



Christian Questions

TALK RADIO WITH A PURPOSE

You will seek Me and find Me when you search for Me with all your heart. Jeremiah 29:13

Dear Romona,

Thank you for writing us at Christian Questions Radio. You asked for advice and counsel on keeping your purity until marriage. You wanted to know what the Bible had to say regarding this matter. You also wanted to know if it was necessary to fall in love and get married and wondered if you could be happy by yourself.

As Christians we believe in the sanctity of marriage. In fact, the Bible presents marriage as a divine institution. God himself united Adam and Eve in holy matrimony, saying, "Therefore a man leaves his father and his mother and cleaves to his wife, and they become one flesh" (Genesis 2:24). "Cleaving" suggests the idea of being permanently glued or joined together. In the sight of God it means wholehearted commitment, exclusivity, and unswerving loyalty to one's marital partner. On a deeper, spiritual level, a Christian marriage is an earthly picture symbolizing the heavenly union of Christ and his Church. "After all, no one ever hated his own body, but he feeds and cares for it, just as Christ does the church—for we are members of his body." (Ephesians 5:29)

The scriptures are specific that any sexual relationship other than between a man and a woman within the bonds of marriage is not acceptable in the eyes of God. "Do not lie with a man as one lies with a woman; that is detestable." (Leviticus 18:22) "Marriage should be honored by all, and the marriage bed kept pure, for God will judge the adulterer and all the sexually immoral." (Hebrews 13:4) Therefore, marriage is a sacred institution and any sexual activity that takes place outside of it can be scripturally classified as fornication.

The Apostle Paul further clarifies, "I have written to you in my letter not to associate with sexually immoral people. . . . Do not be deceived: Neither the sexually immoral nor idolaters nor adulterers nor male prostitutes nor homosexual offenders . . . will inherit the kingdom of God. . . . Flee from sexual immorality. All other sins a man commits are outside his body, but he who sins sexually sins against his own body. . . . Therefore honor God with your body." (1 Corinthians 5:9; 6:9-10, 18, 20)

Additionally, it is important to remember that sexual intimacy per se does not automatically assure that a man and a woman become one in a physical, emotional, and spiritual unity. To achieve the biblical "one flesh" union, sexual intercourse in marriage must be the natural fruit of love, respect and commitment. Sexual desire must become the desire for total union and oneness between marital partners. The husband





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learns to accept his wife as she is because he needs to be accepted as he is. Oneness is achieved because differences are accepted as being complementary, not contradictory. Both the husband and wife need to focus on what is truly good about each other. By so doing, they celebrate their "oneness" by reserving their sexual expressions exclusively for each other.

You asked if it was really necessary for you to fall in love and get married. You wondered if you could be happy by yourself.

It is not necessary for you to fall in love and get married. The Apostle Paul tells us in 1 Corinthians 7:1, "It is good for a man not to marry." He infers by that statement that we as Christians are at liberty to serve God in the way most suited to our temperaments and circumstances. Each of us must determine for ourselves as we seek the counsel of God whether we should marry or remain single. Either state is acceptable to God.

Can you be happy by yourself? Of course you can, since the mental state of happiness has nothing to do with one's marital status and everything to do with one's relationship with God. The Apostle Paul tells us the secret of being content in every situation. "I have learned to be content whatever the circumstances. I know what it is to be in need, and I know what it is to have plenty. I have learned the secret of being content in any and every situation, whether well fed or hungry, whether being in plenty or in want. I can do everything in him who gives me strength." (Philippians 4:11-13) Yes, it is God who gives us the strength and contentment we need in every situation, provided we seek Him.

Although none of us is truly pure, we are, nonetheless, to strive to be free from sin and fleshly desires. We should seek to be both physically pure and mentally pure. Although harder to obtain, mental purity is the key to building a Christ-like character. "Finally, brethren, whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report; if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, think on these things" (Philippians 4:8).

Abstinence from sexual activity before marriage was once the norm; now it is the exception in social relationships. Yet it is a key principle and a type of the virgin bride of Christ. We can be examples of purity to those in the world by clearly making known our decisions on this subject.

We hope we have answered your questions and have given you good scriptural advice. Be sure to sign up for CQ Rewind at





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www.christianquestions.com. The service is free without obligation and will provide you with scriptural perspective on many questions.

Sincerely,

Christian Questions Radio

