “good parent” and using preimplantation genetic testing (or genetic selection)? In what way does use of these technologies constitute control over the bodies of one’s children (for better or worse)?
- What is the relationship between eugenics and parenthood? Do parents who use genetic selection and gene editing engage in eugenic practices? Are these practices consistent with Christian ethical commitments?
- How should Christians, especially non-Catholic Christians, think about contraception? Relatedly, how should Christian parents (or prospective parents) think about family size? Should Christians attempt to have as many children as possible? Or are there good theological reasons to limit the size of one’s family?
- From a Christian perspective, what does it mean to be a mother? In what ways do today’s cultural and social practices interfere with one’s ability to be a mother (in this sense)?
- From a Christian perspective, what does it mean to be a father? In what ways do today’s cultural and social practices interfere with one’s ability to be a father (in this sense)?

The issue editor welcomes early discussions of brief proposals and/or abstracts by email to: NColgrove@augusta.edu

Submission Instructions:

Email submissions to the Managing Editor at journalofchristianbioethics@gmail.com. Please include a statement that your submission included in *Christian Bioethics*’ “Special Issue on Parenthood, Eugenics, and the Body.”

Each manuscript must be accompanied by a statement that it has not been published elsewhere and that it has not been submitted simultaneously for publication elsewhere. Authors are responsible for obtaining permission to reproduce copyrighted material from other sources and are required to sign an agreement for the transfer of copyright to the publisher. All accepted manuscripts, artwork, and photographs become the property of the publisher. Please provide files in MS Word Format.

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Manuscript preparation instructions are available here:
https://academic.oup.com/cb/pages/Instructions_To_Authors

Submission Deadline: March 25, 2025