

Virgin

TO BE OR NOT TO BE—A VIRGIN By Diane Provost

Before we look at the Biblical view let us consider nine known **'scientific facts'** concerning the probable effect of premarital sex on your future marriage.

Fact 1. *Premarital sex tends to break up couples.*

Other things being equal, couples who engage in sex are more likely to break up before marriage than those who do not. So what about the young woman who gives in to sex in the hope that she won't lose her young man? She would more likely hold him if she holds out.

Fact 2. *Many men do not want to marry a woman who has had intercourse with someone else.*

Some guys do their level best to reduce the number of virgins in the population. Yet when it comes time to marry, they don't want a girl whose been pawed over by other guys. Their strange logic seems to be: "It's OK for me to have sex with the girl you marry, but it's not OK for you to have sex with mine."

Fact 3. *Those who have premarital sex tend to have less happy marriages.*

On the whole, your chances of being happily married are better if you wait till you're wed to have sex. And the more premarital sex you have the less likely you'll be happy in your marriage.

Fact 4. *Those who have premarital sex are more likely to have their marriage end in divorce.*

This follows from Fact 3. If a couple is unhappy with their marriage, they're more likely to get a divorce. And again, the more premarital sex the individuals have had, the greater chance of divorce.

Fact 5. *Persons and couples who have had premarital sex are more likely to have extramarital affairs as well.*

Some studies show twice as likely! The more premarital sex a person has had, the more likely he or she is to commit adultery. This may well be the most serious consequence of all for a marriage. Few wives, and even fewer husbands, are able to tolerate—much less approve—acts of adultery on the part of their spouse. Even in cases where it never gets discovered by the spouse, adultery may well drive a deep wedge between the couple.

Fact 6. *Having premarital sex may fool you into marrying a person who is not right for you.*

Sex can blind you. You may believe you have found real love, when in fact it is only sex which has held you together. If you wait for sex until you're very sure you have a sound relationship without sex, you can avoid this tragic error. Once your relationship is firmly established, then sex becomes a beautiful, wondrous bonus. It will tie you together even more completely in your marriage.

Fact 7. *Persons and couples with premarital sex experience seem to achieve sexual satisfaction sooner after they are married. HOWEVER—*

Fact 8. *They are likely to be less satisfied overall with their sex life during marriage.*

That is, they adjust to sex more quickly, but their overall adjustment is less satisfying than it is with couples who wait for sex until after they wed. Learning to have good sex is in part a physical skill. In that sense it is like learning to play the piano or to ride a bicycle. At first you make some mistakes.

Thus your first sexual experience is not likely to be all that great, especially if you're female. Both of you are bound to be a little clumsy. It will take time for virgin newlyweds to get their sex life in

order. But once they get the hang of it, their sex life will be happier than that of those who have experienced sex before marriage. One reason sexually experienced persons may be less satisfied with their married sex life is that they are more likely to compare their spouse's sexual "performance" with that of their previous partners. Now let us suppose that the only sex this couple has known is with each other. Are they not much more likely to be fully satisfied with the sex life they share? What they have is good, so they're happy with it. The statistics are clearly on their side.

Source: Sex, Love, or Infatuation: How Can I Really Know? By Ray Short (Augsburg Publishing House)

THE BIBLICAL VIEW:

But why is the church so strongly opposed to sex before marriage?

Every major religious body in America not only opposes but condemns premarital sex. Christians—both Catholics and Protestants, as well as Mormons, Jews and Muslims, all condemn such behavior. They must have good reasons—and they do.

For one thing, all of these groups put great stock in their Scriptures. Most of them think that much or all of it is the inspired Word of God. So one big reason they oppose premarital sex is that it is so strongly condemned in these Scriptures. Look at the facts.

The big word for premarital sex in the Bible is *fornication*. That word, or some form of it, is used at least 61 times. It appears all the way from Genesis right on through Revelation. In every single place it is used it is strongly condemned as a most grievous kind of sin.

In the Old Testament period, sex outside of marriage was on a par with being a harlot, a whore, or "unfaithful." Was it frowned upon? Just look at the penalty dished out to any man or woman caught doing it. In some cases both parties were to be stoned to death (Deut. 22:21-29; John 8:5). Capital punishment, no less! Scarcely the penalty for a minor crime. At the very least, a man who had sex with a virgin was forced to pay a stiff fine to her father, and then marry the girl, *with no chance ever to divorce her*. That must have cooled the ardor of a lot of guys on the prowl!

The New Testament is no less strict. St. Paul listed fornication in the same class with serious sins like adultery and murder (Romans 1:29; Gal. 5:19). It would seem that Paul took a very dim view of sex outside of marriage. And so does the church today.

But why would a loving God through His church impose such harsh restrictions on sexual behavior. After all, **God created sex**. But He created sex in the context of a lifelong, committed relationship called marriage where a couple learns to love and to cherish each other unselfishly. God and the church know that premarital sex hurts a lot of people in a lot of ways. He sees marriages smashed when one partner cheats. He bleeds for the plight of the unwed mother or the lifelong pain of the woman who kills her baby through abortion. God and His people feel pity for the child who is born unwanted, rejected, and neglected. He knows the misery of those who have bodies riddled and broken with venereal disease (there were 2 serious Sexually Transmitted Diseases in 1948, but over 45 today!) (*See the article on STD's*) He and the church see the tragedy of people who just use other people for their own selfish ends. God and His people know how guilt and fear and low self-regard can rob a person of the good life.

In summary, the evil that can result seems much too high a price to pay for the thrill of the moment that illicit sex may bring. Neither the church nor the Word of God, the Bible, are against

sex. Make no mistake about that. They are just against having sex until or unless a person can and will take full responsibility for the act after marriage vows. God is not against fun unless it spoils something better. And make no mistake; He definitely has the best plan for your life. After all, He is your Creator and Redeemer.

PSALM 119: 105 Your word is a lamp to my feet and a light to my path.

PSALM 119:128 Therefore all Your precepts (laws) concerning all things I consider to be right; I hate every false way. NKJV

