

B. Health and Emotional Reasons to Wait until Marriage.

1. To avoid pregnancy. Nearly 1 million teen pregnancies are reported annually. (Source: CDC)
2. To avoid Sexually transmitted diseases STD's. In the 1970's, only two STD's were common, and both were curable. Now, 25 STD's have been identified and several of them are incurable. (Source CDC, New England Journal of Medicine, Journal of Infectious Diseases)
3. To avoid death by fatal STD's such as AIDS, which cause more than 18,000 deaths annually. (Source: CDC)
4. Abstinence is the ONLY reliable method of prevention, 100% of the time. Nothing will guarantee safety from pregnancy or disease. Every method has a failure rate, except abstinence!
5. You can not tell who has an STD. Nearly 1 in 5 adolescents who are sexually active has an STD!!! Three million cases are reported among teens every year. (Source CDC)
6. To increase your chance of a happy, lasting marriage. Contrary to popular belief, people who have sex before marriage and those who live with their partners before marriage have a greater chance of getting divorced. (Journal of Marriage and the Family) 
7. To avoid heartbreak, regret and anger. People who have had sex and "break up", encounter many emotions which can cause them to feel worthless, regretful and depressed.
8. To be clearheaded when you are making important decisions. When you decide to marry, you need to have a clear mind and conscience and you need to have God's blessings. Sexual activity can distort your thinking and judgment and will most definitely, without a doubt, prevent you from receiving God's blessings.

C. Spiritual and Practical Ideas for Keeping out of Trouble.

1. Think about God's words of advice and trust in HIM (Proverbs 3:5-6). Ask yourself why would God warn us so many times about sex before marriage? Try to understand that God has designed you and knows how you will operate the best. Just like an engineer who builds a car and understands how it operates more than the person who drives it. So also, God has designed your body, which you have received as a gift, and HE knows the effect of sexual intimacy on you more than you do. Try to live by His guidelines, you won't go wrong!
2. Don't be in a rush to have a sexual experience. Remember... the right thing at the wrong time is the wrong thing!!! Just like you would not eat something not fully cooked, so also, do not rush yourself into something that you are not ready for and that will hurt you emotionally, physically and especially spiritually.
3. Choose your friends wisely. "As iron sharpens iron, so one man sharpens another" Proverbs 27:17. You should choose friends that sharpen you... that encourage you to live a holy and pure life. Remember what the Bible says "...bad company corrupts good habits" 1 Cor 15:33. Chances are, if your friends are sexually active, eventually you will be too!
4. Make a promise to God and your future spouse to stay pure. Make a commitment.
5. Ask God to help you and shield you with His Grace. Remember "...where sin abounds, grace abounds much more" Romans 5:20
6. Take up your spiritual armor and fight. Ephesians 6
7. Purify your mind by reading your Bible, praying your Agpeya and being in the presence of God in Church. Remember... "Let no one despise your youth, but be an example in word, in conduct, in love, in faith, in purity. 1 Timothy 4:12

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ST. MINA'S COPTIC ORTHODOX
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DANGER

**WHY
WAIT?**

**UNTIL MARRIAGE:
REASONS FOR SEXUAL
ABSTINENCE**



**CAUTION
SLOW
DOWN**



WHY WAIT TO HAVE SEX?

In the Book of Genesis we read that the Lord God created the world in 6 days and rested on the 7th (Genesis Chapter 1). One thing that is remarkable about the creation is what God said in Genesis 1:31 "...then God saw everything that He had made, and indeed it was very good." This is important to note because it sets the stage for the proper attitude we should have towards the world and everything in it. It also leads us to the correct definition of our relationship with the world, ourselves and with one another. God is more specific to mention the proper attitude, respect and expression of sexuality when it says "... God blessed them and God said to them, 'be fruitful and multiply'." (Gen 1:28) And in Gen 2:18,21,24 God says "It is not good that man should be alone, I will make him a helper comparable to him...He took one of his [Adam's] ribs and made it into a woman... therefore a man shall leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, and they shall become one flesh". Also in the New Testament, the Lord Jesus Christ echoes these words and says "...So then, they are no longer two but one flesh. Therefore what God has joined together let not man separate" Matt 19:6 These verses serve as the foundation for human sexual behavior. They establish the Sacrament of Holy Matrimony, monogamy, and abstinence from any sexual acts until marriage. Also, these verses lead us to understand that the only context for sexual expression is between one man and one woman in a life long commitment within the Sacrament of Holy Matrimony. This is the teaching of the Holy Bible, the teaching of the Holy Orthodox Church, and the teaching of the Holy Fathers of the Church.



Let us consider some quotes from the Fathers.

—*"...when husband and wife are united in Marriage they no longer seem like something earthly, but rather like the image of God Himself."*

—*"Marriage is the sacrament of love..."*

—*"Two souls united in this way [holy matrimony] have nothing to fear. With harmony, peace and mutual love, husband and wife possess every possible wealth. They can live in peace behind the impregnable wall which protects them, which is love in accordance with God's will. Thanks to love, they are harder than a diamond, harder than iron, they have everything they need as they steer their course towards eternal glory and enter more and more fully into God's Grace."*

— St. John Chrysostom

If the Holy Bible, the Church and the Fathers teach us to abstain from any and all sexual activity until marriage, what can we do to help ourselves live the life of holiness that God has intended for us to live (Lev 11:44, 1 Pet 1:16)? How can a Christian live a holy life in a world that glorifies freedom of sexual expression. Why should a Christian wait until marriage? Are Christians ignorant? Are we living in the past? Are we against any sort of fun, including sex? In order to understand this, let us turn to the pages of the Holy Bible to find the Biblical reasons why we should abstain from all sexual activity until marriage.



A. Biblical Reasons to Wait.

1. Sex is a blessing from God and is reserved for marriage ONLY. "Then God blessed them, and God said to them be fruitful and multiply..." Genesis 1:28 No where in the Bible has God blessed a sexual union except in Marriage! Actually, God condemns it elsewhere. (Gen 38:9, Ex 20:14, Lev 20:10, 20:13, 18:22, Eph 5:3, 1 Cor 6:9, 1 Tim 1:10, Heb 13:4)
2. Sexual intimacy creates a 'oneness' that God intended for marriage only. "... they are no longer two

but one flesh" Matt 19:6. So God created this 'oneness' to build intimacy and trust in order to bond the couple together. Imagine the pain and emotional suffering one would have if sexual intimacy was shared then broken over and over again?

3. The Bible says we should not be sexually immoral. "For this is the will of God your sanctification: that you should abstain from sexual immorality that each of you should know how to possess his own vessel [body] in sanctification and honor not in passion of lust, like the gentiles who do not know God." 1 Thessalonians 4:3-8 Let us prove that we know God by our obedience to this commandment.
4. The Bible says that we should be the Light of the world, the salt of the earth and the fragrance of Christ. "Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works and glorify your Father in heaven." Matthew 5:16 So when we live a pure life and reject the sexual practices of the world, we become powerful witnesses to Christ by our deeds and give Him glory.
5. To be without shame, embarrassment and guilt. "whoever commits adultery with a woman lacks understanding; He who does so betrays his own soul. Wounds and dishonor he will get, and his reproach [shame] will not be wiped away." Proverbs 6:32-33 You see... the person who lives a pure life will not need to worry about the embarrassment or shame of seeing former sexual partners at school, work or anywhere else.
6. The Bible says we should run away from sexually immoral situations. "Flee also youthful lusts; but pursue righteousness, faith, love ..." 2 Tim 2:22

