

## **ABSTINENCE ACCORDING TO THE BIBLE**

*I Corinthians 7:1*

### **INTRODUCTION:**

#### **A. What Is Abstinence?**

1. According to Webster, abstinence is the act or practice of refraining.
  - a. Abstinence means to refrain from sexual contact of any sort. This refers to physical or intimate activity done for the purpose of sexual gratification.
  - b. Although there are some types of sexual activity, which do not result in pregnancy, these are still a form of sex (most of which can also transmit disease).
2. One good rule to apply for those who are unsure, is to ask yourself if the behavior in question can only be done in private?
  - a. Sexual behavior and attitudes are not always about sexual intercourse.
  - b. Abstinence may include kissing and holding hands only.

#### **B. Risks Of Having Sex Before Marriage.**

1. The risk of death.
  - a. No one can deny that having sex before marriage can have grave consequences.
  - b. More than 600,000 cases of AIDS have been reported in the United States since 1981, and as many as a million Americans may be infected with HIV.
2. The risk of lost relationships.
  - a. When you choose to develop a sexual relationship with someone,
  - b. Immediately, you have changed the entire definition of the relationship.
3. Risks of incurable disease.
  - a. Imagine that you have found that one special person with whom you want to share your life.
    - (1) Now you are forced to break the news that you have an incurable disease.
    - (2) Even though such diseases like herpes are generally not considered life threatening, there are no cures.
  - b. According to the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), about 25% of sexually active teenagers get a sexually transmitted disease (STD) every year, and 80% of infected teens don't even know they have an STD, passing the diseases along to unsuspecting partners. When it comes to AIDS, the data is even more chilling: of the new HIV infections each year, about 50% occur in people under the age of 25.
4. The risk of depression.

## I. **TEENAGERS MUST BE TAUGHT THE BIBLICAL TRUTH THAT FORNICATION IS A SIN WITH A GREAT PRICE**

*I Corinthians 6:9-10 - "Know ye not that the unrighteous shall not inherit the kingdom of God? Be not deceived, neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor fornicators, or effeminate, nor abusers of themselves with mankind, nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortionists, shall inherit the kingdom of God?"*

### A. **How Can We Develop Godly Purity?**

1. Notice I didn't say just purity.
  - a. I'm not talking about the world's form of purity.
  - b. I'm talking about God's kind of purity.
2. The world talks about safe physical relationships between a man and a woman, but God tells us there is only one way for that physical relationship to be right before God and that's when the man and the woman are married to each other.
  - a. The world rates movies PG, PG-13, R and much worse,
  - b. But God rates things:
    - (1) As right and wrong
    - (2) Godly or ungodly
    - (3) And righteous or unrighteous.
  - c. This list of comparisons could go on and on.

### B. **The First Thing Christian Teens Need To Develop Is Godly Purity From God's Perspective! - Titus 2:12 "Teaching us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lust, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly in the present age."**

1. This verse is a good start to understanding HOW God wants us to live.
  - a. Righteously means the right way, God's way and Godly means to be to be like God in character.
  - b. That's a high calling for Christian teens, to follow God's character.
2. Just the mention of the word "abstinence" will bring sneering and mocking from those in this world around us.
  - a. But, this mocking would not have taken place 100 years ago.
    - (1) Our society has not always been so immoral and loose!
      - (a) Our culture once honored God's Word and obeyed God's principles.
      - (b) Our society years ago honored and respected God's Word.
      - (c) Our society years ago honored sexual abstinence before marriage.
    - (2) Gradually more and more people in our society started doubting God's Word and then stopped believing and practicing it.
    - (3) Over time our society has developed into an immoral society.
  - b. But God is not mocked, we, as a society, have reaped what we've sown.

- (1) Sexually transmitted diseases are showing up in teens and having lasting, permanent, and sometimes fatal results.
    - (2) The divorce rate is around 55% leaving behind families and ruined lives.
  - c. Many of the failures and problems of our modern society can be traced right back to abandoning God's plan for men and women, beginning with abstinence. - Remember! Most divorces begin during the dating days.
    - (1) In God's plan, unmarried men and unmarried women may have friendships without physical relationships,
    - (2) But, once they cross the line from a friendship relationship to physical relationship, they have committed sin.
3. God has not been silent about this issue of Abstinence before marriage! God has also not been vague when He has spoken about this subject in His Word.
- a. Look at what God's Word says:
    - (1) *I Corinthians 7:1 - "Now concerning the things of whereof ye wrote unto me: It is good for a man not to touch a woman."*
    - (2) *Ephesians 5:3 - "But, fornication, and all uncleanness, or covetousness, let it not be once named among you, as becometh saints;"*
    - (3) *I Corinthians 6:18 - "Flee fornication. Every sin that a man doeth is without the body, but he who committeth fornication sinneth against his own body."*
    - (4) *II Timothy 2:22 - "Flee also youthful lusts: but follow righteousness, faith, charity, peace, with them that call on the Lord out of a pure heart."*
  - b. Could it be any clearer?
    - (1) Don't touch!
    - (2) Don't commit fornication (sex outside of marriage)!
    - (3) Don't commit immorality!
4. You should agree, God is clear and there are absolutely no gray areas in God's teaching on remaining sexually inactive before marriage.
- a. Granted, the Christian in this world faces some serious opposition in society, but face it we must.
    - (1) The world and more than likely people you know are saying, "Hey, everybody is doing it!"
    - (2) Well, everybody except Christians that are truly sold out to serve and obey Jesus Christ.
  - b. Yes, even Christians have swallowed the lie of the Devil, "it's OK, because everybody is doing it."
    - (1) No, it's not OK!
    - (2) The Bible says
      - (a) "Flee sexual immorality",
      - (b) "Flee youthful lust"!
  - c. I see no room in God's Word for lingering around or testing out sexual immorality, do you?

- (1) Christians that try to convince themselves that God will permit sexual activity outside of marriage, have ignored God's Word and have deceived themselves!
- (2) No means No! And God says NO to sex before and outside of marriage!

**II. SOME CHRISTIANS HAVE BELIEVED THE LIE OF THE DEVIL AND SINFUL MEN THAT SAYS, "SO LONG AS YOU DON'T GO "ALL THE WAY", IT'S NOT SEXUAL SIN!**

**A. This Kind Of Argument May Work With Worldly Christians And Unbelievers, But To Those Wanting To Do The Will Of God And To Those Who Know What God's Word Says, This Argument And Rational Goes Against God's Written And Spoken Word.**

1. For those who want to obey God, for those who want to please God, understand, God even forbids sexual touching, sometimes called petting.
2. God also forbids any touching that arouses sexually. *I Corinthians 7:1, "It is good for a man not to touch a woman."*
  - a. The word "*touch*" here in the Greek means, "to fasten one self" or "to kindle a fire".
  - b. This word implies:
    - (1) Touching that is clinging,
    - (2) Touching that is sexual,
    - (3) Thus "kindling the fire."
  - c. Unmarried people should NOT allow anyone to touch them in such a way that a fire is started:
    - (1) Emotionally,
    - (2) Hormonally,
    - (3) Or sexually

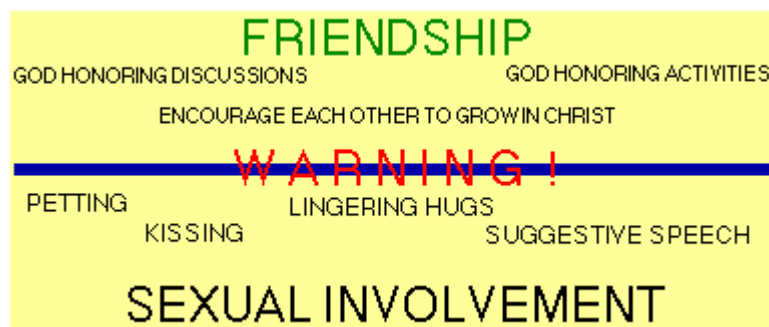
**B. Let's Get Specific!**

1. Some people may hold hands, but can they just stop there?
  - a. Once you start holding on, is that enough?
  - b. God has not created our bodies to start and stop on a dime sexually.
  - c. Yet young (and not so young) people foolishly convince themselves, "Oh I can stop when things begin to go to far."
  - d. Too many have learned that this is not true.
2. The more involved a fire is, the more difficult it is to extinguish.
  - a. Hand holding can lead to arms around the waist,
  - b. Then to kissing,
  - c. Then to petting,
  - d. Then to... you get the picture!
3. Too many Christians disobey God by allowing emotional and hormonal fires to build up even though they stop short of sexual intercourse!

- a. Those that do this are still sinning before God and they have also sinned against the person they were with.
  - b. Make no mistake about this.
    - (1) Don't rationalize it a way!
    - (2) Don't lean upon unbiblical interpretations of God's Word!
    - (3) Don't lean upon the World's standards!
4. To please God is to Obey His Word!
- a. Outside of marriage:
    - (1) Don't touch sexually!
    - (2) Don't arouse sexually!
  - b. Remember! Abstinence is to be practiced before marriage.

### C. Let's Get Extremely Practical Here.

1. Let me repeat what God is saying in - *I Corinthians 7*,
  - a. "Don't touch",
  - b. "Don't light the fire",
  - c. "Don't be clinging in a sexual way."
2. God has drawn the line in His Word.
  - a. You need to draw the same line in your heart and mind.
  - b. This is what the line looks like:
    - (1) Friendship with Purity... don't cross that line.
    - (2) Don't let fires start ... if you do, you've crossed the line.



3. *I Corinthians 7:1* - If applied, will keep you pure and practicing abstinence. If you're not touching or you're not allowing someone to touch you, there will be no contact.

### III. WHAT IS THIS "ABSTINENCE" THING?

#### A. What Does It Mean?

1. It simply means "to keep yourself from something."
2. From what?
  - a. In this case, sex outside of marriage.
  - b. The physical relationship of a man and women has it's glorious place, but it's only in marriage.

- c. *I Corinthians 7:2* - adds to the "Don't touch" command, "*Nevertheless, to avoid fornication* (because of sexual immorality), *let every man have his own wife, and let every woman have her own husband.*"
3. It's quite clear in God's word.
    - a. Number one, don't commit fornication and don't touch.
    - b. Number two, do get married in order to avoid immorality.

#### B. But What If You're Not Ready To Marry?

1. Wait! Hold Off from sex! Abstain! It's expected and commanded by God.
2. Young adults, you need to have a patient obedience before the Lord.
3. You need to wait until you're married before you have a sexual / physical relationship.
  - a. This means that any dating / courting only involves the developing of friendships that are free from physical relationships.
  - b. *I Corinthians 7:1-2* - makes God's will crystal clear:
    - (1) Don't have a sexual relationship outside of marriage.
    - (2) Guys, don't even touch!
4. However, once you're married, the physical relationship is then commanded and expected, but until marriage, Abstain.



#### CONCLUSION:

##### A. The Blessings Of Abstinence Are Many!

1. First and foremost, you will have pleased the Lord God. You will have obeyed the God who purchased you with the blood of His Son.
2. Secondly, you will not have all the guilt associated with disobeying God in this area.

3. You will also avoid many emotional heartaches that come with the life of immorality.
4. You will avoid STD (sexually transmitted diseases).
5. You will avoid pregnancy outside of marriage.
6. You will keep yourself from public shame in the church.
7. You will honor your mother and father.

**B. There Is One More Very Important Blessing Of Abstinence.**

1. You and your future marriage partner will be able to give of yourselves in complete purity.
2. And your spouse can be the first and only person you give yourself to and with that God will be very pleased.