



# Family Christian Center

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Family Life Development & Application {FLDA} Department

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**CLASS NAME:** Prep for Marriage – 20/20 Vision | Lesson 7: The Green House Effect | Playing House instead of Marriage  
**CLASS SESSION:** Sundays Feb 21, 2021 @ 11 a.m. **LOCATION:** Zoom Conference  
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## ***The Green House Effect:***

### ***Playing House, It Makes Secular Sense!***

Cohabiting prior to marriage makes sense today. With the increase in the cost of living as well as utilizing “living together” as a litmus test to evaluate if the person you are with is “the one” before making the big plunge makes good **secular sense**. Society today understands why some choose to cut the cost of living in half as they determine if marriage is really for them in the first place. Let’s face it, you are saving money, splitting rent, cutting grocery cost, raising kids together, added security, never being alone and let’s not forget unlimited sexual access brings all the benefits of marriage, less the commitment.

## Reasons to Cohabitate

*Ask yourself silently to yourselves, “Do I fall into one of these categories”?*

- Convenience
- Testing the relationship for compatibility
- Financial Reasons
- Child/Children out of Wedlock
- Fear of being alone or Fear of starting over
- Fear of Divorce

Understand this, if it is convenient, if it is easy and most of all if it pleases the flesh but does not please God, are you in right standing with Lord?

**Matthew 26:41** New King James Version (NKJV)

***“Watch and pray, lest you enter into temptation. The spirit indeed *is* willing, but the flesh *is* weak.”***

## **Imaginary Bricks**

Do you remember the childhood story, “The three little pigs”? The fable is about three pigs who build three houses of different materials. A Big Bad Wolf blows down the first two pigs' houses, made of straw and sticks respectively, but is unable to destroy the third pig's house, made of bricks. Well, what if there was a 4<sup>th</sup> house in this childhood fable? One in which one of the pig's home was built with imaginary bricks. Think for a moment, if you were the child hearing this story, you might say to yourself, “who would build a house with imaginary bricks”. However, as premarital coach's we have watched so many couples attempt to do just that. Cohabitation without marital commitment is building a home with imaginary bricks. There is no foundation, there is no covering and it leaves you and your cohabitants susceptible to attacks from the enemy.

## **The Effects of the Green House Effect!**

**The appearance of being equally yoked.**

**2 Corinthians 11:13-15**  
**New International Version**

***13*** For such people are false apostles, deceitful workers, **masquerading** as apostles of Christ. ***14*** And no wonder, for Satan himself **masquerades** as an angel of light. ***15*** It is not surprising, then, if his servants also **masquerade** as servants of righteousness. **Their end will be what their actions deserve.**

The **appearance** of being equally yoked is by far the most dangerous issue affecting modern couples and burgeoning relationships today. The appearance or the falsehood of legitimacy can place a new couple faced with the weight of the world on their shoulders—left standing on thin ice. For example, the belief that just because both you and your mate attend church services, have an understanding there is a God or because your mate identifies as Christian, somehow means that you are equally yoked. This a common mistake in thought for new relationships. In fact, attending church service and stating the obvious fact that there is a God; does not mean you believe in God. It simply it means you know the address to the church; you know that God resides there...**but God does not reside in you**. Knowing that you can find the Lord in church but never having a relationship with the Lord of the church proves you are only an **attender** not a **member of the body of Christ**. Statements without an **active service** in the body of Christ such as, “*I believe there is God?*” or “*God knows my heart*” shows a lukewarm relationship with Christ. To be clear, understanding there is a God does not prove spiritual maturity nor does it provide a clearly defined individual relationship with Christ. It does not mean that God is **known** to you and most importantly it does not mean you are **known** to God.

John 10:14

New International Version

<sup>14</sup> “I am the good shepherd; I **know** my sheep and my sheep **know** me—

“But here’s possibly where the misconception starts: Being in an “equally yoked” relationship isn’t about the convenience of going for church service together, or being able to sing the same songs or use the same lingo. Two professing Christians are still two broken human beings with the free will to pursue God – or not to. Simply wearing the label of Christianity does not give us a free pass to walking the three-legged race towards Christlikeness in perfect unity of mind and heart.”

“I pray that the measure of our richness will not be wrongly determined by how often we go to church, how many Bible stories we know, or the leadership positions we hold in church – but by the fruit of the Spirit in our lives – manifested in a mutual reverence for the sovereign Lord, surrender to His will and selfless love for each other.”

### ***Can a relationship be unequally yoked if we're both Christians? | Ada Chua***

In all actuality, your mate can be a vacant attendee void of the **fruits of the spirit**, barren of understanding and going through the motions to appease the believing mate prior to marriage.

### **Galatians 5:22-23 New King James Version**

**22** But the fruit of the Spirit is **love, joy, peace, longsuffering, kindness, goodness, faithfulness,** <sup>23</sup> **[a]gentleness, self-control.** Against such there is no law.

It is also quite possible that before today the believing mate, did not know how to hold their mate accountable for not praying with and over you consistently, for not reading the word of God or for failing to tithe because they are inconsistent in these areas as well. **However, what is your core belief in the Lord?** That is the true litmus test of faith. Unfortunately, this is how the bond between a true believer and unbeliever is cultivated. When the believing mate is not in the state of **active belief**, their standards lower and become more accepting of someone with **unequally low** beliefs to zero core beliefs in the Lord. Leaving the couple at self-imposed disadvantage in marriage before it even begins.

## **Come Up Smelling of Roses!**

### **Reverence for the Lord**

All hope is not lost! God provides us a guide through the unequally yoked mandate. He wants marriages to flourish and blossom the way that He intended them to be. Additionally, just because someone is raised in the church does not mean they are equally yoked material either. In fact, lukewarm Christians contribute to some of the messiest

divorces we have ever seen! Just because a believer knows every verse in the bible and often knows the social cues and etiquette of church settings does not mean they are an equally yoked match either. In fact, relationships that have the potential to move from unequally yoked to equally yoked usually involves a new believer with a sincere **reverence** for the Lord. A new foundling in Christ that is truly growing in their faith and not imitating a false relationship with the Lord who conveys a deep and profound respect of the Lord will **grow faster** in faith than someone who has known the Lord all their lives. Keep in mind, this believer must be **actively** seeking not moonlighting as a Christian, is one that walks and exemplifies a profound reverence for the Lord.

Reverence is honor and respect that is deeply felt and outwardly demonstrated. Because of the Lord God's awesome power and majesty, He is deserving of the highest level of reverence ([Leviticus 19:30](#)). The Bible records reverence as the automatic response of everyone who encounters the awesome grandeur of the Lord God Almighty ([Numbers 20:6](#); [Judges 13:20](#); [1 Chronicles 21:16](#)).

What is Reverence for the Lord | Got Questions?

## Playing House

### *The Consequences of Cohabitation*

*According to statistics gathered by US Attorney Legal Services, living together before getting married doesn't accomplish the goal that couples think that it will. A couple who does not live together prior to getting married has a 20 percent chance of being divorced within five years. **If the couple has lived together beforehand, that number jumps to 49 percent.***

*If the couple chooses to live together as an alternative to being married at all, the likelihood that the relationship will break up within five years is 49 percent. **At the 10-year mark, a married couple has a 33 percent chance of breaking up. For the unmarried couple who is living together, the likelihood of a breakup is a whopping 62 percent.***

Proverbs 3:33 New Living Translation (NLT)

<sup>33</sup>The LORD curses the house of the wicked,  
but he blesses the home of the upright.

## ***Just another Monday***

Perhaps the saddest thing a recently-married couple told me was this: “Because we lived together before marriage, the day we got back from our honeymoon felt like ‘just another Monday.’” Premarital cohabitation sucks the novelty, joy, and surreal feeling out of the weeks, months, and years following the big day. Nothing’s really new except the jewelry on your fingers.

*The Dangerous Lure of Living Together Before Marriage, Author - Steve Hoppe*

## **Hopes Unfulfilled**

*“In every measure of consolidation, intimacy and commitment, couples who are living together feel less closeness than married couples. Fewer share resources and 18 percent are not dating their partners exclusively. More than twice as many are not sure if their relationship is permanent. **The low commitment levels in cohabiting are particularly tough on females. Women agreeing to move in with a partner typically look for a deeper, more committed relationship, but according to studies, their hopes are often unfulfilled.**” *Christian Headlines Today**

## **Trying Before Buying**

*Why Buy the Cow When You Can Get the Milk for Free?*

We have all heard the many sayings when it comes sampling the best of a woman before asking for their hand in marriage. It is an insulting term and invalidating statements like these cause women to stay in relationships as the hopes of marriage are dangled over their heads until they comply with the needs of their live-in mates. Often, after many years of sexual **sampling**, a would-be male suitor becomes bored when a covenant

commitment has not been made. Not inspired to change, not driven to fight for what is essentially laying right in front of them they become comfortable in complacency. We have all heard the many heartless comments and jokes said behind the heads of live-in girlfriends. ***“The old ball and chain, it’s cheaper to keep her”***. The sayings are many, but the kept promises of marriage are few. Statements such as, ***“Why buy the cow when you can get the milk for free, you can have your cake and eat it too or test drive the car first before you buy it,”*** demeans and devalues the gift that God has called women to be.

## Test the Test Drive Theory

***Test Drive Theory - The theory that you must test drive a car (live with someone) before committing to purchase (marriage).***

- **The Test Drive**- after you have test driven the vehicle you have utilized the vehicles resources without committing to purchase. (Fuel, convenience, etc.)
- **Devalue**– Once the vehicle is driven off the lot the car immediately depreciates in value.
- **Miles**- Most of the time a potential buyer does not want to own a vehicle that has high mileage.
- **New versus Used**– Let’s face it; if given the choice between a new car and a used vehicle most people would prefer to purchase a new car free of blemish.
- **Insurance**– During a test drive the vehicle has no protection to ensure its quality.
- **“As Is”**- Meaning you take it or leave it. Whatever damage was placed by the previous owner you take it that way and assume the risk, and you cannot seek reimbursement. There is no accountability and there is no recourse for repair for the current owner.

Do You Really Want to Be Tested Like This? God calls us to test the spirits not the spirits testing you!

1 John 4:1 New King James Version (NKJV)

## Love for God and One Another

**4** Beloved, do not believe every spirit, **but test the spirits**, whether they are of God, because many false prophets have gone out into the world.

Only the adversary seeks to diminish your value by comparing your importance to objects or things. You were created by a King and have inheritance as a child of a King. Women and Men of God are worth the wait! However, it is imperative that women in cohabitation relationships know their worth most of all!

1 Peter 2:9 New King James Version (NKJV)

<sup>9</sup>But you *are* a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, His own special people, that you may proclaim the praises of Him who called you out of darkness into His marvelous light;

## Future Forfeited

The real tragedy is that many couples who seek to live together before marriage do not truly understand what they are giving up. Without covenant there is no protection therefore you forfeit your marital inheritance. ***It is such an insurmountable wager where the consequences far outweigh the impact to those involved but affects their children's children up to the 10<sup>th</sup> generation.***

Deuteronomy 23:2 New King James Version (NKJV)

<sup>2</sup>“One of illegitimate birth shall not enter the assembly of the LORD; even to the tenth generation none of his *descendants* shall enter the assembly of the LORD.

Putting your children's children future at risk is selfish but it also shows a sincere lack of faith. It shows that you and your relationship lack the ability to trust in God that he knows what is best for you. This lack of faith causes a manmade relationship that siphons love



and virtue rather than giving it. This faithless relationship continues to look for proof to establish itself in the eyes of man without ever providing commitment. Coexistence based in fear gives an outward appearance of marriage not the character of God within your relationship.

1 Samuel 16:7 New King James Version (NKJV)

7But the LORD said to Samuel, "Do not look at his appearance or at his physical stature, because I have <sup>[a]</sup>refused him. **For<sup>[b]</sup> the LORD does not see as man sees; for man looks at the outward appearance, but the LORD looks at the heart."**

## The Fear Factor

An unwillingness to start over or fear of loneliness has caused many to move out of the will of God attempting to master their own destiny. So many co-habiting couples face long engagements, no fruition of marriage and in most cases high divorce rates soon after finally tying the knot, that it has become unfortunate to see relationships shatter once the couple says, "I do". The thrill is gone before the marriage even begins. We all know when the person we choose isn't right for us, yet still many fail to trust in the Lord with all of their hearts to guide our paths straight.

**Proverbs 3:5-6** "Trust in the Lord with all of your heart and do not lean on your own understanding. In all your ways acknowledge Him and He will make your paths straight."

*"Treating cohabitation as marriage "insurance" is a very unstable foundation, one built partially on fear and partially on selfishness. It's basically saying that, if you meet all my needs and serve me well, then I will marry you".*

- If you make me feel loved, then I'll marry you.
- If you satisfy me sexually, then I'll marry you.
- If you treat me with respect, then I'll marry you.
- If you make me happy, then I'll marry you.
- If you fulfill my needs, then I'll marry you.

- If you like what I like, then I'll marry you.
- If you make something of yourself, then I'll marry you.
- If you don't do things that get on my nerves, then I'll marry you.

**Before You Live Together: Will Living Together Bring You Closer or Drive You Apart? Dr. David Gudgel**

**Isaiah 4:1** New Living Translation (NLT)

**4** In that day so few men will be left that seven women will fight for each man, saying, "Let us all marry you! We will provide our own food and clothing. Only let us take your name so we won't be mocked as old maids."

## **Ring Rights!**

*If you Love it, put a ring on it!*

Both men and women must understand that sex and the ability not to engage in sex should not be the sole reason you are getting married. Both genders pressure their mates for intimacy out of an abundance of fear. **While others in cohabitation relationships want the benefits of marriage without the actual Ring Rights.** This is unfair to both parties and if you really love each other you should be able to sacrifice your flesh for the greater good of covenant in marriage.

It is an unnatural dependency to live on lust instead of love. You or your mate should never feel pressured to engage in sex prior to marriage. You should also never feel that you will lose your relationship if you forgo sex prior to marriage. This is the embodiment of **Soul-Ties** where the spirits of others are fighting for center stage in your marriage bed. The bible states to get married if these strong desires persist. **However, we caution you again this should not be the sole reason you want to marry your significant other.**

## 1 Corinthians 7:9 New Life Version (NLV)

⁹But if you are not able to keep from doing that which you know is wrong, get married. It is better to get married than to have such strong sex desires.

### Great Sex in Marriage is God's Design

Great sex in marriage is God's design. In fact, that's how great sex works! Sex is supposed to be intimate physically, emotionally, and spiritually. And here's the neat thing: the more spiritually and emotionally close we feel, the more the physical kicks in and the more sex feels great! **To Love, Honor & Vacuum – Top 10 Reasons to Get Married: Author Sheila Wray Gregorie**