

# Should You Only Date a Virgin?

Posted March 6, 2021 by [Patrick Neve](#)

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## What have you heard about natural disasters?

I grew up in Florida, which means I've heard plenty of hurricane stories. They are a staple in the Sunshine State. I have lived through many hurricanes, but I missed some of the worst ones.

I find it interesting to hear people talk about natural disasters I didn't experience, like Hurricane Andrew...or the toothpaste analogy.

Much like Hurricane Andrew, the toothpaste analogy is a natural disaster from the 90s I never experienced but have heard about. [It was a product of "Purity Culture"](#) and was a staple at chastity talks. In order to dissuade teenagers from having sex, speakers would say your virginity is like a tube of toothpaste because if you squeeze it out, you'll never get it back in.

I can't believe people got paid to say that in public.

## It isn't technically wrong, you can't "un-have" sex.

But the toothpaste analogy wasn't helpful because instead of *virginity*, [the analogy was used to describe chastity](#). It led to worse things like the Rose Skit or the Cup of Water Skit, where something was passed around the room and kids were instructed to mangle the rose or spit in the cup. Then the speaker would hold up the rose or the water and ask "Now who would want this?"

That sends the wrong message. Instead of saying, "Don't treat yourself like an object to be used," these analogies say "You are an object to be used...so don't get used too much or you'll lose your resale value."

Much like a hurricane, these analogies did damage, some of which we haven't dealt with. There are two main consequences. On one hand, [people who lost their virginity](#) were told they had no more worth. On the other hand, some people were convinced their future spouse needs to be a virgin. This post deals with the second misconception.

## Virginity is not chastity.

Now, if you're not married and you want your future wife to be a virgin, that's not necessarily wrong. [It stems from a desire to want to marry someone who practices chastity](#), which is fine. It becomes a mistake when you equate virginity with chastity.

The toothpaste analogy and others like it taught the wrong lesson. They taught that chastity was something you have and lose, like your virginity. But chastity is [a virtue that you grow in over time](#), like humility or prudence.

Virtues are not something we have and then lose when we sin. We begin our life's journey with very little virtue [and we become more virtuous over time](#). Babies, for instance, have very little patience. Over time, an impatient baby can grow into a patient adult but very rarely does an impatient adult regress all the way back to infancy.

Good works and grace increase our virtue and sin sets us back. Sin *damages* our virtue but doesn't destroy it completely. In the case of someone losing their virginity, it's likely that person led an unchaste life, but that [doesn't disqualify them from becoming chaste in the future](#).

In fact, sometimes the repentance of a sin motivates someone to virtue faster than someone who never sinned in that area at all. Christ knew this when He said, "Her sins, which were many, have been forgiven; hence she has shown great love. But the one to whom little is forgiven, loves little."

If you make sweeping declarations like "I will only ever date a virgin," [you could be dismissing a very chaste person](#).

## Judge not, or you will be judged.

In [Matthew 7:1](#) Christ also says, "Judge not, lest you be judged." This is an often-misquoted verse, used by people who want to sin as a justification for why you should be okay with them sinning. This is not one of those instances. Christ's words teach us [we shouldn't assume the state of a person's soul](#) based on the limited information we have.

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Again, the desire to marry a virgin is an understandable desire. We all want our future spouse, whoever they are, [to be living a life of chastity](#). But when that preference becomes an absolute, you risk judging the state of a person's soul, which is not good.

[There are plenty of men and women in heaven right now](#) who struggled with chastity during their life on earth, like St. Augustine, Mary Magdalene, and St. Faustina. It's impossible to say men and women like them are unworthy of dating when they are clearly worthy of heaven.

In [Story of a Soul](#), St. Thérèse counsils the reader to "assume virtue" in other people. This is the posture we should take when getting to know a potential romantic partner. Many of us (if not most of us) have made mistakes in our past when it comes to chastity. Assuming virtue means even when you know someone has made a mistake in the past, your first reaction [should be to assume they repented of it and are forgiven](#). After all, this is how you would want to be treated if your past mistakes came to light.

The question, "Should I only date a virgin?" is the wrong question. The correct question is: "Should I only date people who practice chastity?" And the answer is yes.

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