

Why wait until we are married?

Our modern community standards have been changing over the last sixty odd years. People in love and planning to marry have always had the desire to “jump the gun” as far as sexual relations are concerned. Up until the 1960’s however, there was always a fear of unwanted pregnancy which held back couples from intimacy. With the advent of reliable contraception however, this fear has largely disappeared and with it the reluctance to engage in premarital sexual activity. It has come to the point now where it is an accepted thing in society, even to the point of living together without being married.

But what does the Bible say? Premarital sex is termed “fornication” in the Bible. It is condemned right through the Old Testament and in the New Testament we have the following:

Acts 15:20

But that we write unto them, that they abstain from pollutions of idols, and from fornication, and from things strangled, and from blood.

Romans 1:29

Being filled with all unrighteousness, fornication wickedness, covetousness, maliciousness; full of envy, murder, debate, deceit, malignity; whisperers,

1 Cor. 6:18

Flee fornication. Every sin that a man doeth is without the body; but he that committeth fornication sinneth against his own body.

All of this means that courting couples must be careful. Passions are easily aroused and restraint and respect must be observed. It is very easy for emotions to be aroused and keeping oneself in control is all part of being one of God’s children.

Self control while couples are courting helps them learn self control in other matters also. Self control in anger, control in financial matters, rearing children and in personal and business matters. It is all about learning to respect and care for others.

The Apostle Paul advised marriage, (even though he was not married), for those who needed to have a sexual relationship. His first advice is that it was better to remain unmarried, but if a person needed a sexual relationship, then that needed to be in a married relationship.

1 Cor. 7:8-9

I say therefore to the unmarried and widows, It is good for them if they abide even as I. But if they cannot contain, let them marry: for it is better to marry than to burn.

Marriage, however, is more than just sexual relations. Couples must learn therefore to cultivate an interest in what the other is interested in to earn the long term love and respect of each other for life. Respect and self control are also key aspects of marriage, which need to be cultivated.

Courtship and engagement, as they are called in Western society, are necessary steps to ensure, that the couple are indeed suited to each other and not just lusting after each other. There is a big difference between the two; Couples who genuinely care and are suited to each other will learn to love and respect the “quirks” of each other and to love their spouse as themselves. Proverbs 6:25

Lust not after her beauty in thine heart; neither let her take thee with her eyelids.

Those who just lust after one another will find that it will just burn out in time and that lust will need to be transferred to someone else. This is the type of relationship built on shifting sand and cannot last the test of time. Unfortunately, this is the case for many couples today. Genuine and lasting love and respect in marriage grows out of a caring relationship, starting with that attitude in courting and engagement. There is no room for a relationship built on lust. This will inevitably lead to major problems later in the marriage and possibly end in divorce, which God hates.