

The demise of normal family: does it matter?

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In this guest post, Dr Tony Rucinski outlines the enormous impact of undermining marriage and family. We know that future society is made up of today's children.

Research such as that highlighted in Brad Wilcox's 'Get Married', shows that children are generally happier, healthier, perform better in school, and are less likely to become pregnant as teenagers or end up in prison if they grow up with their married, biological parents. There are always exceptions, but at population level, the difference isn't close. We also know that marriage (not cohabitation) is more likely to keep parents together, more likely to encourage women to have children, and that married parents are statistically the happiest and most content of all humans.

It turns out God's plan for marriage and family works. Even secular researchers like JD Unwin (see his book, "Sex and Culture"), have found that throughout history, the cultures that survived are the ones that promoted man-woman monogamous marriage and pre-marital chastity.

So you'd think the Government and media would promote marriage, right?

Well, fewer people are marrying than ever before, and when they do, it's typically later in life. Women are having fewer babies, and for the first time, over half of the births that do take place are to unmarried parents. Experts tell us there aren't enough people being born to work and pay the taxes needed to care for the increasingly elderly population.

As a result, the Government encourages new mums to get back to work as soon as possible. Living and housing costs mean average wages are no longer adequate to have one parent working while the other raises children. This is due in part to more single occupancy pushing up house prices because fewer people are getting married.

What few children we're having are put into wraparound childcare from 9 months. Growing up within families of multiple siblings and cousins is quickly becoming a thing of the past. Instead, our children get socialised through a screen, by strangers on the internet, on addictive social networks run for profit. Teachers are saying they must pick up the pieces of poor development and bad behaviour in our school system. Meanwhile, to fill the gap in the workforce, we must import workers from overseas.

A properly functioning society, interested in its own flourishing, might reasonably attempt to address these obvious problems by holding an annual man-woman marriage promotion month, replete with flags, redesigned corporate branding and maybe even specially painted road crossings. Manifestos and political pledges would be dominated by ideas and policies aimed at promoting the thing that leads to personal and national betterment. And if this spilled out into political punditry, TV storylines, and into school resources over the whole of the rest of the year, it might even start addressing the decline in marriage and population gap.

But we have 'Pride Month'.

For fear of offending 1.5% or so of the population, who erringly believe their entire being is defined by who they currently want to have sex with, we refuse to even mention the thing that brings about the best version of the next generation for everyone: man-woman marriage. Our schools teach anything but, we legalise the fantasy of being able to change sex, we redefine marriage by taking out the premise of biological parenting and permanence, and our equality legislation (soon to extend into home conversations), aims to criminalise anyone who dares suggest that some ways of living are intrinsically better than others.

Whose fault is it we are here, and how can we restore truth? The answer to both is: Christians. Yes, our silence and lack of saltiness in society has allowed the rate of decay, and there's nobody else coming to help. We are the people we are waiting for!

As Carl Trueman once told me, marriage is at the heart of the culture war.

As Christians, we need to protect our own marriages recognising they are literally micro models of the relationship between God and his Church. They are ideal environments for learning how to love our neighbours as ourselves, and to model the love of God to a watching world. As Christians, we need to not let the salt lose its saltiness.

This means we speak out when our schools teach things we object to. It means we write to our MPs – again and again. It means we refuse to wear rainbow lanyards or add pronouns to our bios. It means we give the populist politicians someone else to listen to instead of the loud minority activists.

We are told to offer ourselves as living sacrifices, yet most of us are more worried about being sniggered at.

We can do better; we must do better.

The best Marvel plot has nothing to offer compared with the truth: we are in an eternal battle between good and evil, we are called to be courageous for our faithful leader, and he has promised that we will ultimately be victorious. We must challenge the devil on the flagstones of hell – and we know those gates will not prevail! We want to earn that good and honourable welcome: “well done, you good and faithful servant”.

It starts here, it starts now. Let us do better. Let us speak bolder. Let us live fuller lives – for the hope of the glory of him who called us out of darkness and into his marvellous light.

Families matter, marriages matter – they are the stabilising bedrock of society. And you and I, Christian, are their last best defence.

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