

Dr. James Dobson: Why Marriage and Family Matter Now More Than Ever

We live during an age in which the institution of marriage is under constant attack by forces that want to destroy it. As a result, this timeless relationship is increasingly viewed by many as an unnecessary hindrance to our self-absorbed lives.

Temporal “partnerships” are dissolved through “conscious uncoupling,” and children are little more than assets to be divided or assigned, not precious souls to be loved, guided and protected.

In short, the biblical foundation of marriage and family is seen as a relic by liberal politicians and our popular culture. And yet, the very future of this nation rests on the strength of our marriages and families. If our country is to survive and pull itself out of the current mire, we must learn and draw our strength from the cornerstone on which it was built—the family.

Our nation was formed less than 250 years ago, making it little more than an infant in comparison to the original building block of society. The family has endured for millennia, dating back to the Garden of Eden when, at least 5,000 years ago, our Creator gave it meaning and definition. Sadly, this building block of all societies is under a relentless and vicious attack by leftist groups of all kinds, and they have one mission in mind—to discredit and obliterate it.

The institution of the family is one of the Creator’s most marvelous and enduring gifts to humankind. It was revealed to Adam and Eve and then described succinctly in Genesis 2:24, where we read, “Therefore a man will leave his father and his

mother and be joined to his wife, and they will become one flesh." With those 20 words, God announced the ordination of male-female marriage long before He established government. Not only is the family first in time, but it is also preeminent in importance because the vitality of our families is directly related to the strength of our citizenry and our nation.

When it comes to the family, science has proven what is plainly evident. More than 10,000 studies have concluded that kids do best when they are raised by loving and committed mothers and fathers. They are less likely to be on illegal drugs, to be held back a grade in the classroom, to drop out of school, to commit suicide, to be in poverty, to become juvenile delinquents, and for the girls, less likely to become teen mothers. They are healthier, both emotionally and physically, even 30 years later, than those not so blessed by traditional parents. In other words, a strong family unit is the most reliable way to produce well-adjusted and contributing members of society.

And yet our culture has sought to deconstruct families and marriage through the media, through the sexual revolution and even through law and policy. Consider these examples:

—In 1969, Congress foolishly created the Marriage Penalty Tax, requiring husbands and wives to pay higher taxes than cohabitating couples. Incredibly, our elected officials thought it was appropriate to punish married couples. This disastrous policy persisted for 33 years before being eliminated by George W. Bush (though it was temporarily revived under Barack Obama).

—Or consider the media. Marriage and monogamy are mocked in music, television shows and movies. Those who hold to any semblance of sexual ethics are ridiculed or dismissed as "old fashioned" and "prudish." Gone are wholesome role models. We are more likely to celebrate entertainers who pole dance on

network television than we are to applaud men and women who conduct themselves with modesty and fidelity.

—Others are not content to disincentivize or ridicule marriage and family—they aim to destroy it. In 2012, Marsha Gessen, a lesbian journalist, activist and author, stated during an interview with ABC Radio, “[I]t’s a no-brainer that the institution of marriage should not exist.” These anti-marriage activists are so opposed to God’s plan for marriage that they will not stop until it is utterly destroyed.

Why is marriage under attack? Why is the family targeted for elimination? Perhaps because marriage reinforces what its opponents call the “myth” of human sexuality—the idea that God uniquely made men and women. These so-called progressives view gender as a “social construct” and marriage as a restrictive and outdated constraint on sexual relationships, parenting and ideology. If “male” and “female” are meaningless, so is marriage. You might think I overstate the matter. Think again. One such activist has claimed that the only thing women add to parenting is the unnecessary ability to lactate.

This may be difficult to read, but I write not to discourage you, but to motivate you. No matter how much marriage is attacked or distorted, its essential nature is unchanged, and its power to revitalize our society remains. As I stated above, strong marriages produce strong families, and strong families lift up a nation!

First and foremost, let us raise the standard. As we build strong marriages and raise our children to understand the unique contributions of men and women and the dynamic union they form, we can and will make a difference. And as we support politicians who understand the essential role of marriage and policies that strengthen that role, our nation will grow stronger.

We owe the history of our nation to God’s design of the

family, and America's future still depends on it. {eoa}

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