

F. LaGard Smith answers the question: How close are we to the destruction of the nuclear family?

Discussion and study guides / questions / topics for your consideration.

1. When you think of 'the nuclear family' what do you think of? How would you define it? (Gen 2.18-25)
  - a. Is the notion of the nuclear family important to us?
2. How would you characterize the condition or status of the biblical based nuclear family in the present time?
  - a. What is the significance of marriage? Is there significance? (Eph 5.21ff)
  - b. Who established marriage? (Gen 2.18ff)
  - c. What has the Adversary and the creation done with it? Has it become a topic related to 'disposable' or 'convenient' or perhaps 'economic'?
3. When you think of the term 'divorce' as it relates to a marriage, how would you describe your initial reaction? (dismay; shock; blasé; so what; or something else?)
  - a. How have perceptions of divorce changed over time?
  - b. Why?
  - c. Is it unsettling that the divorce rate within the Lord's church is at or near the divorce rate outside the church? Why or why not?
4. Consider the perspective that divorce is really the loving thing to do in order to get out of this hard situation or relationship.
  - a. What is the first situation that comes to your mind that justifies this perspective? Is it scriptural?
  - b. Or is it cultural?
5. Whether the notion of "ending the marriage" is academic to you or very real to you, to what degree do you seek the Lord's wisdom as revealed in the scriptures for your guide? Or do the scriptures even matter?
  - a. Does Jesus' words in Matt 19.4-6 have meaning?
  - b. Has the creation changed meaning to suit its desires? (Mal 2.14-17).

6. Divorce or damage to the nuclear family is not limited to divorce.
  - a. Discuss the impact of absenteeism – either the father or the mother.
  - b. What do you think of the idea that family can be so greatly prioritized that it also can or will lead to family damage?
  - c. What do you think of the idea of children becoming the object of everything? How does that fit into Eph 6.1-4?
  - d. Does that or can that influence a child into thinking that they are center of the universe? And is that or can that be a positive or negative thing?
  - e. What do you think of the family unit itself becoming the object of everything?
  - f. What remains for God?
  - g. Isn't one of the big themes in scripture God must come first? (Matt 6.33, 22.36-40; Ps 37.3-6;
7. Consider some of your favorite scriptures – for example – Josh 24.14,15 – answer in your own mind and heart – do we resemble that? Is that what we have worked to accomplish?
8. Practical application for your consideration: husbands and wives – read the Song of Solomon together. Or, read it separately first, and then, come together and read it together. In the ESV, parts are even broken out to read to one another.
  - a. This is holy scripture. Take time to be holy – with one another.