

CELIBACY FOR  
UNMARRIED-SINGLES  
& SECONDARY  
VIRGINITY



# CELIBACY FOR UNMARRIED - SINGLES AND SECONDARY VIRGINITY

## If Unmarried, Is 'No Sex' Possible or 'Right'?

**Sexual freedom** for every person is one's own ability to make his/her own decisions about his/her sexuality.

➔ SEXU 55

- **to not have sex, saying "no"**
- **to have sex, saying "yes"**
- **to wait for sex, saying "I'll wait"**
- **with whom to have sex, saying "with whom?"**
- **when to have sex, saying "when?"**
- **how to have sex, saying "how?"**
- **saying "is it right for me and for the other person to have sex?"**

Any person who gives **any** of the above options to **any other person to decide**, regarding their sexuality, is not sexually walking in freedom. All persons have the right and personal empowerment to make their own sexual decisions. Christians in particular, have been additionally empowered by Jesus Christ daily, to be right and sexually free. The Church has a responsibility to teach and bring discipleship in the area of sexual freedom in the Biblical sense, to all believers.

## Influencing Factors upon Sexual Decision-Making

In many parts of the world, including Africa, various influences come to bear upon an individual's choices regarding his/her own sexual expression. However, marriage should not be entered into just for sex. Some reasons people use for getting married are:

### 1. Background

- **Cultural expectations:** As one gets older, the family and extended family expect one to be married by a certain age. If he/she does not get married, people may feel there is something wrong with that individual, or that he/she is abnormal.
- **Peer expectations:** All of one's friends are getting married, therefore, so must the person remaining single.
- **Personal needs:** The single person does not like to be alone, therefore, he/she must get married. The person wants children, therefore, he/she must get married. He/she feels sexual feelings in the body; therefore, he/she feels the need to get married.
- **Society's expectations:** Advertising, radio, TV, music, etc. all portray 'couple' images which can leave the unmarried or single person feeling sidelined, left out and marginalized.

2. **Natural biological desires.** Every person is **born** with sexual drives. These are God-given and not wrong in themselves. Biological sex drives are normal, are strong, and do not start only when a person gets married. They are part of the make-up of an individual from childhood through adulthood. God made marriage as the context in which these biological drives can be expressed, in safety, with the well-being of both partners in mind.

It is important to know, however, that “not being married” for whatever reason does not eliminate those sexual desires. Not being married does not make the person sexually dead!

There is, therefore, pressure upon single persons (especially as they leave their teen years and move into their twenties) to feel they ‘must’ have sex or they must ‘get married’ in order to meet the expectations of everyone. Christians in some parts of the world have taught in error, that to remain single is not God’s will. This teaching is not biblically supported even though the Bible does teach the principles of marriage.

### **Biblical Teaching about Remaining Single (Unmarried)**

*“Nevertheless he who stands steadfast in his heart, having no necessity but has power over his own will, and has so determined in his heart that he will keep his virgin, does well” (1 Corinthians 7:37).*

➔ SEXU 56

➔ REFR 09

The Bible teaching in the whole chapter of 1 Corinthians 7 is both for the **unmarried** who choose to remain so, and the **married** who choose so. The apostle Paul is saying that the unmarried person has been empowered by God to remain sexually pure, sexually healthy, and sexually celibate because that person is sexually free to do so. Every person must choose what is right and best for him/her self. There is nothing wrong with remaining single because of circumstances in life, or choosing not to marry. One should never marry because of outside pressure; one should only marry if it is right for him or her.

It is understood by many that the apostle Paul remained single and celibate.

*“For I wish that all men (and women) were even as I myself. But each one has his own gift from God, one in this manner and another in that. But I say to the unmarried and to the widows: It is good for them if they remain even as I am...” (1 Corinthians 7:7 & 8).*

➔ REFR 09

### **Disciplines to Help the Unmarried and Single Person to Remain Sexually Pure**

There is no doubt that with our biological urges for sex and the pressure from outside for sex, that it **will not be easy** for a young man or young woman to remain sexually virgin and celibate. Single people need helpful teaching, especially from the family and church, to equip them to stay sexually abstinent and pure. It is possible! The Bible tells us that remaining single and sexually pure will not be easy. That is why the apostle Paul instructs single people to remain sexually pure. Rather than move into sexual immorality while being single, it is better to marry than to burn.

*“Now concerning the things of which you wrote to me: It is good for a man not to touch a woman. Nevertheless, because of sexual immorality, let each man have his own wife, and let each woman have her own husband” (1 Corinthians 7: 1 & 2).*

*“...but if they cannot exercise self-control, let them marry. For it is better to marry than to burn with passion” (1 Corinthians 7:9).*

➔ REFR 10

### Steps to Help the Single Person Remain Sexually Pure and Free

➔ SEXU 31

1. **Be in daily personal relationship with Jesus Christ.** If Jesus is ‘IN’ one’s life then it is much more difficult to be “IN” sexual sin. Be in God’s Word, the Bible, each and every day. This gives inner strength to resist temptation in any form including sexual temptation.
2. **Talk to Jesus in prayer every day.** It is essential to pray to Jesus every day in order to have a strong relationship with God. Daily prayer also gives inner strength to make right decisions and to have the necessary life skills to carry out those decisions.
3. **Avoid alcohol or drugs if you want to be sexually free and pure.** Risky sexual behaviour very often happens when a person is under the influence of alcohol (beer, spirits, wine, etc.) or drugs (dagga, etc.).
4. **Keep opposite sex relationships healthy.** Both with opposite and same sex relationships, it is important that they be kept on a level that will facilitate wholesome friendships. In life, maintain a balance between God, family, work, church, leisure and sports, etc.

➔ SEXU 57

➔ SEXU 06

When the single person finds him/her self in a romantic relationship with someone, **set boundaries.** This means making a line or a fence around your actions, over which you will never cross. Some guidelines are:

- When together, be within proximity of other people. Other people close by will protect you from becoming too intimate. It is always safer to enjoy leisure company in three’s or more. It will be difficult to engage in sexual activity, robbing you of purity while single, if a third person is present!
- When together, do not touch the other person in ways that further ignite the fire of sexual passion. A good boundary question can be:

*“Would I touch this person in this way if Jesus were physically here with us?”*

If not, that touch is better left undone! Remember the proverb: If you play with fire you will burn your fingers! Remember: Sexual fire in marriage can bring warmth and intimacy. But, sexual fire if played with while single and unmarried, will burn and hurt both partners.

5. **Discipline your thought life.** When sexually impure thoughts come to mind, take immediate steps to put them out of your mind. Sometimes this means removing yourself from your present scene and engaging in an activity (such as a sport) that will redirect your thoughts.

*“...Whatever things are true, whatever things are noble, whatever things are just, whatever things are pure ,whatever things are ‘lovely,’ whatever things are of good report, if there is any virtue and if there is anything praiseworthy—meditate (think) on these things”*  
(Philippians 4:8).



REFR 10

*Casting down imaginations and every high thing that exalts itself against the knowledge of God, bring every thought into captivity to the obedience of Christ, and being ready to punish (bring self discipline) all disobedience when your obedience is fulfilled”*  
(2 Corinthians 10:5 & 6).



REFR 10

6. **Fill your life full of productive activity.** Maintain a balance with God, yourself, family, others, church, work, fun, sport or physical activity, study, etc. in your daily life.
7. **Be confident in your singleness.** Rest assured that there is nothing wrong with being unmarried. Remaining single does not make you of less value than a married person.
8. **Fulfil your need for intimacy in non-sexual ways.** Everyone has a need to be intimately loved. However, **intimately** loved does not have to mean **sexually** loved! Meet your own need for intimacy by being close to God, in Bible reading and prayer. Keep your family relationships strong and healthy. Have a few close friends with whom you can talk and share your inner person. Cultivate a healthy relationship with a person who is older than yourself, with whom you can seek counsel and share deeper thoughts.
9. **Remember that you are not helpless with regards to your sexuality.** Be confident that saying ‘no’ to sex is totally within your capability. People move by ‘relationships’ and have power in them. It is ONLY ANIMALS that move by ‘urges’ and they do not have power over them. Remember, you are NOT AN ANIMAL so you do not have to act like one sexually.
10. **Be sexually accountable.** Find a person who is older and wiser (preferably a pastor or elder) to whom you can keep yourself sexually accountable as a single person. Speak with this person fairly frequently concerning sexual matters and your personal progress in that area.
11. **Accept your single status as God’s will for this time in your life.** Do not allow yourself to “wish” you were married, living in a “what if” world. Be content with your status, knowing the following about your singleness:



SEXU 19

- That singleness is right for you now and in God’s time you will find the right person to marry. Meanwhile, you will not be anxious about being single.
- That singleness may be the best and most satisfying status for you on a permanent basis, and that you can be content with that.
- That singleness does not mean your life is less productive than that of a married person’s life.
- That singleness means God and your friends love you for who you are, not for your marital status.

***“..For I have learned in whatever state I am, to be content”  
(Philippians 4:11).***

➔ REFR 11

***“Be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known to God, and the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus”  
(Philippians 4:6 & 7).***

### **Secondary Virginity**

**Secondary virginity means that a person has had sex outside of marriage previously, but now chooses a life of purity..** Although virginity was lost to the person they had sex with, they choose now to be sexually pure. Secondary virginity is the choice to live a sexually clean life from now onward.

➔ SEXU 58

Many individuals have called **Jesus Christ, God’s Son, ‘the God of the second chance’!** Our world is made up of many failures, including sexual failures. Jesus Christ knew this and that is why He came to forgive and wipe away past failure, including sexual failure. It is very possible after sexual failure for one to see that sexual activity was neither in their best interest nor of the other partner’s. They can then make a secondary choice: the choice of secondary virginity. Secondary virginity says this:

**I MAKE A DECISION TODAY THAT I WILL LIVE BY. I WILL NEVER AGAIN HAVE SEX WITH ANYONE UNTIL I MEET AND MARRY THAT PERSON.**

➔ SEXU 59

Inviting Jesus Christ into one’s life gives greater empowerment to make sexual choices that are pure. The person who has failed by having sex outside of marriage, can make a quality decision to never again violate sexual purity and choose **secondary virginity**. Local churches can give much help and hope regarding secondary virginity to a sexually-exposed young generation. This teaching will bring restoration to a person who asks for forgiveness and determines to live a pure life. Individuals who have wrongly engaged in sex do not need our judgement; they need the hope of secondary virginity.

***“Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; old things have passed away; behold, all things have become new” (2 Corinthians 5:17).***

➔ REFR 11

Some who have engaged in sexual activity outside of marriage and violated their virginity may have to face consequences that are already hard to bear, as follows:

- STDs (sexually transmitted diseases) including AIDS
- Loss due to the breakup of the casual sexual relationship
- Hurt and pain because of the emotional trauma that goes with casual sex, molestation, rape, etc.

The Church can take this opportunity to lead such individuals to Jesus Christ, who can cleanse their lives and give them a fresh start.

➔ SEXU 32

*“...And the one who comes to Me I will by no means cast out” (John 6:37).*

➔ REFR 20

*“There is therefore now no condemnation to those who are in Christ Jesus, who do not walk according to the flesh, but according to the Spirit” (Romans 8:1).*

➔ REFR 20

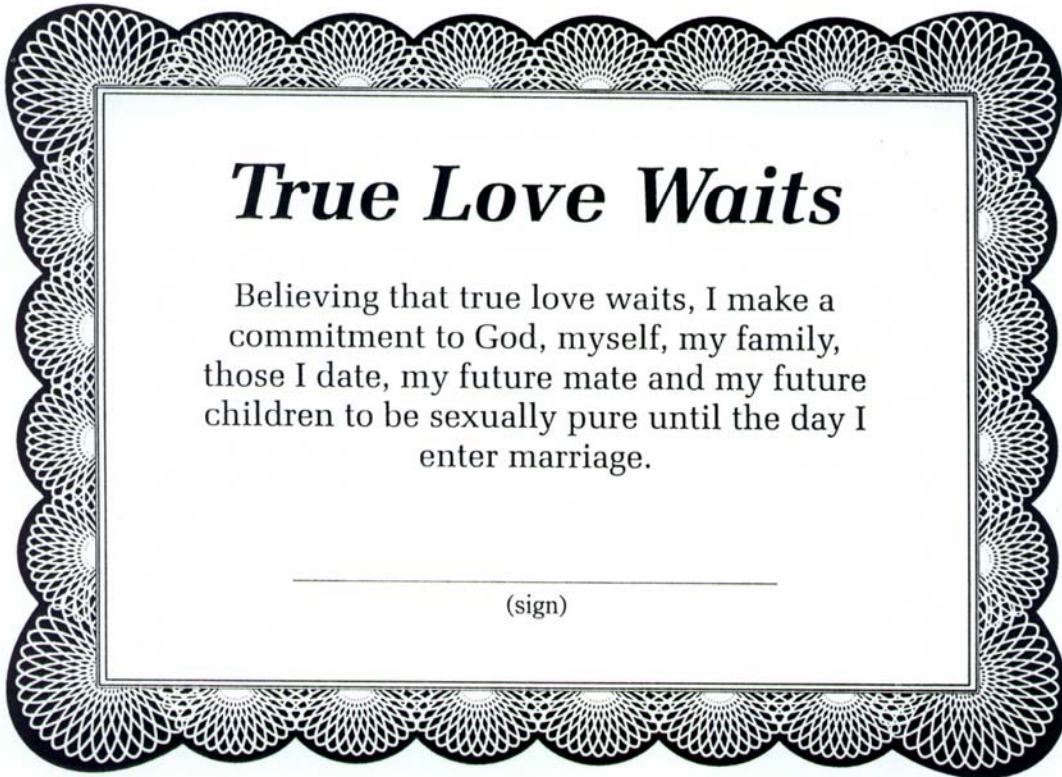
*“Do you not know that the unrighteous will not inherit the kingdom of God? Do not be deceived, nor adulterers, nor homosexuals, nor sodomites, nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortioners will inherit the kingdom of God. And such were some of you.*

## ***BUT***

*you were washed, but you were sanctified, but you were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus and by the Spirit of our God” (1 Corinthians 6:9-11).*

➔ REFR 12

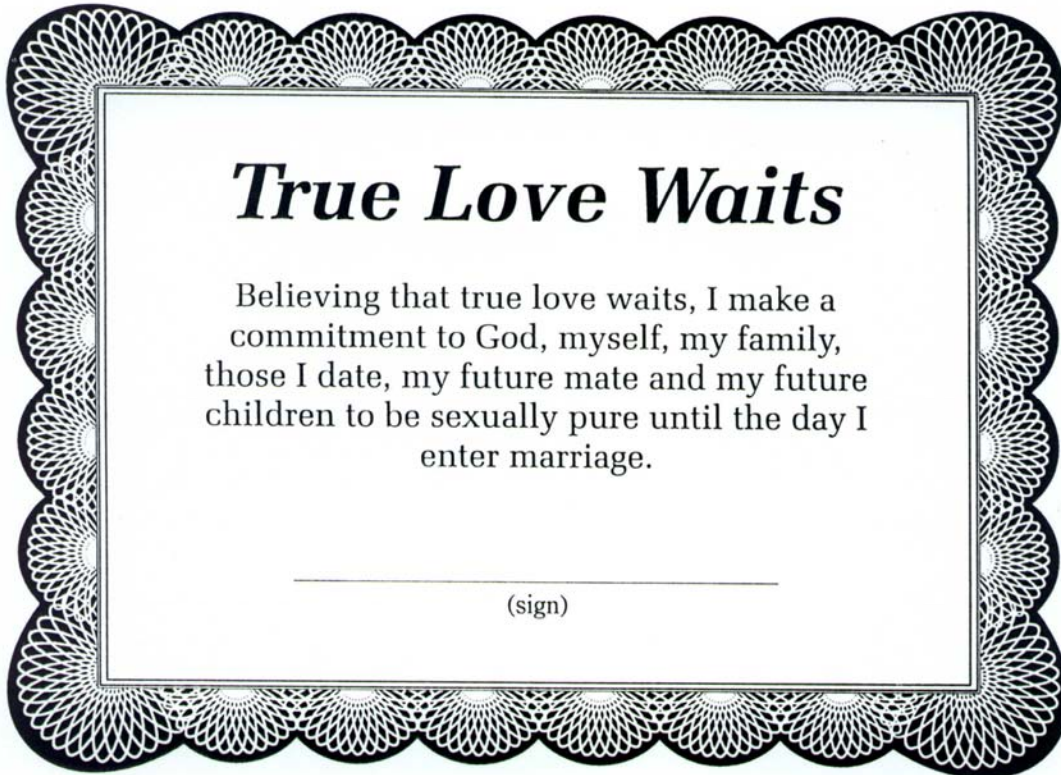
The choice of **secondary virginity** is given to each person who has failed, by confessing his/her sin and accepting Christ’s forgiveness and cleansing. Secondary virginity gives HOPE for the future and opportunity to begin all over again.



## *True Love Waits*

Believing that true love waits, I make a commitment to God, myself, my family, those I date, my future mate and my future children to be sexually pure until the day I enter marriage.

\_\_\_\_\_  
(sign)



## *True Love Waits*

Believing that true love waits, I make a commitment to God, myself, my family, those I date, my future mate and my future children to be sexually pure until the day I enter marriage.

\_\_\_\_\_  
(sign)