

THE REAL *purely* PURE CODE

**13 PRACTICAL WAYS TO
STAY SEXUALLY PURE**

KEMI ONANUGA

Foreword by Pastor Ghandi Olaoye

THE
REAL
Purity
CODE

13 PRACTICAL WAYS TO
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Endorsements for THE REAL PURITY CODE

In a culture filled with lusts, fornication, adultery and all types of sexual perversion comes a beacon of hope, THE REAL PURITY CODE. Sexual impurity is not new. It is as old as the world itself. The devil, who is the progenitor of this bastardized, God-given desire called sex has not been able to come up with a new trick. He is only taking advantage of the ignorance of people using sophisticated deceptions.

THE REAL PURITY CODE is not only practical and analytical but highly engaging. The author's advice to the singles on group dating and the need for all of us to be accountable to one another is exceptionally a home-run. It is amazing how she is able to craft an ancient truth of the Spirit in an easy-to-understand modern language without distorting the original intent of the message.

She did not write from a holier-than-thou position or from the standpoint of a taskmaster forcing her slaves to do her biddings. Instead, she encourages us to take certain, wise precautionary, pro-active steps that could potentially checkmate the workings of the flesh. If every visionary single person with a unique sense of purpose for their life will take time to read this authentic, prodigious piece and make the advice their life style, there will be more sanity, peace, and harmony in our homes, churches, and the world as a whole.

It is also interesting and therapeutic to know that THE REAL PURITY CODE offers a merciful, compassionate encouragement to those who are struggling with the spirit of lust. "Do not tumble into condemnation if you have ever missed the mark" she counseled.

The only appropriate word I would use to describe this fabulous book is GRACE. I am personally careful in recommending books, not that there are no good books out there, but being an author myself, I have found out that the process of cutting through the fog of irrelevant, information overload could be laborious and fastidious. I have by God's grace done this on your behalf. All you need to do now is: buy the book, read it, and recommend it

to others. Let us bring sexual purity to our world one person at a time. Be empowered.

SAM ORE

Author of Amazon #6 Bestseller, PURPOSE REDEFINED

Senior Pastor, Kingdom Ambassadors Christian Center Largo, MD

We live in a time and season where a strong spirit of seduction has blinded the hearts of people of their need for a Savior. In all facets of life, we see sexual images and connotations being used as a tool to desensitize people of the need for sexual purity, which is abstinence for singles and faithfulness for the married.

If there's anyone who has captured the essence of purity when it comes to sex and sexuality, it is Pastor Kemi Onanuga. Over the past few years, I have been blessed to know her and see her walk in the ministry with grace, beauty, favor, and integrity of heart. I have seen the Lord open doors to her in ministry and government, and she has walked worthy of her calling. I believe one of the reasons why she has been granted access to influence global leaders today is because of her burning desire to walk in sexual consecration before God, after giving her life and heart to the Lord.

This book takes us back to the basics of how we can have victory over the lusts of the flesh, the lusts of the eyes and the pride of life. It is my hope that the simplicity and the practicality of the words will leave a strong impact on your heart and mind to walk after the Spirit and not after the flesh in all areas of your life. That you will also become a voice in our generation that upholds sexual purity according to the standards of the Word of God.

NIKE ISRAEL-BOLARINWA

RCCG Jesus House DC, Silver Spring, MD

I really enjoyed this book! It opened my eyes to a lot of things I needed to work on in my life.

AYODELE DELE-GIWA

RCCG Jesus House DC, Silver Spring, MD

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KEMI ONANUGA



**THE REAL PURITY CODE: 13 PRACTICAL WAYS TO STAY
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DEDICATION

*To my daughter Anji, whose life I desire to shape by example through mine
(in Christ), hence my life choices.*



ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

With Special Thanks to my Lord and Savior; my friends and mentors whom the Lord has used to scaffold me, while working on me.

My family, without whom I will always be incomplete, to Ayo, Nigel, Mamatee and Ellen, thanks for all you did to plan and edit this book.

My Mother to whose courage I owe being here! Thank you all.

Kemi Onanuga



FOREWORD

Pastor Kemi Onanuga has vividly laid out some practical ways for people who are living in their season of singlehood to maintain an exciting and complete single lifestyle, while remaining sexually pure, in her book: **“The Real Purity Code - 13 Practical Ways to Stay Sexually Pure”**.

She explains how a person can keep themselves chaste until marriage by simply adhering to the principles taught in the Scriptures on the Fruit of the Spirit, no matter how long they have to wait!

This book is very relevant to our generation, especially in a time where people who choose to uphold sexual purity values have fast become the vast minority, in both younger and older generation settings.

Pastor Kemi inspires the reader to have a greater sense of value for self, a clear plan about how they intend to live their lives as a single person, and to enjoy their single life to the fullest!

I highly recommend this book for anyone living in their single season of life, single mothers, young widows, parents of teenagers and anyone who desires to inspire others with this great message.

PASTOR GHANDI OLAOYE

Senior Pastor

RCCG Jesus House DC, Silver Spring, MD



THE WIFE OF NOBLE CHARACTER

*“Who can find a virtuous wife?
For her worth is far above rubies.*

*The heart of her husband safely trusts her;
So he will have no lack of gain.*

*She does him good and not evil
All the days of her life.*

*She seeks wool and flax,
And willingly works with her hands.*

*She is like the merchant ships,
She brings her food from afar.*

*She also rises while it is yet night,
And provides food for her household,
And a portion for her maidservants.*

*She considers a field and buys it;
From her profits she plants a vineyard.*

*She girds herself with strength,
And strengthens her arms.*

*She perceives that her merchandise is good,
And her lamp does not go out by night.*

*She stretches out her hands to the distaff,
And her hand holds the spindle.*

*She extends her hand to the poor,
Yes, she reaches out her hands to the needy.*

*She is not afraid of snow for her household,
For all her household is clothed with scarlet.*

*She makes tapestry for herself;
Her clothing is fine linen and purple.*

*Her husband is known in the gates,
When he sits among the elders of the land.*

*She makes linen garments and sells them,
And supplies sashes for the merchants.*

*Strength and honor are her clothing;
She shall rejoice in time to come.*

*She opens her mouth with wisdom,
And on her tongue is the law of kindness.*

*She watches over the ways of her household,
And does not eat the bread of idleness.*

Her children rise up and call her blessed;

*Her husband also, and he praises her:
“Many daughters have done well,
but you excel them all.”*

*Charm is deceitful and beauty is passing,
But a woman who fears the LORD, she shall be praised.*

*Give her of the fruit of her hands,
And let her own works praise her in the gates.”
She considers a field and buys it;
From her profits she plants a vineyard.*

*She girds herself with strength,
And strengthens her arms.*

*She perceives that her merchandise is good,
And her lamp does not go out by night.*

*She stretches out her hands to the distaff,
And her hand holds the spindle.*

*She extends her hand to the poor,
Yes, she reaches out her hands to the needy.*





AUTHOR'S NOTE

I celebrated my 50th birthday a few months ago; it was a happy event although those who know my story may not think so. Why? Because traditionally, it is not looked at favorably when a person (especially a female) is unmarried at 50 and have never married before!

Contained in this book are some values and thoughts that have sustained me through this difficult journey of life. Having worked for almost 20 years as a minister of the Gospel, I have learned that the standard expected of us as ministers is more severe in terms of our everyday life than the ordinary person; therefore, permit me share some lessons learned with you that have sustained me as a woman of God especially in the area of sexuality.

There are many today who are believing for a spouse, I want to encourage you not to give up, hold on to God's promises while He's at work perfecting you for the journey of marriage, while also helping you to learn to enjoy where you are right now.

The principles contained and taught in this book, based on the Fruit of the Spirit according to Galatians 5, can be applied and practiced in every sphere of life. Here, we will examine and be taught how to apply it to our sexuality. I have lived the principles of self-leadership that I teach in this book, hence, I can assure you that even though some ideas may seem simplistic, they work. These principles are based on God's Word and He is never wrong as the Creator. What we must learn is to do things His way.

May the joy of the Lord, that is the joy that is found by the desire to please Him, continue to be the source of your strength. If you can be persistent in practicing and diligently doing the principles contained in this book, you will surely get your reward and victory.

Kemi Onanuga



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INTRODUCTION

I was speaking to a young counselee one day and he asked a question that caught me off-guard: “What are the practical things that one can do to remain sexually pure?”

**In this time in which
we live, everything is
promoted as being
permissible.**

That may not be a question that too many members of today’s generation of young people would ask. In this time in which we live, everything is promoted as being permissible. Movies, television, music, magazines, advertisements and even video games all glamorize sexual freedom and multiple casual partners for those who are not in committed relationships. For those who are sexuality is encouraged as a natural part of a healthy relationship and something to be experimented with prior to marriage. Young couples are often advised to say “yes” to marital relations before they say “I do” to marriage. The reason they are given is, of course, to find out if they are compatible as sexual partners. This deceit has for long made sense to the flesh.

The young man’s question is a very important one. It prompted me to think it was time to put pen to paper and try to answer the concerns about sexual

purity as truthfully as I can, focusing on practical ways that can help.

However, when I started writing, I did not see things from the point of view from which it would eventually be written. I began to pour out my heart to the next generation of power-houses (men and women) who will emerge in God's kingdom. This was when I received a revelation inspired from reading the teachings of the Apostle Paul in Galatians 5, which speaks about the Fruit of the Spirit. These attributes are profitable for every human being to possess, whether he or she is a Christian believer or professes to be of another faith. During my study, I realized that the lessons learned from this chapter of scripture could also be applied to our sexual or relational habits as we live from day to day.

I would like to say that when we read Galatians 5, our hearts and minds generally only process those things that the Bible says are ungodly or godly. Once we read the above scripture it becomes the basis of how we measure where we stand in our daily living.

We then begin to work on ourselves in the hope of mirroring the recommended way to godliness. As we seek help for example, we strive to overcome greedy or spiteful thoughts and behavior, or we try to polish up and express better manners. What we do not realize is that, as we practice these qualities to acquire the Fruit of the Spirit, we are protecting ourselves against one of the fleshly characteristics that is expressed through illicit sexual relationships.

There is much to be said about these various godly characteristics and behavior patterns that the Bible defines as "fruit." More than just personality traits, they are vital to Christian growth. When we harness them, we are equipped to overcome the temptations that are predominant in life today, including those that can cause emotional and physical havoc and confusion when interacting with the opposite sex prior to marriage.

These attributes are profitable for every human being to possess, whether he or she is a Christian believer or professes to be of another faith.

What I have been entrusted by the Holy Spirit to communicate to you is that as you build yourself up by the continuous practicing of the teachings of Galatians 5 and the application of these to your relationships, by this you will end up a winner!

Just as John 1:14 teaches us that the Word became flesh, I pray that as you read and deliberate on the following life-preserving chapters, you will come to the fullness of yourself and bloom into all that you were created to be! I pray that there will be a transformation in your attitude and life, and that what you learn becomes a part of your decision-making process from today forward.

Be blessed and empowered for change!



PROLOGUE

THIRTEEN WAYS TO STAY SEXUALLY PURE... AND FIVE MORE FOR GOOD MEASURE

The Fruit of the Spirit – Galatians 5:22-26

“Stand fast therefore in the liberty by which Christ has made us free, and do not be entangled again with a yoke of bondage.” (Galatians 5:1)

I say then: Walk in the Spirit, and you shall not fulfill the lust of the flesh.

For the flesh lusts against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh; and these are contrary to one another, so that you do not do the things that you wish.

But if you are led by the Spirit, you are not under the law. (Galatians 5:16-18)

The following pages contain some prescribed practical ways of avoiding illicit sexual encounters in order to prepare for the future and the greatness God has in store for you.



CHAPTER ONE

DATE IN GROUPS TO ENCOURAGE ACCOUNTABILITY AND RIPEN THE FRUIT OF SELF-CONTROL AND JOY

No doubt, we live in a global society where accountability seems to be an unknown concept. The expression “every man for himself,” comes to mind as we observe people striving to be the independent captains of their own ships and their own bosses, navigating by their own set of rules and standards.

Well, I love to speak the truth, and the truth is that no man or woman is an island. As with all areas of life, when you are involved in dating or courtship, you need to be accountable for your choices, and the actions and outcomes that result from them.

For those who seek to have and enjoy a Godly courtship, dating in groups is a wise and responsible option that can actually be a lot of fun. It can protect you from having physical contact with someone you may already be attracted to. Most people fall into sexual sin because an opportunity presents itself, and there are no deterrents to keep it from progressing..

**To have and enjoy a
Godly courtship, dating
in groups is a wise and
responsible option...**

When you date within the boundaries of a group setting, such as in the company of friends, you render yourself accountable to them in regards to your conduct.

Of course, this may not be helpful if your companions do not share your Christian faith and values! You must ensure that your accountability is given to those who are like minded in terms of what you are trying to achieve. The role they play in your relationship is similar to the role of chaperons many years ago. I do not expect that too many people these days, who are of acceptable dating or courtship age, go on dates while under the watchful eyes of a chaperon or a super nanny!

What you need to seek is an accountability partner. This is someone with impeccable character and moral standards, and who is in complete agreement with and in support of your desire for a sexually pure relationship. This person genuinely has your best interest at heart and may want you to serve in the same role for them. Remember that ***“as iron sharpens iron, so a man sharpens the countenance of his friend”*** (Proverbs 27:17)

This Scripture teaches us that believers are to strengthen, encourage and be available to one another, and part of the process is keeping each other accountable to the teachings of our Lord.

When you are involved in dating or courtship, you need to be accountable for your choices, and the actions and outcomes that result from them.

The biblically-defined purity that is right for you is right for every other unmarried believer...

The person or people who serve as your accountability partners do not bow down to criticism from the world. They do not view practicing accountability as being judgmental, intolerant or sticking their noses where they do not belong. The fact is, when it comes to our moral behavior, Christians have every right to hold each other accountable. There is no room for the popular, rationalizing attitude that says, *“Just because it’s wrong for one person doesn’t mean it’s wrong for everyone.”* Sexual purity is not to be treated as a personal choice situation, and that is because the Bible is very clear about how unmarried believers are to conduct themselves in that area of life. The biblically-defined purity that is right for you is right for every other unmarried believer, so it is vital that accountability partners agree with this.

Furthermore, we are instructed to hold one another accountable.

“Brethren, if a man is overtaken in any trespass, you who are spiritual restore such a one in a spirit of gentleness, considering yourself lest you also be tempted. Bear one another’s burdens, and so fulfill the law of Christ. For if anyone thinks himself to be something, when he is nothing,

he deceives himself. But let each one examine his own work, and then he will have rejoicing in himself alone, and not in another. For each one shall bear his own load.” (Galatians 6:1-2 NKJV)

Accountability can be a powerful tool for maintaining purity and strengthening the fruit of self-control. Group socializing with those of shared standards is one of the most effective activities for staying on the straight and narrow path, which, by the way, is not synonymous with a dull and boring life-style. Whether the gang is grabbing dinner from a local pizzeria or sky-diving from planes, group dating can be a lot of fun – just make sure everyone holds each other accountable for double checking the readiness of those Parachutes.



CHAPTER TWO

AVOID DESPERATION IN WANTING A MATE AND RIPEN THE FRUIT OF PATIENCE AND FAITH

As the saying goes, “Marry in haste, repent at leisure.” Like anger or alcohol, desperation clouds and impairs your judgment. Be patient and look before you leap. Time is a tester of all things, and when the time is right, you will know if you have the real deal or if you are getting the raw deal.

Sadly, too many people these days end up with the raw deal, and one reason that happens is because they rush to form relationships. This is a time-tested method for failure, especially when it comes to finding a relationship they hope will last a lifetime. Many relationships, even those that may have had potential to develop into something deeper, break up quickly because those involved did not allow enough time to communicate, get to know each other and fully commit themselves to the promise of “for better or for worse.”

Divorce rates in the United States are staggering. According to the Americans for Divorce Reform, Inc., an organization that stands behind legislation and cultural efforts to reduce the number of divorces, “*Probably 40 or possibly even 50 percent of marriages will end in divorce if current trends continue.*”(1)

Odds are, those numbers did not shock you. We have been hearing about the high statistics for quite some time now. Every time we turn around, it

seems we are learning about another divorce among co-workers, neighbors, friends, family and even within our churches. Some of these divorces are occurring among people who have been married for years and were believed to have one of those marriages made in Heaven. The news of so many couples not surviving the long haul, and of some who barely get out of the drive way, can leave us feeling disheartened and discouraged about the future state of matrimony.

Time is a tester of all things, and when the time is right, you will know if you have the real deal...

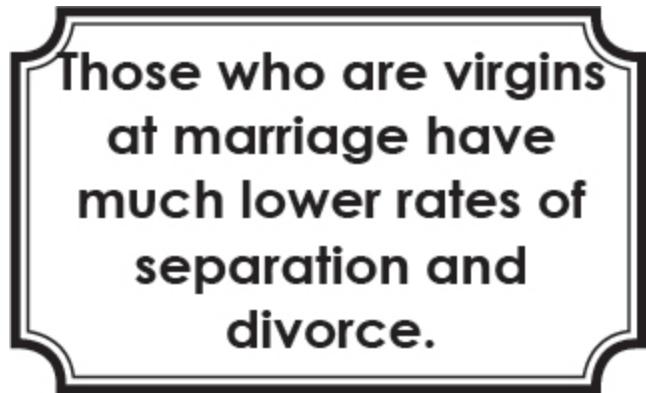
Yet, let us not forget the other side of those statistics. They also show us that between 50 and 60 percent of marriages are not failing. While there should be many more marriages succeeding, we can at least take comfort that not all wedding days ultimately lead to dooms day. Why do some marriages make the entire journey and others do not? The reasons are wide and varied, but research indicates that certain factors increase a couple's chances of being among those who grow old together:

Data from the National Survey of Family Growth indicate that "*women who are sexually active prior to marriage faced considerably higher risk of marital disruption than women who were virgin brides.*" These scholars explain that even when controlling for various differentials between virginal and non-virginal groups -- such as socio-economics, family background as well as attitudinal and value differences -- "*non-virgins still face a much higher risk of divorce than virgins.*"(2)

The massive and highly respected National Health and Social Life Survey, conducted at the University of Chicago, was the first serious, fully reputable study of sexual behavior in America. It found a marked connection between premarital sex and elevated risk of divorce. The authors explain: "*For both genders, we find that virgins have dramatically more stable first*

marriages...”, and “... those who are virgins at marriage have much lower rates of separation and divorce.”

Additionally:



“Those who marry as non-virgins are also more likely--all other things being equal --to be unfaithful over the remainder of their life compared with those spouses who do marry as virgins.” This higher prevalence of marital infidelity among the non-virgins is assumed to be an important factor in their higher likelihood of divorce, while “those who are virgins at marriage are those who go to greater lengths to avoid divorce.” Essentially, non-virgins typically appear to do more to harm their marriages and virgins do more to strengthen them. (3)

That is some inspiring information to keep in mind while patiently waiting on the Lord to lead you to the spouse He has intended for you. For those who have eaten the “forbidden fruit” (no pun intended), you can be restored in God and continue life’s journey as if nothing ever happened to you before if you are willing to pay the price and wait patiently in obedience.

It has been said that one of the most underused resources given to mankind is the gift of prayer. What a privilege to be invited to go before the throne of God Almighty and present our requests! Just knowing we can pray about something is a comfort in itself. Actually, following through and placing our burdens and broken hearts before Him is one of the most peace-instilling experiences we can ever have.

Take comfort too in knowing that the Scriptures invite us to pray about everything – the big, the small and everything in between. Nothing is too

large to challenge or dupe God, or too tiny to waste His time. Nothing shocks or surprises Him. He has seen it all and He has heard it all!

For those who have eaten the “forbidden fruit”, (no pun intended), you can be restored in God and continue life’s journey...

“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)

“Everything” means everything, including something as important as your future spouse. Trust that God will bring this meeting and union about, in His own perfect timing.

Praying about your future spouse does not equate taking to God that list you have been compiling since middle school called “Everything I Want in a Husband or wife.” (Now admit it, some of you do have that list!) God already knows what you want in the spouse you will share your life with.

Praying for this spouse whose face you cannot yet see is the first positive thing you will do for your future relationship.

More importantly, He knows what you want and what you specifically need in a mate. He really does have your back; you only need to trust and wait patiently upon Him to deliver what He has been preparing since before you were even born.

In your prayer time, remember to not only pray about finding your spouse, but also to pray for him or her as you would if they were already part of your life. Pray for their well being, happiness and wisdom to make good decisions about purity and the future. Pray that they draw closer to the Lord every day as God prepares them to become your spouse.

Praying for this spouse whose face you cannot yet see is the first positive thing you will do for your future relationship. Spiritually, you are already making a connection and getting off to a fantastic start!



CHAPTER THREE

COMMIT TO CELIBACY

AND RIPEN THE FRUIT OF PEACE AND SELF-CONTROL

(You can't have too much of that one!)

Whatever you practice is what you will get used to and come to expect as normal behavior. If you never have sex, you will not miss it. That, however, is not to say you will not be curious about it and tempted to experiment, especially if you truly are attracted to and in love with someone.

Choosing to abstain until after the “I dos” is called celibacy. The lifestyle can be challenging at first, and some may stumble in their efforts. However, God knows the thoughts and intentions of a man’s heart, so do not ever allow a mistake to keep you down or cause you to remain off track and continuing in sin. Repent, recommit your ways to the Lord and rise back up!

There really is nothing you cannot train your body to do. Have you ever started an exercise program? Those 10 stomach crunches that nearly killed you on the first day were done with ease after a couple of weeks. Training is about discipline, and while initial resistance is to be expected, persistence leads to boundaries being moved and redefined.

Celibacy requires self-control and is about not sleeping together on the first, second, third and 100th date. Early intimacy, however, is where many people slip-up, resulting in “too much too soon” that prevents them from ever advancing to a next date. People who have experienced this will tell

you that one of the worst feelings of rejection and robbery of peace, is waiting for a phone call that never comes from someone they just began an intimate relationship with.

While the old double standard may enrage some contemporary women, it is a hard fact of contemporary dating...

Why does this happen? What causes a seemingly nice, caring guy to suddenly don the ‘jerk’ mask of love-her-and-leave-her? Is it possible that the old fashioned warning that men do not respect women who give of themselves early in a relationship still holds true in this modern day of sexual freedom? Think about it!

Yes, this truth is alive and operating in the twenty-first century! While the old double standard may enrage some contemporary women, it is a hard fact of contemporary dating or courtship, like it or not. With some men, nothing will reduce a woman to the disrespected status of Miss Right Now faster than her consenting to early sex.

Another possibility for early sex resulting in early relational demise is because the brain releases a powerful, pair-bonding hormone called oxytocin during sexual relations. This occurs in all humans and intensifies as time goes on. When this hormone is released between unmarried partners, especially those who do not know each other too well, it can lead to expectations (usually on the woman’s part) that are well advanced of where the relationship actually is in the man’s opinion. Confusion and misplaced emotions find their way in, leaving the relationship fraught with complications that many men just do not want to deal with. They often feel like the relationship has jumped onto a fast track that they simply are not ready for.

On the other hand, when sex is embraced inside the bonds of marriage, oxytocin performs as it is intended to, which is to draw husband and wife into a deeper and more intimate relationship, one that their commitment to marriage indicates they are emotionally ready for. This appears to especially be the case with women who marry as virgins. Research actually shows that a woman's most intense love is likely to be for her first sexual partner, and that a man has greater love for a woman who loses her virginity to him than he does for previous partners.

I was told of a young lady who shared with her parents her decision to practice abstinence until her wedding night. Needless to say, her Christian parents were very pleased by her choice to follow as the Lord instructs. They were also proud that she made this decision in the face of her girlfriends who, one by one, were falling away to experiment with sexual activity. Their purpose was to become more popular with the young men they attended high school with. (Indeed, they did start receiving more text messages from some of these young men – but the messages were only asking them to sneak out and meet them at 2 o'clock in the morning. They were never an invitation to go to a movie or a game, or to grab a bite to eat as these boys seemed to enjoy doing in the company of some other girls.)

Back to the young lady who chose to walk in the ways of the Lord, her parents bought her a purity ring to celebrate her wise decision. If you are not familiar with this type of jewelry, it is a ring symbolizing one's commitment to abstinence while unmarried.

Prior to giving their daughter the purity ring, her parents had it engraved with these words: "God knows his name." The intent of these lovely words was to always remind their daughter that God knows exactly who He has picked out for her, as well as what every detail of their life together will be like. They wanted her to always realize that a man hand-chosen by God is worth saving herself for, and hoped this truth would reinforce her decision and remind her to turn to God for help when temptation arose.

When choosing to remain celibate until marriage, it helps to recognize why God has deemed it so important.

1 Corinthians 6: 15-20 says:

“Do you not know that your bodies are members of Christ? Shall I then take the members of Christ and make them members of a prostitute? Never! Or do you not know that he who is joined to a prostitute becomes one body with her? For, as it is written, “The two will become one flesh.” But he who is joined to the Lord becomes one spirit with him. Flee from sexual immorality. Every other sin a person commits is outside the body, but the sexually immoral person sins against his own body. Or do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit within you, whom you have from God? You are not your own? For you were bought at a price; therefore glorify God in your body and in your spirit, which are God’s.”

**Sexual sin is a sin
against our own bodies,
and that we become
like one flesh with every
single person we have
ever had a sexual en-
counter with.**

What we see here is that sexual sin is a sin against our own bodies, and that we become like one flesh with every single person we have ever had a sexual encounter with. Spiritually speaking, we are taking every past partner, including casual, one night stands, into our brand new marriage bed and asking our spouse to join with them. Likewise, our spouse is subjecting us to any previous partners of theirs. When you view it from this perspective, virginity looks better!

Praise God, with Christ all things are made fresh and new, and Christian couples who keep Him at the heart of their marriages can overcome less than stellar pasts. It would be nice to be able to avoid the agony of past baggage in the first place.

Many married Christian couples have told stories of regretting the decision not to be patient in waiting for each other. I was told of one woman who described it as “wasting herself instead of waiting.” It takes a lot of spiritual

maturity to deal with the guilt and remorse felt in later years, so do yourself a favor and wait.



CHAPTER FOUR

EMBRACE THE WORD OF GOD AND RIPEN THE FRUIT OF JOY AND FAITH

The Word of God will save your life. It is like an anti-virus for the mind and soul, wiping out the bad information and restoring the spirit with immeasurable joy.

When your default is the Word of God, and you have studied and meditated upon it, you discover a wonderful truth: ***“For the word of God is living and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the division of soul and spirit, and of joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart.”*** (Hebrews 4:12)

In speaking of the Bible, Robert E. Lee, general of the Confederate Army during the American Civil War, once said, “In all my perplexities and distresses, the Bible has never failed to give me light and strength.”

There is absolutely no other book like the Holy Bible, for it is as applicable to life today as it was thousands of years ago. No other words have inspired more good and positive change than the ones contained between its covers, speaking to the individual heart and imparting wisdom, comfort, hope and guidance at precisely the time it is needed. One of the most key ways God has chosen to reveal Himself to us, is through the Bible, His Word and His Will:

There is absolutely no other book like the Holy Bible, for it is as applicable to life today as it was thousands of years ago.

“Your word is a lamp to my feet and a light to my path.” (Psalm 119:105)

Written over a span of 1,500 years, the Bible was penned in three languages, in ten countries, on three continents, by more than forty authors, living different experiences and writing in an array of emotional states. Yet, it speaks on hundreds of topics with amazing continuity and consistency. So far, its fulfilled prophecies have an accuracy rate of 100 percent, right down to the smallest of details. Jesus alone fulfilled over 300 of them at his First Coming. The earliest fragment of the New Testament dates to A.D. 130, making it the most credible document in existence, with the vast majority of its books written no more than 50 years after the resurrection of Jesus and done so by men who were alive at the time He walked the Earth. Archaeologists have confirmed numerous discoveries that support teachings found in the scriptures.

Is there any reason for anyone to doubt the authenticity of this Book?

Be sad for those who doubt, scoff or call it a fable. The Word of God empowers you to derive joy from life no matter what you are suffering, and that includes the heartbreak of broken relationships. When we follow the Bible’s instructions to keep our eyes focused on Christ, our circumstances lose their power to overwhelm us and we are soothed by **“the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding.”** (Philippians 4:7)

This holds true, of course, only if you embrace and cherish the mighty Scriptures, then apply their treasures to your life. Leaving your Bible at rest on the nightstand does you no good whatsoever. Neither will years of multiple dating disasters and disappointments, which will steal your joy as

they expose your emotions to abuse and your body to the ravages of illicit sex.

Now, if you truly are walking in the light, you may still feel hurt when a relationship falls through. However, the relationship will not include premarital sex if you are living for the Lord, so at least you will not be dealing with that aspect of heartbreak.

And what is that aspect? Is it more painful when a relationship that included sex comes to an end? It certainly can be. If you feel like the sexual aspect deepened the relationship and brought you closer to the other person (and you may be vulnerable and deceived into believing this when choosing to live in disobedience to the Lord), letting go can be more difficult. If your partner has left you because he does not feel as strongly for you as you do for him, despite the physical intimacy, you may feel humiliated and betrayed after giving so much of yourself. If he is leaving because he has met someone else, you may feel used and cheapened, as though he was only biding his time with you until someone he deemed better came along. If he says he is no longer attracted to you, look out: your self esteem is in for a real assault as you begin doubting your desirability and whether or not you have what it takes to hold onto someone.

You can experience all those doubts and feelings even if sex was not part of the relationship, but its absence will spare you the emptiness that descends after losing someone who knows the deepest, most intimate part of you. You are free to heal without the additional burden that sex places on a failed relationship. Undistracted by the regret, remorse, second guessing, low self esteem and self-admonishment that often follows sexual sin; you can begin the journey to a healed heart by focusing on who you are in Christ.

Look out: your self esteem is in for a real assault as you begin doubting your desirability...

And who is that? Someone He deemed precious enough to die for, that's who! That is joy. You can be restored to this joy even if the relationship was sexual in nature, but it may be delayed. That is because most people embroiled in a sinful lifestyle go through a lot of grieving and anger before they finally break before the Cross, repent and begin to rise from the ashes. If you never leave the Cross at all, you will be much better equipped to begin healing from a broken heart. No matter what the circumstances of a break up are, even though, tears are a natural response to an aching heart and the death of dreams. We see in Psalm 34:18 that "***The LORD is near to those who have a broken heart, and saves such as have a contrite spirit.***"

God is so keenly and personally aware of your pain that He actually keeps a record of every single tear you shed. "***You number my wanderings: put you my tears into your bottle: are they not in your book.***" (Psalm 56:8)

God is so keenly and personally aware of your pain that He actually keeps a record of every single tear you shed.

What a tender God we serve! He wants to comfort us when relationships fails and will be faithful to do so, even if the ethics of the relationship strayed from the Biblical way and our time with that person was marred with mistakes and self-destructive decisions. Repentance from sexual sin, from any sin, is an opportunity for restoration and the Lord promises this cleansing if we are truly sincere in our repentance.

What He most desires, though, is that we keep our relationships pure. Meditate on His Word and understand why this is so important to Him. See that He has made His instructions to abstain very clear, leaving no wiggle room to twist and turn the scriptures to suit ourself and justify choosing premarital sex.

Many have said, “It is okay if you are in love” and “It is okay if you are engaged.” People who believe this did not draw those ideas from the scriptures, because God’s Word leaves no space whatsoever for that interpretation. That is because He loves us and wants the best for us. Choose the Word and choose joy!



CHAPTER FIVE

CROSS NO BOUNDARIES

AND RIPEN THE FRUIT OF SELF-CONTROL (AGAIN!)

The Bible says to run when faced with sexual temptation (1 Corinthians 6:18-20). Not casually stroll or walk briskly, but run. This is because our Father knows we are not naturally built to always overcome the temptations of illicit sex. No doubt you have noticed this, but in case you have not, we Christians have hormones too!

Listen to the Word and instruct your legs to run. It is not acting in wisdom to try to convince yourself that “nothing will happen,” or that you are strong enough to resist romantic wooing and advances from someone you are attracted to. You are human and human beings have been built to enjoy physical intimacy, which is the body’s natural response to the sexual expressions from someone you desire and may be in love with. Unless you choose to remove yourself from the place of temptation, you are not likely to win this war against the flesh.

We are not facing anything new to the human race, and God’s Word promises that we will not be tempted beyond what we can bear. Withstanding and bearing temptation does not necessarily mean we grit our teeth and wait for it to give up on us and go away. While that may be applicable in some types of temptation, it is not likely to work when the object of our desire is in full seduction mode. In this case, bearing the

temptation often means finding a means of escaping it, which the Word says God will provide.

Listen to the Word and instruct your legs to run. It is not acting in wisdom to try to convince yourself that “nothing will happen...

“There has no temptation taken you but such as is common to man: but God is faithful, who will not allow you to be tempted above that you are able; but will with the temptation also make a way to escape, that you may be able to bear it.” (1 Corinthians 10:13)

Escaping may mean literally escaping, as Joseph did when the wife of Potiphar (an officer of Pharaoh) grabbed his cloak and said “Lie with me.” So much for subtlety! Joseph “left his garment in her hand, and fled and ran outside” (Genesis 39: 12). He made a conscious decision not to cross any boundaries.

On the contrary, King David had the object of his temptation delivered right to him. **“The woman was very beautiful to look upon” and David began to inquire about her. The woman was Bathsheba and “David sent messengers, and took her; and she came in unto him, and he lay with her”** (2 Samuel 11 verses 2 and 4). David’s poor judgment to cross that line led to all sorts of problems before he finally expressed the wrenching repentance in Psalm 51.

Know, recognize and never cross the boundaries. Whenever possible, avoid them completely to prevent getting yourself into any compromising situations. It is better to run while the escape hatch is standing open, rather than fumble with locks, prying and pulling the door when it is already too late.



CHAPTER SIX

SAY “NO” WITHOUT INCITING ANGER AND RIPEN THE FRUIT OF GENTLENESS AND PEACE

Never apologize or feel guilty for saying “no” to sex before marriage. Never!

The person who knows your convictions about premarital relations and still pressures you is not someone who cares about your opinion, period. The person, who does care about your opinion, will respect and honor your stance, whether he is happy about it or not. If God does some work on that person, and they do end up becoming your spouse, their respect, trust and appreciation for you will only increase. Believe me, many stories have been told by those who got a “no” while trying their luck in the early days of dating and courtship.

Even if that person does not become your spouse, they will still admire you for remaining true to your beliefs. They might not act like it, but deep down, they will be glad you remained strong. Nobody has respect for someone who does not have the gumption to “walk what they talk”.

Be clear that you intend to wait until marriage to have sex, not until “you are ready” or the “time is right.”

Be clear that you intend to wait until marriage to have sex, not until “you are ready” or the “time is right.” That can be misleading, and gives an amorous suitor hope that it is just a matter of time before intimacy is part of the picture!.

Saying “no” is about pleasing the Lord and preserving your virtue. When someone says, “If you really loved me, you would show me,” the correct response is, “No, if you really loved me, you would not ask to see.” Remember, people who use the “if you” ploy are trying to manipulate you. Do not give them this authority in your life.

However, you can throw cold water on a hot pursuer without being cruel. **“A soft answer turns away wrath, but a harsh word stirs up anger”** (Proverbs 15:1). Telling the person how you feel about premarital sex, and why you feel that way, should suffice and not be perceived by them as a personal rejection or dislike for them. If, however, a person is being persistent or forceful, and you feel harassed or threatened, do not be shy about screaming out for help. It cuts both ways, male and female!

Finally, it is difficult to address the topic of saying “no” without acknowledging a very serious concern in today’s society. The sad reality is that some people skip the asking part and go straight to taking advantage of someone who is incapacitated. I am speaking of the date rape drug, which an unscrupulous person can easily slip into the drink of someone else.

You do not have to be in a night club or other environment where alcohol is served to fall victim to this crime. It can occur in any setting and with any beverage. Young women are usually the unsuspecting targets of this vile

attack. Please protect yourself by never leaving a beverage unattended when among strangers or in a social situation that includes people you do not know well. If you do put your beverage down and look away, even for a minute, consider it trash and throw it away.



CHAPTER SEVEN

KEEP THINGS CLEAR

AND RIPEN THE FRUIT OF GENTLENESS AND MEEKNESS

Clarify the honest standing of your relationship. Is your companion a suitor or just a friend? Take care not to confuse the two as they each lead down a different aisle of life. The Bible says that two cannot head in the same direction unless they agree on that direction (Amos 3:3). If you are heading north, and the other person is heading south, make it known in the beginning so that you both can move towards your own destinations.

Be upfront with the other person about how you view and feel about them. Now, if you genuinely hope romantic love will blossom, it may not be wise to blurt this out on the second date! They might scamper away like a frightened rabbit. Better to see how things develop before any declarations of great hope are made.

If, however, you are absolutely certain your feelings are strictly friendship, it is only fair you be truthful about it – especially if his or her interest seems to be sparking on a more romantic note. Women are hesitant to speak up about this, not wanting to hurt the other in love with. Unless you choose to remove yourself from person's feelings. In the long run, though, there will be much more disappointment if the relationship is allowed to progress and the feelings to grow.

It is also easy to get caught up in the attention an interested man shows in you, even though you do not return his sentiments. Do not love the way he loves you and enjoy the attention when you know you will never return the feelings. Do not go with the flow and make yourself try to love someone just because he is a person you do not want to hurt or +because you are tired of the dating game and want to settle down. Again, someone will be hurt much worse if they are allowed to believe that your feelings are running more deeply than they actually are.

On the other hand, many friendships have the potential to develop into much more. If you sincerely believe this defines your situation, let them know, but be careful that your words and actions only reflect where things currently stand.

One of the most important lessons that cover every element of life is found in Matthew 7:12, where Jesus teaches, “Whatever you want men to do to you, do also to them, for this is the Law of the Prophets.” From His Sermon on the Mount, and also called The Golden Rule, the short version is “do unto others” and it literally applies to every single area of life, including dating and courtship. You certainly would not appreciate a man leading you to believe a relationship was moving along nicely when, deep down, his feelings did not truly agree with that. In approaching your dating or courtship relationship, it is only kind, good and a character of Christian love to offer people the same honesty you yourself want.

It is also important that you be honest in your assessment of how someone feels about you. Do their actions imply that they might see a future with you..?

It is also important that you be honest in your assessment of how someone feels about you. Do their actions imply that they might see a future with

you, or does it look like you will always be the “pal” he invites to the car show or likes to shoot hoops with? If it is the latter, and you really want the former, it can be difficult to accept. You do not, however, want to fall into the pit of putting your life on hold in hopes that they will come to see you differently, and realize that driveway basketball is only one of your many charms and talents.

The sooner you accept that you may not be what they are looking for in a spouse, the sooner you can move forward and be available, emotionally and otherwise to others who might become interested in more than friendship. Never play games, though. If you leave, do so with true intentions of making a break. For instance, too often, women leave the relationship thinking, “once I am gone, he will realize what he is lost and want me back.”

Granted, there have been cases of this working. Someone discovers they really do miss the person who has left, and regret ever letting them walk away. Trying to manipulate it into working, though, is a gamble. You are still putting your life on hold and your feelings at risk, and if the person does not come after you to ask for another chance, you will feel worse than you did to begin with. When you choose to leave a relationship, “plan on staying gone” not just on vacation until he realizes what he has lost. If he does pursue you, do not go back until you have carefully considered why you had to leave to get his attention. After all, would you not rather date someone who knows what he would be losing if you chose to leave, instead of one who has to realize it after you are gone? Think about it!

As you know, and as some of these scenarios have demonstrated, the earlier stages of a relationship are sometimes hard to decipher and maneuver. You can see, then, how adding sexual intimacy to the mix can only serve to confuse, complicate and kill the relationship before you are even sure what its status is. Savor those early weeks and months of dating, enjoy each other’s company without the added element of sex and all the emotional extras it brings with it. This is also the time to find out if the person really is on board with your plans to postpone sex until marriage. If they continue wanting to see you, and if they are willing to advance to a more serious stage of courtship, you may just have a keeper!



CHAPTER EIGHT

TEST FOR TOUGH LOVE

AND RIPEN THE FRUIT OF TEMPERANCE AND LOVE

The tough love I speak of does not mean giving them the silent treatment over a forgotten phone call, comparing their success to another's as a ploy to motivate them, or issuing the ultimatum that they choose between you and the dog they have played fetch with for fifteen years (careful, people have lost out on that one). Looking at these from a woman's perspective, this Queen Bee ("hear me buzz, feel my sting") behavior hardly reflects the attributes of love as defined in the Bible.

"Love suffers long and is kind; love does not envy; love does not parade itself, is not puffed up; does not behave rudely, does not seek its own, is not provoked, thinks no evil; does not rejoice in iniquity, but rejoices in the truth; bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things." (1 Corinthians 13:4-7)

Love should not even be declared until both parties are absolutely sure they understand the Biblical definition of it.

Understanding the characteristics of that definition, and accessing your relationship to see if it fulfills them, is the act of tough love I advise you to take. Is your relationship in accordance with it, or has Cupid's arrow really missed its mark?

When you truly want a relationship to work, it can be hard to face the fact that the qualities and expressions of love are keeping their faces hidden. If both people realize this and want to change things, there is hope if they are equally committed. If, however, the relationship does spell out love, celebrate the blessing by nurturing it and keeping it healthy.

Hopefully, before you have even fallen in love, the Lord is present in your relationship, you have both agreed that you are on the same path, share the same goals and have vowed to postpone sex until after marriage. Protect your interest by sticking to the promise of pre-wedding chastity. It will increase your chances of actually making it to the altar.

However, if this relationship needs some work, do not be deceived into thinking sex will help improve things by drawing you closer together. Oh, it may initially fool you into thinking it is, but it will really only serve to temporarily distract you from the problems, which may continue to grow while you are not looking. At best, sex will be a short-term postponement of having to deal with unpleasant things, but it will never prove to be a solution to problems. If sex was the remedy to such things, God would not forbid us from engaging in it prior to marriage.

“Do not stir up nor awaken love until it pleases” is the wisdom we are given in of Song of Solomon 2:7, which is a poetic way of saying do not bring sex into a relationship before marriage. Why is it so important that we not use the physical expression of love as a way to help repair the other expressions of it?

One way or another, sex changes a relationship. It is not the same once intimacy has been introduced, and outside of marriage, these changes will not ultimately show themselves to be for the better. (Even inside of marriage, substituting sex to avoid addressing problems will only hold the fight of the century at bay for so long!) Adding it to a relationship that is already fraught with problems is a recipe for breaking up. If you think certain behaviors bother you prior to the relationship becoming sexual, wait until you see how much they bother you after you have given the last thing you had to give.



CHAPTER NINE

AVOID THE DRAMA **AND RIPEN THE FRUIT OF GOODNESS AND JOY**

Do not be afraid to ask where the other person is right now in his own life. Likewise, know where you are in your life so that you can see if the other person's desires agree with yours. Remember, two have to walk in the same direction to be in agreement. (Amos 3:3)

If you are on a shared road traveling in the same direction, pay attention to the dips in the path, off shoots for getting lost and road signs that issues may be ahead. If all is on course, do not travel too fast, but do not hold things up either. Enjoy the journey, looking forward to the future but not becoming so fixated on it that you stop nurturing the present. Sometimes, in our desire to get settled with the right person, we become so concerned about the next stage of the relationship that we stop savoring its current goodness; "we are so busy worrying where we are going, that we ignore where we are". This robs the relationship of healthy growth.

From the day you begin dating, aim to keep your relationship drama-free from the nit-picky nuances just waiting to trip you up.

Be a lover of peace, learn to talk things through, be sensitive to feelings, keep the door to communication wide open and do not sweat the small stuff. Avoid creating mountains out of mole hills and choose your discussions carefully. For example, does the fact that he leaves empty soda cans on the counter really negate the fact that he is responsible with his finances, knows exactly how to make you laugh, and honestly seems to like your cat? Recognize what things are worth bringing up and what are not. Ask that you do the same for each other, and chances are you will appreciate the generosity you show each other responding in kind, summing up all your wonderful qualities before commenting on little things that simply do not matter in the grand scheme of life, yet are just enough to trigger an argument.

Women, remember these wise words from Proverbs 21:9: **“Better to dwell in a corner of a housetop, than in a house shared with a contentious woman.”**

Should you and this man progress to being husband and wife, you certainly would not want to drive him to the rooftop because he deems it better than living inside with you! Nor would you want to face issues that make you want to pack your bags and move up there first. From the day you begin dating, aim to keep your relationship drama-free from the nit-picky nuances just waiting to trip you up. Step over and around them and go in peace.

In Philippians 4:8, we are told to look upon **“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 on these things.”

Always be generous in how you view each other. This is not to say that you rationalize or justify unacceptable behavior

Applying this to a relationship can make a world of difference in how we think about and view our partner. For example, if he is rarely able to meet you for breakfast on Saturday mornings in the autumn because he coaches a youth football team, what does that make him? Is he an overly-committed big kid who puts a bunch of 10-year-olds before you and your relationship, or a guy who loves kids and is serving in a mentorship role that is teaching young people the values of teamwork?

Always be generous in how you view each other. This is not to say that you rationalize or justify unacceptable behavior by trying to find things to make it pure and lovely, which is impossible to do with some actions. It means when dealing with the situations and circumstances you are not crazy about, do not automatically buy a ticket aboard the train of negativity and frustration, which can distort your viewpoint. Instead, keep things in perspective and aim to see them for the good they may really represent.

How generous are most men when they learn about a woman’s vow of chastity until marriage? Many young women fear there is no generosity available at all in the dating pool, that she is immediately dismissed as a cold, boring, convent-bound prude no man will consider time-worthy. She may be right in regards to some men, but note, only to some!

Plenty of men view her as a confident, self-respecting, trustworthy, grounded woman, a true catch who recognizes her value and the fact that she is worth waiting for.

Even when it seems like the fish God has chosen for us is lost out there amid a sea of hungry sharks and barracudas, be sure that they are swimming closer to us every day, and that their view of us will be a reflection of Philippians 4:8.

Finally, brethren, 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 on these things.



CHAPTER TEN

TAKE YOUR TIME

AND RIPEN THE FRUIT OF FAITHFULNESS AND PATIENCE

When you know you have found someone special, and are confident they may even be “the one,” it is only natural to want to find the nearest mountaintop and shout it for the entire world to know – or to at least let your 700 friends on Facebook hear all about it. These days, social media makes it very easy to get the word out about anything and everything, but be discrete in what you tweet to your Twitter followers regarding your relationship.

Keep in mind that even outgoing, sociable people often prefer to keep their private lives safe from the curious eyes of others, and cringe when they get Facebook notifications that they have been tagged in two dozen photos they themselves have not even seen yet. You may be one of them, so practicing discernment about how much to post regarding your relationship should not be too difficult, no matter how much you want to share your happy news and changing life with others. Give yourselves time to really get to know each other well before others get to know you as a couple. Too much visibility brings out the busybodies, the opinionated, the critics and the ones who just will not leash their tendencies to interfere in other people’s lives. Sadly, not everyone you know may be happy for you, especially if they are still searching for someone to share their own life with. Be certain that you and your beloved are rock solid before you take on the world, including

those well meaning relatives who will constantly be checking your finger for an engagement ring and asking when they will be hearing wedding bells.

**Give yourselves time
to really get to know
each other well before
others get to know you
as a couple.**

Hopefully you had been praying for and asking God to lead you to His chosen mate for you before this wonderful person came into your life. Remember when we want so much for something to be right, it is easy to convince ourselves that it is, and sometimes easy to convince ourselves that a prayer has been answered when it may not have been. It takes continued faith in God's promise to direct our footsteps as we enter into and continue along in a relationship.

It also takes willingness to accept what God wants to show us about the relationship we are in. Keep in mind, just because it does not have fairy tale perfection (no relationship can live up to those standards), does not mean it is wrong. Pray for God to give you realistic expectations, clarity and confirmation that this is where He desires you to be.

God should be the key connecting factor of your relationship. Scripture teaches that marriage partners are to be equally yoked, so if this person is not a believer, then he is either not your future mate or it is not the appointed time for you to accept a ring. Some people go ahead and marry, thinking they will be the positive influence who leads their mate to Christ. They may very well be that person, but the other person's decision for Christ should come before the marriage. If it does not, this couple will be crossing the threshold on the wrong foot.

No matter how many appealing qualities this non-believing man or woman may have, odds are much higher your dating relationship will have conflicts over premarital sex. Be prepared to face those if you continue in the

relationship. A Christian, however, who is living in obedience to Christ, will agree with and respect premarital vows of chastity. Often, the Christians solution to dealing with desires is to encourage a shorter engagement period!



CHAPTER ELEVEN

TAKE CARE IF IT PROVES TO BE WRONG AND RIPEN THE FRUIT OF GENTLENESS AND FAITH

Suppose those dreaded red flags begin to wave. Suppose the Holy Spirit has nudged you with those gentle convictions that this relationship is not the one God has especially chosen for you.

What now?

You do not want to hurt this man or woman; you do not want to be a heartbreaker. You want things to be different... but they are not and you know it.

Action has to be taken, but do not fall into the pit of pity for the person you need to end things with, few want to be pitied. In addition, feeling sorry for the person you are about to hurt may cause you to prolong the inevitable by dragging your feet and staying in the relationship longer than you should. This is not fair to the other person.

Do have compassion, though. The difference between compassion and pity is that the latter springs from an unrenewed mind and the former draws from the wells of the heart of a renewed person. Compassion will encourage you to carefully consider how, when and where you deliver this life-changing news to the person you are dating, please don't break that

relationship via e-mail, text or twitter or worse still on facebook. Some people do so these days and it is ever so insensitive.

Compassion will monitor you to exercise temperance, which in this case, would curb the desire to make it as easy as it can be for you. Some people find initiating a break up so difficult and uncomfortable to do that they end up being sharp and cruel. With a deep breath and a “get it over with” approach, they almost deliver the news like a hard punch to the stomach, or as the recipient might feel, like a knife to the heart.

The Bible is woven with consistent teachings about kindness and compassion and sometimes we are called to do difficult things. Doing them does not make us cold and unfeeling; the way we opt to do them can certainly make us come across as such, though. Nowadays, we have so many sources of communicating besides face-to-face, and the real cowards hide behind electronic devices when ending their relationships. There are many stories out there about somebody getting dumped in a text message.

Once again, the Golden Rule can be your guide. Imagine the situation were reversed and the man was the one breaking things off with you. As you consider your approach and handling of this situation, never let do unto others be far away from your thoughts.



CHAPTER TWELVE

BE A GREAT COOK BUT NOT A HOSTESS... **REALLY?**

AND RIPEN THE FRUIT OF GOODNESS AND HUMILITY

It takes a lot of goodness to open your home to friends and acquaintances all the time, but it can reach the extent of your house becoming a gathering point for everyone and anyone. Guys like to hang out at such houses, as it is a place to bring both casual and serious friends, enjoy some laughter and fun, and be assured of a meal as well. But do guys marry women who are this accommodating? The answer is NO – they will usually go for the quiet, unknown girl whose house is not a social depot for other guys. The reason is because trust becomes an issue in an environment that is a free-for-all and without boundaries.

There is nothing wrong with having friends over from time to time to socialize and hang out. Healthy living is about being part of a community; however, there must be boundaries to every communal activity. Guys in particular hate it when their best friend tells them they've had something to do with a girl they fancy. Girls don't like hearing about it, either, and an environment where both males and females hang out into the wee hours of the night can invite all sorts of trouble.

People can become creatures of habit very quickly. If you are always up for providing fun and food amid mixed company, it will not take long for it to become everyone's routine to invade your place on a regular basis. They will stop ringing the doorbell, but will start opening cabinets like they own your place. Some may start bringing guests who you do not know, and these strangers may not be trustworthy among your belongings, and might even bring alcohol or illegal substances into your home. The crowd will grow and so will the problems, which might cause conflicts between people, and you start to feel like your hospitality is being taken advantage of – not to mention neighbors calling your place “the party house” and complaining about too much noise and too many cars.

***Trust becomes an issue
in an environment that is
a free-for-all and with-
out boundaries***

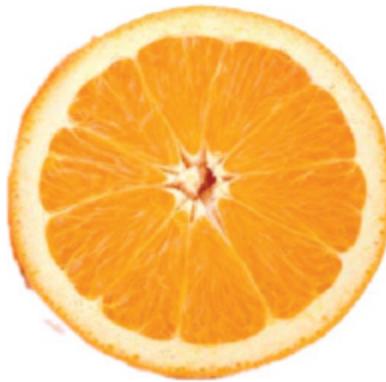
The image this scenario portrays is not glorifying to Christ and should not be one a Christian, especially the woman is comfortable presenting; nor is it the type of environment Christian men who are not ready for marriage, imagine meeting their future wife in. For mature men, the idea of dating the most popular girl in town usually dies out after high school.

This type of socializing can open the door to relationships that are permissive, illicit, casual and destined to go nowhere fast. It creates an environment for “hooking up” which makes it as risky as a bar is for meeting people for easy sex. It can set the stage for relationships defined as “friends with benefits,” which boils down to intimate relations with no strings attached. Though this type of so-called relationship has become trendy in recent years, since when does it define what women really want? The only ones who benefit from it are men whose moral character is not what self-respecting women deem acceptable. Women who try to convince themselves that being friends with benefits is okay, and that they are being modern and forward thinking by allowing it, need to realize they are worth far more than their casual partners are willing to offer.

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Inviting a group of girlfriends over for a weekly Bible study or monthly book club meeting should not threaten a man you are building a relationship with. Even a girls-only slumber party once in a while, where you watch chick flicks and give each other manicures, is okay. (He might even view that as kind of cute, even though he does not begin to understand it!) An occasional, organized large gathering that includes both genders, such as a surprise birthday party for a dear friend or a backyard barbecue on July 4th, is also fine, but avoid constant drop-ins, do-as-you-please, unstructured forms of socializing that turn your home into a haven for big trouble. Besides their potential for encouraging impure thoughts and behavior, being the hostess of these gatherings will make it hard for any man to imagine you ever being the helpmate who smoothly and efficiently manages his household.

Woman, be a great cook and invite good friends to dinner, but be careful not to set yourself and your home up in a manner that is detrimental to a serious and lasting relationship.



CHAPTER THIRTEEN

PREPARE FOR THE NEXT STEP - PRACTICE SOLITUDE

AND RIPEN THE FRUIT OF PEACE AND JOY

When I say solitude, I do not mean isolation. I am just saying to start practicing being comfortable and happy with your own company. You are now blessed to have found the one you have been waiting for and will soon be starting your lives together as newlyweds – great! But you cannot bring Tom, Dick and Harry along on that journey or you are asking for trouble.

No doubt, you have dreamed about your first home together. Whether it is going to be a small apartment or you are spending your weekends searching for your first house, you are very eager to hang pictures, find just the right spot for your sofa and get the kitchen organized.

Like many young married couples, you and your spouse may be excited to invite people over to see your place and have dinner; as you both cannot wait to start using those wedding gifts and serve meatloaf or spaghetti on your brand new fine china! And even though the elegant brass candlesticks from Aunt Martha really are too formal for your small dinette, you plan to display them anyway.

All of that is absolutely fine, but I implore you to guard against becoming the always-ready host and hostess with the most and mostess. If your house

or apartment becomes a social depot for friends, people will begin to see it as a hang out spot and a place to chill, instead of the private home and the personal space of a married couple.

Besides, frequent entertaining can put a strain on the budget, and this is the last thing any marriage needs, but it is a frequent challenge among the young and newly married. Extending open invitations to come by anytime may also result in your hospitality being taken advantage of. The one who does it may not be acting intentionally or even realize they are doing it. They may be favorite friends, lovable as a teddy bear, and so established and comfortable in your life that they think nothing of crashing on your couch when they do not feel like driving home, after plopping in between you and your spouse during a was-cozy night of DVDs and popcorn.

Be aware that this third party's presence can generate conflict within your new marriage, especially if they are just good friends with one of you. Either one of you might get a little tired of your former roommate always dropping in to trash her latest bad date, especially if her timing always coincides with when either of you want to kick back in the recliner and read. Likewise, you may be tempted to drop-kick your spouse's old fraternity friend to the curb the next time they burst through the front door without knocking, forget to close it and let your cat escape, again. Beware also of that friend you did not know because you never met, and whom you are now too friendly with much to your spouse's deep irritation. Remember, there must be boundaries to every relationship; define them early.

**Sadly, some friends
may actually start to
detract from the value
of your life, and the
only wise option is to
step back.**

As you settle into married life, your relationships with people will likely undergo some changes. This may especially be true between you and

friends who are still single. The normal course is for young married couples to gravitate towards other young married couples. Later, if children come into the picture, expect to meet other parents through the activities your children are involved in. We tend to seek out, and have the most in common with, those who are in the same stage of life as we are, by the way ensure that both of you are at the same stage of life before you say I do or someone will be calling for counseling soon after the big day!

You may see that you and some single friends begin to add value to each other's lives in ways that are very different, and less involved, than they were during your solo years. Some friendships make smooth transitions and are redefined. Often, when those single friends get married, your lives realign. This happens because some friendships really are meant to go the distance of a lifetime.

Other people are only in your life for a few seasons. Sadly, some friends may actually start to detract from the value of your life, and the only wise option is to step back. The decision can be painful for both parties, but is sometimes necessary, especially if the friendship is distracting from your priorities, which should be God first and spouse second. Be sure and remember that if you have children! As parents, it is very easy to put the children before the spouse, but this is not the Godly order of things. The correct order is God, spouse, children. Getting those priorities mixed up can lead to all sorts of marital tension and misunderstanding.



CHAPTER FOURTEEN

FINAL WARNING

Having said all the above, however there is “the other side of God” where when you do not have time for the above recommended and go your own way you will encounter the hardship and problems that come with disobedience. Many societal problems have come as a result of this “I’ll do it my way” attitude, such as:

Teenage pregnancy which often-times results in unwed mothers, that is being alone without a husband and your child without a father. When a 20 year old girl has a four year old child she is viewed by men as though she is a 32 year old woman; because of all of the baggage that goes along with being a single mother who never wedded. Her education is terminated producing young girls who may never graduated from High School or College and who not only have herself to take care of but when the man looks at her he sees two people that he has to not only take care of but also to educate.

Some single moms have said to me after getting pregnant at 24 that 16 years later they felt like they have served a 16 year “Jail Sentence” because they had to raise their child or children alone, this does not look or feel good. Women who have male children out of wedlock often see their sons’ loose respect for them and as the boy child grows older and grows bigger than their mothers, they many times display abusive behavior towards their mothers having never had a father around to teach them better. Children

bringing up children lead to decay in social values and character, amongst many other things to consider. Also baby fathers have become an issue.... need I say more, these are boys who grow up into men never fully realizing their God given potential because of the early responsibility of fatherhood, perpetuating the vicious cycle over again.

One of my mentors told me that “the children you do not build today will one day destroy the house you have spent time building”.

So, let's build people, and by that build the nation! A nation will never be stronger than the people that are comprised in it.....



EPILOGUE

The Bible says in Romans 3:23, ***“for all have sinned and fallen short of His glory.”***

This means that we have deviated from the path of right standing with God.

Do not tumble into condemnation if you have ever missed the mark by falling short in overcoming sin. When we were young children learning to walk, our parents did not tell us to stop trying every time we stumbled and fell down, rather they encouraged us to get up and try walking again and in so doing we learnt to walk. In the same way, God’s command is to get up again, and again and again, until we are able to walk life’s journey without falling into unnecessary sin. You must keep trying until you get it right because if at first you do not succeed, try and try again. Yes, you have probably heard that expression many times perhaps in the nursery rhyme which has stuck around and survived the test of time because its call to action has proven to be successful.

This book may convict you, but I pray it is not a book that brings you to condemnation because it is not God’s nature to condemn; His nature is to encourage and inspire us to go, try again and sin no more. As you pray the following words, my hope is that your hope will be renewed and your spirit uplifted.

I would like you to pray these words out loud if possible: ***“Lord, you have promised according to Your Word that if I confess my sins and repent, you***

will not only forgive, but you will cleanse me. Please do that which you say you will do” (1 John 1:9).

I take hold of your promises by faith in the cleansing stream of the blood of Jesus Christ, and I thank you for a renewal of my spirit, my soul, and my body. Amen.”

PRAYER SCRIPTURE

- *By His stripes I am healed – Isaiah 53:5; 1 Peter 2:24
- *There is therefore no condemnation for those in Christ Jesus -Romans 8:1
- *I have identified with Christ’s death and resurrection; it is no longer I that live but Christ who lives in me – Galatians 2:20
- *I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me -Philippians 4:13
- *I will arise and shine for the glory of God is upon me -Isaiah 60:1
- *I am accepted in the beloved – Ephesians 1:6
- *Do not be conformed to the ways of this world but be changed by the renewing of your mind (defaults) - Romans 12:2
- *Study the word to show you are approved by God, so you can also know what His choices are for you - 2 Timothy 2:15
- *You will not achieve change by struggle but you will by His Spirit strengthening you - Zecharia 4:6
- *God will cause His grace to be aboundl to you so that you can be instant and ready for good choices - 2 Corinthians 9:8

FIVE MORE WAYS FOR GOOD MEASURE (TIPS ON HOW TO STOP MASTURBATING)

Admit it is an Addiction

Admit that it is an addiction and pray for release and separation from trigger images. Scripture says “Therefore, guard your mind with all diligence”, do not fill your mind with garbage.

A Cold Shower Works Miracles

A cold shower may sound old-fashioned but it works. It is also an excellent distraction to get your mind off your immediate line of thought.

Do Not Sleep in Lose Undergarments.

This may take some getting used to, but not sleeping naked will help minimize easy access.

How Far is “Too Far” with Your Husband?

Do not feed your weaknesses. Do not feed each other’s weaknesses once you are married. Be modest in all that you do including your fantasies, because once the boundaries are removed by your actions, it may be difficult and may also take time to re-establish those normal boundaries.

Control Your Imagination

Do not allow your mind to run wild with all kinds of fantasies. Perhaps the best way to control your imagination is to be careful with what you allow yourself to see. Scripture says to “Stand guard at the doors of your heart” (Proverbs 4:23).



A SWEET TRUTH

**When God knows
You are ready for the
Responsibility of commitment
He'll reveal the right person
Under the right circumstances.**

**Wait patiently
Don't waste your time
Searching and wishing.**

Grow and be ready, and you'll see.

**God will give you
A love story far better than
You could ever dream of.**

(c) Zyzzyzrah

APPENDIX

Chapter 2

www.divorcerate2011.com/divorce-updates

Joan R. Kahn and Kathryn A. London, “Premarital Sex and the Risk of Divorce,” Journal of Marriage and the Family
www.focusinsights.org

Chapter 3

www.abstinenceworks.org

Chapter 4

Is the Bible Truly God’s Word?
www.gotquestions.org/Bible-God-Word

About the Author



Pastor Kemi Onanuga, a social entrepreneur and community organizer; whose strength and calling as a market-place pioneer are to influence, mentor, deploy and bring life changes to people and organizations. She is Executive Director of the Redeemer's Community Development Corporation (RCDC) founded by Jesus House DC, and President & CEO of Grace LLC, a faith-based consultancy company, where her life's work is Governmental Relations and Community Empowerment. PK, as she is fondly called lives in the USA with her teenage daughter, Anji.