

GLAD TIDINGS

“And we bring you good tidings of the promise made unto the fathers...” (Acts 13:32)

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MARRIAGE IN AMERICA

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The last decade has witnessed a major change in America regarding marriage. According to the 2000 Census, the number of unmarried couples has increased 71 percent in the 1990's. Compare this with the mere 7 percent increase over the last decade in married-couple households, and one clearly sees a drastic change in attitudes towards marriage occurring in this country.

Dorian Solot, co-founder of the Alternatives to Marriage Project says, “Social norms have changed. The neighbors don't whisper behind your back as often.” Society is becoming more opened minded, and does not look with as much disfavor upon lifestyles alternative to marriage between a man and a woman. While many see this as progress, those who still care about the truth of the Gospel see the trend as evidence of a society in a downward spiral of corruption.

Our society desperately needs to be reminded of God's exhortation: “*Let marriage be had in honor among all, and let the bed be undefiled: for fornicators and adulterers God will judge*” (Hebrews 13:4). The

foundation of any society is the family. And the building block of the family is the institution of marriage. One media commentator expressed her disgust in a television interview this week at the mentioning of marriage as an “institution”. To the chagrin of liberal talking heads in the media, marriage has not accidentally evolved into being, but was instituted by God in the beginning of man's existence. (*Genesis 2:18-24, Matthew 19:4-6*). And God says all should honor marriage.

Why are young and old deciding to just live together without being married? Siobhan Hadley, a recent graduate from the University of New Mexico says, “one of the carrots for not getting married is the ability to maintain a large degree of financial independence.” She has been living with her boyfriend for over three years. Richard Miskunas, 50, and his live-in girlfriend of six years have talked about getting married, “but have decided against marriage, at least for now...because of personal beliefs and the so-called marriage penalty on federal income tax.”

Apparently, the personal beliefs of Richard Miskunas have not been fostered by hearing the

gospel of Christ (Romans 10:17), or he would not be living sexually with his girl friend without marriage. How can I satisfy my sexual desires, while not giving up my financial independence is the goal for some today. Honoring marriage because God says to honor it is not even in the conscience of many people today. They clearly demonstrate in their lives that they have no fear of God judging them for not honoring marriage.

The census reveals a sad fact of the dishonoring of marriage in America: 26 percent of white babies born today are born out of wedlock. 70 percent of black babies born today are born out of wedlock. These babies have been called “illegitimate”, but they are innocent. Their fornicating mothers and fathers should feel the stigma.

Behind the numbers of the recent census, lies an attitude of disregard for marriage. Believers, we must raise our voices in support of marriage as God instituted it, and clearly condemn all manner of life-styles that dishonor marriage as God revealed it. Society is changing. We must not (cf. Jude 3) !