

STRENGTHENING MARRIAGE

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According to research conducted by the Marriage and Religion Research Institute (MARRI), federal surveys clearly demonstrate that the intact married family that worships frequently (weekly or at least monthly) yields the most favorable social outcomes. Compared to the non-intact family that worships less than monthly or never, national data illustrates the superiority in the following:

BENEFITS FOR THE INDIVIDUAL:

- Happiness: 50% more likely to be happy in a general sense.
- Performance: A third more likely to take pride in their work (34%).
- Health: Nearly a third more likely to rate their health excellent or very good (30%). (From “The Case for Marriage”)

BENEFITS FOR THE COUPLE:

- Marital Satisfaction: 25% happier in their relationship.
- Divorce or Separation: 50% less likely.
- Adultery: More than 4 times less likely (7.7% vs. 33.8%).
- Earned Income: As much as 5 times more annually (\$54K vs. \$9.4K).



BENEFITS FOR THEIR CHILDREN:

- Average High School GPA (English and Math): Almost half a grade point higher (2.94 vs. 2.48).
- Expulsion or Suspension from School: Nearly 3 times less likely.
- Repeating a Grade: Nearly 6 times less likely (6% vs. 34%).
- Hard Drug Use: Nearly 2.5 less likely (8.5% vs. 20.1%).
- Drunkenness: Nearly 2 times less likely (22.4% vs. 41.2%).
- Homosexual Activity: 3 times less likely (2.5% vs. 7.5%).
- Running Away from Home: Over 2.5 times less likely.
- Average Number of Sex Partners (Females): Over 3 times less (0.47 vs. 1.55).

BOTTOM LINE: ENRICH YOUR MARRIAGE AND FAMILY BY PARTICIPATING IN CHURCH!

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Marriage constitutes the basic building block of society, and it was the first institution created by God in the book of Genesis. One man and one woman in a marriage covenant relationship for life is the divine pattern expressed throughout the Bible. Quoting from Genesis 1 and 2, Jesus declared:

“Have you not read that he who created them from the beginning made them male and female, and said, ‘Therefore a man shall leave his father and his mother and hold fast to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh’? So they are no longer two but one flesh. What therefore God has joined together, let not man separate”

(Matthew 19:4-6 ESV)



A good marriage enables people to be happier, live longer, and build more economic security. But it is not just about the individual. Marriage is an exclusive union that takes its distinctive character from being founded, unlike other friendships, on this bodily unity that generates new life. Certainly, marriage has value in and of itself and not just as a means to procreation. Yet marriage is the form of relationship that is uniquely suited for childrearing, which is why it is a matter of vital public concern and not just a “private matter.” In fact, marriage is a public, social contract for which the law requires witnesses. Why? It has profound implications for the common good, for the health of society.

Marriage impacts children. Wherever possible, children should be reared in the context of the bond between the two parents whose marital union gave them life. Research shows that when both sexes are represented in the parenting role, children have the best opportunity for health, well-being, development, and success in life. Thousands of studies have concluded that kids do best when they are raised by mothers and fathers.

Every civilization has been built upon the institution of marriage. It is the foundation. The happiness and success of individuals, the welfare and security of children, and the soundness of society, are all largely dependent upon the stability of marriage according to the divine pattern. Consequently, churches should do as much as possible to strengthen marriages.

“Learning to Walk Worthily”

Text: Philippians 1:27-30 (p. 951)

PLEASE STAND as we read our Text.

What did Paul mean about “walking worthily?”

That is in essence what Paul is saying here in **vs. 27**, isn’t it? “Walking Worthily” involves more than avoiding immorality – although that certainly is part of it! But it is much more than that.

FOCUS: Let us examine some things about Walking Worthily.

You walk worthily when...

1. You _____. – **vs. 27**
2. You Stand Firm In _____. – **vs. 27**
 - Paul saw and warned of the danger of division in **Phil 4:2** – *I plead with Euodia and I plead with Syntyche to be of the same mind in the Lord.*

3. Your Striving Is _____!

- Let us strive TOGETHER rather than AGAINST each other. – **vs 27**
- God wants to FILL us with the Holy Spirit, doesn’t He?
- WE need to let Him!
- We don’t want an all-knowing, all-powerful and all-present God.
- We want a God we can keep comfortably in a box and under our control.
- *What would happen if we really let God out of the box...and let Him have His way with us?*
- *Why don’t we find out?*

You walk worthily when...

4. You Are _____ In the Face of Opposition.
–**vs 28**
5. You Have Been _____ to Suffer For Him – **vs 29**
 - **You have arrived!**