

CHURCH CONNECTION

MARCH 2024



MORE THAN A PIECE OF PAPER

"It's just a piece of paper. We love each other and that's enough." Ever heard anyone say something like that when explaining why they aren't married but are living together? Unfortunately, that's a common attitude about marriage.

The truth is marriage is much more than "just a piece of paper." As Institute for Family Studies points out in a marriage fact sheet, "[m]arriage is about building a common life together, forming an exclusive emotional, sexual, and spiritual bond, forging a shared financial future, taking care of your spouse in 'sickness and health,' and providing a stable and loving home for any children that you have."

Children get lost all too frequently in the marriage discussion these days. Many couples, if they marry at all, are choosing not to have children, claiming children are too expensive, or don't fit their lifestyle, or the world is overpopulated, or the world is too bad to bring children into it. Broken families or children born to single women put children at huge risk for all sorts of pathologies. Children adopted into homes with two dads or two moms are always purposefully deprived of either a mother or a father. All of these alternative structures reflect the sad reality that our culture is much more about adult happiness than the well-being of children.

What we know is that what is best for children is to be brought up in the homes of their married dads and moms. This doesn't mean children brought up in other family structures can't overcome the challenges. Many certainly do. It does mean that normatively an intact, married-dad-and-mom home is where children are much more likely to thrive, not just survive. And every society depends on the next generation to become well-adjusted, positively productive adults.

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

Prayer & Praise

Pray for the work of Wisconsin Family Council. Please pray for wisdom for our entire staff as we seek to strengthen, preserve and promote God's plan for marriage and family, the sanctity of life, and religious liberty in our state.

As of mid February, 67 LEAD WI campers have registered for LEAD WI 2024. Registration for new campers is now open! Go to LEADWI.org for details and to register. Please pray for this outstanding biblical worldview camp for teens.

We live in dark days, but Jesus is still the Light of the world, and He calls us to be light. Pray as Jesus taught us that God's will be done "in earth, as it is in heaven."

"Wherefore be ye not unwise, but understanding what the will of the Lord is."

- Eph. 5:17.

What God's will is, is clearly detailed for us in Eph. 5:18 – 6:20.

Marriage matters to children. Social science continues to reinforce God’s design for marriage and family. What social science finds is that children living with their married dads and moms are more likely to do well in school than their peers in other family structures. They typically graduate high school and when they reach adulthood, they are more likely to have full-time employment and to succeed in their work.

Boys in intact families are more likely to avoid getting in trouble with the law than boys not in these families and thus these boys stay out of jail. Girls who are brought up in homes with married moms and dads are less likely to be sexually active than girls in other families, thereby avoiding teen pregnancies. Importantly, children living with their married dads and moms avoid the disadvantages of poverty.



So how do we change the culture, the mindset of so many? First, Christian families model godly marriages. They talk positively about God’s plan for marriage and about their own marriage. They promote child-bearing and adoption within marriage. Seeing good marriages and families is one of the best ways to ensure the next generation values marriage and wants marriage and children for themselves.

Churches also have an important role to play in creating a marriage culture. Biblical preaching and teaching on the subject is essential, but so is celebrating marriage as God designed it—making much of weddings and anniversaries and births sends a powerful message to everyone that marriage is good and desirable.

Government can help by making sure no laws penalize marriage, but rather that married couples receive some benefits, reflecting the good they bring to society. Additionally, we need to stop incentivizing single parenthood, which sets children up for trouble.

Marriage matters, and it especially matters to children. Wise societies will do everything they can to ensure they are promoting the best interests of children—their future. Once again, it must be said, God’s way is always the best way. His design for marriage truly is so much more than a piece of paper.

THEM BEFORE US

For additional reading that is well documented, we recommend *Them Before Us*, by Katie Faust. Katie masterfully makes the case that adults need to prioritize the needs of children. For a webinar with the author Katie Faust, visit wifamilycouncil.org/events/lunch-with-a-purpose.

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.

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