

## Why Wait Until Marriage?

By Jeremy Sweets

Our society has peddled the sexual relationship to anyone willing to buy it. Commercials and advertisements are filled with lightly clad women. Pornography is freely offered in magazines, movies and the internet. More people are living together outside of marriage. Sex is common. In today's progressive society, should sex be reserved for marriage? The answer is "yes" for several reasons.

- ***It's the right thing to do.***

First and foremost, one should wait until marriage to engage in the sexual relationship because this is God's will. God has declared, "Marriage is to be held in honor among all, and the marriage bed is to be undefiled; for fornicators and adulterers God will judge" (Heb. 13:4). This means that anything outside of marriage is dishonorable and contrary to the will of God. To dismiss God's instruction is to commit sin. Your soul is more valuable than all of the world's wealth, and it is not worth sacrificing for a moment of passing pleasure (Matt. 16:26; Heb 11:24-26).

- ***It's the best thing to do.***

God's word does not give instructions meant to hamper us or hurt us. God is not trying to prevent his children from experiencing fun and pleasure. His instructions are intended for our good, and we need to trust our heavenly Father that he has our best interests in mind. God's wisdom can be seen in a couple of areas.

First, God provides for lasting satisfaction instead of passing, momentary pleasure. Sex in marriage enhances the relationship and brings a couple closer together as "one flesh" (Gen. 2:24; Matt. 19:5-6). Sharing yourself with another person is a special gift that should be reserved for your mate. The act of fornication before marriage squanders that gift and denigrates the sexual relationship.

Second, God's plan for marriage prevents sorrow and heartache. Shame, guilt and conflicted feelings are products of sex outside of marriage. Having multiple partners creates a greater risk of acquiring sexually transmitted diseases. Unexpected pregnancies fail to provide the proper environment to raise children. The sinner must travel a difficult path, but God's word provides another way (Prov. 11:3; 13:6, 15).

- ***It's the respectful thing to do.***

Having sex outside of marriage is harmful and disrespectful to all the parties involved. It is damaging to your partner in fornication. You are selfishly endangering their spiritual welfare in order to fulfill your lusts. It is damaging to your future spouse when you bring the baggage of your past relationships into marriage. It is damaging to your own body. Christians are to use their bodies in sanctification and service to God, not in fulfillment of lustful passions (Rom 13:12-14; 1 Thess. 4:3-8). The sin of fornication is also disrespectful to God. Joseph recognized that fornication would be a sin against God, and he fled from temptation rather than disrespect his Lord (Gen. 39:9). We need to display the same fortitude of Joseph by making a commitment to wait until marriage.