

God is saying: “If you long to discard truth and live in sin, I will give you over to as much sin as you desire.” A high price is paid for such rebellion, as indicated by verses from Romans 1:

*Therefore God gave them over in the lusts of their hearts to impurity, that their bodies might be dishonored among them. For they exchanged the truth of God for a lie, and worshiped and served the creature rather than the Creator, who is blessed forever. Amen. (Romans 1:24-25)*

These verses portray the downward spiral of mankind throughout history. First, truth is rejected. Then comes sexual immorality (sex outside of marriage), and man actually begins worshipping “*the creature rather than the Creator.*” In other words, “*idolatry*” runs rampant (Colossians 3:5). This scenario is unfolding at an accelerated pace in our day, as evidenced by the rapid spread of pornography, adultery, premarital sex, etc. When the “*creature*” is worshipped the “*bodies*” of those who participate are “*dishonored*” to their shame. Should you doubt the validity of this statement, examine the lives of those who have trodden this Godforsaken path. Nothing but devastation is left in their wake, leaving the participants and their offspring perplexed, confused, and in most cases void of the stability to live a meaningful life. Infidelity rips a society to shreds, as evidenced by the present state of our surroundings.

Many people (even believers) view premarital sex as socially permissible. As a result, an alarming percentage of Christian youth are sexually active prior to marriage. They argue that the Scriptures have nothing to say regarding the subject, when in essence God’s Word has much to say about remaining pure until the wedding day. Let’s begin with the issue of virginity, for Paul speaks of a man giving his “*virgin daughter*” in marriage:

*But if any man thinks that he is acting unbecomingly toward his virgin daughter, if she should be of full age, and if it must be so, let him do what he wishes, he does not sin; let her marry. (1Corinthians 7:36)*

In Paul’s day, the bride was expected to be a virgin, as confirmed by 1Corinthians 7:28 as well:

*But if you should marry, you have not sinned; and if a virgin should marry, she has not sinned. Yet such will have trouble in this life, and I am trying to spare you. (1Corinthians 7:28)*

This truth ties in perfectly with 2Corinthians 11:2; for the church, who will one day marry Christ (Ephesians 5:22-27; Revelation 19:7-9), will be presented to Christ “*as a pure virgin*”:

*For I am jealous for you with a godly jealousy; for I betrothed you to one husband, that to Christ I might present you as a pure virgin. (2Corinthians 11:2)*

This same truth is expressed in different terminology in Ephesians 5:27:

*...that He might present to Himself the church in all her glory, having no spot or wrinkle or any such thing; but that she should be holy and blameless. (Ephesians 5:27)*

Tying Ephesians 5:27 in with Ephesians 5:25-27, we find that the church will be presented to Christ as a pure virgin when their marriage is consummated in heaven:

*Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ also loved the church and gave Himself up for her; that He might sanctify her, having cleansed her by the washing of water with the word, that He might present to Himself the church in all her glory, having no spot or wrinkle or any such thing; but that she should be holy and blameless. (Ephesians 5:25-27)*

The marriage between a man and a woman is a picture of Christ's relationship with the church. The church will be presented as a pure virgin to Christ on the wedding day. Consequently, premarital sex is not endorsed by the Creator.

The account of Tamar and Amnon verifies the sinfulness of premarital sexual activity:

*Then David sent to the house for Tamar, saying, "Go now to your brother Amnon's house, and prepare food for him." So Tamar went to her brother Amnon's house, and he was lying down. And she took dough, kneaded it, made cakes in his sight, and baked the cakes. And she took the pan and dished them out before him, but he refused to eat. And Amnon said, "Have everyone go out from me." So everyone went out from him. Then Amnon said to Tamar, "Bring the food into the bedroom, that I may eat from your hand." So Tamar took the cakes which she had made and brought them into the bedroom to her brother Amnon. When she brought them to him to eat, he took hold of her and said to her, "Come, lie with me, my sister." But she answered him, "No, my brother, do not violate me, for such a thing is not done in Israel; do not do this disgraceful thing! "As for me, where could I get rid of my reproach? And as for you, you will be like one of the fools in Israel. Now therefore, please speak to the king, for he will not withhold me from you." However, he would not listen to her; since he was stronger than she, he violated her and lay with her.*

*Then Amnon hated her with a very great hatred; for the hatred with which he hated her was greater than the love with which he had loved her. And Amnon said to her, "Get up, go away!" But she said to him, "No, because this wrong in sending me away is greater than the other that you have done to me!" Yet he would not listen to her. (2Samuel 13:7-16)*

Sexual activity of this sort is grossly unacceptable, for Absalom killed Amnon as a result of his misdeed (read 2Samuel 13:23-29).

Exodus 22:16 also explains the severity of the issue:

*“And if a man seduces a virgin who is not engaged, and lies with her, he must pay a dowry for her to be his wife. (Exodus 22:16)*

The priests under the Law were allowed to marry only virgins:

*‘A widow, or a divorced woman, or one who is profaned by harlotry, these he may not take; but rather he is to marry a virgin of his own people; (Leviticus 21:14)*

The magnitude of the issue of virginity is described in Deuteronomy 22:13-21 as well:

*“If any man takes a wife and goes in to her and then turns against her, and charges her with shameful deeds and publicly defames her, and says, ‘I took this woman, but when I came near her, I did not find her a virgin,’ then the girl’s father and her mother shall take and bring out the evidence of the girl’s virginity to the elders of the city at the gate. And the girl’s father shall say to the elders, ‘I gave my daughter to this man for a wife, but he turned against her; and behold, he has charged her with shameful deeds, saying, “I did not find your daughter a virgin.” But this is the evidence of my daughter’s virginity.’ And they shall spread the garment before the elders of the city. So the elders of that city shall take the man and chastise him, and they shall fine him a hundred shekels of silver and give it to the girl’s father, because he publicly defamed a virgin of Israel. And she shall remain his wife; he cannot divorce her all his days. But if this charge is true, that the girl was not found a virgin, then they shall bring out the girl to the doorway of her father’s house, and the men of her city shall stone her to death because she has committed an act of folly in Israel, by playing the harlot in her father’s house; thus you shall purge the evil from among you. (Deuteronomy 22:13-21)*

Virginity was expected by the man taking a wife in marriage, for the blood shed by the virgin bride (on the wedding night) is a visible picture of the sealed covenant of marriage. The Father sealed the covenant of marriage with Israel by the shedding of blood (read Exodus 24:1-8).

For a man to lie with a woman prior to marriage meant that he had “*violated her*”:

*“If a man finds a girl who is a virgin, who is not engaged, and seizes her and lies with her and they are discovered, then the man who lay with her shall give to the girl’s father fifty shekels of silver, and she shall become his wife because he has violated her; he cannot divorce her all his days. (Deuteronomy 22:28-29)*

God’s will is purity prior to marriage in every case, as verified by both Old and New Testament Scripture. However, sexual sin can be forgiven. Any sin can be forgiven, but the consequence of sexual sin in this life is staggering even among believers (Colossians 3:25), for the memories it creates are impossible to erase. Paul said:

*Do you not know that your bodies are members of Christ? Shall I then take away the members of Christ and make them members of a harlot? May it never be! Or do you not know that the one who joins himself to a harlot is one body with her? For He says, "THE TWO WILL BECOME ONE FLESH." (1Corinthians 6:15-16)*

Paul isn't teaching that a sexual relationship between a man and a woman consummates a true marriage. His point is that the two participants in the sin are "one body" due to the physical intimacy associated with the sin, a counterfeit of what occurs in a God-sanctioned marriage when "two...become one flesh." Paul follows later with:

*Flee immorality. Every other sin that a man commits is outside the body, but the immoral man sins against his own body. Or do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit who is in you, whom you have from God, and that you are not your own? For you have been bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body. (1Corinthians 6:18-20)*

Paul also teaches:

*Now the deeds of the flesh are evident, which are: immorality, impurity, sensuality, (Galatians 5:19)*