

Extra-Biblical Confirmation of Biblical Views of Sex, Marriage and Family

Part 1

Establish the need: We have seen in Couple's meeting a lot of principles from the Bible concerning relationship, marriage, sex, children and family. We always go by God's Word as the norm for our life **but are there are extra-biblical confirmation that God's way towards sex, marriage and family is blessing?**

Purpose: Today we want to see how extra-biblical studies confirm that obedience to God's Principles towards life so that it will continue to motivate us towards obedience to God's Word.

- The problem with Co-habitation
- The Problem with Promiscuity
- The Blessing of Sex within Marriage

Our Study's Biblical Principle: *"The one who despises the word will be [a]in debt to it, But the one who fears the commandment will be rewarded."* (Proverbs 13:13)

Some methodological precaution:

Issues with Correlation versus Causation

Don't confuse primary motivation for obedience versus getting good side effects

- I. The problem with Co-habitation
 - a. The issue: Living together with someone that one loves ought to be in the context of marriage; those who decide to "shack up" twist Biblical view of headship, and sex in the context of marriage.
 - b. The Finding in Studies:
 - i. Today Co-habitation is accepted
 1. According to a survey by Pew Research Center in 2011, "Among Americans who have ever lived with an unmarried partner, **nearly two-thirds (64%) say they thought about it as a step toward marriage.** That includes 53% of those now living with a partner, **compared with 67% of those who cohabited in the past.** There are no significant differences by age, race or gender on this question, among people who ever lived with a partner. Adults with annual incomes of \$75,000 or more (69%) are more likely than those with annual incomes under \$30,000 (59%) to say they saw cohabitation as a step toward marriage. "¹
 - ii. Those involved with co-habitation experience higher level of depression

¹ <http://www.pewresearch.org/daily-number/cohabitation-a-step-toward-marriage/>

1. “Annual rates of depression among cohabiting couples are **more than three times what they are among married couples.**”²

One of the co-author is David Popenoe, Ph.D., a professor and former social and behavioral sciences dean at Rutgers.

2. In a 2000 an article titled “The effect of union type on psychological well-being: Depression among cohabitators versus marrieds” was published in the American Sociological Association’s Journal of health and social behavior. The author’s own description is as follows: “Marital status is a key determinant of psychological well-being. I use data from both waves of the National Survey of Families and Households to evaluate the effect of union type (ie, cohabitation versus marriage) on depression. **Cohabitors report higher levels of depression than their married counterparts, net of sociodemographic factors.** The greater depression characterizing cohabitators is primarily due to their higher relationship instability relative to marrieds. **Cohabitors' reports of relationship instability are about 25 percent higher than marrieds' report.**”³

iii. Higher Divorce Rate

1. “Premarital cohabitators in Canada have **over twice the risk of divorce in any year of marriage when compared with noncohabitators.**”⁴
 - a. Study was done in Canada.
 - b. Fascinating part of this study is that the article separation four other factors (step-children, age, parent’s divorce background, martial status of first spouse) and found pre-marital co-habitation still bring great risk of divorce.
2. “Cohabitation is now the modal first union for young adults, and most marriages are preceded by cohabitation even as fewer cohabitations transition to marriage. These contrasting trends may be due to compositional shifts among cohabiting unions, which are increasingly heterogeneous in terms of cohabitation order, engagement, and the presence of children, as well as across

² David Popenoe & Barbara Dafoe Whitehead. “Should We Live Together? A Comprehensive Review of Recent Research.” Second Ed. The National Marriage Project. 2002. Rutgers University. 7. Available at <http://nationalmarriageproject.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/01/ShouldWeLiveTogether.pdf>.

³ Available with limited preview at <http://www.jstor.org/discover/10.2307/2676319?uid=2&uid=4&sid=21104485073891>

⁴ David R. Hall and John Z. Zhao, “Cohabitation and Divorce in Canada: Testing the Selectivity Hypothesis,” Journal of Marriage and the Family 57 (1995): 421-427. Available at <http://www.faithandreason.ca/RS35/ethicalissues/Cohabitation%20and%20Divorce%20in%20Canada.pdf>

socioeconomic and demographic characteristics. **The author constructs 5-year cohabitation cohorts for 18- to 34-year-olds from the 2002 and 2006–2010 cycles of the National Survey of Family Growth (n = 17,890 premarital cohabitations) to examine the outcomes of cohabitations over time. Compared to earlier cohabitations, those formed after 1995 were more likely to dissolve, and those formed after 2000 were less likely to transition to marriage even after accounting for the compositional shifts among individuals in cohabiting unions.** Higher instability and decreased chances of marriage occurred among both engaged and non-engaged individuals, suggesting society-wide changes in cohabitation over time.”⁵

II. The Problem with Promiscuity

a. The issue: The Bible makes it clear that sex before marriage (fornication) is wickedness before God. What have extra-biblical data reveal of the problem of promiscuity?

b. The Finding in Studies:

i. Two professors at BYU published in 2010 that saving sex for marriage has positive for marriage

1. Summary by Science Daily: “A statistical analysis showed the following benefits enjoyed by couples who waited until marriage compared to those who started having sex in the early part of their relationship:

a. **Relationship stability was rated 22 percent higher**

b. **Relationship satisfaction was rated 20 percent higher**

c. **Sexual quality of the relationship was rated 15 percent better**

d. **Communication was rated 12 percent better.”⁶**

2. In another summary: “Regardless of religiosity, waiting helps the relationship form better communication processes, and these help improve long-term stability and relationship satisfaction,” Busby said.”⁷

3. The full study can be accessed at

http://www.unav.edu/matrimonioyfamilia/b/top/2011/Busby_Effects-sexual-timing-marriage-relationships.pdf

ii. In the abstract of another study in 2012 published in Journal of Marriage and Family: “**Rapid sexual involvement may have adverse long-term implications for relationship quality.** This study examined the

⁵ Guzzo, Karen Benjamin. “Trends in Cohabitation Outcomes: Compositional Changes and Engagement Among Never-Married Young Adults” Journal of Marriage and Family 76 Issue 4 (2014): 826-42 available at <http://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.1111/jomf.12123/full>

⁶ <http://www.sciencedaily.com/releases/2010/12/101222112102.htm>.

⁷ <https://www.lifesitenews.com/news/saving-sex-for-marriage-leads-to-greater-stability-communication>

*tempo of sexual intimacy and subsequent relationship quality in a sample of married and cohabiting men and women. Data come from the Marital and Relationship Survey, which provides information on nearly 600 low- to moderate-income couples living with minor children. Over one third of respondents became sexually involved within the first month of the relationship. Bivariate results suggested that **delaying sexual involvement was associated with higher relationship quality across several dimensions. The multivariate results indicated that the speed of entry into sexual relationships was negatively associated with marital quality, but only among women.** The association between relationship tempo and relationship quality was largely driven by cohabitation. Cohabiting may result in poorer quality relationship because rapid sexual involvement early in the romantic relationship is associated with entrance into shared living.”⁸*

III. The Blessing of Sex within Marriage

a. The issue: The Bible makes it clear that sex within marriage is a gift from God. What have extra-biblical data line up with Scripture?

b. The Finding in Studies:

i. In article citing a content from a book titled The Case for Marriage, we find: “About 40% of married people have sex twice a week, compared to 20-25% of single and cohabitating men and women. Over 40% of married women said their sex life was emotionally and physically satisfying, compared to about 30% of single women. For men, it’s 50% of married men are physically and emotionally contents versus 38% of cohabitating men.”⁹

ii. There’s also an interesting correlation between quality of sex and spiritual life! According to a Science Daily summary of a 2014 published study: “**Regular churchgoers, married people or those who enjoy harmonious social ties are most satisfied with their love life.** This also goes for people who are currently in love or who experience the commitment and sexual desire of their partners, says Félix Neto and Maria da Conceição Pinto of the Universidade do Porto in Portugal. Their findings, published in an article in Springer’s journal Applied Research in Quality of Life, look at the influences on love life satisfaction throughout one’s adult life.

The researchers associate love with the desire to enter into, maintain, or expand a close, connected, and ongoing relationship with another person. In turn, love life satisfaction is a purely subjective, overall measurement of someone’s actual enjoyment of love. To investigate the factors that influence this across various age groups, 1,284 adult Portuguese women and men ranging between 18 and 90 years old were asked to evaluate and weigh specific facets of their own love lives by using the Satisfaction With Love Life Scale.

[...] **While education does not impact a person’s love life satisfaction, religious involvement does. The finding that believers and regular churchgoers are positive about their love lives is in line with previous studies that associate religious involvement with better mental health and greater satisfaction with life and sexual relationships in general.**”¹⁰

⁸ <http://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.1111/j.1741-3737.2012.00996.x/abstract>

⁹ <http://www.psychpage.com/family/brwaitgalligher.html>

¹⁰ <http://www.sciencedaily.com/releases/2014/04/140409103032.htm>