

# **Biblical Teaching About Marriage and Sexual Love**

**Therefore, a man shall leave his father and his mother and hold fast to his wife, and they shall become one flesh.**

Genesis 2:24 (ESV)

**"For this reason, a man will leave his father and mother and be united to his wife, and the two will become one flesh."**

Ephesians 5:31 (NIV)

**Many waters cannot quench love; rivers cannot wash it away.**

**If one were to give all the wealth of his house for love,  
it would be utterly scorned.**

Song of Solomon 8:7 (NIV)

**Marriage is honorable among all, and the bed undefiled; but fornicators and adulterers God will judge.**

Hebrews 13:4 (NKJV)

**It is God's will that you should be sanctified: that you should avoid sexual immorality; that each of you should learn to control his own body in a way that is holy and honorable,**

1 Thessalonians 4:3-4 (NIV)

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## About Phil Benedict

I (Phil Benedict) grew up in a godly Christian home and was saved as a young child. I was active in our church youth group in Boise, Idaho, where I met my wife, Linda. We married when we were young and God has blessed our marriage. We have now been married for over fifty-four years (as of January 2021). We have four children, all of whom are actively serving the Lord. We both graduated from Moody Bible Institute in Chicago, Illinois, and from Boise State University in Boise, Idaho. I have also taken classes in secondary school administration at the College of Idaho in Caldwell, Idaho, as well as classes in Cherokee heritage from Northeastern State University in Tahlequah, Oklahoma, and classes in drug and alcohol counseling at Bacone College in Muskogee, Oklahoma. We have served as “full time” Christian workers for over thirty-five years. We have been members of UIM International (United Indian Missions) for over twenty-five years.

## Thanks to My Wife

God has given me an exceptional wife. We met when we were kids in our church youth group. Linda has been a huge blessing in my life. She has been my co-worker and partner throughout life and in the writing of these study guides. She has spent many, many hours editing, checking for mistakes, making suggestions, printing, and binding these study guides. She has been a genuine ministry partner. Without her, these study guides would not exist.

## *My Prayer*

It is my prayer that our Lord will be glorified and revered through this study. “May those who go through this study grow in their understanding of Your plan for love and marriage and then choose to put Your teaching into practice. I am asking that Your Spirit work in their lives and in my own life, bringing us into a greater maturity in our walk with You. I thank and praise You for what You are doing through this study. You deserve honor, glory, and praise for who You are and for what You have done.”

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## How to Get the Most from This Study Guide

This study guide is designed to help you to learn, to understand, and to live what God teaches us in His Word, the Bible. God gave us the Bible to teach us to know and to walk with Him.

It is important that one take time to read, to digest, and to absorb the Scriptures in this study guide. Take time to carefully read and think about them. Meditate on them and the truths they teach. Regularly ask God for a right understanding of Scriptural truths and then make them part of you. Learn to love God and His Word. Commit yourself to making Biblical truths the foundation of your life and to putting them into practice every day of your life.

**All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness, so that the man of God may be thoroughly equipped for every good work.**

2 Timothy 3:16-17 (NIV)

## **Bible Translations Used in These Studies**

There are five different translations of the Bible used throughout these studies. The translations used are the King James Version (KJV), the New King James Version (NKJV), the New American Standard Bible (NASB), the New International Version (NIV), and the English Standard Version (ESV).

The purpose of this study is to help ordinary people to understand and to have faith in fundamental Biblical truths. When quoting Scripture I have tried to use the translation which most clearly states the Biblical truth being covered in that part of the study. No particular translation has been favored. After each verse that is quoted, the translation is identified by giving the initials of the translation.

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## *A. Introduction: We are God's creation.*

God created us as male and female and God called all His creation "very good". I (Phil Benedict) wholehearted agree. I am glad God created us as men and women. My wife has enriched my life more than I could possibly say. I cannot imagine going through life without her. Thank you, Lord, for my wife. ☺

**In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth.** Genesis 1:1

**So God created man in his own image, in the image of God he created him; male and female he created them.** Genesis 1:27

**God saw all that he had made, and it was very good.** Genesis 1:21a

**For this reason a man will leave his father and mother and be united to his wife, and they will become one flesh.** Genesis 2:24

The Bible clearly teaches that God is the creator of all things. When He created people, He created us as men and women. He put within us an attraction to each other. This attraction is a God- given attraction. It is not dirty or wrong. It is a normal God given attraction and every normal person has felt that attraction in one way or another.

In Genesis 1:21 God clearly states that all his creation, which includes both men and women with our attraction to each other, as being "very good". In fact, both men and women are identified as being created in the "image of God". Men and women with their natural sexual drives are God's creation and God calls his creation very good. We do not need to feel guilt because we are sexual beings. God created us that way.

## *B. God established marriage and instructed us to have sexual relationships only with our marriage partner.*

God gave us instructions in how we are to express the sexual desire that He put within us. God has clearly stated that it is to be fulfilled in a marriage relationship between a husband and a wife.

In the Word of God when it refers to husbands and wives being "one flesh" it is referring to the union of a husband and wife and it clearly includes the sexual relationship between a husband and wife.

**For this reason a man will leave his father and mother and be united to his wife, and they will become one flesh.** Genesis 2:24

**But at the beginning of creation God made them male and female. For this reason, a man will leave his father and mother and be united to his wife, and the two will become one flesh. So, they are no longer two, but one. Therefore, what God has joined together, let man not separate."**  
Mark 10:6-9

In 1 Corinthians 7 we are clearly told not to withhold sex from our marriage partner.

**The husband should fulfill his marital duty to his wife, and likewise the wife to her husband. The wife's body does not belong to her alone but also to her husband. In the same way, the husband's body does not belong to him alone but also to his wife. Do not deprive each other except by mutual consent and for a time, so that you may devote yourselves to prayer. Then come together again so that Satan will not tempt you because of your lack of self-control.** 1 Corinthians 7:3-5

**Marriage should be honored by all, and the marriage bed kept pure, for God will judge the adulterer and all the sexually immoral.** Hebrews 13:4

God clearly established marriage and instructed us to keep sexual activity within marriage.

Society as a whole has ignored and rebelled against these instructions and, even among Christians, there is often rebellion, disobedience, misunderstanding, and guilt associated with our sexual drive and sexual activity.

God intended for there to be a harmonious, loving, and mutually satisfying relationship between a husband and a wife. Unfortunately, very often there is anything but harmony and oneness in marriage relationships. It does not have to be that way. If a couple will put Biblical teachings into practice, they will have a healthy satisfying marriage. Both husband and wife need to be committed to putting Biblical instructions into practice.

A Christian should never even consider marrying an unsaved person. It is a direct violation of God's Word and could very well lead to a lifetime of trouble, hurt, and unhappiness.

### *C. Three God given reasons for the sexual relationship between a married husband and wife.*

#### *1. The first reason for the sexual relationship between a married husband and wife is for bonding and becoming one.*

In the second chapter of the Bible God established marriage. A man is to leave his mother and father and be united to his wife. They become "one flesh". In the Bible, "one flesh" is a clear reference to the union of a husband and wife which clearly includes the sexual relationship between them.

**For this reason a man will leave his father and mother and be united to his wife, and they will become one flesh.** Genesis 2:24

In God's eyes,  $1 + 1 = 1$ . That doesn't make mathematical sense, but it makes sense to God and it should make sense to His people. According to God, when we have a sexual relationship, we become one with that individual.

The bonding of a husband and wife into being "one" is beautiful thing. Oneness goes far beyond the sexual part of marriage. In God's design a husband and wife are one in love, compassion, and

purpose. A husband is to love his wife and a wife is to respect her husband. They blend together and become one as God becomes one with His church. Ephesians 5:22-33

As we have already seen, this teaching on oneness was established at the time of creation. It was also reaffirmed by Jesus and the apostles later in the New Testament.

**But at the beginning of creation God made them male and female. For this reason a man will leave his father and mother and be united to his wife, and the two will become one flesh. So they are no longer two, but one. Therefore what God has joined together, let man not separate."**

Mark 10:6-9

**"For this reason a man will leave his father and mother and be united to his wife, and the two will become one flesh."** Ephesians 5:31

In these verses we are clearly instructed that when we marry, we are to leave our father and mother and become one with our married partner. When a husband or a wife is unwilling to leave their father or mother, the marriage is in trouble. When a mother or father is unwilling to let go, the marriage will have problems. This is not teaching that we have nothing more to do with our parents. We do not isolate them from our lives, but we do focus on making our mate, not our parents, our primary, number one relationship. No married couple should allow parents to be a negative influence in their marriage and in their relationship with their spouse.

*2. A second reason for the sexual relationship between a married husband and wife is for reproduction.*

**God blessed them and said to them, "Be fruitful and increase in number; fill the earth and subdue it".** Genesis 1:28a

**Then God blessed Noah and his sons, saying to them, "Be fruitful and increase in number and fill the earth.** Genesis 9:1

**As for you, be fruitful and increase in number; multiply on the earth and increase upon it."** Genesis 9:7

It is God's plan that children be raised in a loving nurturing home by a father and mother who deeply love each other and who deeply love their children. The father and mother are to love, to care for, to provide for, to train, and to discipline their children. This is a beautiful plan. In spite of our society's rejection and rebellion, it is still God's plan.

If you are one who does not have a loving father and mother, with God's help and instruction, determine that you will not repeat the errors of your parents. Remember, God deeply loves you and wants to heal your hurts. With Him by your side, you can be all that He wants you to be.

### *3. A third Biblical reason for the sexual relationship between a married husband and wife is for our pleasure.*

Many view God as some sort of a cosmic killjoy, especially when it comes to sex. This is simply not true. When used as God designed it, the sexual experience of a husband and wife is very pleasurable and satisfying. God put only one restriction on sex, and that one restriction is that it be within marriage.

In the following passage of Scripture, each verse in one way or another is referring to the sexual relationship of a husband and wife. In this passage we are being instructed to enjoy our own wife, not someone else. Note that the overall tone of this passage is one of enjoyment and pleasure.

**Drink water from your own cistern, running water from your own well. Should your springs overflow in the streets, your streams of water in the public squares? Let them be yours alone, never to be shared with strangers. May your fountain be blessed, and may you rejoice in the wife of your youth. A loving doe, a graceful deer -- may her breasts satisfy you always, may you ever be captivated by her love. Why be captivated, my son, by an adulteress? Why embrace the bosom of another man's wife? Proverbs 5:15-20**

The Bible states that sexual acts within marriage are “pure”. There is no reason that we cannot thoroughly enjoy it with a sense of God’s approval and blessing.

**Marriage should be honored by all, and the marriage bed kept pure, for God will judge the adulterer and all the sexually immoral. Hebrews 13:4**

The entire book of Song of Solomon (Song of Songs) is dedicated to the pleasure of pure romantic (at times sexual) love between a husband and wife.

**How handsome you are, my lover! Oh, how charming! And our bed is verdant (luxurious).**  
Song of Solomon 1:16

**Let him kiss me with the kisses of his mouth-- for your love is more delightful than wine. Pleasing is the fragrance of your perfumes; your name is like perfume poured out. No wonder the maidens love you! Take me away with you--let us hurry! Let the king bring me into his chambers. Song of Solomon 1:2-4**

**Many waters cannot quench love; rivers cannot wash it away. If one were to give all the wealth of his house for love, it would be utterly scorned. Song of Solomon 8:7**

There are some who say that the sexual drive occurred only after man’s fall into sin and it is a result of our sin nature, and therefore sex is part of our sin nature and is inherently evil. There are absolutely no Biblical grounds for this. In fact, both the instructions to reproduce and the teaching on becoming “one flesh” were given before the fall into sin. This is a clear indication that the sexual drive is not a result of the sin nature. It is a beautiful God-given gift and, when used according to God’s instructions, it is a very God-honoring pleasurable experience.



## *D. Biblical Words and Descriptions of Wrong Sexual Activity*

As we have seen, God designed the sexual union of a man and woman to be between a husband and wife. It is a pure beautiful relationship when used as God designed. However, like all of the instructions given by God, many ignore and rebel against them. Men ignore what God has taught and they develop their own ideas and concepts; then they justify their ideas by their own sinful human reasoning. Sex is certainly a prime example of this. The world is obsessed with sex that perverts and twists God's design and His teaching.

When man rebels against God's teachings, he will pay the price.

**Since they hated knowledge and did not choose to fear the LORD, since they would not accept my advice and spurned my rebuke, they will eat the fruit of their ways and be filled with the fruit of their schemes.** Proverbs 1:29-31

**Do not be deceived: God cannot be mocked. A man reaps what he sows. The one who sows to please his sinful nature, from that nature will reap destruction; the one who sows to please the Spirit, from the Spirit will reap eternal life.** Galatians 6:7-8

**Furthermore, since they did not think it worthwhile to retain the knowledge of God, he gave them over to a depraved mind, to do what ought not to be done. They have become filled with every kind of wickedness, ...** Romans 1:28-29a

Rebelling against God's instructions will bring a multitude of hurt and problems and those problems may last a lifetime. Untold trouble, guilt, hurt, and lifelong regret may all result from ignoring God's standard and going our own way.

There are several words used in the Bible to describe sinful sexual behavior.

### *1. Adultery*

Adultery is defined as any kind of sex with a person to whom one is not married. Adultery usually involves at least one person who is married. (Spiros Zodiaties, *The Complete Word Study Dictionary of the New Testament*, page 994)

**You shall not commit adultery.** Exodus 20:14 and Deuteronomy 5:18

**If a man commits adultery with another man's wife -- with the wife of his neighbor -- both the adulterer and the adulteress must be put to death.** Leviticus 20:10

**But a man who commits adultery lacks judgment; whoever does so destroys himself.** Proverbs 6:32

**For out of the heart come evil thoughts, murder, adultery, sexual immorality, theft, false testimony, slander.** Matthew 15:19

## 2. Fornication or Sexual Immorality

In a general sense, fornication is used of sexual sin by unmarried people, while adultery is used of sexual sin by married individuals. However, fornication is very often used in a much broader sense and includes any kind of sexual sin.

The word “fornication” is used primarily in the King James Version of the Bible. The New International Version often uses “sexual immorality” or at times, when appropriate, it uses “prostitution” or other appropriate words. The New American Standard uses both the words “fornication” and “immorality”.

“Fornication” and “sexual immorality” are broad words that include any kind of sexual sin, (Zodiaties, page 1201)

The *Wycliffe Bible Dictionary* (page 28) defines fornication as, “All lewdness and sexual irregularity”.

**Flee from sexual immorality. All other sins a man commits are outside his body, but he who sins sexually sins against his own body.** 1 Corinthians 6:18

**Now the works of the flesh are evident, which are: adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lewdness, 20 idolatry, sorcery, hatred, contentions, jealousies, outbursts of wrath, selfish ambitions, dissensions, heresies, 21 envy, murders, drunkenness, revelries, and the like; of which I tell you beforehand, just as I also told you in time past, that those who practice such things will not inherit the kingdom of God.** Galatians 5:19-21 (NKJV)

**"For all the nations have drunk of the wine of the wrath of her fornication, the kings of the earth have committed fornication with her, and the merchants of the earth have become rich through the abundance of her luxury." 4 And I heard another voice from heaven saying, "Come out of her, my people, lest you share in her sins, and lest you receive of her plagues.** Revelation 18:3-4 (NKJV)

**But the cowardly, the unbelieving, the vile, the murderers, the sexually immoral, those who practice magic arts, the idolaters and all liars – their place will be in the fiery lake of burning sulfur. This is the second death."** Revelation 21:8

**It is God's will that you should be sanctified: that you should avoid sexual immorality; that each of you should learn to control his own body in a way that is holy and honorable, ...** 1 Thessalonians 4:3-4

**The acts of the sinful nature are obvious: sexual immorality, impurity and debauchery; idolatry and witchcraft; hatred, discord, jealousy, fits of rage, selfish ambition, dissensions, factions and envy; drunkenness, orgies, and the like. I warn you, as I did before, that those who live like this will not inherit the kingdom of God.** Galatians 5:19-21

## 3. Impurity or Uncleanness

Most often in the Bible when “unclean” is used, it is referring to being unclean according to the Old

Testament law that God gave to Moses and the Israelite nation. When used in this way, it is not referring directly to sexual uncleanness. However, there are other times when the Bible uses “impure” or “unclean” that it is clearly referring to sexual sin.

**But among you there must not be even a hint of sexual immorality, or of any kind of impurity, or of greed, because these are improper for God's holy people. Ephesians 5:3**

**...and have not repented of the impurity, sexual sin and debauchery in which they have indulged.**  
2 Corinthians 12:20b

**Do you not know that the wicked will not inherit the kingdom of God? Do not be deceived: Neither the sexually immoral nor idolaters nor adulterers nor male prostitutes nor homosexual offenders nor thieves nor the greedy nor drunkards nor slanderers nor swindlers will inherit the kingdom of God. And that is what some of you were. But you were washed, you were sanctified, you were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ and by the Spirit of our God.**  
1 Corinthians 6:9-11

**Having lost all sensitivity, they have given themselves over to sensuality so as to indulge in every kind of impurity, with a continual lust for more. Ephesians 4:19**

Uncleanness or impurity, when referring to sexual sin, is used in a very broad sense referring to *any* kind of sexual activity between individuals who are not married.

#### *4. Sensuality or Lasciviousness or Debauchery*

Sensuality apparently refers to sexual excess, absence of restraint, or an insatiable desire for pleasure. (Zodiaties, page 270) Today we might call it sexual addiction. This is clearly identified as deeds of the flesh and it is clearly identified as sin.

**Having lost all sensitivity, they have given themselves over to sensuality so as to indulge in every kind of impurity, with a continual lust for more. Ephesians 4:19**

**Now the deeds of the flesh are evident, which are: immorality, impurity, sensuality, idolatry, sorcery, enmities, strife, jealousy, outbursts of anger, disputes, dissensions, factions, ...**  
Galatians 5:19-20 (NASB)

**For the time already past is sufficient for you to have carried out the desire of the Gentiles, having pursued a course of sensuality, lusts, drunkenness, carousing, drinking parties and abominable idolatries. 1 Peter 4:3 (NASB)**

*E. When sin is genuinely confessed, all sin, including all sexual sin, is forgiven.*

The following verses show how completely God forgives sin:

**who forgives all your sins ...** Psalm 103:3

**He forgave us all our sins,** Colossians 2:13

**For I will forgive their wickedness and will remember their sins no more."** Hebrews 8:12  
(Also see Jeremiah 31:34, and Isaiah 43:25.)

**...as far as the east is from the west, so far has he removed our transgressions from us.**  
Psalm 103:12

**Though your sins are like scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they are red as crimson, they shall be like wool.** Isaiah 1:18

**...the blood of Jesus, his Son, purifies us from all sin.** 1 John 1:7

**But you were washed, you were sanctified, you were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ and by the Spirit of our God.** 1 Corinthians 6:10-11

**If we claim to be without sin, we deceive ourselves and the truth is not in us. If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness.**  
1 John 1:8-9 (NIV)

**Come now, and let us reason together, saith the Lord: though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool.** Isaiah 1:18 (KJV)

Scripture clearly teaches that He forgives all our sin. That includes all sexual sin. A person who has been involved in all kinds of sensuality can be completely forgiven and be justified by God. We need to remember that being forgiven does not remove many of the consequences of our sin. Being forgiven does mean that we can walk in fellowship with God and be used by God to serve Him and promote His kingdom.

## *F. Ways of Perverting God's Design for Sex*

### *1. Sexual intercourse with a person you are not married to.*

**You shall not commit adultery.** Exodus 20:14 Deuteronomy 5:18

**"For from within, out of the heart of men, proceed the evil thoughts, fornications, thefts, murders, adulteries, 22 deeds of coveting and wickedness, as well as deceit, sensuality, envy, slander, pride and foolishness. 23 "All these evil things proceed from within and defile the man."**  
Mark 7:21-23 (NASB)

### *2. Living together without being married.*

**You shall not commit adultery.** Exodus 20:14 Deuteronomy 5:18

Even though living together without being married is an accepted practice in our society, in God's eyes it is sexual immorality. Even though this has become acceptable in society and even in many of our churches, it is sinful and wrong and should not be accepted by individual Christians or churches.

**But now I am writing you that you must not associate with anyone who calls himself a brother but is sexually immoral or greedy, an idolater or a slanderer, a drunkard or a swindler. With such a man do not even eat.** 1 Corinthians 5:11

God instructs us not even to associate with a "brother" who is sexually immoral.

### *3. Other forms of sex, including oral sex, with a person you are not married to.*

**But among you there must not be even a hint of sexual immorality, or of any kind of impurity, or of greed, because these are improper for God's holy people.** Ephesians 5:3

**Having lost all sensitivity, they have given themselves over to sensuality so as to indulge in every kind of impurity, with a continual lust for more.** Ephesians 4:19

In recent years many have said that oral sex is not wrong since it is not actual sexual intercourse. This way of thinking is as wrong as it could be. In God's eyes, oral sex or any other form of sex outside of marriage is impure, lust, and is clearly wrong and sinful.

### *4. Sexual Lust.*

**But I tell you that anyone who looks at a woman lustfully has already committed adultery with her in his heart.** Matthew 5:28

**For everything in the world--the cravings of sinful man, the lust of his eyes and the boasting of what he has and does--comes not from the Father but from the world.**  
1 John 2:16

**For you have spent enough time in the past doing what pagans choose to do--living in debauchery, lust, drunkenness, orgies, carousing and detestable idolatry.** 1 Peter 4:3

It is clear in the Bible that thinking unclean sexual thoughts is sin. As humans we cannot keep a thought from entering our mind; however, to keep on thinking impure thoughts, or lusting, is clearly sinful and wrong.

### *5. Feeling or touching a person in a sexual way when you are not married to that person.*

If thinking unclean sexual thoughts is sinful, it is certainly sinful to touch or feel a person in a sexual way.

**But I tell you that anyone who looks at a woman lustfully has already committed adultery with her in his heart. Matthew 5:28**

**But among you there must not be even a hint of sexual immorality, or of any kind of impurity, or of greed, because these are improper for God's holy people. Ephesians 5:3**

## *6. Dressing in such a way as to encourage lust.*

**But I tell you that anyone who looks at a woman lustfully has already committed adultery with her in his heart. Matthew 5:28**

**I also want women to dress modestly, with decency and propriety... 1 Timothy 2:9a**

The Word of God clearly states that sexual lust is sin. When an individual (boy or girl) dresses in such a way as to encourage sexual thoughts, they are sinning. When a person wears tight clothing or exposes parts of the body that causes themselves or others to have unclean thoughts, they are just as wrong as the ones having those thoughts. As a Christian we are to dress in such a way that we glorify God, not to draw attention to our physical body. Drawing sexual attention to ourselves comes from our fleshly nature, not from God, and it is sin.

## *7. Divorcing without Biblical cause and remarrying.*

**But at the beginning of creation God made them male and female. For this reason a man will leave his father and mother and be united to his wife, and the two will become one flesh. So they are no longer two, but one. Therefore what God has joined together, let man not separate." Mark 10:6-9**

God has clearly taught us that marriage is to last as long as both partners are alive.

**A woman is bound to her husband as long as he lives. But if her husband dies, she is free to marry anyone she wishes, but he must belong to the Lord. 1 Corinthians 7:39**

**"I hate divorce," says the LORD God of Israel, ... Malachi 2:16**

**And I say to you, whoever divorces his wife, except for immorality, and marries another woman commits adultery. Matthew 19:9 (NASB)**

**He answered, "Anyone who divorces his wife and marries another woman commits adultery against her. And if she divorces her husband and marries another man, she commits adultery." Mark 10:11-12**

**But if the unbeliever leaves, let him do so. A believing man or woman is not bound in such circumstances; God has called us to live in peace. 1 Corinthians 7:15**

Here is a clear teaching that is ignored by both the world and many in Christian churches. God intends

for marriage to last as long as both partners are alive. They are not to break that union by divorce. God does allow for divorce in two limited circumstances, but in both of these circumstances the marriage is to be preserved if possible. To ignore these teachings and to divorce and remarry without Biblical cause is sin. It is disobedience and rebellion. God identifies their sexual union as adultery. Remember, if a husband and a wife will commit themselves to putting Biblical instructions into practice, they will have a good marriage.

Since the sexual union in an unbiblical remarriage is identified as adultery, how do Christians who have broken this Biblical instruction regain a close walk with God? Should they divorce and go back to their original marriage? Should they abstain from sexual relations in the new marriage? Are all of their sexual relations now sinful?

There are some questions that are not directly answered in Scripture. However, it is clear in Scripture that when we *genuinely* confess sin, God forgives. A couple must genuinely recognize and confess the sin, and commit themselves to honoring and glorifying the Lord Jesus Christ in their lives and in their marriage.

When that happens, the past is forgiven and they can now look to the future. They can dedicate themselves and their marriage to the Lord Jesus Christ and honor Him in all aspects of their life, including their sexual relationships in the new marriage.

A couple in this situation needs to realize that their service to the Lord may be restricted because of the reputation they established when they publicly disobeyed God's Word. There are some very clear qualifications for being a pastor or an elder. They must be above reproach in every area of their lives and they must have a good reputation both in and out of the church. It will take a considerable amount of time before that reputation can be re-established.

There is also a word of warning that needs to be given. You cannot try to manipulate God and expect good to come from it. Some have divorced, knowing that it was wrong, and then remarried because they knew that God forgives sin. You cannot manipulate God in this manner. You cannot deliberately sin in any manner and expect good to come from it. It simply will not happen.

Some have even tried to justify their actions by saying, "We prayed about it". That is hypocrisy to the very core. We do not have to pray about whether to sin or not. It is never, ever, God's will that we disobey Him and sin. In these situations, God expects obedience, not prayer.

## 8. *Prostitution.*

**Do you not know that your bodies are members of Christ himself? Shall I then take the members of Christ and unite them with a prostitute? Never!** 1 Corinthians 6:15

**You engaged in prostitution with the Egyptians, your lustful neighbors, and provoked me to anger with your increasing promiscuity.** Ezekiel 16:26

## 9. *Homosexuality.*

**Do not lie with a man as one lies with a woman; that is detestable.** Leviticus 18:22

**Because of this, God gave them over to shameful lusts. Even their women exchanged natural relations for unnatural ones. In the same way the men also abandoned natural relations with women and were inflamed with lust for one another. Men committed indecent acts with other men, and received in themselves the due penalty for their perversion. Furthermore, since they did not think it worthwhile to retain the knowledge of God, he gave them over to a depraved mind, to do what ought not to be done.** Romans 1:26-28

**Do you not know that the wicked will not inherit the kingdom of God? Do not be deceived: Neither the sexually immoral nor idolaters nor adulterers nor male prostitutes nor homosexual offenders nor thieves nor the greedy nor drunkards nor slanderers nor swindlers will inherit the kingdom of God. And that is what some of you were. But you were washed, you were sanctified, you were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ and by the Spirit of our God.**

1 Corinthians 6:9-11

## 10. *Pornography and “sexual toys”.*

**For everything in the world--the cravings of sinful man, the lust of his eyes and the boasting of what he has and does--comes not from the Father but from the world.**

1 John 2:16

Looking at pornography and the use of “sexual toys” are clearly nothing but pure sexual lust. It is sin. The drawing to pornography is not from God; it is from our sin nature. It destroys healthy sexual attitudes and it has destroyed untold marriages.

## 11. *Sex with an animal.*

**Do not have sexual relations with an animal and defile yourself with it. A woman must not present herself to an animal to have sexual relations with it; that is a perversion.**

Leviticus 18:23

## 12. *Sexual abuse.*

God gave us the gift of sex to be a beautiful expression of love and oneness between a husband and a wife. It is a delightful gift. God never intended there to be any form of sexual abuse of children or adults. Sexual abuse came as a result of our fall into sin. It is not from God.

It is beyond our understanding how much pain and hurt sexual abuse has caused to both children and adults. If you are one of those who has been hurt by sexual abuse, remember how deeply you are loved and valued by God. Being sexually abused is in no way an indication of one's worth or value. You were not abused because you were defective or abnormal in some way. You were abused because



those who abused you have a sin nature and have chosen not to control that sin nature. It is their sin, not yours.

God loved you so much and valued you so highly that He died for you, so that all your sin could be forgiven and you can be completely clean and pure and you can become a child of His. He wants you to be his child and to walk close to Him.

God deeply wants to heal wounded hearts. Learn to walk with Him and let Him heal your spirit. With God's help, don't let yourself repeat the wrong of others and then hurt others as you have been hurt.

## *G. Overcoming Sexual Temptation*

**Therefore I urge you, brethren, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies a living and holy sacrifice, acceptable to God, which is your spiritual service of worship. And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, so that you may prove what the will of God is, that which is good and acceptable and perfect.**

Romans 12:1-2 (NASB)

**Flee from sexual immorality. All other sins a man commits are outside his body, but he who sins sexually sins against his own body.** 1 Corinthians 6:18

Our society is obsessed with sex and violence. Anyone who wants to commit themselves to being a follower of the Lord Jesus Christ and living a sexually pure life will be in a small minority. At times you may feel as if you are the only one who has made this commitment.

Choose to live for the Lord Jesus Christ and to grow in your walk with Him. If this is a strong commitment in your life, it will carry you through many strong temptations.

1. Regularly be strengthened by reading and absorbing the Word of God. Learn to pray. Regularly fellowship with fellow Christians.
2. Choose friends who will encourage your commitment to serve the Lord.
3. Don't fill your mind with unclean stuff. Essentially all television sitcoms, movies and other programs are full of sexual perversion and violence. Filling our minds with this will tear down our commitment to living Biblical pure lives. Determine that you will not watch sexy movies, look at any kind of pornography, read anything that is dirty, go to any online sex sites, or have any online sex conversation or contacts.
4. Listen to uplifting music. Much, essentially all, of the world's music has sexual themes or overtones. Filling your mind with this kind of music will tear down your commitment to have pure thoughts and pure lives.

Music is a big part of our lives and every Christian should listen to music that will uplift our spirits and glorify the Lord Jesus Christ.

5. Do not choose unsaved “boyfriends” or “girlfriends”. Do not even date unsaved individuals. Do not even date Christians that you know have low moral standards.
6. Be willing to talk about problems with a more mature spiritual person who has high moral standards.
7. Keep your eyes on the future. Be willing to put off sexual activities for now so that you can have beautiful fulfilment in marriage later.
8. Avoid situations where you will be tempted. Stay in groups and participate in healthy group activities. Don’t go to parties when you know there may be sexually stimulating activity. If at all possible, don’t go to friend’s houses when parents are not home.
9. Stay away from illegal drugs and all alcoholic drinks. On-going drug and alcohol use will almost always lead to wrong sinful sexual desires and actions.
10. This may not sound very spiritual, but there are times, especially with young men, when the hormones are raging, that you will just have to ask God for help and then “gut it out”. Determine that you will stick with the commitments you have made, even though the sexual drive is very strong.

**No temptation has seized you except what is common to man. And God is faithful; he will not let you be tempted beyond what you can bear. But when you are tempted, he will also provide a way out so that you can stand up under it.** 1 Corinthians 10:13

**For we do not have a high priest who is unable to sympathize with our weaknesses, but we have one who has been tempted in every way, just as we are--yet was without sin. Let us then approach the throne of grace with confidence, so that we may receive mercy and find grace to help us in our time of need.** Hebrews 4:15-16