



Why is Marriage Important?

The Reasonable Defense of Marriage

By S. Michael Craven

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The True Meaning of Marriage

Marriage is far more profound than our contemporary culture would lead us to believe. It is a life-long commitment that restrains self-centeredness, self-indulgence and self-gratification. It is the one relationship that effectively prepares and conditions us for community. By restraining self-centeredness and promoting love of another, marriage becomes the foundation for social order. When this commitment labeled “marriage” is reduced to nothing more than a mere contract between two consenting persons, or worse just another option, it ceases to restrain our self-centered passions. Self-centeredness harms not only that relationship but also others as well until it spreads throughout society like ripples in a pond. Abandoning the “others before self” concept of marriage for the self-serving concept of contractual relationships between autonomous individuals makes us increasingly narcissistic, ultimately leading toward moral and social collapse.

Across America the institution of marriage is being assailed, reduced to nothing more than a sentimental ceremony between consenting adults, radically redefined, or simply abandoned altogether.

With the long-term viability of marriage in question one must ask: Is the Judeo-Christian concept of marriage really that important? Absolutely, and perhaps there is a greater need now more than ever to understand why.

Our challenge then is to offer a reasonable defense of marriage that not only persuades the culture to resist redefining marriage but also encourages the culture to recommit to the strengthening of marriage as an esteemed institution in society.

The Judeo-Christian concept of marriage is as old as mankind. It has served as the very foundation of civilization itself. The marriage covenant is singularly unique in civilization; for marriage is not just a civil union between two people, rather it is an emotional,

The marriage covenant is singularly unique in civilization physical and spiritual union between one man and one woman.

Emotional in the sense that these two people, male and female, each with different attributes, join together in life—each assisting the other, nurturing and caring for one another, affirming and guiding one another. In essence, completing the other. Physical in the sense that marriage is procreative—two separate