

SAVE AMERICA Ministries Presents Year 2005 Edition The STATE of the MARITAL UNION in Summary

“A Crumbling Institution”

Christianity Today (Sept. 2004)

America is in a shocking retreat from marriage

- US Census 2000 Reveals (From 1990-2000)
 - Households headed by unmarried partners grew 72%.
 - Nuclear or intact families fell below 25% of all households.
 - 46% of married couples vs. 43% of unmarried couples are raising children. The trend is still climbing for unmarried couples, but is declining for married couples.
- Since 1960
 - Cohabitation has increased 1000%.
 - Marriage among black women declined from 62% to 31%.
 - By age 30, one-half of American women have cohabitated.

America clings to divorce as a “gospel tenant” of our “Right” to pursue life, liberty, and happiness.

- As of 1995 There were 1.2 million divorces each year leaving 1 million children each year without a true family.
- In 1996 Of 3142 randomly selected adults, including 1220 professed “born-again” Christians:
 - 23% of non-Christians were divorced.
 - 27% of “born-again” Christians were divorced.
 - 30% of fundamentalist Christians were divorced. (The Barna Report)
- In 1995 Protestant Pastors are equally as likely to be divorced as their parishioners. (Hartford Seminary study of 4400 pastors (2401 women and 2039 men)) in 10 Protestant denominations including liberal and conservative.)
- In 1999 The divorce rate in the “Bible Belt” of America soared to 50% causing Governors of Oklahoma and Arkansas to declare a “marital emergency.” The highest rate of divorce is among Protestant Christians in the Bible Belt (Rutgers University Study).
- In 2005
 - 33% of Born-Again Christians have divorced their spouses, a rate statistically equal to our non-Christian and pagan counterparts. 90% of all divorces among Christians occurred after they came to Christ (Barna Report August 6, 2000).
 - 35% of Americans who have ever married have divorced. The figure is the same for Christians.
 - 23% of born-again Christians have divorced 2 or more times.
 - For every 100 new marriages, 51 end in divorce.

Who is Divorcing?

- By nation...
 - America 51%
 - France 33%
 - Germany 30%
 - Israel 30%
 - Netherlands 28%
- By Religious Persuasion...
 - Protestants 39% (Pentecostals 44%, Presbyterians 25%)
 - Catholics 25%
 - Atheists 37%
- By Region...
 - Bible Belt (South) 50% higher than national average
 - Northeast (Massachusetts to Maine) Lowest in the country (28%)
- By Race...
 - Black 36% (Never married 38%)
 - White 34% (Never married 21%)
 - Hispanic 32% (Never married 41%)

Divorce is “Politically Correct”

- A June 6, 1995, USA Today editorial asks if conservatives and “the Christian Coalition are worried about family values, shouldn’t they put divorce at the top of the list? How come that’s not in the Contract with America?”
- We decry the breakdown of the family but refuse to admit that it is divorce that has nearly shredded the fabric of what we warmly call the “essential building block of the Republic”...the family. Denial runs deep among pastors and para church leaders. Historically unprecedented support of remarriage by the church drives the divorce debacle.
- Social conservatives say they are defending marriages but refuse to talk about divorce. “Why is that so? Because their supporters are divorcing in droves. Harping on the subject divorce would be bad for business” (Froma Harrop, *The Dallas Morning News*, 2003). This includes virtually all of the prominent “Christian” parachurch ministries purporting to wage war for righteousness in the Culture Wars. They will fight homosexuality but become amazingly silent on divorce.
- Even Conservative Christian voices are paralyzed by political correctness and the pursuit of profits to promote and maintain ministries ostensibly dedicated to preserving the family. We fear losing ministry finances more than the destruction of families. Pastors and para-church leaders virtually choke on the “D” word...Divorce. We claim we can truthfully teach God’s plan for marriage without also strongly teaching God “hates” divorce as treachery to His creation ordinance (Mal. 2). A clue to refusal of pastors to challenge their people on matters of divorce is that divorce among pastors is the 2nd highest among all professions (INJOY Ministries - Partners in Prayer).

Divorce Driven By Remarriage

- Until the late 1960's and early 1970's, remarriage was categorically deemed “adultery” unless your spouse was deceased or had committed adultery. Divorce was also virtually non-existent.
- In the early 1970's, secular psychology married the church through the “God is love” movement, exchanging faith for feelings as the hallmark of moral authority, opening the door for the first time in history to remarriage unrestricted by Biblical prohibition.
- “No-fault divorce” linked arms with “No-fault remarriage” and divorce exploded resulting in serial re-marriage and what one called, “the church of serial polygamy.”
- Historical theological convictions of biblical principal were progressively sacrificed on the altar of cultural pragmatism. (If you can’ beat ‘em, join ‘em.)
- 2004
 - Assemblies of God, fastest growing Protestant denomination worldwide, reversed its entire history and authorized remarriage after divorce.
 - Church of England and Archbishop of Canterbury, guiding 70 million Anglicans and Episcopalians worldwide, overturned hundreds of years of Biblical conviction approving remarriage after divorce.

Our Conclusion

Divorce is America’s “fulcrum spiritual issue”. Divorce is to the Church what abortion is to the nation. When America’s commitment is restored to marriage, perhaps her heart will be restored to the life of her children. Each is born and protected by our headlong pursuit of SELF and SELF-fulfillment. We have pursued happiness when God called us to holiness, and now we are neither happy nor holy. Without open repentance by pastors, parachurch leaders and people on the divorce-remarriage debacle, there will be no true spiritual revival in the land.

Suggested Resources

Year 2000 Census Report

Michael McManus, *Marriage Savers*

Rutgers University, “The State of our Unions Report.”

George Barna’s Research Reports – The Barna Group

Renewing the Soul of America by Charles Crismier (Elijah Books © 2002)

The POWER of Hospitality by Chuck and Kathie Crismier (Elijah Books © 2005)

Viewpoint Broadcast Tapes:

“Data & The Divorce Deception” 8/8/01; “Becoming A Marriage Saver 5/1/01; “Protestant Polygamy 8/14/00; “Never Give Up - A Marriage Miracle” 1/22/01; “The Scarlet Scandal” 4/3/01; “Homosexuality, Abortion & Divorce - The Common Thread”; “Till Death Do Us Part” 11/26/02. **(Cost \$6 each, \$5 each for 2 or more.)**

SAVE AMERICA

A Voice to the Church, A Vision for the Nation

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