

## Is Living Together Okay?

Many people say that as long as these two people love each other very much, it is okay to live together even without a marriage certificate. They think that living together is a good way to find out if they are very compatible (having and sharing same goals and opinions in general) before getting married for life.

Before we make any comments or opinions on that "living together" issue, we need to take a good hard look at the Word of God. That is, because the Lord God created man and woman in His image and designed a plan for man and woman to live together as one flesh for the glory and praise of the Lord. That plan God wanted for man and woman is **marriage**, not just living together.

Marriage is a life-long union of one man and one woman, as husband and wife. Genesis 2:24 reads: ...a man will leave his father and mother and be united to his wife, and they become one flesh. (See Matthew 19:5-6, Ephesians 5:31)

I Corinthians 7:2 - in order to avoid sexual sins, each man should have his own wife, and each woman should have her own husband.

Hebrews 13:4 - marriage is honorable in every way, so husbands and wives should be faithful to each other. God will judge those who commit sexual sins, especially those who committ adultery.

God established marriage for four (4) reasons:

- 1) to set up a house of faith
- 2) to love one another just as Jesus loves His Sheep, His Bride (us)
- 3) to have sex with God's blessings
- 4) to have children

People living together do not use these four reasons for living right in the eyes of the Lord, but rather they use selfish personal reasons. In general, man wants to use woman for his selfish sexual reasons and woman wants to use man for her selfish security reasons. They may say: But I love her/him very much! The problem is that they do not have the right understanding of what true love is.

True love is: joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control (Galatians 5:22-23) People living together almost never use that kind of love to stay together for life. It is either from lust or insecurity.

In order to have a strong life-long relationship between man and woman, there must be mutual (both from man and woman for each other) trust. When you have mutual trust, then you can develop three C's to keep your relationship alive and strong, which are: (1) Commitment; (2) Communication; and (3) Compromise. In short, man and woman need to have 3C's based on T. That

can happen in marriage, but, sadly, never happen with people just living together.

Just because all of my friends are living together and nobody cares about that, I think I can live together with my girlfriend or boyfriend does not make it right at all. No, the Lord God makes it very very clear that sexual sins are very serious from the following verses:

1 Corinthians 6:9-10 - Don't you know that wicked people won't inherit (go to) the kingdom of heaven. People who continue to commit sexual sins,...those who commit adultery, homosexuals...will not go to heaven.

1 Corinthians 6:18-19 - Flee from sexual sin...if he sins sexually, he sins against his own body...his body is a temple that belongs to the Holy Spirit.

Ephesians 5:3 - don't let sexual sin, perversion of any kind...even be mentioned among you (Christians). This is not appropriate (right) behavior for God's holy people.

Galatians 5:19-21 - ...parts of corrupt nature (of the sinful world) are: illicit (wrong use of) sex, perversion (having sex with animals or things in a sick way), promiscuity (prostitution or having many sexual partners at the same time)...people doing things like that will not inherit (go to) the kingdom of God.

If we do not want to use the Word of God to decide if living together is a good idea or not, then we will use hard facts from research:

- Living together results in a relationship less stable (strong) and less fulfilling (happy or satisfied) than marriage
- People living together before they marry usually divorce much more than people not living together

On a final note, the Lord God wants to save every person, even those living together. Jesus came to live on earth so that He could live a perfect holy life on the behalf of every sinner, including those living together, and suffer and die on cross to forgive every sexual sin, yes, every sexual sin! People living together need to hear God's comforting promise that if they confess their sins, He is faithful and just and will forgive their sins and cleanse them from all wrongdoings. (1 John 1:9).

If people stop living together with a full trust in God's promise of forgiveness of all their sins, and if they later decide to go ahead and marry, they can do that with joyful trust in God's forgiveness and His blessings on their marriage.