

LIVING TOGETHER

It is becoming increasingly common in our society for couples who are involved in a romantic relationship to live together without being married. This is sometimes referred to as “cohabitating.” Even though some people consider this to be completely normal, is it the will of God for you?



WHY DO PEOPLE CHOOSE TO LIVE TOGETHER?

Common reasons people say they live together are:

“WE WANT TO TEST IF WE ARE COMPATIBLE WITH EACH OTHER.”

“WE CAN’T AFFORD TO LIVE APART. WE WANT TO SAVE MONEY.”

“WE WILL END UP GETTING MARRIED ONE DAY ANYWAYS.”

“WE DON’T WANT TO BE LONELY.”

“SEX IS MORE ACCESSIBLE.”

“WE ARE ALREADY IN LOVE AND COMMITTED TO EACH OTHER.”

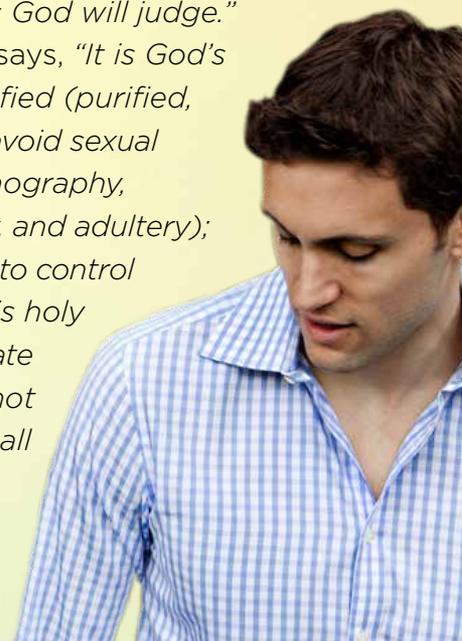
The question that a Christian should ask is: do any of these reasons glorify God? Remember, as Christians, whatever we do, we should do it to glorify God (1 Corinthians 10:31). And as Christians, we are to walk by the Spirit not by the flesh.

When we walk by the Spirit, we will not carry out the desire of the flesh (Galatians 5:16). Our behaviors, actions, and attitudes are to please the Lord and to glorify Him, not our sinful desires.



WHAT DOES **GOD** SAY ABOUT LIVING TOGETHER?

Living together is disobedient to God. According to Hebrews 13:4, *“Marriage is to be held in honor among all, and the marriage bed is to be undefiled; for fornicators and adulterers God will judge.”* And 1 Thessalonians 4:3-5, 7 says, *“It is God’s will that you should be sanctified (purified, made holy): that you should avoid sexual immorality (prostitution, pornography, premarital sex, homosexuality, and adultery); that each of you should learn to control your own body in a way that is holy and honorable, not in passionate lust like the pagans, who do not know God; For God did not call us to be impure, but to live a holy life.”*





GOD CREATED MARRIAGE FOR A REASON

It is a boundary line that protects the man and woman and unifies them together in a stable, God-centered relationship. If you are crossing that boundary line now and having sex outside of marriage, what makes you think that you or your partner won't cross that boundary line with someone else after you two are married?



WHAT IS GOD'S PLAN FOR YOU?

As Christians we are set apart (sanctified). We are called to live a life that honors and brings glory to God. Galatians 2:20 reminds us that once we become a believer, Christ lives in us and the life which we now live is by faith. Our primary purpose in life is to please God and to follow His will.

God's plan for marriage was revealed in the beginning of creation when He created Adam. God declared that it was not good for man to be alone, so He created Eve for Adam. This was the first marriage. For God declared, *"Therefore a man shall leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, and they shall become one flesh"* (Genesis 2:24).

God's will and plan is to have the intimate relationship between a male and a female within the context of marriage. It is a covenant between a man, a woman, and God. Aside from a person's relationship with God, marriage is more important than any other relationship.

Inside a marriage is the only place that God intended for sex to take place (1 Corinthians 7:1-4). In other words any sexual act outside of marriage is a sin. This even applies to couples that eventually plan to get married or that are already engaged.



MARRIAGE IS MORE THAN A PIECE OF PAPER

Some people discount the importance of the legal process of marriage. They say things like, “it’s only a piece of paper” or “God knows we are committed to each other so that is enough to make us married.”

Having a marriage license is a state regulation in place to protect those who are in the process of getting married. In order to get a marriage license, an application must be filled out and signed by both people getting married in the presence of a county clerk. Then the applicants must show proof of age, identity, and social security numbers. In doing so, the state ensures that the people getting married are not minors; both individuals are legally competent, have mutual consent, are not being forced into it, and are not presently married to someone else.

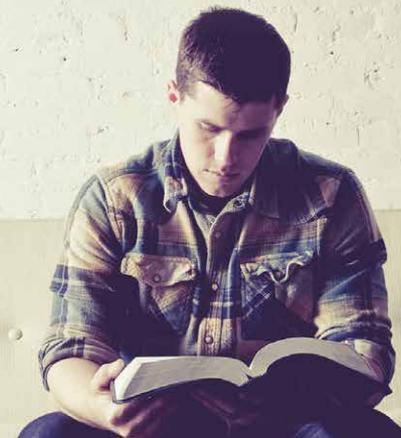
Most importantly, as long as the state is not interfering with your responsibility as a Christian to God, we have to obey the state laws on marriage. As stated in Romans 13:1-2, *“Every person is to be in subjection to the governing authorities. For there is no authority except from God, and those which exist are established by God. Therefore whoever resists authority has opposed the ordinance of God; and they who have opposed will receive condemnation upon themselves.”*

THIS IS A QUESTION OF OBEDIENCE

God calls us to be fully devoted to Him in every area of our lives. True, authentic Christianity holds nothing back but surrenders every area to God and to the teachings of His Word. When we obey God in this way, He is pleased with us. And in John 15:10, Jesus says, “When you obey my commandments, you remain in my love, just as I obey my Father’s commandments and remain in His love.”

If we deliberately disobey and refuse to follow God’s teaching, that is inconsistent with the life of a Christian. In Luke 6:46, the Lord asks, *“Why do you call Me, ‘Lord, Lord’ and do not do what I say?”* In John 14:15, the Lord also says, *“If you love me, you will keep my commandments.”* And Proverbs 19:16 reminds us that the person who obeys instructions guards his life, but he who is disapproving of God’s ways will die. James 1:22 encourages us, *“Do not merely listen to the word, and so deceive yourselves. Do what it says.”*

The Bible calls us to commit ourselves to following what God says instead of following what the world says. Paul urges, *“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).





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Our Pastoral Care team would love to talk to you more about this. If you have questions, contact us at 214.969.2435 to set up an appointment.

