

The Scriptural Foundation of Marriage and Family

God Created Marriage and Family

God has established marriage and family in His creation work and they are thus defined and governed by the natural law of God's creation (Gen. 2:18,23,24). Attempts to redefine marriage and family and to alter or resist their intended purpose thus injure families and society.

Marriage—a Lifelong Covenant

A fundamental change of values and concepts marked the so-called sexual revolution of the 1960s. Marital fidelity lost its significance. Sexual cohabitation has gained moral acceptance in our society. The fulfillment of nearly all one's inclinations has become permissible. This is manifested, for example, in legislation legalizing same-sex unions. God, however, instituted marriage as a lifelong covenant between man and woman. God's will is that sexual life between man and woman take place only in the estate of marriage. The Bible always calls sexual relations outside of marriage fornication.

(LLC Position Statement, Section 4, Items 1-2)

God Protects and Strengthens Marriage and Families

God's Word seeks to protect and strengthen the family (Exod. 20:12; Prov. 1:8; Eph. 6:1-3). The family forms the fundamental unit of society and strong families are crucial to the health and preservation of society. Our society needs to value lifelong marriage and to support parenthood. Governments, policy makers, and public institutions at all levels should strive to support and strengthen marriage and families.—(LLC Position Statement, Section 4, Item 5)

Pressures of our time stress marriage and family life to the breaking point. Our society has almost forgotten that marriage was established by God, not man, and is a holy covenant. Marriage is intended to be a joy, but corrupted mankind makes it a burden. It was given as a gift to the first pair, and therefore all mankind, and has always been the only legitimate union of two people: a man and a woman (Gen. 2). It is the most wholesome foundation for family life and society.

Holy Scripture and Christian values are increasingly challenged in our time. As a nation we are becoming more secular and less spiritual, and as a result, God's intent for marriage and family is hidden from many. Christian understanding, based on the light of God's Word, views marriage as a holy covenant having a special purpose. However, a large element of secular society no longer sees marriage as sacred, or even reserved for members of the opposite sex even though marriage is not intended for those of the same sex. It is increasingly viewed only as a civil union wherein one has certain legal rights, and a bond to be dissolved when adversity arises or one becomes tired of the relationship.

Marriage is the foundation of family life, and when lived according to God's Word, it provides the most wholesome environment into which children can be born and raised. It is the only intended setting for procreation (Gen. 1:28). The Christian understands that each child is a gift from God, and the natural result of marriage (Ps. 127,128). Accepting children as God's creation does not spoil the marriage, nor does it reduce the joy of marriage as some assert. However, receiving children changes one's focus from only the self to the family as a whole, which is positive. Nevertheless, the Christian view of childbearing and family is at odds with the secular view, which considers parenthood a hindrance to the pursuit of leisure or career ambitions, and children as a bother or drain on resources. This emphasis on self-fulfillment causes some to look down on families with multiple children. Our society measures children in terms of cost: What is the cash burden for having children? What will I need to give up? Because of this very negative approach, many forgo having any children or choose to have only one or two. Such a view is far from God's intent for

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marriage and family as a place of love, security and belonging, as well as children.

The rejection of God as Creator has led to a carnal and sensual emphasis on sexual relationships. Sex outside of marriage is generally accepted, and many see it as more of a recreational activity than part of God's work in creation. Increased acceptance of co-habitation and homosexual behavior is driving society to redefine what marriage and family mean in the modern world. We face a paradox of homosexuals demanding the right to marry and raise children, but many heterosexuals choosing to live together unmarried and without children. As a result, children are thrust into very unnatural and unwholesome settings. Both homosexual and co-habitation relationships are detrimental to the rearing of children and the stability of society. Thus God's Word pronounces all sexual activity outside of marriage as sin (Eph. 5:3).

Wholesome marriages and families provide a future for our nation. It is in this God-given setting that children are first taught positive values, and receive the instruction of God's Word. This is where children also learn respect for authority and how to properly interact in the network of human relationships. Such lessons carry through into future generations and are a benefit to society. Marriage and the work of parents deserve much more honor and support than they presently receive. As a society, we need to return to the foundation of strong marriages and families, and find ways to ease the burdens placed upon them. The first step is to return and embrace the scriptural basis for both.

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