

‘Married at First Sight’ Reality TV Show Makes Mockery of Marriage

A new reality show called *Married at First Sight* is legally marrying two complete strangers as part of a “social experiment”—all in the name of entertainment.

The show debuted last week on the FYI channel and follows three couples who are thrown into a legal marriage the moment they meet. A sexologist, psychologist, sociologist and spiritual adviser use “scientific matchmaking” to pair up the couples, then watch to see what happens.

According to the show’s publicist, the marriages are indeed binding but the couples can have their divorces paid for by the show within six months, if they so choose.

American Pastors Network President Sam Rohrer says the show makes a mockery of marriage, which God calls a sacred union.

“A major role of pastors today is spending serious time counseling couples who want to enter into the sacred union of marriage,” Rohrer said. “Marriage is not a game show, a contest or something to entertain the masses. Rather, it is a divine relationship defined by God in the Garden of Eden and confirmed throughout Scripture. This show puts two people in a precarious position that will potentially scar them for future healthy relationships and, worse yet, endorses the destructive view that divorce is a logical escape route when marital challenges arise.

“The broken homes and weakened families created by divorce hardly warrant greater encouragement,” he continued. “Contemplating marriage with complete strangers and a built-in escape is contrary to the concept of a God-designed, life-long

covenant with a clearly defined purpose and goal. This is neither entertainment nor 'reality.' It is damaging to society and propagates the lie that marriage is a joke, a game and an experiment."

The program's spiritual adviser is Harvard University humanist chaplain Greg Epstein, who said he takes marriage seriously and noted, "What the show is promoting is for people to think long and hard about what really makes for a long-term relationship, what really makes for a good marriage. The show is trying to get people to think in a different way on how they are choosing potential partners."

But, Rohrer noted, the mechanism contradicts the stated motive.

"Trying a partner out for up to six months is hardly a healthy way to choose a marriage mate," Rohrer said. "Anyone who truly wants to understand what makes for long-term relationships will be better served by turning off Hollywood mockeries of marriage and looking to God's design for healthy marriages and families."