



Three Lies About Premarital Sex

Is Scripture becoming outdated and archaic in light of today's cultural views concerning premarital sex?

by Shana Schutte

When Cindy met Rob, she knew that even though he attended church, he didn't share her convictions about premarital sex. Rob thought it was OK—and even good for dating couples to engage in—and Cindy believed it was wrong from a Christian perspective.

As their friendship progressed, Cindy and Rob's opposing viewpoints caused some hot debates. It also forced them both to take a second look at their convictions. As a result, Cindy developed a deeper understanding of truth, and Rob was forced to face the lies he'd always believed.

If you're like Cindy or Rob, and you've taken a stand for (or against) premarital sex, but you're not sure why, here are some things to consider.

Scripture is Outdated, Right?

Like many singles, Rob thinks the Scriptures on sexual purity are outdated and archaic. "Those parts of the Bible aren't relevant to today," he told Cindy. "After all, when the Scriptures were written, the people during that time got married when they were teens; so they didn't have to struggle with sexual temptation like we do now."

In response to Rob's argument, Cindy found Scriptures about sexual purity and showed them to him. When Cindy read 1 Corinthians 6:9, 2 Corinthians 12:21, Galatians 5:19, Hebrews 13:4 and Deuteronomy 22:13-28, all which condemn sex before marriage, she asked Rob, "Are these Scriptures relevant to today?" "Nope," Rob responded.

"Do you have a pair of scissors?" Cindy asked.

"Why?"

"Because I think we should cut those Scriptures out. After all, if they're not true because people can't control their desires, why not completely eliminate them? After all, we can just pick and choose the parts of Scripture that we want to believe on sexual purity, right? Give me your scissors," she said.

"You're crazy," Rob responded.

Crazy or not, Cindy had made her point—there are holes in Rob's it's-not-true-because-people-can't-control-their-desires theology. Why? Because, if his beliefs were based on truth, they would stand up in every circumstance, but they don't.

For example, if sex before marriage is okay because people supposedly can't control themselves, then it must be okay to engage in pornography, too, right? After all, the temptation to watch and participate in porn abounds like it didn't in Bible times.

Not surprisingly, when Cindy asked Rob if it was OK to engage in pornography, his theology changed. "Pornography isn't okay because it's damaging to the people who are doing it, and it's not very Christian."

Why does Rob have a schizophrenic view of purity and of the Bible's commandments?

Additionally, if scriptures in the Bible became untrue because people can't control their desires, then we'd also have to cut out the commandments on stealing, lying, cheating and having affairs.

Sure enough, there are holes in Rob's sex-before-marriage theology, just like there would be holes in his Bible if Cindy cut it up.

Doesn't Sex Produce Intimacy?

During their discussions about premarital sex, Rob insisted that it was good to engage in sex with a dating partner because "it brings you closer."

Cindy believes that this is true, and not true. On one hand, the Bible says that sex causes "two people to become one." Therefore, it's more than just a physical act, it's also a spiritual encounter (Mark 10:6-9).

Additionally, Dr. Patricia Love, the author of *The Truth About Love*, writes that a feeling of intimacy is created by a "chemical cocktail" that is produced in the brain during sex and stays with each person for up to 24 hours after intercourse. Perhaps this physiological bonding is what Rob was referring to.

On the flip side, having sex is no guarantee that the deep emotional intimacy that everyone longs for will develop.

Alice Fryling, in an article titled, *Why Wait for Sex?* writes:

"Genital sex is an expression of intimacy, not the means to intimacy. True intimacy springs from verbal and emotional communion. True intimacy is built on a commitment to honesty, love and freedom. True intimacy is not primarily a sexual encounter. Intimacy, in fact, has almost nothing to do with our sex organs. A prostitute may expose her body, but her relationships are hardly intimate."

Some experts even report that premarital sex short circuits the emotional bonding process. Donald Joy, a writer for *Christianity Today*, cited a study of 100,000 women that linked "early sexual experience with dissatisfaction in their present marriages, unhappiness with the level of sexual intimacy and the prevalence of low self-esteem."

So what does this mean? If Rob tries to convince Cindy, or any woman, that sex will actually help their relationship, she might want to think again before consenting. While premarital sex does produce a short-lived chemical cocktail in the brain, there is no guarantee that it will produce long-term emotional closeness or relational satisfaction.

Can't Sex Help You Determine Compatibility?

Rob told Cindy he felt it was unreasonable to expect him to abstain from sex before marriage because no one would buy a car without test driving it; so he couldn't imagine committing to marriage without taking a "sex test drive."

When Cindy suggested to Rob that his "test drive" mentality could lead him to compare his wife's sexual performance with his other partners, he denied it. "No, I wouldn't," he adamantly said.

However, his logic is faulty. Here's why: If it was true that Rob wouldn't struggle with comparison, why would he need to "test drive" anything? After all, if he'd never had multiple partners, he would automatically think his wife the best. For example, the man who hasn't ever seen or driven more than one car doesn't know what other cars are like; therefore he would be satisfied with his automobile.

Partners can also feel threatened if they think their mate could be comparing them with previous partners.

When Cindy randomly asked 10 women at work if they would be worried that their husband was comparing them if he'd had intercourse with multiple women before marriage, 80 percent of them said yes.

This provides a strong argument to abstain from sex before marriage to protect the emotional safety that your spouse will need to feel in marriage.

Hope and Restoration After Premarital Sex

Perhaps you're asking, "What if, like Rob, I'm guilty of sexual sin?"

The first thing to remember is that no sexual sin is beyond God's forgiveness. Thankfully, He doesn't withhold forgiveness or grace from those who ask for it.

I John 1:9 promises that if you confess your sins, that He is faithful to forgive and to cleanse you from all unrighteousness.

Note: This includes all sin, and does not exclude sexual sin. Psalm 103: 12 also promises, "As far as the east is from the west, so far has He removed our transgressions [sins] from us."

In addition to forgiveness, God wants you to embrace His grace that will help you move forward in life and embrace the promises He has for you with joy. In spite of your choices, God wants to bring you relational fulfillment.

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