

What Everyone Needs to Know About Strengthening Marriage:

We Can Do Better:

- U.S. taxpayers spend at least \$112 billion a year on divorce and unwed childbearing.
- 40 percent of all American babies today are born outside of marriage.
- More people are facing the financial and emotional challenges of life alone. In 1970, 79% of all adults in America were married; today it's only 51%.

Marriage Pays. Research shows that:

- Married individuals have more financial wealth and financial stability
- Married individuals have more personal happiness, more lifelong thriving love, better health, and longer lives
- Children with both parents at home perform vastly better in school, have far less trouble with the law, less teen pregnancy, and fewer issues with addiction.

More facts:

- Married men earn 10 to 40 percent more than single men who have similar education and job histories.
- Women and children are more likely to be impoverished through divorce.
- Divorce and unmarried childbearing significantly increases poverty rates of both mothers and children. Married mothers have lower rates of depression than single or cohabiting mothers.
- Boys reared without their fathers are two thirds more likely to end up in prison.
- An astonishing 35 percent of adolescent girls whose fathers left before the age of six became pregnant, compared to just 5 percent of girls whose fathers did not leave before that age.
- About 40 percent of U.S. couples getting divorced say that one or both of them are interested in reconciliation. This is a major opportunity to help millions of American families—saving couples, and their children, from the pain and anguish of an unnecessary divorce.

What We Can Do

- Host a marriage event or class at your local library or community center.
- Ask every church in your town to offer pre-marriage instruction and marriage enrichment classes, and for pastors to preach and teach about marriage
- Create a celebration in your town with Governor's or Mayor's Proclamations. Get local media coverage about the benefits of marriage and for your local efforts
- Ask public and private Middle and High Schools to talk about the importance of marriage between a man and a woman.
- Engage the media in your community on the importance of strengthening marriage as well as community leaders.

What Everyone Needs to Know About Redefining Marriage

The debate over the definition of marriage has unfolded across America and at the federal level for the past several years. What is the debate about marriage really about, how does it affect society and what is at stake in the outcome of the debate?

Competing Definitions of Marriage

- So-called same-sex “marriage” won’t exist in the law alongside traditional marriage.
- “Genderless marriage” will be the only form of marriage available to any couple – gay or straight.
- Terms like “husband” and “wife” are turned on their head, making them gender-neutral. Men can be “wives” and women can be “husbands.”
- Over time, marriage is deconstructed and becomes meaningless.

The “New” Marriage – for Everyone

As noted in a scholarly review published in the Harvard Journal of Law and Public Policy, “...once the judiciary or legislature adopts ‘the union of any two persons’ as the legal definition of civil marriage, that conception becomes the *sole* definitional basis for the *only* law-sanctioned marriage that any couple can enter, whether same-sex or man-woman. Therefore, **legally sanctioned genderless marriage, rather than peacefully coexisting with the contemporary man-woman marriage institution, actually displaces and replaces it.**”

Children Are Left Out

- Protecting the interests of children is the primary reason that government regulates and licenses marriage in the first place.
- Marriage is a special relationship reserved exclusively for heterosexual unions because only the intimate relationship between men and women has the ability to produce children as a result of that sexual union.
- By encouraging men and women to marry, society helps ensure that children will be known by and cared for by their own parents.
- The overwhelming body of social science evidence establishes that children do best when raised by their married mother and father.
- Simply stated, children need *both* a mother and a father.
- Redefining marriage strips the interests of children from being a focus of our marriage laws and substitutes the desires of adults for the needs of children.

There Will Be Consequences if You Disagree With The “New” Marriage

- Redefining marriage will result in serious and widespread consequences for society.
- People who refuse to accept this redefinition of marriage will be punished by the law.
- Churches and religious organizations can lose their tax exemptions and be forced to abandon their core moral principles or face punishment.
- Individuals, small businesses and groups will be subjected to lawsuits and regulatory action for refusing to condone the “new” understanding of marriage.
- Children at a very young age will be taught in school that marriage is between any two adults, no matter what they have been taught at home, in church or in their ethnic traditions.
- Under the law, those who believe in traditional marriage will be treated as the legal and moral equivalent of bigots
- Six states and D.C. now legalize same sex marriage, yet it is still only practiced by **4/100ths of one percent** of all Americans. Yet there are 99 plus percent of Americans who will be impacted. Religious institutions will be prevented from providing adoption services or foster care if they do not comply with state re-definitions of marriage.

What We Can Do

- Support candidates for office, especially for the presidency, who pledge to take specific actions to preserve marriage as the union of one man and one woman. See <http://www.marriagepledge.com/>
- Ask your pastor to preach and teach about the importance of preserving marriage.
- Get active at your state level to fight to preserve marriage as the union of one man and one woman. Volunteer to help and donate to marriage supporters in other states who are presently fighting to preserve marriage where it is under attack:

Minnesota - www.minnesotafor marriage.com

Maryland - www.marylandmarriagealliance.com

North Carolina - www.voteformarriage.com

Washington - www.preservemarriage.washington