

10 REASONS YOUR FAMILY MATTERS TO AMERICA:

FUNCTIONAL FAMILIES:

The process by which helpless self-centered infants become adults capable of making and keeping promises, earning a living, and using their freedom without troubling other people.

1

YOUR MARRIAGE PREVENTS FATHERLESSNESS



Marriage is society's only way of attaching fathers to the children they create. It protects children's relationships with their own mother and father during the many years it takes for them to reach adulthood. The vast majority of scientific studies over the last several decades have consistently shown that father absence is a problem for children. For millennia, marriage has brilliantly solved the fatherhood question by attaching men and women to each other before new life is created. This attachment helps eliminate any confusion about the obligations either parent has to each other and to the child.

2

YOUR MARRIAGE PROTECTS THE RIGHTS OF CHILDREN



Children have a right to their fathers whenever possible. Children are built to experience the love of a mother and father. Children are entitled to a relationship with both parents—to know and be known by both parents. Because of this, the union of a man and woman helps set the trajectory in a child's young life. But children cannot possibly protect these entitlements on their own. Marriage proactively protects these rights; it assures that children, created by their parents, will also be bound to their parents. It also idealizes the promise that a bride and groom will not be making babies outside of the home with other partners who cannot commit to the child. A marriage, even if it is currently childless, protects any future child's natural right to affiliate with both parents. Also, such childless marriages reserve sexual activity to a setting that prevents out-of-wedlock birth.

3

YOUR MARRIAGE TEACHES CHILDREN ABOUT THE PERMANENCE OF TRUE LOVE



"The primary job of parenthood is relational. Parents build relationships with their children and in so doing, teach their children how to build relationships with others." Relationships of trust make humanity possible. "The human race could not survive beyond a single generation if every person truly acted as if he were unconnected to any other person." By uniting man and woman, marriage brings together two opposite halves of humanity in a way that benefits both, and it models those benefits to children and society.

4

YOUR MARRIAGE TEACHES CHILDREN HOW TO HAVE RELATIONSHIPS



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5

YOUR MARRIAGE SETS THE STANDARD FOR A CHILD'S FUTURE



"Daughters of single parents are 53 percent more likely to marry as teenagers, 111 percent more likely to have children as teenagers, 164 percent more likely to have a premarital birth, and 92 percent more likely to dissolve their own marriages." Similarly, "boys raised outside of an intact nuclear family were more than twice as likely as other boys to end up in prison, even controlling for a range of social and economic factors."



6 YOUR MARRIAGE CIVILIZES MEN

Marriage benefits men and society: “Let me suggest that there are two basic categories—good and bad. The bad thing that men can do is become violent, isolated, and sexually irresponsible. The good thing they can do is to become husbands and fathers. Becoming husbands and fathers is the universal prescription of human societies for the socialization of the male. It’s how societies link male aggression, energy, purpose—maleness—to a pro-social purpose. The way human societies do that is by linking them to the lives of their children and to the lives of the mothers of their children through marriage.”

7 YOUR MARRIAGE REDUCES DOMESTIC VIOLENCE



“One of the most important benefits of a positive relationship between mother and father . . . Is the behavior it models for children. . . . Fathers who treat the mothers of their children with respect and deal with conflict within the relationship in an adult and appropriate manner are more likely to have boys who understand how they are to treat women and who are less likely to act in an aggressive fashion toward females. Girls with involved respectful fathers see how they should expect men to treat them are less likely to become involved in violent or unhealthy relationships.” The most important predictor of criminal behavior is not race, not income, not religious affiliation. It’s father-absence. It’s boys who don’t grow up with their fathers.

8 YOUR MARRIAGE REDUCES POVERTY



In the past, children were largely assured an intact home, and poverty often depended on what a father did for a living. But fatherlessness is now affecting almost half of American children, and poverty is much more likely to depend on whether children have fathers. Child poverty is now more often linked to family structure. “Being raised in a married family reduced a child’s probability of living in poverty by about 82 percent.”

9 YOUR MARRIAGE PREVENTS COMMUNITY PROBLEMS



“Neighborhood standards [are] set by mothers [and] are enforced by fathers. . . . Neighborhoods without fathers are neighborhoods without men able and willing to confront errant youth, chase threatening gangs, and reproach delinquent fathers. The absence of fathers deprives the community of those little platoons that informally but effectively control the boys on the street. By contrast, boys who do not regularly experience the love, discipline, and modeling of a good father are more likely to engage in what is called ‘compensatory masculinity,’ where they reject and denigrate all that is feminine and instead seek to prove their masculinity by engaging in domineering and violent behavior.”

10 YOUR MARRIAGE MAKES MARRIAGE AVAILABLE TO THE NEXT GENERATION



“Each of us has a marriage imprint based upon the marriage of our parents.” Can you imagine entire communities where this marriage modeling does not exist? Researchers have identified many American communities wherein as few as 9% of children experience a two-parent home. Such a setting makes it harder for children to understand what marriage is, how it functions, or how to behave in marriage, since they see permanent relationships so rarely.

Additionally, a failing marriage culture makes it harder to find a dating pool of qualified partners to choose from, since it is also unlikely that their acquaintances have seen or experienced the benefits of a functional marriage. In such a setting, it is nearly impossible to anticipate or share courtship practices and standards that would allow relationships to develop into marriages.

Your marriage shows the world a path toward the “harmonization of opposites.” Modeling a lifestyle “with inherent privileges, responsibilities, meaning, and purpose” marks a path that enriches and builds civilization.

WHAT'S THE TAKE AWAY?

“There is no substitute for the family in helping self-centered infants develop into cooperative adults.” For good or bad, America’s children are shaped by the union of their mother & father, and the skills and commitments that are modeled there.

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