

[Report Inappropriate Ad](#)[HOME »](#)[BIBLE TEACHER'S GUIDE: BUILDING FOUNDATIONS FOR A GODLY MARRIAGE: A PRE-MARRIAGE, MARRIAGE COUNSELING STUDY](#)**FROM THE SERIES:**[BIBLE TEACHER'S GUIDE: BUILDING FOUNDATIONS FOR A GODLY MARRIAGE: A PRE-MARRIAGE, MARRIAGE COUNSELING](#)[STUDY](#)

# 5a. Article: Friends Of The Opposite Sex?

[← PREVIOUS PAGE](#) | [NEXT PAGE →](#)

How will you handle friendships with the opposite sex in marriage? This seemingly unimportant issue can often cause great strain and conflict within a marriage.

This topic came up while I was working as a Navy Reserve chaplain at Great Lakes Navy Base. While there, I attended a two hour group pre-marital counseling session for sailors. The chaplain running the session asked the sailors this question, “How many of you have friends of the opposite sex?” The whole class raised their hands. The next question was, “How many of your fiancés have friends of the opposite sex?” The whole class raised their hands again. Finally, he said, “How many of you plan on keeping it that way?” Each of the sailors looked at each other trying to discern what the right answer was, but eventually, all of them raised their hands again.

The chaplain then began to describe a formula of how relationships develop and progress further than friendship. He said:



Those of you who plan to keep your friends of the opposite sex, I would highly discourage it. Do you think most people who end up having affairs, initially planned to cheat on their mates? No, many times it happens simply because the couple did not have a rational plan about how they were going to interact with the opposite sex. They began to have fights and then one spouse went to share their problems with a friend of the opposite sex. When this continually happened, it created vulnerability and intimacy, eventually leading to an affair. Or, one mate had a job that required travel while the other stayed home, partied, and hung out with the opposite sex when the mate was away. Again, this produced the simple formula of the opposite sex + time together + intimate sharing, leading to problems.

These are not uncommon scenarios; they happen all the time. To make it worse, throw alcohol into the picture. Then anything could happen. It only takes one drink to lower your inhibitions...

The topic of friendship with the opposite sex is a topic every couple should consider before getting married. Personally, my wife and I talked about this before marriage, and we both agreed it was very difficult, even as a single person, to have a close relationship with the opposite sex without someone's feelings eventually getting involved. Not impossible, but difficult.

How did we decide to handle it? As a pastor, I have to minister to females, but I am very careful about being alone with them unless it is necessary for confidentiality. When I am going to be alone with a female for an extended period of time, I always try to let my wife know and make sure she approves. If the counseling will be continuous, I will probably ask her to get involved.

In addition, before I got married, one of my best friends was a female, and to be honest, feelings sometimes got involved. However, we never went further than friendship. In marriage, it was very important to me for my wife to become close with this female if my friend was to remain a part of my life. By God's grace, my wife now has a closer friendship with her than I do. For me, this was the only way my friend and I could continue to have a close relationship. With that said, my relationship with this girl is not even close to where it was previously because now my wife gets all my intimate thoughts, fears, plans, and time alone. That intimacy is reserved for my wife alone. And, by God's grace, this close friend is now also married, and her intimate thoughts are reserved for her husband.

Consequently, this is a very important issue for couples to discuss and to create a plan for. When not properly addressed, it often becomes a source of conflict and tension within a marriage and sometimes it can be destructive. How will you handle relationships with the opposite sex?

**FROM THE SERIES:**

**BIBLE TEACHER'S GUIDE: BUILDING FOUNDATIONS FOR A GODLY MARRIAGE: A PRE-MARRIAGE, MARRIAGE COUNSELING**

**STUDY**





[Report Inappropriate Ad](#)

