



A Gospel Handout For You

Father Knows Best: Cohabiting is Not Good for You



How Cohabiting Today Can Ruin Your Life Tomorrow

Estimates vary as to how many people in America are cohabiting together (there is no way to actually know), but figures from the US Census Bureau show that there are over five million cohabiting people in the United States. As the graph above from USA Today shows, the numbers have been radically increasing over the last several decades. In the 1960's less than 5% of women lived with a man before they got married. In the opening years of the new millennium it is estimated that as many as 70% of women have lived with a man before they get married. But is cohabiting good? Is it good for you, and if not, why?

The simple answer is that God told us not to live in sexual relationships outside of committed marriage. Some think this is rather prudish, old fashioned and unenlightened. But recent research and studies have concluded--as usual--that God knew what he was talking about when he gave us the boundaries for successful living.

COHABITING MEN ARE LESS LIKELY TO BE COMMITTED AFTER GETTING MARRIED [Psychology Today](#) in its June 14, 2005 issue, reported a study by Scott Stanley of the Center for Marriage and Family Studies at the University of Denver. The study showed that men who lived with their spouses before marriage were on the average less committed to their marriages than those who did not. The bad news is that women tended to be just as committed as those who did not cohabit. So in the cohabiting relationship, *if* it ends in marriage, there is a strong possibility that the woman will be more committed to the relationship than the man. That's plain awful!

COUPLES WHO HAVE COHABITED BEFORE MARRIAGE CONSISTENTLY HAVE HIGHER DIVORCE RATES THAN THOSE WHO DON'T A frequently-cited source for this is a study by Pennsylvania State University researchers that appeared in 2002 in the [Journal of Marriage and Family](#). Numerous studies have been pointing this out for many years. The fact is, living together before marriage is not healthy for the relationship and brings with it a much higher probability of the relationship breaking up *if* it ends in marriage.

LIVING TOGETHER DOES NOT NECESSARY LEAD TO STAYING TOGETHER Many of those who cohabit will cohabit again. How many people do you want to live with over the course of your lifetime? How many hopes do you want shattered? How many promises to you do you want broken? Stay away from cohabiting. It is not good for your relational or emotional health.

COHABITING COUPLES ARE MORE PRONE TO CHEAT ON EACH OTHER Well, duh! Our antennae should go up whenever anybody is hesitant to make a commitment to us. What are they afraid of anyway? "Well I don't want to be tied down." "Then, goodbye!" Preserve your dignity. You are worth a commitment. Studies show that cohabiting couples are more prone to cheating on each other than married couples. But we already know that from being alive and being around people. Spare yourself the pain. If he or she won't commit, split!

WHAT ABOUT CHILDREN AND COHABITING? It goes without explaining that this is a very difficult situation for children. It unnecessarily complicates their lives and leaves them insecure when the adults around them should be adding, not taking away from, stability in their lives.

BUT IT'S A GREAT ECONOMIC ARRANGEMENT! No it's not. Married people are happier, healthier and richer than cohabiting couples according to the research. Linda Waite and Maqgie Gallagher in their book "[The Case for Marriage](#)" published in 2000, show this to be true. Married men even live longer!

YOU'VE GOT TO ADMIT THE SEX IS GOOD. Not so according to the surveys. Married sex is best.

WHAT DIFFERENCE DOES IT MAKE? IN SEVEN YEARS WE'LL BE MARRIED BY COMMON LAW. Not true. There is no such thing in any state as an automatic common-law marriage after cohabiting together. If you want to be married in any state you need to declare your intentions.

We are happiest and most fulfilled when we are living the way God created us to live. After all, He made us. He knows what is right and good for us. May God give you the courage to do His will!

Download for free "Marriage-Lite: The Rise of Cohabitation and its Consequences" @ www.civitas.org.uk