

Why Traditional Marriage Is Still Worth Defending

The Supreme Court has issued rulings on the Defense of Marriage Act and California's voter-approved **Proposition 8**.

The Institute on Religion and Democracy has a paper by Alan Wisdom extolling the social value of traditional marriage and taking stock of the debate about its future in U.S. society. The marriage paper poses the following question: "Our society's view of marriage, centered on mutual emotional satisfaction, is already far from classic Christian teaching. Now pro-homosexuality advocates are seeking to radically redefine marriage, reducing it to a relationship between any 'two people who love each other.' Amidst all this conflict, is it worth the cost for Christians to continue to defend this embattled institution?"

The paper examines biblical passages related to marriage, as well as the history of the church's approach to marriage. It presents social science evidence showing the weakened state of marriage today but also the benefits marriage brings for both adults and children. It addresses sensitive issues such as cohabitation and **same-sex marriage**. The paper can be viewed free of charge on the Institute's website at .

"Traditional marriage serves an important role as a building block for a flourishing society," comments Kristin Rudolph, the Institute's evangelical program coordinator. "There is an urgent need for churches and others to defend **traditional marriage**."

"Faithful church teaching contrasts with forces of cultural accommodation that would **redefine marriage** out of existence," she continues. "Standing up for traditional marriage is an important responsibility in a confused culture needing

spiritual and moral direction.

“By many measures, marriage has weakened in our society. Fewer people marry. More people divorce. More cohabitate. Increasing numbers follow a pattern of serial monogamy. Those who suffer most are the next generation of Americans. Children suffer when adults are encouraged to pursue their own satisfaction over the good of their offspring.”

“U.S. Christians have three options,” Rudolph concludes. “They can yield to the trends devaluing marriage. Or they can admit defeat in society but try to maintain traditional teachings inside the church. Or they can swim against the current and insist that both church and society must uphold marriage. We believe that only this last option is faithful to the Scriptures and conducive to the long-term good of society.”