

# Pros & Cons *of* Kissing

"Should  
Christian  
Singles Kiss  
before  
Marriage?"

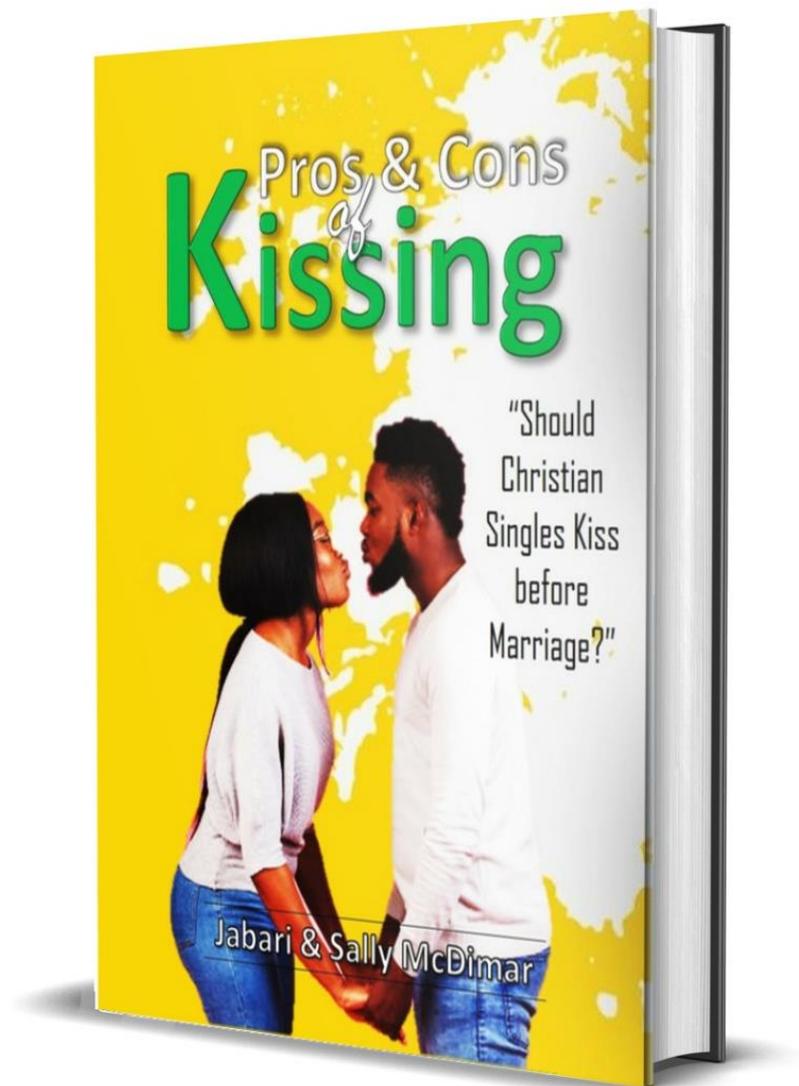
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Jabari & Sally McDimar

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Pros & Cons of Kissing

The Pros & Cons of  
**KISSING**



## Pros & Cons of Kissing

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**Cover Design** by Jabari McDimar

**Layout Design** at Lucrative Idea Resources. Shanzu, Mombasa.

**Email:** [mcdimar3@gmail.com](mailto:mcdimar3@gmail.com) **Tel:** +254 759950090

*For more info, preaching engagement, book publications, etc.*

Call Us @ +254-759950090 / +254-724327927

**Email:** [mcdimar3@gmail.com](mailto:mcdimar3@gmail.com) / [kalengasalome@gmail.com](mailto:kalengasalome@gmail.com)

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## INTRODUCTION

EVERYONE SEEMS TO KNOW how to kiss these days, the question is “*are you aware of the benefits and disadvantages of kissing?*”

Growing up into adulthood has several challenges, especially at the puberty stage when you begin to see several changes in your body that need proper interpretations. I believe you have a whole lot of questions to ask about intimacy, relationship, hugs, the types of kissing, and which one is safe.

No matter what appears to be the benefits of kissing and what could be said in praise of kissing, whether lip or “*deep kissing*” and the “*when you kiss someone and it feels right*” common sayings. The truth remains that kissing alone has several disadvantages that you would consider its better not to kiss anyone and save your life from infections that can mess with it.

First, some types of kisses are acceptable and even expected. The Bible tells us that Jesus Christ kissed his disciples, for example. And we kiss our family members as a normal expression of affection. In many cultures and countries, kissing is a common form of greeting among friends. So clearly, kissing is not always a sin. Of course, as everyone understands, these forms of kissing are a different matter than *romantic kissing*.

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Most devout Christians believe that the Bible discourages sex before marriage, but what about other forms of *physical affection* before marriage? Does the Bible say that romantic kissing is a sin outside the boundaries of marriage? And if so, under what circumstances?

This question can be especially problematic for Christian teenagers as they struggle to balance the requirements of their faith with societal norms and peer pressure.

Like many issues today, there is no black-and-white answer. Instead, the counsel of many Christian advisers is to ask God for guidance to show the direction to follow.

## Chapter One

### KISSING IN THE BIBLE

**R**EAD THE BIBLE and it doesn't take long before you run into some kissing. There's a lot of kissing going on in the Bible and it may just surprise you when you find out what the Bible says about it!

*There are about 45 references to kissing in the Bible.*

- 93% of kissing happens outside of marriage.
- 73% of kissing happens between two men.
- 20% of kissing happens between a man and a woman.
- 4% of kissing happens between two women.

There is one reference to kissing an idol mentioned in Hosea 13:2 “*And now they sin more and more, and have made them molten images of their silver, and idols according to their own understanding, all of it the work of the craftsmen: they say of them, Let the men that sacrifice kiss the calves*”.

*Jesus was kissed twice:*

- Once as a sign of devotion by a former prostitute.
- Once as a sign of betrayal by a former disciple. How ironic is that?!

*5 times in the New Testament kissing is commanded of believers.*

And that brings us to an important question. Are you kissing outside of your marriage? If you're not, then you should start, after all, it is a command! Ok, I understand that we might have a few cultural differences from Bible times. Those differences could make kissing anyone but your children and spouse a little weird. So let's take a look at the significance of a *Biblical Kiss*.

*What does a Biblical kiss signify?*

- Respect and honor
- Love
- Fidelity
- Deep emotional attachment
- Joy or sadness
- Loyalty

These are important aspects of a relationship. We need to realize that often words are not enough to communicate the significance of how we feel towards another person or to show the importance of that relationship. Physical affection can go a long way to deepen and strengthen a relationship.

Psalms, 85:10 says, "*...That glory may dwell in our land. Mercy and truth are met together; righteousness and peace have KISSED each other. Truth shall spring out of the earth; and righteousness shall look down from heaven.*" -

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The desire of God is for His glory to dwell in our land, church, family, and relationship when we demonstrate our affections the right way. For any relationship to experience His glory, it must be built on the foundation of Mercy and Truth. And for the relationship to bloom, the kisses must be based on Righteousness and Peace.

The question is this, “*does your kiss reflect the kissing between righteousness and peace*”? Without this kind of *Holy Kiss*, there will be no glory but shame.

## Chapter Two

### THE CUSTOM OF KISSING

**E**ARLY CHRISTIANS RECOGNIZED each other with a kiss, the '*kiss of charity.*' 1 Peter 5:14 "*Greet ye one another with a KISS OF CHARITY. Peace be with you all that are in Christ Jesus. Amen*". Originally, St. Paul enjoined Christians to "*Salute one another with a HOLY KISS.*" Romans 16: 16.

Holy Kiss is from the Greek word *philema*, which means "*A salute given with the lips; a common token of affection void of sexual activities*". The kiss is a touch of the lips, a sign of affection or love, a greeting, a show of reverence; it is a universal sign of '*being connected.*'

Kissing the lips by way of affectionate salutation was customary among near relatives of both sexes, in both patriarchal and later times. (Genesis 29:11; Solomon 8:1) Between individuals of the same sex, and in a limited degree between those of different sexes, the kiss on the cheek as a mark of respect or an act of salutation has at all times been customary in the East.

Most often used of the touching of the lips to another person's lips, cheeks, shoulders, hands, or feet as a gesture of friendship, acceptance, respect, and reverence. The location of the kiss carried different meanings as Jesus made clear in the episode of the woman kissing his feet (Luke 7:36-50).

Except for three occurrences (Proverbs 7:13; Song of Solomon 1:2; Song of Solomon 8:1), the term is used without any erotic overtones. Kiss translates two Hebrew words and three Greek words; the basic Hebrew term is found 32 times, and the basic Greek term is found seven times.

In the Old Testament, close relatives kissed at greeting and departing with the connotation of acceptance most often in the foreground (Genesis 27:26-27; Genesis 29:11; Genesis 50:1; Exodus 18:7; 1 Samuel 10:1; Ruth 1:9). The term was further used of the gesture of reverence to idols (1 Kings 19:18; Hosea 13:2) as well as to the Lord (Psalm 2:12). A kiss of betrayal is also found (2 Samuel 20:9).

The holy kiss was widely practiced among the early Christians as a manner of greeting, a sign of acceptance, and an impartation of blessing. This custom could well have been used to express the unity of the Christian fellowship. The substitute kiss involved kissing the hand and waving it in the direction of the object to be kissed (Job 31:27). The kiss of betrayal from Judas does not belong to the category of the kiss of Joab to Amasa (2 Samuel 20:9) but was the sign of respect from pupil to master. Either the action of Judas did not accord with his inner feeling, or his action had other motivations than betrayal.

The kiss still survives in the Near Eastern culture as a sign of love, respect, and reverence.

Four places in the New Testament refer to the “*holy kiss*”—Romans 16:16; 1 Corinthians 16:20; 2 Corinthians 13:12; and 1 Thessalonians 5:26. In each instance, the Greek words denote a kiss that is sacred—physically pure and morally blameless. It was a common custom in most nations for people to kiss each other at meeting or parting to display their love, sincere affection, and friendship for each other. The kiss is called “*holy*” to distinguish it from a sexual one and a hypocritical and deceitful one, such as Joab gave to Amasa (2 Samuel 20:9) or such as Judas gave to Jesus when he cried, “*Hail Rabbi,*” and betrayed Him into the hands of His enemies (Matthew 26:49).

In New Testament times, the holy kiss was a sign of greeting, much like the modern handshake (1 Thessalonians 5:26; 1 Corinthians 16:20; 2 Corinthians 13:12; Romans 16:16). For Christians, it further expressed brotherly love and unity. The holy kiss was especially precious to the new believers during the early church years because they were often outcasts from their own families because of their new faith. These new believers gloried in the new spiritual kinship they had found among other Christians. Furthermore, the holy kiss from a Jewish Christian to a Gentile believer was evidence that the Gentiles were accepted fully into Christian fellowship, despite the teachings of the Judaizers, those who would return to the Mosaic law as their source of justification. So prominent were these false teachers in the early church that they even temporarily drew such a prominent Christian as Peter into their web of deceit (Galatians 2:11-13). The holy

kiss between the Jewish and Gentile believers was done righteously in recognition that all believers are brothers and sisters in the family of God.

In the Christian Church the “*kiss of charity*” was practiced not only as a friendly salutation but as an act symbolical of love and Christian brotherhood. It was embodied in the earlier Christian offices and has been continued in some of those now in use. Among the Arabs, the women and children kiss the beards of their husbands or fathers. The superior returns the salute with a kiss on the forehead.

In Egypt, an inferior kisses the hand of a superior, generally on the back, but sometimes, as a special favor, on the palm also. To testify abject submission, and in asking favors, the feet are often kissed instead of the hand. The written decrees of a sovereign are kissed in token of respect; even the ground is sometimes kissed by Orientals in the fullness of their submission. (Genesis 41:40; 1 Samuel 24:8; Psalms 72:9) etc. Kissing is spoken of in Scripture as a mark of respect or adoration to idols. (1 Kings 19:18; Hosea 13:2)

Whether or not the holy kiss should be a tradition we carry on today is not clear in Scripture. Whether or not our salutations to our brothers and sisters in Christ include the holy kiss, the important thing is that our greetings spring from real love and friendship, be characterized by sincerity, and represent true Christian fellowship.

## Chapter Three

### PHYSICAL AFFECTION

**W**HAT DOES THE BIBLE say about Physical Affection?

The Bible does tell us to love one another with brotherly affection (Romans 12:10), but dating does stray beyond brotherly love. In Greek, we're talking about two different kinds of love.

**Phileo:** Brotherly love (John 11:36). The Jews referred to this kind of brotherly love in terms of what Jesus had for his friend Lazarus. Even though Jesus technically had *agape* (*unconditional love*), Jews who believed him to be merely human attributed the highest humanly love possible to him: *phileo*.

**Eros:** Sexual love or attraction (Song of Solomon 1:2-4). The Bible makes it clear that God only approves of acts of *eros*, sexual acts, within the confines of marriage.

But even if we are attracted to our significant other, does that mean kissing falls under *eros*? Or more so, should we reserve kissing for marriage, and do we sin if we kiss before we tie the knot?

What this question boils down to the intentions of the heart and mind during the act of kissing. As stated in Ephesians

5:3, we should not allow even a hint of sexual immorality among God's people.

So the question is: do you personally believe kissing before marriage falls under sexual impurity as outlined in that verse?

Some might point out that we do kiss our family members. This might be a quick peck as a hello or a goodbye. But a passionate tongue-kiss or make-out session is likely not how we are greeting our family members.

A quick peck might fall under the category of *phileo* love, depending on each person, but a long kiss marked with sensuality is certainly in the *eros* category.

The Bible makes it clear to avoid having sex before marriage (1 Corinthians 6:18), but as for kissing and other modes of affection, where do they measure up?

To answer this question, we should look at temptations we or our partners may face. If either has a previous history with sexual temptation, we may want to avoid activities such as kissing that can prompt sexual thoughts or sexual feelings.

The more intimate the act, the more likely one can fall into temptation.

So is imagining kissing a sin? Is having a boyfriend a sin in Christianity? Is kissing a fiancé before marriage a sin?

When tackling all these questions, we have to apply the same tests from above. Is this physical affection an act of *eros* love?

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Will this particular act cause us to fall into temptation or sin? If so, we should avoid it. Jesus did metaphorically tell us to pluck our eye out if it causes us to sin (Matthew 5:29).

What level of intimacy can Christians reach before they've fallen into sexual sin?

That varies from different stages of relationships. Some Christians don't even hold hands until marriage, whereas others regularly kiss a boyfriend or girlfriend. The matter at hand is, again, the hearts of those involved. Are these acts of affection done with a clear conscience before God? Is the act done in righteousness and peace?

Why do we have to wait? Does God just want to see us unhappy until we slip a ring on our significant other's finger?

No. We have to understand that we chemically bond with someone when we get intimate with them. The Bible has a phrase for it: *two becoming one flesh* (Mark 10:8). So when we break off a relationship with someone with whom we got intimate, it hurts. It rips us apart on a chemical and physical level.

God wants us to avoid this bonding before marriage because he wants us to avoid the massive pain and hurt that follows from a severed relationship. Intimacy is reserved for the safety of the marriage covenant, where both parties have sworn faithfulness and unconditional love before God. Intimacy is vulnerable, and God's heart is to protect us and to protect the sanctity of marriage.

## Chapter Four

### IS KISSING BEFORE MARRIAGE A SIN?

**I**T IS A VERY RELEVANT QUESTION to ask especially for singles in a relationship. However, I don't usually like to list things that are sinful and things that are not. That won't teach anyone to live a godly life. What I strive to do is this: To show things that are behind "*the scene*"; and leave the conclusion to the individual who asks the question.

The kind of kissing I'm talking about here is not the kissing families and friends exchange for greetings. The kissing I'm talking about here is the one between two lovers, not to say hello and bye but to enjoy each other's body. It is not only their lips that are involved here but their heart, blood pressure, and the most important part of their body, the brain.

Our bodies are covered by nerve endings (*inside and outside our body*) for the body to work in unison. When our stomach is full, the message from our stomach goes to our brain through nerves to order us to stop eating (*though we sometimes choose to ignore it*).

In the same way, when somebody touches us, we know they are touching us because the nerves on our skin relay that message to our brain (with a speed of 45meter/second) so that we can know and respond to the touch. Depending on

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the location where these nerves are located, they relay different messages.

So, when two unmarried couple kisses, their nerves which are located on their lips (*which are similar nerves with the ones located on their sexual organs*) transmit the message upon touch to the brain and the brain releases sex hormones in their bodies. These sexual hormones can also be triggered by touch, smell, or from watching something sexually attractive.

These nerves do not react the same way by a simple “*bello*” kiss but they transmit a sexual message when they are touched by lips or receive a loving touch from the person we are attracted to. These nerves, once they are activated, we can't stand in their way and try to tell them not to do their job. They are very faithful and fast! After they relay the message to the brain, the brain prepares the body for the anticipated sexual activity.

When those two people, who kissed and caressed, decide not to have sex (*because they are Christians*) and go to their own separate homes, their body doesn't stop demanding sex. These sexual hormones which are already released in their bodies won't say “*Oops, we made a mistake in assuming that there will be sex. Okay, let's go back.*” No, Brother, they are not created to think that way. They hung around until they get what they are out to get! They won't go back until they get the job done! They are very faithful in executing their job and they are very efficient! Once these sex hormones are released

in the body, the body finds a way to express its obedience and cooperation.

Then those Christian people wonder why their dream is pornographic. They wonder why they want to watch sexually explicit movies regardless of their moral values. They wonder why they keep on thinking about their girl/boyfriend constantly, all the time, thinking about them having sex with them, even when they sit in the church. And they also wonder why they made a mistake on the second date while they are born-again Christians who reject sex before marriage. And sometimes, they even thought that they heard God's voice saying: "*Go ahead and have sex. I understand your situation.*" Yeah, our body can create its reality to fulfill its part in the game.

Not only kissing but touching each other's body can trigger this cascade of sexual hormones. These hormones are there to prepare the body for sex and to create bonding between the two people. God created these hormones to "*cement*" the two people together so that those two will be one. These hormones are not trained to ask "*Where is your marriage certificate?*" No, they won't! This is why Solomon said, "*...Do not awaken or arouse love until it pleases!*" Song of Solomon 2:7.

There is another beautiful truth with the kissing I want to mention here. Well, when the two people, who are attracted, kiss deeply, they exchange body fluid called saliva (*the fluid that is found in their mouth*). That is one of the ways married men and women become one, by exchanging their body fluid. Exchanging body fluids is one of the expressions of oneness;

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fluid from kissing and sexual intimacy; whatever is in her body will also be in him; and whatever is in his body will also be in her. They are in two bodies but they are one!

So, the unmarried couple who kissed and caressed decides to dissolve their relationship, they find it very difficult to do so because they already have bonded through kissing and touching (the bond created by sex hormones). If they decide to get married, they will soon find out that they hardly know each other. They will also find out that there is no chemistry between them even in their sexual intimacy because for sexual intimacy to be fulfilling and pleasurable, it demands oneness in all other areas of life (which I will say more about in the future).

In short, kissing, touching, and caressing are gifts from God. They are part of the foreplay, an action that comes before sex; a very important step that prepares the couple's body for a fulfilling sexual intimacy but it is beautiful, fulfilling, pleasurable, beneficial, and gratifying only when it happens on the marriage bed, between one man and one woman.

Do I need to say here that whether kissing before marriage is a sin or not? I leave that for you to decide but let me say this: God is always Right! When He said "*flee from sexual immorality*" (1 Corinthians 6:18), He is saying to our goodness, not to take something good that is legitimately ours; rather He is saying "*FLEE*" so that we don't miss out on that which is legitimately ours! Flee means flee even from the area of temptation.

## Chapter Five

### ROMANTIC KISSING

**I**S KISSING CONSIDERED a sin before a person is married? Is kissing a sin or not for Christians?

The answer to this question all depends on the purpose of the act and what is going on in the hearts of those participating in it.

For example, it was not wrong in the early New Testament church as believers used this gesture as a sign of greeting, friendship, and mutual affection (Romans 16:16, 1Corinthians 16:20, 2Corinthians 13:12, 1Thessalonians 5:26, 1Peter 5:14).

Regarding kissing someone who is not a person's mate, especially in the context of courting or pursuing an extra-marital affair, Jesus revealed a basic principle on sexual morality during his famous Sermon on the Mount message. He told a crowd that had gathered, "*You have heard that it was said to those in ancient times, 'You shall not commit adultery.'* But I say to you, everyone who looks upon a woman to lust after she has already committed adultery with her in his heart" Matthew 5:27 - 28.

Based on Christ's statement, when people (*male or female*) actively think about having sex with another person to who they are not married to it is always sin, even when they do not

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commit the act. This principle is valid regardless of the age of those involved, as both young and old can lust (*although the young normally do it more than those who are older*).

A brief "*peck*" on the cheek while courting is unlikely to cause lust, such as those commonly exchanged between friends greeting each other in the Latin American culture. On the other hand, however, a sustained deep kiss (*like when each person's tongue is touching*) certainly is lustful.

There are many gradations in-between the above two extremes, and it is possible that what is sinful for one person will not be for another, depending on their thought processes.

Furthermore, sustained kissing is considered foreplay as preparation for physical intercourse. It may be the first "*stop*" for the "*train*" that ends with penetration and orgasm at the final destination, but it is still part of the same general process. It can easily be a sexually charged "*warm-up*" that prepares for consummation even when the couple ultimately avoids going that far. Sometimes it is not so easy to put this act in a watertight compartment that is completely separate from sex.

One reason for single Christian people to avoid strong romantic kissing is the need to protect their own and other person's purity for their (*likely*) marriage to someone else. If a relationship breaks up, and they marry someone else down

the line, what kind of memories do they have when they show affection to their future wives and husbands?

Sex is such an intense experience both physically and emotionally. It is hard for people to erase their memories of what happens during it when they are finally with that "*special someone*" months or years later. As more parts of the sexual relationship are saved for marriage, they then become more special since they are not besmirched by guilty thoughts when done with their life partner.

When Does Kissing Become Sinful?

For devout Christians, the answer boils down to what is in your heart at the time. The Bible tells us that lust is a sin:

*"For from within, out of a person's heart, come evil thoughts, sexual immorality, theft, murder, adultery, greed, wickedness, deceit, lustful desires, envy, slander, pride, and foolishness. All these vile things come from within; they are what defile you"* (Mark 7:21-23, NLT).

The devout Christian should ask if lust is in the heart when kissing. Is the kiss making you want to do more with that person? Is it leading you into temptation? Is it in any way and act of coercion? If the answer to any of these questions is "yes," then such kissing may have become sinful for you.

This doesn't mean that we should regard all kisses with a courting partner or with someone we love as sinful. The mutual affection between loving partners is not considered sinful by most Christian denominations. It does mean,

however, that we should be careful about what is in our hearts and make sure we maintain self-control when kissing.

### To Kiss or Not to Kiss?

How you answer this question is up to you and may depend on your interpretation of the precepts of your faith or the teachings of your particular church. Some people choose not to kiss until they get married; they see kissing as leading to sin, or they believe romantic kissing is a sin. Others feel that as long as they can resist temptation and control their thoughts and actions, kissing is acceptable. The key is to do what is right for you and what is most honoring to God. First Corinthians 10:23 says, "*Everything is permissible—but not everything is beneficial. Everything is permissible—but not everything is constructive.*" (NIV)

Christian teenagers and unmarried singles are advised to spend time in prayer and think through what they are doing and to remember that just because an action is permissible and common doesn't mean it is beneficial or constructive. You may have the freedom to kiss, but if it leads you to lust, coercion, and other areas of sin, it is not a constructive way to spend your time.

For Christians, prayer is the essential means for allowing God to guide you toward what is most beneficial for your life.

## Chapter Six

### HEALTH HAZARD OF KISSING

**K**ISSING OFFERS MANY HEALTH benefits in married life but may transmit a small number of disease-causing bacteria and viruses in the life of the unmarried. Bacteria and viruses in the saliva or blood of one person can be spread to another person by kissing. Some diseases are more easily spread than others.

Locking lips with a loved one can bring some pretty great health benefits for married couples because they have become “*One Flesh*”. Kissing has been shown to lower your blood pressure, burn some extra calories (*up to 16 calories per kiss*), reduce the pain from cramps or a headache, and boost the chemicals in your brain that make you feel happy.

Kissing is sweet and has a lot of health benefits, but if you’re kissing the person who is not your married partner, it can also introduce your body to a host of negatives – 500 different kinds of negatives to be exact, in the form of germs and viruses, all from just one tiny kiss.

This means that kissing, can not only give you a cold, flu, mononucleosis, or a nasty batch of cold sores, but like many sweet things, it can also give you cavities. What? Doesn’t kissing help prevent cavities? The answer is yes, but kissing can also transfer bacteria into your mouth that can cause

cavities by eating away at your teeth. The same is true for gum disease where the transfer of bad bacteria from one mouth may potentially infect the healthy mouth.

What diseases can be transmitted through kissing?

1. Kissing can lead to a cold sore:

Kissing someone who has a cold sore can easily infect you with the disease. A common lifelong virus transmittable through kissing is the Herpes simplex virus type 1, this does not have to involve sex to be contacted. More than 50% of the U.S. adult population has oral herpes, but symptoms aren't always visible.

Cold sores can appear like fluid-filled blisters around the mouth or close to the mouth region or on the genital for Herpes II.

2. Kissing can expose you to Cytomegalovirus:

Cytomegalovirus (CMV) is a viral infection that can be spread by kissing an infected person.

Unfortunately, CMV has no total cure. In most cases, persons with CMV may never have symptoms like the herpes simplex virus symptoms.

3. Gum disease is transmittable through kissing:

Gum disease is also known as periodontitis and gingivitis may not spread through kissing but the bacteria causing it can easily be spread by kissing someone who has it.

Mostly when plaques build up under the gum line, gum disease can be detected.

#### 4. Mononucleosis spreads through kissing:

Mononucleosis is a disease caused by the EBV (Epstein-Barr Virus) transmittable through saliva. This is one of the saliva-related diseases also known as “*mono*” or “*the kissing disease*”. The symptoms of Mononucleosis disease are similar to those of the flu and include sore throat, fatigue, muscle weakness, fever, and swollen lymph glands.

There’s currently no treatment for the Mononucleosis disease transferable through a kiss, but over-the-counter medication can be used in managing the infection. Research has it that people between the ages of 15 and 30 and anyone who is regularly in contact with a lot of people are at risk of getting infected.

#### 5. Kissing can expose you to HIV:

Several other blood-borne viruses can quickly spread by kissing an infected person. Indeed, HIV is transmitted through semen, vaginal fluids, and blood.

Yet, you or the other person may have a tear in the mouth which can be caused due to hard brushing or other underlying infections. They both leave a room for possible blood exchange that will spread HIV by kissing.

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Kissing someone can cause several allergies too, like for example, kissing someone who ate or drink substances you're allergic to can make you experience an allergic reaction.

It feels good to kiss, but how does it feel to contract an infection due to kissing? You already know what it could present, as some of them are incurable and comes with invisible symptoms. How these types of kissing infections can put you off for months, the pains and money that could be spent in curing or managing it if it is a lifelong oral infection.

## Chapter Seven

### HOLY ROMANCE

**WE SHOULD KEEP IN MIND** that romance is a reflection of God's heart for his people. He has given us romance as a gift, as a way to selflessly give of ourselves unto others, to understand how Christ gives of himself to the church (Ephesians 5).

But we do have to understand that intimacy is reserved solely for a *Marriage Covenant* relationship. To avoid the hurt that comes from severing a bond between two becoming one, we reserve those acts of deep kissing and intimate romance under the covenant of marriage: where two people vow to become one until death does them part.

As for finding the balance between showing affection to someone whom we can see a future with, and avoiding going too far can differ from Christian to Christian. Early on into the relationship, if you see a potential future with the person whom you've chosen, make sure to establish boundaries early on.

On a personal note, with one of the women I was in a relationship with, I had established the boundary that I wanted to save my first kiss for marriage. We ended up ignoring that boundary, and I can't get that first kiss back. So if someone has a boundary, make sure to respect it. For

instance, if someone does not want to kiss until marriage, don't pressure them to do so until the day of the wedding.

And in all things, let's avoid causing fellow brothers and sisters stumble, in whatever temptation they may face.

There are so many ways to show affection in a relationship, and a kiss is certainly one of them. But in doing so, always make sure that the display of your love isn't entirely based on physical expression, because even in marriage, physical intimacy is a small fraction of a relationship in light of all the other ways two people express love and commitment to one another.

So if you're going to kiss, let it be an expression of your love – not your lust.

How far is too far? What's okay when it comes to getting physical before marriage?

### Don't Start a Fire You Can't Quench

Two important passages will give us a biblical principle about kissing before marriage. The first passage is 2 Timothy 2:22.

*"Now flee from youthful lusts and pursue righteousness, faith, love, and peace, with those who call on the Lord from a pure heart".*

This verse commands us to flee the strong lusts that occur in youth. The Greek word that is translated as "flee" is *pheugo* and it simply means "to avoid doing something." The Greek word for "youthful" is *neoterikos* which refers to an "adolescent

or young adult.”[1, 2] The Greek word for “*lusts*” is *epithumia*. This word refers to strong passions and emotions. In summary, the command “*flee from youthful lusts*” means that we are to avoid the very strong lusts that commonly occur at a young age. These lusts are greatest in adolescence and usually decrease with age.

This verse teaches that we are not to intentionally cause ourselves to experience the passions that are especially strong at a young age. While many passions are common in youth, sexual passions are the strongest of all emotions. Therefore, unmarried couples are to avoid situations that intentionally cause sexual emotions and passions. What can incite sexual passions and emotions? The answer is touching someone of the opposite sex or daydreaming about someone of the opposite sex. Matthew 5:27-28 warns us to not indulge in thinking about having sex with another person who is not our husband or wife.

This means that it is a sin for an unmarried man or woman to do anything that will cause himself or herself to be intentionally sexually stimulated. It is also a sin to cause another person to be sexually stimulated unless we are married to that person. When we cause someone to whom we are not married to be sexually stimulated we can cause them to stumble. Matthew 18:7 warns us to not cause another person to stumble.

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*“Woe to the world because of its stumbling blocks! For it is inevitable that stumbling blocks come, but woe to that man through whom the stumbling block comes!”* Matthew 18:7 (NASB)

If we combine all of these passages, we learn that we sin when we do not flee sexual sins and when we cause others to become sexually stimulated if we are not married to them. Once sexually stimulated, it is common for men and women to perform some form of sexual activity to release the sexual tension or enjoy an orgasm. Consequently, 1 Corinthians 7:1-2 warns us to get married to avoid immoralities.

*"But because of immoralities, each man is to have his wife, and each woman is to have her husband".* 1 Corinthians 7:1-2 (NASB)

The Greek word for immoralities is *porneia*. This Greek word includes fornication (*sex before marriage*), incest, sex with animals, homosexuality, adultery, and may include masturbation. The verse reveals that God only allows sexual activity between husbands and wives. Such activity within the bounds of marriage is blessed by God.

Therefore, this gives us the biblical principle that men and women are not to start the fire of sexual desire in ourselves or in someone to whom we are not married. This means a man is not to touch a woman in any way that stirs sexual passion in his date, girlfriend, or wife-to-be. The same is true for a woman.

Experienced couples understand that kissing is sexually stimulating. The woman feels affection and feels loved when

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the kissing starts. Most women enjoy a kiss and a hug. It takes them longer to be as sexually stimulated as their male partner. But the man is immediately stimulated if the kissing is more than a quick one. His sexual stimulation increases very rapidly if the couple continues kissing. He will not want to stop and his body will crave more kissing. If the couple is French kissing, his sexual stimulation will be extremely high almost instantly.

God designed *romantic kissing* to stimulate sexual passion – the more kissing, the greater the stimulation and the craving for an orgasm increases. Kissing and hugging start the foreplay. Kissing is like starting a car. French kissing puts the “*car*” into second gear. Other foreplay activities will put the car into a higher gear and orgasm and sexual intercourse are the climax where the “*car*” stops and the joyous ride is over. Therefore, it is a sin if kissing between an unmarried couple results in starting the car – sexual passion. Remember we are to “*flee from youthful lusts.*” An inexperienced woman may not understand she has started the “*car,*” but the man knows the “*car*” has started and will crave more and demand more. Eventually, the woman’s sexual passions will ignite. Once the fire starts it wants to consume everything.

To flee sexual lusts and to help others to whom we are not married flee sexual lusts, it is recommended that kissing and French kissing be avoided until the wedding day when the preacher announces the groom may kiss the bride. A young

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woman once said, *“When the kissing starts the thinking stops.”* Therefore, be careful what fire you start.

What is important to you? Do you love Christ with all your heart? In Matthew 22:37 Jesus said, *“And He said to him, ‘YOU SHALL LOVE THE LORD YOUR GOD WITH ALL YOUR HEART, AND WITH ALL YOUR SOUL, AND WITH ALL YOUR MIND.’”* Matthew 22:37 (NASB)

How important is your obedience to God? Since Christ has asked us to be holy and to flee sin (1 Corinthians 6:18; 2 Timothy 2:22), the question is: will you obey Christ and flee youthful lusts and help your boyfriend or girlfriend flee sin until you are married and sexual activity is no longer sin? Do you desire to be a godly man or woman?

What should you do if your boyfriend or girlfriend wants to kiss and does not care about pleasing God? The answer is to explain that you are keeping yourself for the man or woman you will marry, you desire to be a godly man or woman, or respond with one of the following (*for suggestions*):

- *Please stop! I do not believe in kissing before marriage. Why don't you?”*
- *Slow down! Let's control our emotions.*
- *Please stop that!*
- *Excuse me! I am not interested in that.*
- *This is too much, too soon!*

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– *This is not a good idea. It is a sin to get sexually stimulated before we are married.*

Before I close, let me share with you what this man, who kept himself sexually pure, is saying to his bride, the woman he kept holy until their wedding night. Listen how he rejoices with his bride, looking at her body for the first time before their sexual consummation occurs for them to be one (never to be two again):

*“You are a garden locked up, my sister, my bride; you are a spring enclosed, a sealed fountain. Your plants are an orchard of pomegranates with choice fruits, with henna and nard, nard and saffron, calamus and cinnamon, with every kind of incense tree, with myrrh and aloes and all the finest spices. You are a garden fountain, a well of flowing water streaming down from Lebanon.”* (Song of Solomon 4:12-15)

Marriage is a unique relationship, and the good gift of sex and kissing is not only allowed but commanded within that relationship. However, these gifts are not allowed when not married.

The decision to stay totally off sex before marriage is hard because of all the feelings humans have but try to look at it in a big sense. There is better sex life awaiting you when you get married. So do what is right now for a better marriage in the future.

Do not allow yourself to be alone, or at least alone in situations where sexual contact is possible and the privacy necessary to engage in it exists (i.e., parked cars, in a house or

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secluded room alone, etc.). The temptation may just be too great. Think of kissing the same way you might think about your virginity. Once the line is crossed, there's no going back. You cannot reverse the current kissing status' you have with someone else. Know yourselves and set limits wisely with this knowledge. Use common sense. Don't let feelings control your actions. Acknowledge feelings but don't give in to them, or you will make miserable mistakes. Take enough time to talk about things that were too personal before. Kissing is powerful. God made it so. Respectfully use it as a tool in His service.

Remember that Virtues like patience, endurance, contentment, selflessness, appreciation, encouraging, understanding, and respecting each other and the fear of God are needed more in making a better and long-lasting relationship than sex. In all you do, keep sex off your plate until you are married.

In the final analysis, we should avoid situations and behaviors that can tempt us to sin and do things that are only permissible in marriage.



## ABOUT THE AUTHOR

**Jabari McDimar** is the Director of **Marriage Grace International**, and the President of **International Marriage Institute** with over 1000 students around the world. He is also the CEO of **Lucrative Idea Resources**: An Info Marketer, Content Creator, Blogger and Graphic Design firm based at Shanzu, Mombasa, Kenya.

Jabari is a renowned **Prophetic Teacher**, anointed for the unveiling of *Prophetic Cypher* and *Biblical Euphemisms* in the End Time; a *Prolific Writer*, and a *Certified Marriage Counselor*.

He runs a bi-monthly "*Miracle Marriage Seminars*" together with his precious wife **Pastor Sally Jabari**.

The duos are committed to conveying the **New Covenant** message of **Marriage Grace** to a *hurting and dying world*.

*For Marriage Seminars, Youth Seminars and Revival Meetings. contact us!*



+254 724327927 / 0759950090



Facebook/imi20



Twitter@JabariSally



mcdimar3@gmail.com



Shanzu, Mombasa

+254 724327927 / 0759950090