

BUILT TO LAST

GOD'S DESIGN FOR FAMILY

- Marriage was invented and designed by God
- Family is a biblical concept and structure

The home is divine in establishment. It was established by the Creator for the protection and development of a person's deepest needs physically, psychologically, emotionally, and spiritually. The home and the marriage relationship are supreme of all human relationships. - Adrian Rogers

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As for me
and my
house,
we will serve
the Lord.

Joshua 24:15



Joshua said, "If it is disagreeable in your sight to serve the Lord, **choose for yourselves today whom you will serve:** whether the gods which your fathers served which were beyond the River, or the gods of the Amorites in whose land you are living; **but as for me and my house, we will serve the Lord.**"

Joshua 24:15

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Psalm 127

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Psalms of Ascent

The Psalms of Ascent are a collection of fifteen songs (Psalms 120-134) that were traditionally sung by Jewish pilgrims as they traveled to Jerusalem for annual feasts, representing a physical and spiritual journey to God's dwelling place. These "songs for going up" or "songs of degrees" (*Shir Hama'aloth*) also serve as a source of spiritual nourishment and wisdom for believers today, encouraging trust, hope, and joy in their own lifelong pilgrimage to God.

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A song of ascents, of [for] Solomon. Psalm 127:1

Rashi explains that David composed this psalm and dedicated it to Solomon, who was granted the privilege of building the Temple. David foresaw prophetically that Solomon would marry an Egyptian princess on the evening before the dedication of the Temple, an act of which God disapproved. David composed this psalm, therefore, as an appeal to Solomon not to think that he could please God by building the Temple while committing an act against God's will. – ArtScroll Commentary on Tehilim (Psalms)

Then Solomon formed a marriage alliance with Pharaoh king of Egypt, and took Pharaoh's daughter and brought her to the city of David until he had finished building his own house and the house of the Lord and the wall around Jerusalem. 1 Kings 3:1

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Unless the Lord builds the house, they labor in vain who build it; unless the Lord guards the city, the watchman keeps awake in vain. It is vain for you to rise up early, to retire late, to eat the bread of painful labors; for He gives to His beloved even in his sleep. Behold, children are a gift of the Lord, the fruit of the womb is a reward. Like arrows in the hand of a warrior, so are the children of one's youth. How blessed is the man whose quiver is full of them; they will not be ashamed when they speak with their enemies in the gate. Psalm 127:1-5

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Unless the Lord [Yahweh] builds [*banah* בָּנָה] the house [*bayit* בַּיִת] they labor in vain who build it; Psalm 127:1a

- Is this verse about building a family or building a house? YES!
- *Ben*, a son, and *bat*, a daughter, and *bayit*, a house, come from the same Hebrew root word *banah* בָּנָה, “to build”; because sons and daughters build up a household, or constitute a family, as much and as really as stones and timber constitute a building.

- Adam Clarke

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Jesus said, “Therefore everyone who hears these words of Mine and acts on them, may be compared to a wise man who built his house on the rock. And the rain fell, and the floods came, and the winds blew and slammed against that house; and yet it did not fall, for it had been founded on the rock. Everyone who hears these words of Mine and does not act on them, will be like a foolish man who built his house on the sand. The rain fell, and the floods came, and the winds blew and slammed against that house; and it fell—and great was its fall.” Matthew 7:24-27

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What are we trying to build?

- Marriages and families that honor God

What is our hope and prayer?

- These will last... have stability and durability

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unless the Lord [Yahweh] guards the city, the watchman keeps awake in vain. Psalm 127:1b

- Build a house (home) and leave God out, you play the fool.
- Build walls, set guards on them and leave God out, you play the fool. - Danny Akin
- Homes are the spiritual and literal foundations of a prosperous city

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- Man must realize that all human effort is futile if it is not blessed with Divine approval and assistance.
- King David spent a lifetime gathering money and precious materials for the construction of the Temple, yet his dream was not fulfilled because he had shed blood and thereby forfeited Divine approval for his project. Instead, this privilege was bestowed on his son, Solomon, who took over this sacred project and all the material that his father had painstakingly prepared.

Unless the Lord builds the house, they labor in vain who build it; unless the Lord guards the city, the watchman keeps awake in vain. Psalm 127:1

- Paraphrased by Rabbi Vidal HaTzarfati:
- If the Lord does not establish the foundations of the traditional home and build a durable marriage, the union will not succeed and all toil to save it is for naught.

It is vain [futile] for you to rise up
early, to retire late, to eat the bread
of painful labors [sorrows, toil]; for
He gives to His beloved even in his
sleep. Psalm 127:2

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- Work done independently of God will be futile. But a person who trusts in the Lord will find rest. Without the Lord, all domestic work is in vain.
- The toiling (Psalm 127:2) should not be taken to mean that people need not be diligent, for the Scriptures elsewhere say they should. Rather, that verse stresses that to work long days without divine providence and support is futile.

Verse 2 basically says...

Get up early and stay up late and work yourself to death and “eat the bread of sorrows.”

Or, work hard, trust God, and He will give you blessed rest. It is all a matter of who you trust, what you trust (Ecclesiastes 5:12).

Behold, children are a gift
[heritage] of the Lord, the fruit
of the womb is a reward.

Psalms 127:3

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“The strength of the Hebrew people in the past, and all that remains of it today, largely results from the keen sense which they ever cherished of the importance of the home and the family. The house, the city, labor, are all important to the conserving of the strength of the family.”

- G. Campbell Morgan

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If children are a heritage from the Lord, then why do we have less of them in today's culture? We can discern several reasons:

- Children cost money and time, and in that way they may be a burden on our individual plans and goals.
- What will become of the next generation? People may say something like, "I'm not sure I want to bring more children into a world like this."
- Fewer people today are willing to enter the covenant of marriage which entails a commitment to one's spouse and the responsibility of raising children.
- This cultural phenomenon also seems related to the main theme of this Psalm. When we turn away from trust in God, and do not live by the patterns of His creation children become a problem rather than a gift and a "heritage from the Lord."

How much it costs to raise a child in the US

The cost of raising a child varies by state, by as much as \$439,000.

By [Bethany Braun-Silva](#) **GMA**

April 7, 2025, 3:02 AM



According to a 2022 analysis from public policy think tank The Brookings Institution, a middle-income family with two children could expect to spend approximately \$310,605, adjusted for higher future inflation, to raise one child born in 2015 through age 17.

More recent data suggests that costs have continued to rise since then. A 2023 study by LendingTree estimated that the average annual cost of raising a child has climbed to \$21,681, a 19% increase from 2016, bringing the total estimated cost per child to \$389,000 over 18 years.



Global Issues

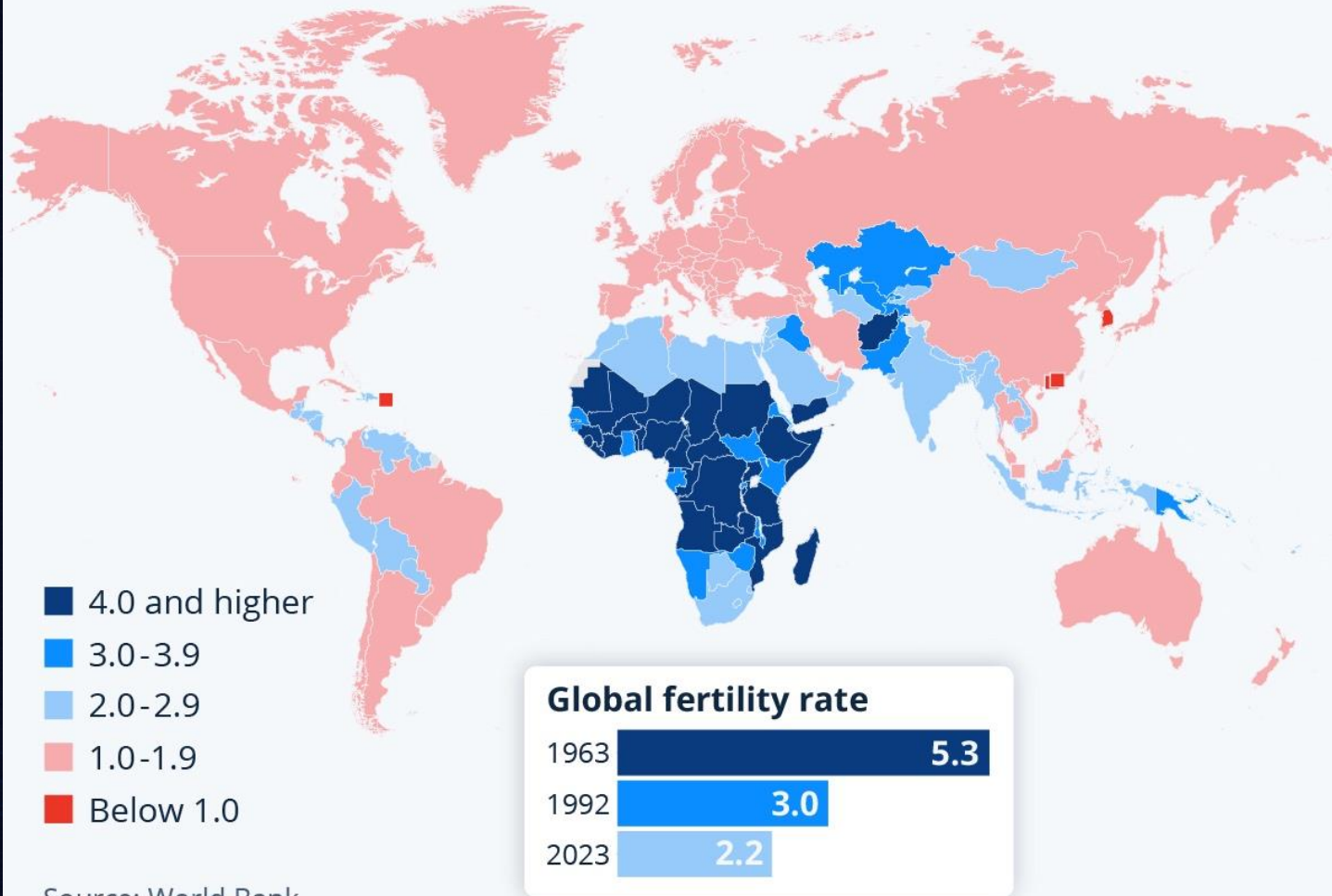
Social, Political, Economic and Environmental Issues That Affect Us All

- Fertility rates below the replacement level are becoming the global norm. In over half of all the countries in the world, representing over two-thirds of the world's population, the fertility rate is below 2.1 births per woman.
- Because of low fertility rates, countries are having fewer births than deaths, and that difference yields negative rates of population growth. And because of sustained levels of that negative population growth, countries are facing population decline and demographic ageing.
- Based on the experiences of countries over the past several decades, once a fertility rate falls below the replacement level, especially to 1.5 births per woman or less, the rate remains at low levels. Most population projections for countries with low fertility rates do not expect a return to the replacement level soon.

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The State of Global Fertility

Fertility rate by country in 2023 (births per woman)



Source: World Bank

The fact that populations keep growing despite falling global fertility is tied to longer life expectancy and lower childhood mortality. The United Nations expects global fertility to reach the minimum replacement level of 2.1 by the middle of the century while global population is expected to start falling towards the end of it.

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<https://www.statista.com/chart/16058/total-fertility-rate/>

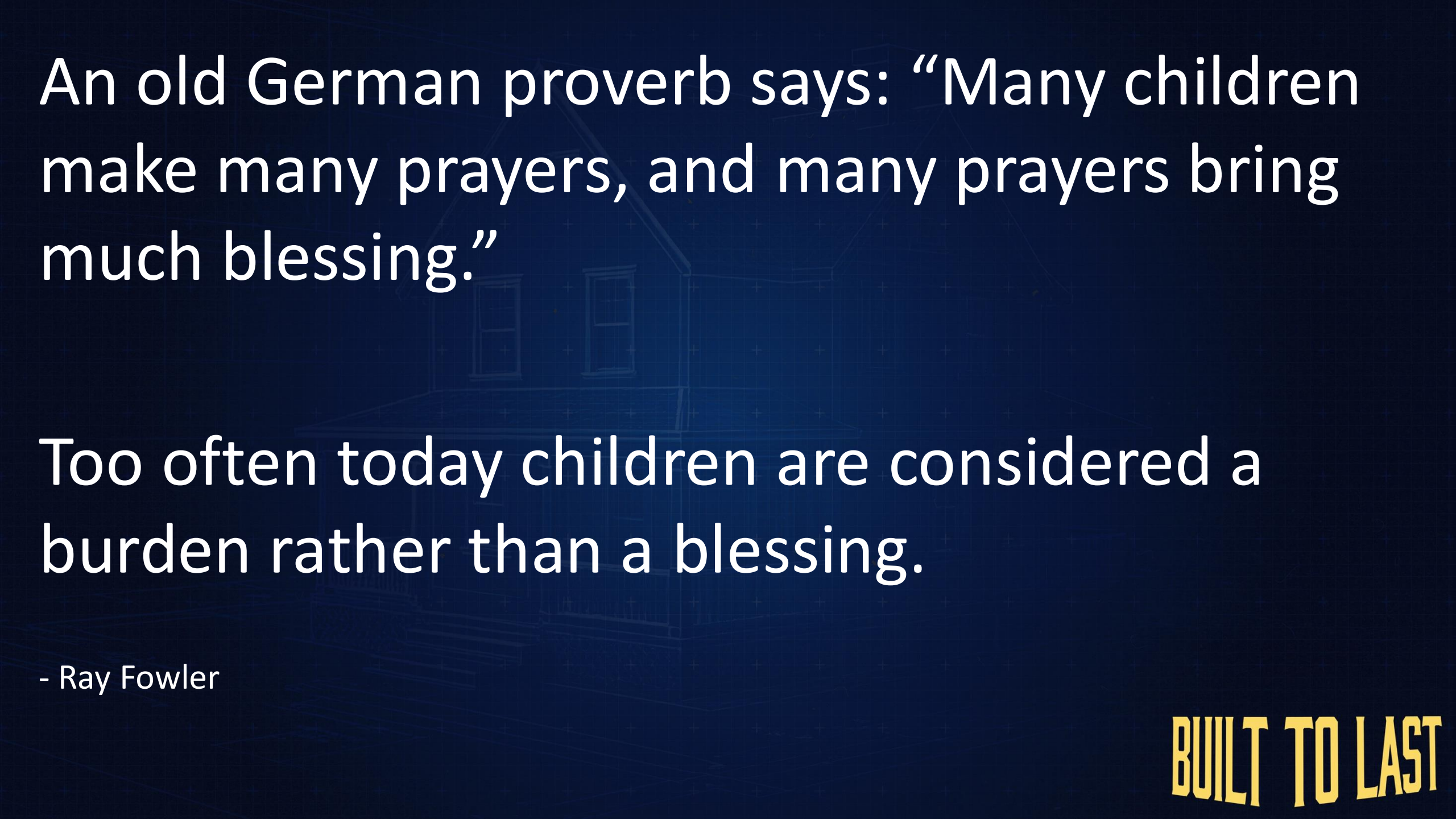
Real Reason Behind Birth Rate Decline

Published Aug 02, 2025

Newsweek

- In the United States, the fertility rate (the average number of children a woman has in her lifetime) is now projected to average 1.6 births per woman over the next three decades, according to the Congressional Budget Office's latest forecast. That is below the replacement rate of 2.1 births per woman required to maintain a stable population without immigration.
- Financial struggles are often cited as the reason for people having fewer or no children, but recent research has focused on cultural changes. "Young people overwhelmingly report worries and uncertainty about their futures. Many expect to experience worse outcomes than their parents did. Their concerns about climate change, economic instability and rising global conflicts will be reflected in the choices they make about raising families."
- A new study conducted by academics affiliated with the National Bureau of Economic Research found that "short-term changes in income or prices cannot explain the widespread decline" in fertility but rather there has been a "broad reordering of adult priorities with parenthood occupying a diminished role."

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An old German proverb says: “Many children make many prayers, and many prayers bring much blessing.”

Too often today children are considered a burden rather than a blessing.

- Ray Fowler

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Like arrows in the hand of a warrior [mighty man], so are the children of one's youth.

Psalms 127:4

- Sons help defend the family for they are like weapons (arrows) in the hands of a mighty man. Sons are capable of defending the family in civil cases (at the gate civil cases were discussed and decided).
- The imagery of arrows and of defense “in the gate” was natural for a nation endangered from without and within.

In many ways children are like arrows in the hand of a warrior

- They must be carefully shaped and formed.
- They must be guided with skill and strength.
- They must be given care or they will not fly straight.
- They must be aimed and given direction; they will not find direction on their own.
- They are, in some respects, only launched once.
- They are an extension of the warrior's strength and accomplishment.
- They have potential for much good or evil.

How blessed is the man whose quiver is full of them;
they will not be ashamed when they speak with their
enemies in the gate. Psalm 127:5

- The gate of an ancient city was a place of business and justice. This verse speaks of children of the godly having places of prominence and influence in their communities. – David Guzik
- One's spiritual legacy will be seen in many ways, but most powerfully in the spiritual walks of their children.
- God-fearing children can and will stand up for the faith of their parents if believers face persecution from the culture.

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Using the imagery of war, the presence of children in a family is akin to an army that provide security and protection. In the early years parents protect them. In latter years, they protect us, even to the point of confronting our enemies on our behalf if necessary. The city gate is where important legal business took place. A brood of godly sons to watch your back and fight beside you would be an asset indeed. However, early attention and involvement is essential if future rewards are to come our way.

- Danny Akin

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When children are sent out from a home where there is contentment, protection, divine principles and policies, a mom and dad who love one another and love God, then those children will not be put to shame when they meet ungodly philosophies. They know who they are. They have something that has been built into them by mom and dad in the university of life called the home.

- Adrian Rogers

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Train up a child in the way he should go,
even when he is old he will not depart
from it. Proverbs 22:6

If God does not help parents mold the child and
his character, those who try to educate the child
labor in vain.

– ArtScroll Commentary on Tehilim

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What if we can't have children?

God is in control of our lives, not us. While this is the case in all circumstances, particularly trying life situations can spotlight God's sovereignty in a way that leaves us shaken in our faith. One of these is fertility. Trying to get pregnant and carry a baby to full term forces us to acknowledge the reality of our finite nature. Some of us have grieved miscarriages. Some of us have experienced the terrible pain of infertility. But for many married couples trying to have babies, the "trying" period, even before a miscarriage or suspected infertility, can be riddled with fear and doubt.

- Trust that God is the giver of life and root yourself in His character for whatever outcome He gives.
- Remember that your marriage covenant is about more than the blessing of children, and it must be nurtured.
- Lean heavily on the local church for prayer, counsel, and support.

God intends for you to have three homes

- **A Heavenly home**

- Jesus said, “I am the way, and the truth, and the life; no one comes to the Father but through Me. John 14:6

- **A Church home**

- Jesus said, “I also say to you that you are Peter, and upon this rock I will build My church; and the gates of Hades will not overpower it.”
Matthew 16:18
- The church is built on the lordship of Jesus

- **A Family home**

- Unless the Lord builds the house, they labor in vain who build it;
Psalm 127:1a

- Jesus is the key to all three homes

- Adrian Rogers

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Later in this series, we will learn more about:

- Marriage
- Singleness
- Parenting
- Friendships

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What if we don't listen to biblical advice?

Like much of Solomon's wisdom, the lessons of this psalm, relevant as they were to his situation, were mostly lost on him. His building, both literal and figurative, became reckless (1 Kings 9:10,19), his kingdom a ruin (1 Kings 11:11) and his marriages a disastrous denial of God (1 Kings 11:1).



**Can we leave a
God-honoring legacy?**

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Can we leave a God-honoring legacy?

In 1874 Richard L. Dugdale was employed by the New York Prison Commission to visit the state prisons. As he visited he was surprised to find criminals in six different prisons whose relatives were mostly criminals or paupers, and the more surprised to discover that these six criminals were all descended from the same family.

This led Mr. Dugdale to study their relatives, living and dead. He studied the court and prison records, reports of town poorhouses, and the testimony of old neighbors and employers. He learned the details of 540 descendants of “Max” (the name given to the patriarch born about 1720) in five generations. He learned the exact facts about 169 who married into the family. He traced others linked to the family bringing the number up to 1,200 persons of the family of the Jukes (Juke was not the real name of the family).

In 1897 A. E. Winship was asked by a scholarly organization to prepare a paper on Jonathan Edwards. In the course of his studies Winship discovered the descendants of Edwards presided over the New York Prison Commission when it employed Mr. Dugdale to make a study of the Jukes. This led Winship to a study in contrast between Jukes and Edwards. Jonathan Edwards’ great-great-grandfather, Richard Edwards, who went from Wales to London about 1580, was a clergyman. Among the first men of the Edwards family to come to the colonies in New England was William, a son of this clergyman, born about 1620, who came to Hartford, where his son Richard, was born in 1647.

Can we leave a God-honoring legacy?

Jukes Family

- 310 of the 1,200 were professional paupers—more than one in four.
- 300 of the 1,200—one in four—died in infancy from lack of good care and good conditions.
- 50 women who lived lives of notorious debauchery.
- 400 men and women were physically wrecked early by their own wickedness.
- 7 were murderers.
- 60 were habitual thieves who spent on the average twelve years each in lawlessness.
- 130 criminals who were convicted more or less often of crime.

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Can we leave a God-honoring legacy?

Edwards Family

- 1 U.S. Vice-President (Aaron Burr)
- 3 U.S. Senators
- 3 governors
- 3 mayors
- 13 college presidents
- 30 judges
- 65 professors
- 80 public office holders
- 100 lawyers
- 100 missionaries, pastors and theologians

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These contrasting legacies provide an example of what some call the five-generation rule. “How a parent raises their child — the love they give, the values they teach, the emotional environment they offer, the education they provide — influences not only their children but the four generations to follow, either for good or evil.”

What a challenging thought! If someone studied your descendants four generations later, what would you want them to discover? Do you want an Edwards’ legacy or a Jukes’ legacy? The life you live will determine the legacy you leave!

This did not happen just because Jonathan Edwards was a Christian or because he was a brilliant Christian thinker. Lots of Christians and great theologians have families that are a mess, with their kids wanting nothing to do with Christ or Christianity. What was Edwards' secret? He was very intentional. You might say he was devoted not to just being a spiritual hero himself (which he WAS) but being a hero-maker of his children. Every evening before dinner, Edwards gave all eleven of his children his full attention for one hour—to build biblical thinking into their hearts. Understanding that leadership IS influence, when he could, he took one of his children with him—building his relationship with each one while he traveled. When Edwards died, his wife, Sarah, commented to her daughter, “Oh what a legacy my husband and your father has left us.” God's intention is for every Christian to build a godly spiritual heritage that he or she passes on to their descendants.

- Gary Yagel

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Do you want to build a home that lasts?

Jesus said, “I am the vine, you are the branches; he who abides in Me and I in him, he bears much fruit, **for apart from Me you can do nothing.**” John 15:5

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