



GROWING HEALTHY PASSION

How Far Should I Go? Nine Experts Say We Are Built for One Sexual Partner

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1. **Psychologists:** People who wait until they are married to begin the adventure of having sex max out the lifetime frequency, meaning, and enjoyment of sex
 - Who has the most *frequent* and *satisfying* sex life? *Married* couples with shared *spiritual* commitment and no/few previous sexual partners.
 - Who has least satisfying sex life and highest risk for abusive sexual experience? *Sexually active single* people with more than one sexual partner.
 - **Addiction Research:** Sexual arousal is highly addictive. The further you go, the less self-control you have. So, it is easier to avoid than recover. Once top intensity level is reached (i.e., having sex), drive for novelty is triggered (i.e., breakup; average non-married relationship lasts just three weeks after having sex.)
 - “Those having the most partnered sex and enjoying it the most are married people.” (Gagnon, et. al., *Sex in America: A Definitive Survey*. U. of Chicago).
2. **Biologists:** Genital contact mixes body fluids, viruses, bacteria, and genetic material
 - Condom effectiveness: 60-95%
 - No protection available: Human Papillomavirus (HPV, aka Genital Warts)
 - Up to 45% of teens get HPV during first genital sexual experience
 - Chlamydia: 48% of single/sexually active women have it; 25-50% infertile
 - Many STDs show no symptoms, destroy body, infect fetus.
 - Herpes simplex (cold sores) can infect mouth or genitals of partner
3. **Economists:** Children born outside of intact marriages are significantly more likely to...
 - use drugs, drop out of school, commit crimes, be neglected or abused,
 - suffer from depression and emotional distress
 - be sexually active early
 - later in life to get divorced themselves and to bear children outside of marriage
 - to commit or consider suicide (See Center for Marriage and Families, Feb, 2006)
4. **Old Testament:** Making love is an awesome and amazing gift given to married people
 - Marriage is unique, supernatural connection with partner and God, more permanent, powerful, and protected than any other human connection
 - Marry as a virgin, and once married, don't commit adultery (Deuteronomy 22)
 - “*Above all else guard your heart, for it is the wellspring of life*” (Proverbs 4:23).
 - Married lovemaking is a sensual adventure (Song of Solomon)

5. Saint Paul: Sexual sin does more damage than other sin
 - *There is more to sex than skin to skin. Sex is as much a spiritual mystery as physical act. As written in Scripture, “The two shall become one...” We must not pursue the kind of sex that avoids commitment and intimacy, leaving us lonelier than ever – the kind of sex that can never “become one”. There is a sense in which sexual sins are different from the others. In sexual sin we violate the sacredness of our own bodies, those bodies that were made for God-given and God-modeled love, for “becoming one” with another (1 Corinthians 6:16-18, The Message).*

6. St. John: The world always has and always will tempt us into a more shallow experience of sexuality:
 - *“For all that is in the world, sensual lust, enticement for the eyes, and a pretentious life, is not from the Father but is from the world. Yet the world and its enticement are passing away. But whoever does the will of God remains forever. (1 John 2:16-17).*

7. Jesus: God’s design for sex is awesome, difficult, and can only happen when we ground our hearts in Christ
 - Sex is God’s great idea: *“...a man shall leave his father and mother and be united with his wife, and the two will become one flesh...”(Matthew 19:6)*
 - *“Out of the heart come evil thoughts, murder, adultery, sexual immorality” (Matthew: 15:17-19)*
 - *“Remain in me, as I in you...Whoever remains in me, with me in him, bears fruit in plenty; for cut off from me you can do nothing” (John 15:4a,5).*

8. Your heart:
 - Imagine your (eventual) lifetime marriage partner and best friend. (S/he exists somewhere.) Imagine that s/he is trying to decide today whether to wait to explore the sexual adventure with you or to go ahead and have sex tonight. What does your heart desire for him or her?

9. Your Parents (Ask them)

Dr. Tim’s Tips for Staying Sexually Pure

1. Learn, Pray, then **DECIDE**.
2. Formalize your commitment. (Write it down, write a letter to future spouse, etc.)
3. Pray regularly and with gut-level honesty for yourself and future spouse.
4. Visualize the awesome benefits of “great friendships now, great sex later.”
5. Tell significant people about your decision and go back to them when tempted.
6. Choose to realign your peer group to include Christ-centered friends.
7. Avoid alcohol/drugs and parties with no adults.
8. Help your friends remain sexually pure.
9. ID “high risk” situations and avoid them.
10. When you make a bad choice, admit it and get back on track ASAP.