

Same-Sex Marriage: A Child's View

Kids need both a mom and a dad!

The current controversy concerning marriage may be one of the biggest distractions in this election season. It is often categorized as a divisive "social issue." Many Americans realize that the definition of marriage, the controversy about abortion and America's support of Israel are huge spiritual and moral issues that will determine the kind of America we will create for the generations that follow us.

Same-sex marriage advocates love to talk about the freedom to love and their own interpretation of "rights." The truth is that none of us need a legal contract to love—we are all born with that freedom. Marriage is not really about the desires of adults. It should be about endorsing the kind of families that will be the best for kids and supporting those unions with public policies, even though other living arrangements may exist.

The reason that legally defined marriage is important is because of children. It takes a mother and a father to conceive a child, and children have a God-given right to have a relationship with both their biological mother and their biological father.

Children also have a God-given right to have both a male role model and a female role model in their homes. There are certainly times when tragedy takes a parent from a child, but what about the much more frequent times when adults put their own fleeting desires ahead of the God-given rights of their children? Desires change, as the break-ups of both heterosexual and homosexual relationships testify.

As our nation continues to wrestle with the meaning and

precise definition of marriage, lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgendered activists consistently dismiss the issue of children. Same-sex marriage advocates insist that children of homosexual couples have the same or better outcomes than children of heterosexual couples.

Unfortunately for them these assertions are based more on philosophy than hard science. For example, a 2010 study by Dr. Walter Schumm of Kansas State University confirmed that adult children raised by homosexual couples are (unsurprisingly) two to five times as likely to identify themselves as homosexual as children of heterosexuals. But the nation is divided as to whether that is an important outcome or not.

More specifically, whenever the topic of children reared by gay parents is raised, the assertion is made that there are no special problems or disadvantages because of their parents' choices of "partners." But this image (if remotely true) represents a tiny, disproportionately wealthy fraction of the gay population. Most of the scientists who have researched the children of such families admit as much.

Common sense would remind us that the results of any particular study depends both on how one defines a household headed by an LGBT couple, and what factors one evaluates when looking at "outcomes."

Dr. Mark Regnerus of the University of Texas, Austin, recently set out to hear the stories of the adults living in America today who were raised by parents in homosexual relationships. LGBT activists have fought vigorously to malign and suppress his findings.

In short, he learned that "on 25 of 40 different outcomes evaluated, the children of women who've had same-sex relationships fare quite differently than those in stable, biologically intact mom-and-pop families, displaying numbers more comparable to those from heterosexual stepfamilies and

single parents.”

This study included controls for age, race, gender and the impact of being bullied as a youth, or the gay-friendliness of the state in which they live. Yet the respondents of same-sex parents were more apt to become unemployed, be less healthy and more depressed. They also were more likely to have cheated on a spouse or partner, have more male and female sex partners, experience more sexual victimization and were more likely to reflect negatively on their childhood family life. Those raised by same-sex couples also were more likely to smoke marijuana and have trouble with the law.

At this point in our nation, no one is debating the right of consenting adults to do what they wish with each other in private. But redefining the ancient institution of marriage is an entirely different matter. This will set the stage for more and more children to grow up without a mother or a father, simply to placate the desire of adults. We must fight to preserve the traditional definition of marriage for the sake of these children.

An amazing team of pastors, educators and public policy specialists and I are conducting a seven-swing-state tour promoting traditional marriage. Plan to join us for a summit near you. We will host them in Colorado, Florida, Maryland, Nevada, Ohio and Virginia during October. You can get information and register at our website, . If we are not coming to a town near you, check out our materials and host your own summit in your city. Do it for the children!

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moral compass of America and be an agent of healing to our nation by educating and empowering churches, community and political leaders.