

### **Relationships & Marriage - Keeping Sex Sacred**

Thinking about having sex outside of marriage? Here's why I think most cultures in the world have made this taboo: 1) There is no such thing as "protected sex," you are volunteering to become a parent with anyone you have sex with. Even if you decide to abort your child, you will live with the knowledge that you and that partner were once parents together. The need for a couple to be fully prepared for parenthood is one reason to reserve sex for the confines of a life-long relationship (the parenting relationship every child needs and deserves). 2) Not having had sex is meant to be part of the risk involved in marriage (just as marital partners take financial risks by merging bank accounts). These risks and obligations are very important aspects of love- they are about trust (which is why divorce rates are higher for those who engage in premarital sex and prenuptial agreements). 3) Reserving sex for marriage keeps us free from the emotional hang-ups (not to mention physical diseases) that often come with having had other sexual partners before marriage. The very emotional nature of sexual involvement clouds our ability to see relationships clearly and can prevent us from breaking up when necessary- because we are avoiding a painful emotional (and physical) divorce. Why sign-up for such emotional upheaval when courting? 4) We as humans possess the ability to control our impulses, for purposes of learning self-discipline, delay of gratification, and most importantly, for focusing on the friendship with the person we are courting. Don't buy into the lie that you cannot control yourself sexually after a certain age or length of courtship. So, whether you have maintained your purity, or whether you are recommitting yourself to a pure life, I encourage you to exercise the gift of self-control for your own sake and that of your partner (after all, you are dating someone's wife or husband) and receive the wonderful blessings that will come later in a pure, rewarding married sex life!