

CHURCH CONNECTION

OCTOBER 2023



TRUTH ABOUT MARRIAGE AND DIVORCE

Let's deal with a dangerous misconception about marriage and divorce. We often hear something like this: "Half of marriages end in divorce." That's an inaccurate and very unhelpful statement to make about marriage and divorce.

As far as we know, no state tracks all marriages from the time they begin to when they are dissolved either by divorce or death of one of the spouses. For instance, the marriages that happen this year in Wisconsin will not be individually tracked by Wisconsin as to when or how they end. That's not how the data, currently, is accumulated and analyzed, at least in our state.

Clearing up this misunderstanding is important. When someone says to a group of young people that half of marriages end in divorce, the message that gets communicated is there's a 50-50 likelihood of their marriage ending in divorce. Then in the mind of a young person, that gets translated to, "Why would I want to marry when there is a fifty percent likelihood of my marriage not lasting?" No wonder so many young people today are at best skeptical about getting married!

According to data from University of Michigan economist Justin Wolfers provided to the *New York Times*, about 70 percent of marriages from the 1990s reached fifteen years, which means the divorce rate for those marriages was 30%. The same data shows that through 2014, the divorce rate for people married in the 2000s was only 15%. These well-below 50% numbers are seldom highlighted, unfortunately.

We need to give people every reason to get married and stop giving them misunderstood

(Continued on back)

Mark your calendar & register today!

On Thursday, October 26 and Thursday, November 16 we will be hosting virtual meetings starting at 6:30 p.m. All of you who pray for us and support us are our heroes, and this is an easy way for you to join us in a "huddle" to hear about what is happening in Madison and around the state that impacts marriage, family, life and religious liberty. These will be online interactive events.

Scan the QR code below or visit wifamilycouncil.org/events to sign up.



STRENGTHENING,
PRESERVING & PROMOTING
MARRIAGE, FAMILY, LIFE &
RELIGIOUS FREEDOM

"What therefore God hath joined together, let not man put asunder."

- Matt. 19:6b



data that scares them. We also need to make sure people know how they can dramatically reduce the likelihood that their marriage ends in divorce.

First, engaged couples need solid premarital counseling.. Good premarital counseling takes time and helps couples discover potential points of conflict that need addressing prior to marrying. Obviously, for Christians, the premarital counseling needs to be solidly biblical, but it also

has to be thorough, practical, and intensive.

Second, a study released by the Institute of Family Studies found that couples who regularly go to church together report higher levels of happiness than those who don't. This data correlates with other research that shows that couples who attend church together are less likely to divorce.¹

Other actions or decisions couples can and should take to ensure their marriage doesn't become a statistic include such things as communicating well, handling conflict biblically, developing a biblical understanding of financial stewardship, committing to each other that divorce isn't an option, practicing humility and forgiveness, and certainly praying together.

These are the messages young people need to receive today. They need to know success in marriage is very possible. The fundamental truth we all need to embrace is that God's plan for marriage is a monogamous, lifetime relationship between one man and one woman (Matthew 19:4-6). Let's embrace the truth about marriage!

¹ <https://research.lifeway.com/2016/02/12/want-a-happy-relationship-go-to-church-together/#:~:text=This%20is%20consistent%20with%20research,less%20likely%20to%20be%20divorced.>

GOD'S PLAN IS ALWAYS BEST!

The vision of Wisconsin Family Council is a Wisconsin where God is honored, life is cherished, families thrive, and religious freedom flourishes. By any standard that is a big vision. But we believe that it is consistent with how Jesus taught His disciples to pray, when He told them to pray for God's will to be done on earth as it is in heaven (Matt. 6:10). In addition, we know righteousness exalts a nation, but sin is a reproach to any people (Prov. 14:34). People are happier and healthier when they obey God's plan for marriage and family, and this is true even for unbelievers. Society in general is blessed by stable marriages and families. Children thrive when they are loved and raised by their biological (or adoptive) mom and dad. This is being acknowledged even by those who do not share our biblical worldview. (See, for example the September 13, 2023, op ed piece entitled "The One Privilege Liberals Ignore," by Nicholas Kristof in the *New York Times*). It's just so true: God's plan is always best. Always!

Wisconsin Family Council (WFC) is a 501 (c)(3) organization that has been advancing Judeo-Christian principles and values in Wisconsin since 1986. We have largely done this by informing Wisconsin citizens, policymakers, and churches about the important legislative and cultural issues so they can be involved in strengthening, preserving, and promoting God's plan for marriage and family, the sanctity of human life, and religious freedom in our state.

"Church Connection" is published monthly by WFC and is available to churches in Wisconsin.

PO Box 14440 | Madison WI 53708 | 888-378-7395 (toll free) | info@wifamilycouncil.org | wifamilycouncil.org