

Marriage

God's Foundation for
Family



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5 BENEFITS OF TRADITIONAL MARRIAGE

What is Marriage really? I have heard it said on numerous occasions by the younger generation "it's just a piece of paper", and therefore by extension 'not worth doing'. With so many people these days seeming to 'opt out' of the institution of traditional marriage, I thought it may be beneficial to explore some reasons why it may be advantageous for them to reconsider their stance on marriage."

The reasons why traditional marriage strengthens our society

But what are the real benefits of marriage as opposed to other lifestyle choices? Without doubt one of the most effective parenting tips I can give you is to seriously consider the benefits that marriage brings to a family. What follows are 5 simple but powerful reasons that sets traditional marriage apart.

Marriage instituted by God

(Genesis 2:23-24)

And Adam said: "This is now bone of my bones And flesh of my flesh; She shall be called Woman, Because she was taken out of Man." Therefore, a man shall leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, and they shall become one flesh.

As soon as God created Eve from one of Adams ribs He ordained that **their union should be permanent**, this was a natural reflection of a spiritual truth, they were now **'One Flesh'**. Through the physical consummation of marriage Adam and Eve's union was already permanent spiritually speaking. Through 'marriage' God set in place a **principle** that laid a foundation for life on earth, a principle that would enable mankind to increase and prosper. Marriage between a man and a woman is the only physical relationship that has **God's seal of approval**.

Marriage is a vow before God

(Ecclesiastes 5:4)

When you make a vow to God, do not delay paying it; For He has no pleasure in fools. Pay what you have vowed

Everything we do in life is done in the sight of God. Marriage is first and foremost **a vow that we make as a man in the sight of our creator** and by choosing marriage we are following the principle that God set in motion. We also recognise and accept that as a father and the head of our home, we will have to give an account to God about how we conducted our self in our marriage.

As **the leader of the home** we are expected to **rule wisely and with compassion and mercy**, showing God's love to our wife and family. It is from God our heavenly Father that we must glean the wisdom and grace to become the best husband we can be; therefore, it is vital that we continue to grow in our personal relationship with Him daily.

Marriage is a vow between a husband and wife

(Malachi 2:16)

"For the Lord God of Israel says That He hates divorce, For it covers one's garment with violence," Says the Lord of hosts. "Therefore take heed to your spirit, That you do not deal treacherously."

As we stand before the minister performing the marriage ceremony as **a couple we are declaring a solemn vow** to love and care for each other for the rest of our lives. This vow entails laying down our own selfish desires to ensure that our spouse is put first in every aspect of life. When both Husband and Wife commit to this life of selflessness they give their marriage every opportunity to prosper and grow throughout their lifetime together.

Marriage is the foundation of family

(Genesis 1:27-28)

So, God created man in His own image; in the image of God He created him; male and female He created them. Then God blessed them, and God said to them, "Be fruitful and multiply; fill the earth and subdue it"

Marriage is God's way of establishing **a sure foundation** for 'family' to grow and prosper in the earth. A married couple who love and are fully committed to each other are the perfect environment for bringing up children. Within the safe confines of 'marriage' children grow up feeling secure and loved, knowing that 'Daddy and Mommy love each other too!'

Family is the foundation of society

(Psalm 103:17-18)

But the mercy of the Lord is from everlasting to everlasting On those who fear Him, And His righteousness to children's children, To such as keep His covenant, And to those who remember His commandments to do them.

Even as 'Marriage' is the surest foundation for 'Family', so 'Family' is **the surest foundation for 'Society'**. The stronger each individual marriage is, the stronger 'society' is. Every builder knows how important a strong and stable foundation is when they are constructing a house, if the foundation is strong then the house can stand the test of time. So many of the problems we face in 'society' today stem from the fact that the family unit has broken down, and that often occurs as a result of a marriage that has broken down.

Traditional marriage as set out by God in the Bible has a blessing and an empowerment from Heaven to be successful and fruitful. It has been instituted by God as a foundation for 'the family unit' on earth, a foundation that enables it to prosper. As individual families prosper so our society prospers, and we all reap the benefits of that stability.

THE BENEFITS OF FIDELITY

We live in a world that has forgotten its foundations and neglected those very things that could make it strong again. Many children are growing up today without really knowing their own father and some have never even met him. Is it any wonder that today's children struggle with a sense of identity and belonging, when the most important part of who they are and where they come from has been denied them? Now there are many reasons why couples break up and I'm not here to apportion blame, but to turn our focus toward the real victims of this catastrophe, the children.

Children are the ones that suffer most when marriages fail.

The word **'Fidelity'** is rarely used these days, but it has a depth of meaning that can empower your family with strength and endurance. **'Fidelity'** means faithfulness to a person, cause or belief, demonstrated by continuing loyalty and support. The word **'Fidelity'** also comes with the added sense that it is an act of honour and therefore to those who understand 'honour' it has a built-in power to bring about its own fulfilment by steeling our willpower with courage and self-sacrifice.

Consider if you will a world where a man and a woman fall in love and stay together all the days of their lives. They get married and have children and together they form a new family that loves and cherishes every member of that family and refuses to allow that family to be divided or broken. This couple and this family are the strongest members of our society, and these are the reasons why:

1. · This couple has understood the value of true commitment to each other and will not allow anything to come between them
2. · They have both realised that although there will always be challenges in married life, that what they have is worth fighting for and 'the grass is not greener on the other side of the hill'
3. · They realise that when they got married they chose to lay down their own selfish desires and serve their spouse until they were parted by death
4. · They have become parents now and that life changing act has come with a great responsibility, a responsibility that they don't take lightly
5. · They realise that each of their actions have far-reaching consequences and they consider wisely before making rash decisions
6. · They realise that little eyes are watching them for clues and understanding of how to live life, and that if they set a bad example it will impact upon their own child's future
7. · They understand that one of the greatest things a parent can give his child is 'stability', and that this vital ingredient is required if a strong future is to be built
8. · They understand that the strength of their relationship to their spouse is the foundation of the home they are trying to build and will forever benefit or hinder their whole family.

So much of what we do or fail to do as parents will impact the lives of our children. Without doubt it is the parents who have both the greatest power and the greatest responsibility to shape the future of their child. Children prosper in a loving family environment where both parents are present and fully involved in the parenting process, and our faithfulness to our spouse enables us to build upon a firm foundation and grow the family we always wanted. If our parenting goals include the raising of resilient children, we should seriously consider the benefits of fidelity.

THE PROBLEM WITH DE-FACTO RELATIONSHIPS

So many of the problems we are facing today in our modern society are repercussions of the failings of previous generations. Decisions that were made decades ago continue to have far reaching and often unforeseen ramifications, this is clearly seen in the widespread breakup of families within our society.

***Please understand that this blog is not being written to shame those currently living in de facto relationships, but to identify a lifestyle choice that in my opinion hinders rather than strengthens the social fabric of our western society.**

I believe that our choices as adults and parents are either improving the future prospects for our children or leaving them with a world in a worse condition than the one we inherited from our parents.

A Changing World

When I grew up in the 1960's, Australian society seemed more stable and within it family life felt more secure and dependable. Very few of my friends from school came from single parent or divorced homes and Australians were still shocked and outraged when the news reported that there had been a murder committed somewhere within our nation. Nowadays unfortunately these scenarios are all too common in our society, and are often even accepted now as the norm.

It was a different time, with different values and a greater sense of community and personal responsibility than what we experience now.

It was a different time, with different values and a greater sense of community and personal responsibility than what we experience now. It was culturally expected that young people showed respect to their elders, stood and gave seats to women while travelling on the bus or train and many people opened doors for others, merely out of a sense of courtesy. These behaviours were instilled into my generation and assigned under the heading of being just 'good manners'.

Unfortunately many of the decisions that were made by my generation as they sought for greater moral freedoms have eroded the very foundations that made our society strong and have destabilised the structures that supported the family unit.

A Changing Lifestyle

In Australia at that time, there were major changes in what was acceptable behaviour within our society. The behavioural constraints that previous generations had accepted as social norms were abandoned by much of this generation and replaced by a lifestyle best described as being **morally relative**, where if it feels good, do it!

These social changes were also accepted by the government of the time as the new norm, and de facto relationships became the way many young couples began their life together. This arrangement may seem to be a smarter way to find out if the relationship will last before you take the big step of getting married, but brings with it a range of problems and repercussions of its own.

Legally de facto relationships are now seen as similar to marriage and often incur the same costs as those who are being divorced, which often runs into tens of thousands of dollars in disputed settlements. When children are involved and custody is being contested the financial outlay can escalate considerably, but unfortunately the emotional cost to the family can be even more catastrophic.

(John 4:16-18)

Jesus said to her, "Go, call your husband, and come here." The woman answered and said, "I have no husband." Jesus said to her, "You have well said, 'I have no husband,' for you have had five husbands, and the one whom you now have is not your husband; in that you spoke truly."

Jesus in this story indicates that the men that this woman had been living with throughout her life had the status and benefits of a husband, but they lacked the responsibility and commitment required in marriage.

Listed below are just some of the problems that come with de facto relationships:

- Statistically Speaking de facto relationships are **6 times more likely to breakup** than a couple who is married without living together first.
- The '**try before you buy**' mentality failed to realise that many people decide not to get married at all and so continue in what is often an unstable relationship. This unfortunately affects not only themselves but any children that may result from the union.
- After 2 years in a de facto relationship the **legal commitments** in relation to **property settlements** etc. is the **same** as those within traditional marriage.
- The children of de facto relationships often have **different last names** to that of their parents current partner and this can lead to a sense of insecurity about identity and acceptance within the family.
- The children of de facto relationships are still seen within many communities as being illegitimate or 'bastards' and suffer socially from this perception.

It can therefore be surmised that society in general has suffered, rather than benefited from the acceptance and adoption of the wide spread practice of living within de facto relationships. It has been 50 years since those fundamental changes in society took place, and we are now reaping the results of a generation of children who **don't know who they are** and what their **responsibilities in society** should be.

Mans Ideas Vs God's Wisdom

The question I would ask today is the same one I ask about many issues we increasingly seem to have to face in our modern society, and that question is: **What does God think about this?**

To find the answer on God's views on this and many other subjects we need to look no further than the pages of God's revelation of His will to mankind found in the Bible.

(2 Timothy 3:16-17)

All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, that the man of God may be complete, thoroughly equipped for every good work.

God's Thoughts on De facto Relationships and Marriage

In God's judgement there's no such thing as de facto relationships. Relationships outside of the covenant of marriage are clearly described either as **fornication** or **adultery**. Fornication being the description of those in a sexual relationship having never been married, and adultery being those in a sexual relationship with someone other than the person that they married. Both of these behaviours are now widely accepted and practised within our modern society, but fail to live up to the standards that God Himself has set.

There are many behaviours that are legally acceptable in modern society but unacceptable in the sight of God.

(Genesis 2:24)

Therefore a man shall leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, and they shall become one flesh.

When relationships breakup there is often a very high level of emotional pain involved for both parties, and this situation is made even worse when there are children involved as well. God didn't want His children to suffer this and so made a way for human beings to enjoy the benefits of married life without the suffering involved in breakups or divorce.

The way God established to protect both individuals and the family unit was through covenant marriage. **A covenant is a solemn vow and commitment** and within marriage it is a commitment to stay married and continue to work through the challenges of life together as a team until they are parted by death, no matter what.

(Matthew 7:24-27)

"Therefore whoever hears these sayings of Mine, and does them, I will liken him to a wise man who built his house on the rock: and the rain descended, the floods came, and the winds blew and beat on that house; and it did not fall, for it was founded on the rock. "But everyone who hears these sayings of Mine, and does not do them, will be like a foolish man who built his house on the sand: and the rain descended, the floods came, and the winds blew and beat on that house; and it fell. And great was its fall."

Marriage that is Christ centred, being based upon the wisdom of the scriptures and God's love and Spirit of service within the family unit, is a foundation that can survive through the storms of life and shine as a light into our communities.

The Christian Marriage Difference

1. Both in Relationship with Jesus
2. Built upon Scripture
3. Mutual respect, defined roles, servant-hood, teamwork, fear of God
4. Built upon Covenant Commitment not feelings or lust

Statistical Links

<https://www.abc.net.au/news/2014-10-30/de-facto-separation-and-divorce-rates-fact-check/5844998>

<http://www.abs.gov.au/ausstats/abs@.nsf/Products/3310.0~2012~Chapter~Marriages?OpenDocument>

<https://www.abc.net.au/news/2019-06-06/in-a-de-facto-relationship-it-wont-save-you-from-the-cost-/11174252>

LOVE AND BE COMMITTED TO YOUR WIFE

There is no doubt that a large proportion of successful 'Parenting' revolves around creating a home environment that is secure and lasting. One of the most important elements required in developing this type of home environment, is having a solid foundation in your relationship and commitment to your children's mother.

The security of knowing that mum and dad love each other can settle many childhood fears and anxieties, and release a peace into a child's heart that imparts confidence and self esteem. Many children from broken homes lack this peace and confidence, and are disadvantaged greatly in life. Whether you are raising boys or raising girls a stable and loving home environment is crucial if we are to succeed as a family.

The statistics on marriage these days are merely a reflection of the lost values in our society, and no matter what anyone may try to tell you, a child needs the love of both parents constantly to mature intellectually, emotionally and spiritually.

The Bible teaches that marriage is for life, not just when it is convenient or feels good. A wise man once told me that in marriage " Your Commitment Will Keep Your Love, Love Will Not Keep Your Commitment" Christian marriage is a covenant or solemn vow between a man and a woman to love and to cherish each other, to give their lives for each other until they are parted by death.

All other physical relationships are like a house that is built upon sand, eventually it will come crashing down. Within Christian marriage, where there is an abundance of love and mutual respect and honour, children prosper and grow to be the best they can be.

Because of the hardness of our human hearts many of us choose what seems 'the easy way out', and get a divorce rather than humble ourselves and work through the problems that every couple faces. The grass is not greener on the other side, and unfortunately it is often the children that suffer the most from divorce.

Dads' Call To Action:

Renew your commitment to your wife daily. Confess privately " I love and am committed to my wife, and I'm in love with my wife!"

(Ephesians 4: 2-3)

...with all lowliness and gentleness, with long suffering, bearing with one another in love, endeavouring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace.

ALWAYS HONOUR YOUR WIFE IN FRONT OF YOUR CHILDREN

Establishing an environment of mutual respect and honour within the home is a vital element in the overall development of our family structure. Without mutual respect and honour it is too easy for disruptive and negative elements to take a hold in the relational mix which makes up a family. Adopting a parenting style that values every member of the family helps us build emotionally resilient children.

'Giving Honour Where Honour Is Due' is important in developing a relational framework that will continue to build up and strengthen the family. Your wife's role within the family needs to be appreciated and shown respect, as does your role as father. As you build up and honour your wife in front of the children, you strengthen the entire family.

It is important not to 'put down or criticise' your wife, especially in front of the children, as this will begin to erode the fabric of mutual respect and honour. If we do, the children may begin to think it acceptable behaviour for them to 'put down' other members of the family.

This negative element, once it has entered into the 'acceptable behaviour' of the family will spread like a cancerous growth and will ultimately result in the children 'putting down' the mother and father as well.

It is also important for the children to hear your 'words of praise' for your wife regularly, as this will reinforce their own honour and respect for her. Appreciating her cooking and hard work, or some of the many other things that she does daily whether in the workplace or in the home, will help her to feel valued and important as well.

Saying things like "Thank you sweetheart for this lovely dinner", or "Hey kids, isn't your mum the best!", "Mum works so hard to take care of us all", "We love you Mummy!" and teaching the children to do it as well, only takes a moment, but has far reaching and beneficial results within the family. Your wife will feel 'like a million dollars' and this will continue to strengthen and bless your marriage as well.

Dads' Call To Action:

Try to say something nice about and to your wife daily, especially in the hearing of the children.

(Exodus 20 v 12)

"Honour your father and your mother, that your days may be long upon the land which the Lord your God is giving you."

(Proverbs 15 v 20)

A wise son makes a father glad, But a foolish man despises his mother.

HEAD OF THE HOME

Over the last 30-40 years there have been a number of well established family structures and traditions that have been coming under constant attack by those opposed to doing family God's way. Probably none have come under so much attack as the role of the father as the head of the home. Raising children is much more effective when both parents are fully committed and present within the family.

A lot of the enmity began with the women's liberation movement in the 1970's, where feminism encouraged women to 'throw off the shackles of men's dominance' and become 'your own woman', by getting out of the home and having a career. The ideology of feminism able to get a foot in the door of many homes, and the unfortunate results are still being felt today with the widespread breakdown of the family unit.

When parents begin to believe that they are missing out on life by loving and looking after their children, a family disaster is on the horizon. If a wife begins to believe that their husband is trying to hold her back and stop her from having a fulfilling life, a marriage breakdown beckons.

Now I believe that some woman are meant to have a career, and more power to them. The problem I have is when they are willing to sacrifice their family and their marriage for the passing glory of being able to 'be somebody'. Unfortunately men are also often guilty of doing this, especially those who are workaholics.

There are well defined biblical roles within the family, and although the application of those roles may change from home to home, it is important to understand these so we can lay a foundation in the home that will last.

God believes in leadership. He does not call for a vote to see whether He should be Lord in heaven, The Creator of the earth and the Judge of mankind. As part of His creation we do not have a say in this, we simply accept this and benefit from a relationship with Him, or reject it and suffer the consequences.

In the same way God has established that the man should be the head of the home, and his wife and family can either accept this and enjoy the benefits of it or reject it and suffer the consequences. The benefits to the wife and family include protection, provision and prayer covering among others.

As head of the home we need to **protect our wife and family** from any and all dangers, as much as it is humanly possible to do so. To do this we must firstly place our trust firmly in God's protection for us and the family. Time and time again God reveals Himself as a protector and a shield to His people.

As head of the home we also need to **provide for our wife and family** to the best of our ability. To do this we need to know God as our provider, and know His promises to supply all our needs. An experiential knowledge of this takes all the stress out of being the bread winner for the home

As head of the home we need to take on the responsibility of becoming **the prayer covering** for the family. We need to learn to watch over them daily in prayer asking for and believing in God's blessing in every area of their lives individually and corporately as a family.

As the head of the home the father is meant **show his love in a practical way by daily laying down his own life for those of his family**. This requires a substantial amount of self sacrifice, and in this, as in all areas of life Jesus Christ is our great example.

When a wife and children see that the father submits his own life to the Lordship of Jesus Christ, that he loves them and daily lays down his life for them, then they will find it easy to submit to his authority as head of the home. But if the father is selfish and merely seeks to dominate and control his family through fear then that family will find it very hard to submit to him as head of the home.

On the day of my marriage to my beautiful wife, she promised to love, **honour and obey me** as her husband and **I promised to lay down my life in service** through the leadership role of being head of the home. **True leadership is always service**, and being a servant is easy when Jesus is on the inside.

Dads' Call To Action:

Lay down your life daily for your wife and family, and they will find it easy to submit to your authority as head of the home.

(Genesis 3 v 16)

To the woman He said: "I will greatly multiply your sorrow and your conception; In pain you shall bring forth children; Your desire shall be for your husband, And he shall rule over you."

(Ephesians 5 v 22 - 25)

Wives, submit to your own husbands, as to the Lord. For the husband is head of the wife, as also Christ is head of the church; and He is the Savior of the body. Therefore, just as the church is subject to Christ, so let the wives be to their own husbands in everything. Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ also loved the church and gave Himself for her,

RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Being a father means being in a position of leadership, and like it or not, every leadership role in life has both rights and responsibilities, for example: You have the God given right as the head of the house, but also the responsibility of ensuring your family follows the correct path in life. Choosing a parenting style that assists you in fulfilling this responsibility is essential, if we are to be a successful dad.

God is our heavenly Father and He has appointed us as men a great task, and that task is to follow His example in raising our children. As fathers we must give an account of our stewardship before God, as to how we fulfilled this high calling. Thankfully we have access to the infinite grace and wisdom of God found in the Bible. This wisdom guides and encourages us as we make a multitude of parenting decisions throughout the years.

Children are a gift from God, on loan from heaven for a time, and we as fathers have the responsibility to prepare them both for life on this earth and life eternal. To ensure that we can do the best possible job in their preparation we need both earthly and heavenly wisdom.

Dads' Call To Action:

Weigh up your actions before you proceed, as to whether they are acceptable in God's sight.

(Galatians 4 v 1)

Now I say that the heir, as long as he is a child, does not differ at all from a slave, though he is master of all, but is under guardians and stewards until the time appointed by the father.

The Ministry Of Dads' UNI

Dads' UNI is an Online Ministry based in Australia and is focused on providing simple biblical teaching to assist young men in Growing Families God's Way.

All Dads' UNI resources are provided free of charge, and we encourage those who enjoy our teachings to share them freely among family and friends.

Dads' UNI can be found online in the following locations:

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/Dadsuni/>

Instagram: <https://www.instagram.com/dadsuni/>

You Tube: https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCV1vuth1FMmKxiJw_xQZpQg

Website: <https://www.dadsuni.com/>

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We would also like to thank the Photographer for our wonderful Cover Photo

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