

FAMILY MATTERS

Designed for
Relationships



The State of the Unions



- Only 48% of Americans are married today, down from 67% in 1960.
- The divorce rate in the US is triple that of Britain and France.
- 41% of first marriages end in divorce.
- 60% of second marriages end in divorce.
- Living together prior to getting married increases a couple's chances of getting divorced by 40%.



**1/3 of all children in
America do not live with
their father as a primary
player in their lives.**



Biblical Understanding of Marriage

1. Marriage is God's Creation



Genesis 2:18-24 - “The LORD God said, ‘It is not good for the man to be alone. I will make a helper suitable for him’... So the LORD God caused the man to fall into a deep sleep; and while he was sleeping, He took one of the man’s ribs and closed up the place with flesh. Then the LORD God made a woman from the rib He had taken out of the man, and He brought her to the man. The man said, ‘This is now bone of my bones and flesh of my flesh; she shall be called “woman,” for she was taken out of man.’ For this reason a man will leave his father and mother and be united to his wife, and they will become one flesh.”



**UNITED, or joined is
“cleave”:
Being welded or glued
together**



***Matthew 19:6 - “So they are
no longer two, but one.
Therefore what God has
joined together, let man not
separate.”***



2. Marriage is the foundation of culture.



**“The Destruction of Marriage
Precedes the death of a
Culture” - Traditional Values
Coalition authored by Louis P.
Sheldon, Chairman of the
Traditional Values Coalition**



“British anthropologist J. D. Unwin, whose 1934 book, *Sex and Culture*, chronicled the historical decline of numerous cultures. Unwin studied 86 different throughout history and discovered a surprising fact: No nation that rejected monogamy in marriage and pre-marital sexual chastity lasted longer than a generation after it embraced sexual hedonism.”



**God's prohibition on sex
outside of marriage is not
random and arbitrary -
it is by design.**



1 Corinthians 7:3-4 - “The husband should fulfill his marital duty to his wife, and likewise the wife to her husband. The wife’s body does not belong to her alone but also to her husband. In the same way, the husband’s body does not belong to him alone but also to his wife.”



3. Marriage is a Primary Tool for Sanctification



***Romans 8:29 - ... “predestined
to be conformed to the image
of Christ.”***



**Martin Luther the Reformer
called marriage the “School of
Character”**



1 Corinthians 7:28 - “But those who marry will face many troubles in this life.”



James 1:2-4 - “Consider it pure joy, my brothers, whenever you face trials of many kinds, because you know that the testing of your faith develops perseverance. Perseverance must finish its work so that you may be mature and complete, not lacking anything.”



Marriage is not about my happiness, it is about my holiness. It is not about what I get but what I become. And that is 'I become like Christ.' And people who become like Christ impact the world for Christ.



***My marriage isn't about me. It is
about God and his reputation.
My Healthy Marriage reflects
God's Design for His created
order.***



BIBLICAL UNDERSTANDING

1. Marriage is God's Creation
2. Marriage is the Foundation of Culture
3. Marriage is God's Tool for Sanctification



6 Steps to a Healthy Marriage

1. Characterized by Forgiveness



Forgiveness is the choice to live with the consequences of someone else's sin without holding it against them.



Colossians 3:13 - “Bear with each other and forgive whatever grievances you may have against one another. Forgive as the Lord forgave you.”



Lewis Smedes-Christian Ethicist

“When you release the wrongdoer from the wrong, you cut a malignant tumor out of your inner life. You set a prisoner free, but you discover that the real prisoner was yourself.”



Robert Quillen-American Humorist

*“A happy marriage is the union of two
good forgivers.”*



2. Characterized by Selfless Service



I am giving my 150% not if you do, but whether or not you do.



***Ephesians 5:25 - “Husbands,
love your wives, just as Christ
loved the church and gave
himself up for her.”***



John 13:14-15 - “Now that I, your Lord and Teacher, have washed your feet, you also should wash one another’s feet. I have set you an example that you should do as I have done for you.”



3. Characterized by Perseverance



James 1:2-4 - “Consider it pure joy, my brothers, whenever you face trials of many kinds, because you know that the testing of your faith develops perseverance. Perseverance must finish its work so that you may be mature and complete, not lacking anything.”



4. Characterized by Protection



Proverbs 4:23 - “Above all else, guard your heart, for it is the wellspring of life.”



5. Characterized by Spiritual Growth



Ecclesiastes 4:12 - “Though one may be overpowered, two can defend themselves. A cord of three strands is not quickly broken.”



Sheri Fuller-*When Couples Pray*

“The divorce rate among couples who consistently pray together is less than 1%.”



**You can endure only when each
of you - separately and then
together - experience a collision
with the supernatural.**



6. Characterized by Being in Community



Ephesians 4:15 - “Speaking the truth in love, we will in all things grow up into Him who is the Head, that is, Christ.”



***James 5:16a - “Therefore
confess your sins to each
other and pray for each
other.”***



**Only 10% of couples who divorce
actually seek help before the
decision is made.**



My marriage isn't about me. It is about God and his reputation. My healthy marriage affirms God's design for His created order.



BIBLICAL UNDERSTANDING

- 1. Marriage is God's Creation**
- 2. Marriage is the Foundation of Culture**
- 3. Marriage is primary Tool for Sanctification**



A HEALTHY MARRIAGE IS CHARACTERIZED BY

1. Forgiveness
2. Selfless Service
3. Perseverance
4. Protection
5. Spiritual Growth
6. Being in Community

