

Being in a relationship before marriage is not automatically sinful — but it becomes sin depending on how that relationship is handled.

1. Courtship vs. Sexual Relationship

There's a clear difference between a respectful courtship and a sexual or emotionally intimate relationship.

A couple who is in courtship can:

- Talk openly,
- Spend time together in public or with family,
- Plan for their future marriage.

But they must not engage in any sexual activity — including touching, kissing romantically, sleeping together, or any behavior that stirs lust or mimics marriage.

*1 Thessalonians 4:3-5*

“For this is the will of God, your sanctification: that you should abstain from sexual immorality; that each of you should know how to possess his own vessel in sanctification

and honor, not in passion of lust, like the Gentiles who do not know God."

God's will for every believer is purity. This includes how we handle our emotions and physical boundaries during courtship.

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2. Why Is It Called "The Marriage Act"?

Sex is called "the marriage act" because it is intended only for those who are already married. It is part of the covenant that seals a couple spiritually, emotionally, and physically before God.

Even if you say, "*We're going to get married anyway,*" that does not give you permission to sleep together before the wedding.

*Hebrews 13:4*

"Marriage is honorable among all, and the bed undefiled; but fornicators and adulterers God will judge."

God honors sex only within the covenant of marriage. Outside of

that, it becomes fornication (if unmarried) or adultery (if one is married to someone else).

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3. Intentions Don't Cancel Sin

Many people justify premarital sex by saying, “*We’re already engaged,*” or “*We plan to get married soon.*”

But let’s be clear: good intentions do not erase sin.

If a man sleeps with a prostitute and says, “*One day I’ll marry her,*” does that make it right? Of course not. Sin is not judged by intention but by obedience to God’s Word.

*Proverbs 14:12*

“*There is a way that seems right to a man, but its end is the way of death.*”

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4. What Kind of Marriage Does God Bless?

God blesses marriages that are established in Christ, meaning:

- In the Church,
- Under spiritual authority,
- Through prayer and agreement with God's will.

Marriages outside of Christ — whether traditional, legal, or cultural — may carry human legitimacy but lack divine approval if they contradict God's Word.

For example:

- Some allow multiple wives,
- Others allow divorce at any time,
- Some include ancestral rituals or sacrifices.

These are not part of God's plan for marriage.

*Genesis 2:24*

"Therefore a man shall leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, and they shall become one flesh."

Jesus also affirmed this in Matthew 19:4-6, emphasizing monogamy, permanence, and God's union.

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5. The Danger of Rushing Ahead

When people ignore God's timing and enter into sexual relationships before marriage, the consequences are often painful:

- Broken relationships,
- Unwanted pregnancies,
- Children raised without both parents,
- Guilt and spiritual distance from God.

Many couples who start with premarital sex never reach the altar. Or if they do, they carry wounds that affect the future marriage.

*Galatians 6:7-8*

“Do not be deceived, God is not mocked; for whatever a man sows, that he will also reap.”

6. Is There Hope If You've Already Fallen?

Yes! If you've already crossed the line — even if you've had a child — God offers forgiveness. But repentance must be genuine.

- Stop the sexual relationship immediately.
- Confess your sins to God and ask for His mercy.
- Begin planning for a proper Christian wedding.

That's when God's grace and blessing will begin to cover your home.

*1 John 1:9*

"If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness."

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7. What If You Refuse to Change?

If you continue in premarital sex, regardless of your plans to marry, you are living in sin — and sin separates you from God.

*1 Corinthians 6:9-10*

“Do you not know that the unrighteous will not inherit the kingdom of God?  
Do not be deceived. Neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers... will inherit the kingdom of God.”

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□ Final Encouragement

Do things God's way. Wait. Honor your body and your partner. Set boundaries. Get married in Christ. That is the only way to receive His blessing and favor over your relationship.

*Matthew 6:33*

“But seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added to you.”

If you build your relationship on Christ, it will last — and it will be blessed.

## Is It a Sin to Be in a Relationship Before Marriage?

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