

The Marketing of Evil

David Kupelian

5 Family Meltdown

The Campaign to Destroy Marriage

Big Ideas

- The marketing campaign to destroy marriage is a tragedy for all, but especially our children, as almost every major pathology traces back to fatherless-ness more than any other single factor. To add to the problem, rampant divorce has given the government alarming power over the family. With no-fault divorce, the binding agreement of marriage has never been easier to break.

Big Ideas

- The attack campaign on marriage began with the radical feminist movement, which compared marriage with “slavery” and “legalized rape.” Eventually, their radical agenda was fulfilled upon the acceptance in all 50 states of no-fault divorce, now widely believed to be a major cause of rampant divorce. Marriage is challenging under the best of circumstances, and when divorce is made too easy, as today’s divorce laws do, marriages often do not survive.

Big Ideas

- Men tend to think women were born to support insecure and egotistical males mentally, emotionally and sexually. Meanwhile, women hope their flawed men will turn out to be knights in shining armor, and feel betrayed and contemptuous when they don't. To rise above the inevitable problems and heartaches of learning to truly love and care for our imperfect spouses, we need to leave behind ego and resentment, discover a new kind of love rooted in patience and understanding, and let our union revolve around a shared love of truth.

Family Meltdown: The Campaign to Destroy Marriage

- In earlier American generations marriage was normal.
- Almost all grownups were married, and the marriage lasted until one of them died.
- Divorce used to create feelings of awkwardness and embarrassment, a gut recognition of some private shame.
- Most of society felt there was something very wrong, something tragic, about divorce.
- Today, decades later, every few weeks we hear about another friend or acquaintance whose marriage has detonated.
- With stunning rapidity, divorce has been transformed from something relatively rare, stigmatizing, and traumatic to something commonplace, accepted—and traumatic.

Family Meltdown: The Campaign to Destroy Marriage

- It is difficult to extrapolate the actual divorce rate. Estimates of 30%-50% are frequently touted. Kupelian cites 50%, but recent data calls that into question. Or does it?
 - http://www.nytimes.com/2014/12/02/upshot/the-divorce-surge-is-over-but-the-myth-lives-on.html?_r=0&abt=0002&abg=1
 - <http://money.cnn.com/2015/01/08/news/economy/census-bureau-marriage-divorce-questions/>
- It seems very odd to me that the U.S. Government, which enjoys tracking lots of things, and thrives off of data, would have such shoddy data in regards to divorce rates. That should absolutely be one of the easiest statistics to extrapolate, yet there is nearly no conclusive actual percentage data. Why?

Divorce Hurts....

- When that one spouse visits a lawyer, they place the entire family in the hands of a hostile court system.
- Children become wards of the state, and all marital assets are controlled by the courts.
- It is truly a tragedy.
- Divorce hurts the married couple but the negative impact is great on the children of divorce.
 - “National studies show that children from divorced and remarried families experience more depression, have more learning difficulties, and suffer from more problems with peers than children from intact families, wrote Judith Wallerstein, widely considered the world’s foremost authority on the effects of divorce on children.
 - In her landmark book, *The Unexpected Legacy of Divorce*, Wallerstein revealed: “Children from divorced and remarried families are two to three times more likely to be referred for psychological help at school than their peers from intact families. More of them end up in mental health clinics and hospital settings. There is earlier sexual activity, more children born out of wedlock, less marriage, and more divorce. Numerous studies show that adult children of divorce have more psychological problems than those raised in intact marriages.

The Divorce Industry

- Besides the more obvious results of rampant divorce—such as the massive growth in single-parent homes—“virtually every major personal and social pathology can be traced to fatherlessness more than to any other single factor,” concluded author Stephen Baskerville, a professor of political science at Howard University.
- Citing violent crime, substance abuse, unwed pregnancy, suicide, and other problems, he observed, “Fatherlessness far surpasses both poverty and race as a predictor of social deviance.
- Equally alarming, although largely unrecognized by most people, is the expansion of government power to which rampant divorce has given rise.
- As Baskerville described it: The result of three decades of unrestrained divorce is that huge numbers of people—many of them government officials—now have a vested professional and financial interest in encouraging it.
- Divorce today is not simply a phenomenon; it is a regime—a vast bureaucratic empire that permeates national and local governments, with hangers-on in the private sector.
- In the United States, divorce and custody comprise over half of civil litigation, constituting the cash cow of the judiciary and bringing employment and earnings to a host of public and private officials, including judges, lawyers, psychotherapists, mediators, counselors, social workers, child support enforcement agents and others.

The Divorce Industry

- This growth industry derives from the impact of divorce on children.
- The divorce revolution has spawned a public-private industrial complex of legal, social service and psychotherapeutic professionals devoted to the problems of children, and especially children in single-parent homes. Many are women with feminist leanings.
- Whatever pieties they may voice about the plight of fatherless, poor, and violent children, the fact remains that these practitioners have a vested interest in creating as many such children as possible. The way to do it is to remove the fathers.
- For an out-of-control, ever-expanding government such as America's, divorce represents a hard-to-resist growth opportunity.
 - "Once the father is eliminated," Baskerville explained, "the state functionally replaces him as protector and provider. By removing the father, the state also creates a host of problems for itself to solve: child poverty, child abuse, juvenile crime, and other problems associated with single-parent homes.
 - In this way, the divorce machinery is self-perpetuating and self-expanding. Involuntary divorce is a marvelous tool that allows for the infinite expansion of government power.

The Divorce Industry

- This may appear to be a sinister, almost conspiratorial sounding assessment of government's role in divorce.
- If you look objectively at what has happened to the institution of civil marriage since the 1960's and pay attention not to what people and governments say, but to what they actually DO, Baskerville's harsh conclusions are hard to dismiss.
- Consider just how absurdly easy it is to get divorced today.

No Fault? All Foul.....

- In order to encourage “till death do us part”, the binding, extremely-hard-to-break nature of the marriage contract is essential to marriage itself.
- Marriage is difficult, and there comes a time in many, if not most, marriages when conflicts and suffering cause one or the other spouse to contemplate ending the marriage.
- The marriage contract is meant to protect both spouses—and their children—against such a period of weakness.
- No-fault divorce destroys that protection. How did this happen? How have we managed to cripple civilization’s primary institution, marriage, and to do so with such blinding speed?

Where did this divorce industry begin?

- We begin our exploration by considering that a best-selling pro-marriage book almost never saw the light of day just a few years ago.
- Harvard University Press had contracted with University of Chicago sociologist and professor Linda J. Waite, a self-described “liberal Democrat,” along with coauthor Maggie Gallagher, to write a book based on Waite’s studies about marriage.
- Apparently, the Harvard-based publishing house expected the book to do the politically correct thing and disparage marriage, as is so common among today’s academic elite.
- But as the Harvard scholars reviewed the manuscript, they found it revealed married men and women live happier, healthier, more financially secure lives, and even have “more and better sex.”
- So naturally, the university’s publication board members decided at the last minute not to publish the book—titled **The Case for Marriage: Why Married People Are Happier, Healthier and Better Off Financially**—a book they themselves had commissioned.

Radical Feminists apparently don't care for marriage....

- By way of tonal comparison, check out another Harvard Press author, feminist Catharine MacKinnon, who frequently compares male sexual desire to rape—whether women consent to sex or not.
- Expressing what one reviewer called “a whole-hog hatred of men,” MacKinnon explained:
 - “What in the liberal view looks like love and romance looks a lot like hatred and torture to the feminist.”
- A professor of law at both the University of Michigan Law School and the University of Chicago Law School, MacKinnon has written no fewer than five books for Harvard Press.
- Her message:
 - “Feminism stresses the indistinguishability of prostitution, marriage, and sexual harassment.”
- So “marriage equals rape” is okay with Harvard University Press, but “marriage equals happiness” is not okay.

Radical Feminists apparently don't care for marriage....

- Flatly contradicting the cherished “divorce may be good for you” myths of the '60s and '70s, Waite and Gallagher argued—using a broad range of indexes—that “being married is actually better for you physically, materially and spiritually than being single or divorced.”
- But they introduced their findings with a warning: For perhaps the first time in human history, marriage as an ideal is under a sustained and surprisingly successful attack.
- Sometimes the attack is direct and ideological, made by “experts” who believe a lifelong vow of fidelity is unrealistic or oppressive, especially to women.

Radical Feminists apparently don't care for marriage....

- Steven Mintz and Susan Kellogg stated:
 - “Even in the early 1960’s, marriage and family ties were regarded by the ‘human potential movement’ as potential threats to individual fulfillment as a man or a woman.
- The highest forms of human needs, contended proponents of the new psychologies, were autonomy, independence, growth, and creativity,” which marriage often thwarted.
- The search for autonomy and independence as the highest human good blossomed with the women’s movement into a critique of marriage per se, which the more flamboyant feminists denounced as “slavery,” “legalized rape,” and worst of all, “tied up with a sense of dependency.”
 - “From this vantage point,” Mintz and Kellogg note, “marriage increasingly came to be described as a trap, circumscribing a woman’s social and intellectual horizons and lowering her sense of self-esteem.

Radical Feminists apparently don't care for marriage....

- Let's travel back to the 1960s and '70s and listen to the feminist drumbeats. And keep in mind that, like much of what was being preached and written about with religious zeal in those days of cultural revolution, even the most absurd ideas had a way of magically morphing into public policy a few years later.

- “We have to abolish and reform the institution of marriage.... By the year 2000 we will, I hope, raise our children to believe in human potential, not God.... We must understand what we are attempting is a revolution, not a public relations movement.” —Gloria Steinem, quoted in the Saturday Review of Education, March 1973

- “Being a housewife is an illegitimate profession ... the choice to serve and be protected and plan towards being a family-maker is a choice that shouldn’t be. The heart of radical feminism is to change that.” — Vivian Gornick, feminist author and tenured professor at the University of Arizona, Daily Illini, April 25, 1981

- “If women are to effect a significant amelioration in their condition it seems obvious that they must refuse to marry.... The plight of mothers is more desperate than that of other women, and the more numerous the children the more hopeless the situation seems to be.... Most women ... would shrink at the notion of leaving husband and children, but this is precisely the case in which brutally clear rethinking must be undertaken.” —Germaine Greer, author, scholar, and lecturer at the University of Warwick, England

- “Like prostitution, marriage is an institution that is extremely oppressive and dangerous for women.” —Radical feminist author Andrea Dworkin in 1983

- “Until all women are lesbians, there will be no true political revolution.” —Feminist author and journalist Jill Johnson

- “The legal rights of access that married partners have to each other’s persons, property, and lives makes it all but impossible for a spouse to defend herself (or himself), or to be protected against torture, rape, battery, stalking, mayhem, or murder by the other spouse.... Legal marriage thus enlists state support for conditions conducive to murder and mayhem.” —Claudia Card, professor of philosophy at the University of Wisconsin–Madison, 1996

Radical Feminists apparently don't care for marriage....

- First, let's be very clear about what we're looking at—pure rage, an all-consuming hatred of men, and often a hatred of God also.
- Kupelian adds: “If you think I'm exaggerating, read the writings of these people for yourself. You will be shocked at the depth and intensity of their anger, the kind one associates with deep personal violation or trauma. Indeed, in some well-known cases, feminist leaders report having been sexually abused as children or beaten by a violent husband. Apparently, they have concluded in their blind anger that all men are predatory beasts and molesters, and thus are determined to save their fellow women from the “slavery” and “oppression” of family life.”

Alien Nation

- MOST PEOPLE who lived through the '60s remember the militant feminists and their angry speeches, demonstrations, and bra disposals.
- But when this spectacle left the front page of mainstream consciousness—along with the Beatles, Jimi Hendrix, long hair, LSD, and the rest of the '60s psychedelic cultural revolution—did America just go back to “normal”?
- No. We had been transformed.
- Today, a generation later, we debate issues like cohabitation, divorce, same-sex marriage, civil unions, polygamy, and the redefinition of marriage, **seemingly oblivious to the fact that marriage as a fundamental institution of civilization was crippled back in the late '60s and early '70s with the advent of no-fault divorce.**

Alien Nation

- Although radical feminism has always been too strident to be embraced by the American public (though it is to this day a powerful molding influence on America's college campuses), its core agenda has mysteriously become our reality.
- The same thing happened with abortion, the number-one cause of feminists today.
- The public has never accepted the radical pro-abortion agenda; Yet that radical agenda is the law of the land in the United States today.
- The feminist movement has succeeded in turning its agenda into public policy.
 - Make women ashamed of their roles as homemaker and mother
 - Institute no-fault divorce
 - Make lesbianism an acceptable alternative to heterosexuality
 - "Free" women from marriage
- But radical feminism didn't change mainstream thinking alone. State legislatures, judges and governors actually stuck the dagger in the institution of marriage (and they still are)

California Dreamin'

- Judith Wallerstein described the seduction of “mainstream” America:
 - Up until thirty years ago marriage was a lifetime commitment with only a few narrow legal exits such as proving adultery in the courts or outwaiting years of abandonment. American cultural and legal attitudes bound marriages together, no matter how miserable couples might be. Countless individuals were locked in loveless marriages they desperately wanted to end, but for the most part they had no way out. Then, in an upheaval akin to a cataclysmic earthquake, family law in California changed overnight.
- The prevailing climate of opinion was that divorce would allow adults to make better choices and happier marriages by letting them undo earlier mistakes. They would arrive at an honest, mutual decision to divorce, because if one person wanted out, surely it could not be much of a marriage. A series of ‘task forces’ led to the development of ‘No Fault’ Divorce policy.

California Dreamin'

- The final task force that formulated the new no-fault divorce laws was led by law professor Herma Kay, who was well known as an advocate for women's rights.
- In 1969, Governor Ronald Reagan signed the new law and people were jubilant.
- It was a time of hope and faith that greater choice would set men and women free and benefit their children.
- Within a few years, no-fault divorce laws spread like wildfire to all fifty states. People all across the country were in favor of change.

What about the Kids?

- “But,” adds Wallerstein, whose groundbreaking work involved a twenty-five-year study of children of divorce, “what about the children?”
- In our rush to improve the lives of adults, we assumed that their lives would improve as well.
- We made radical changes in the family without realizing how it would change the experience of growing up.
- We embarked on a gigantic social experiment without any idea about how the next generation would be affected.”
- Why did Ronald Reagan, a champion of family values, sign the nation’s first no-fault divorce bill into law?

The Gipper didn't win this one.....

- Years earlier Reagan had been shattered when his first wife, actress Jane Wyman, filed for divorce.
 - She accused him of “mental cruelty,” since divorce laws in the 1940s required a charge against the other spouse of adultery, extreme cruelty, willful desertion, willful neglect, habitual intemperance, felony conviction, or incurable insanity.
- As son Michael Reagan later explained in his book *Twice Adopted*,
 - “Even though listing grounds for divorce was largely a formality, those words were probably a bitter pill for him to swallow.”
 - In signing California’s no-fault divorce law, observed Michael, “He wanted to do something to make the divorce process less acrimonious, less contentious and less expensive.”
 - But Reagan later regretted the decision as one of the worst he ever made, as divorce rates skyrocketed and divorce conflicts and legal costs remained “as ruinous as ever,” Michael added.

Detailed damages.....

- Looking back at America's decades-long divorce "experiment," Glenn Stanton, Focus on the Family's marriage expert, summed up its results.
 - While adults suffered terribly, children "fared even worse," he noted.
 - "Many saw the innocence of childhood evaporate the day their parents announced the divorce.
 - Others described being 'scarred for life.'
 - They told countless stories of being crippled by anxiety, possessed by anger, disoriented by confusion and immobilized by fear of total abandonment.
 - Their behavior, grades and physical and mental health plummeted.
 - They were different children. In fact, they didn't see themselves as children any longer.
 - Divorce forced them to become adults, even before they became teens.
 - We now know these children carry these problems cumulatively into adulthood.

Welcome to the Jungle.....

- What happened to America during the 1960s? What really happened?
- EXACTLY was this mass seduction we colorfully call “cultural revolution” that overtook America during that tumultuous period?
- It seems a combination of powerful factors—like planets that rarely align—all came together during that particular period and ushered in a transformation of the American mind.
 - One factor was the assassination of President John F. Kennedy.
 - It signaled the end of America’s innocence,
 - Kennedy’s assassination was a major psychic shock. And shock has a strange way of opening people up to new ideas—and not necessarily good ideas.

Welcome to the Jungle.....

- Then there was the Vietnam War.
 - it was arguably one of America's most altruistic wars, But the war's actual execution by America's leaders was incompetent and disastrous,
 - The nation was polarized and intensely emotionalized over the controversial war.
 - Powerful emotion also has a strange way of opening people up to new ideas.

Welcome to the Jungle.....

- Then there was the rock music invasion from England.
 - What started with the Beatles, Rolling Stones, and other groups immediately exerted a powerful hold on America's youth
 - and soon introduced and sugarcoated the psychedelic drug subculture—"Turn on, tune in, drop out"—
 - which was, in turn, energized and unified by opposition to the Vietnam War.
- A primary effect of mind-altering drugs is that they open people up to new ideas; maybe that's why they're called "mind-altering."

Welcome to the Jungle.....

- And then, most devastating of all, there was widespread confusion among America's churches and churchgoers over God.
 - Time magazine's 1966 "Is God Dead?" issue shockingly quoted top church leaders expressing anxiety and uncertainty over who God is or even if He is.
 - With America's traditional Judeo-Christian beliefs and moral standards in doubt or disrepute, alien philosophies and beliefs readily flooded into the vacuum—paganism, occultism, channeling, and New Age practices of every conceivable sort.
- Similarly, without a godly paradigm—whereby we comprehend that man's only true freedom is to be a servant of heaven rather than a slave of hell
- **Our whole concept of freedom was transformed.**
- This naturally opened America up to a torrent of "liberation" movements, from sexual liberation to women's liberation to "gay" liberation.
- In America's morally weakened and confused state, even the most radical and alien ideas exerted an immensely powerful influence on the national mind and mood.

Was Joseph McCarthy Right?

- As if all this wasn't enough, there was something else at play—something seldom mentioned in polite circles out of fear of ridicule. And that is the **issue of communist influence**.
- We didn't just get high on LSD and fall off the cliff during the 1960s. **We were pushed.**
- Hard as it may be to believe today when communism has been so thoroughly discredited, back during the '30s, '40s, and '50s many people—including some well-known Americans—believed Marxism was a good thing. (Maybe a few people today in positions of power agree???)
- There was an ideological struggle going on in the world, and the seduction of secular socialism was in its heyday—including in the United States.
- During this time the Soviet Union was engaged not only in its very public military and scientific buildup but also in massive espionage and infiltration. And, as the public record undeniably shows, the USSR had direct ties with the Communist Party USA (CPUSA).

Was Joseph McCarthy Right?

- The entertainment industry was one area targeted by the communists, which had been active in Hollywood since 1935.
- Headquartered in New York, the CPUSA had decided to wrest control of the entertainment industry—and therefore of what Americans would see in their movie theatres—by taking over Hollywood’s labor unions.
- “By the end of the Second World War, [communist] party membership in Hollywood was close to six hundred and boasted several industry heavyweights,” revealed Peter Schweizer in his celebrated book, *Reagan’s War*.
 - “Actors Lloyd Bridges, Edward G. Robinson, and Fredric March were members, as were half a dozen producers and about as many directors.” (Some, it should be noted, later renounced their Communist Party affiliation.)

Was Joseph McCarthy Right?

- It was none other than Ronald Reagan who took the leading role in throttling this attempted communist takeover of Hollywood when, as head of the Screen Actors Guild, he very publicly and courageously opposed them.
- It marked Reagan's entry into the world of politics—and the anti-communist mission he would complete forty years later when, as president of the United States, he took the central role in engineering the end of what he himself had aptly called the “evil empire.
- But back in the era immediately preceding the 1960s, there had been many communists infiltrating America's government and institutions.
- Without a doubt, America came under a direct revolutionary assault—pushed primarily by avowed leftists of every stripe—during the 1960s.
- Most U.S. college campuses were swept up in the revolutionary fervor, and leftist propaganda and agitation were everywhere.

Was Joseph McCarthy Right?

- When all these various national assaults and traumas hit the nation at once—an unpopular war, a presidential assassination, music and drug cultural invasion, a massive erosion of faith—the anti-America subversion that previously had existed below the surface of society seized the moment and burst out into open rebellion.
- Looking back, one has to wonder just how successful the radical left was in subverting key American institutions, including government, education, entertainment, the press and the churches.
- It's hard to say for sure (In 2005-Yes...In 2015-It's MUCH CLEARER!).
- Here's how much the world has changed in the ten years since Kupelian wrote this book:
 - “But it's very sobering to realize that today America's colleges and universities are absurdly to the left of the mainstream. In fact, just about the only place in the world you can find real, bona fide Marxists any more is on U.S. college campuses, where they are insulated from reality as tenured professors. Same with radical feminists, who also tend to be socialists. The National Education Association, which “represents” America's public school teachers, is a leftist organization, as are the National Council of Churches and the World Council of Churches.
- Umm...Mr. Kupelian....they are no longer isolated in ivory towers.....

What's all this commie stuff got to do with the family?

- Guess what Lenin (Vladimir, not John) did right up front to facilitate the communist revolution?
- He broke up the family by instituting de facto no-fault divorce, as celebrated Soviet expert Mikhail Heller explained:
 - “It is significant to note that one of the first things V.I. Lenin did when he came to power in the Soviet Union, after the revolution in 1917, was to have passed what amounts to our no-fault divorce statutes.”
 - Lenin, and later [Joseph] Stalin, determined that **in order to maintain control of the people it would be necessary to completely destroy the family and restructure it.**
 - Thus, on September 16, 1918, a law was passed whereby one could obtain a divorce by simply mailing or delivering a postcard to the local register without the necessity of even notifying the spouse being divorced.
 - **This statute, along with the communist encouragement of sexual immorality during marriage, approval of abortion, and forcing women out of the home into the workforce, accomplished its purpose of destroying the Russian family.**

Communism was developed to pave the way for the Antichrist

CONTEMPORARY SIGNS OF THE END OF THE WORLD

Lecture given by Father Seraphim Rose in May 1981

Communism as the precursor of Antichrist

- Someone even asked Lenin what would happen if somebody were to have a religious idea or want to go back to the old-fashioned ways of doing things. They asked him: “Won’t you need a police department at least?” And he said: “There will be no need for a police department because the people themselves will be so changed under the new conditions of society that, when anybody has a non-social idea, he will be automatically squashed like a bug by the people themselves.” In other words, the people will be so happy that they will take the initiative in squashing others, and there will be no need for police, or armies, or anything of the sort. This is an absolute fairy tale! And this is what Communist ideology is based upon. It is a very strange political philosophy. It partakes of the same principle of lawlessness; it is a kind of lawlessness which pretends to be orderly. It is a forerunner of the coming of Antichrist.
- And so Communism does not have the answer; it cannot conquer the whole world and then bring peace and happiness as it claims it can. But in the meantime it is preparing for one very important thing which has to happen before the end of the world can come, and that is that there has to be one, unified world government from which Christianity has somehow been kicked out. And that Communism has been doing very successfully. Humanity’s tie with both the past and with Christianity is being destroyed, and Communism is becoming the main agent for preparing events connected with the end of the world – the establishment of a global anti-Christian empire.
- Father Seraphim Rose
- http://www.holy-transfiguration.org/library_en/mod_signs4.html

What's all this commie stuff got to do with the family?

- Unlike Lenin, who had guns, gulags, and thugs to enforce his will, America's revolutionaries, including the radical feminists, had no means of forcing their anti-marriage and other agendas on society other than the force of "moral persuasion"—or to put it more aptly, angry intimidation.
- Unfortunately, people who aren't strong and sure of their beliefs simply cannot withstand the demands of unreasonable, angry intimidators.
- They give in, they compromise, and they even adopt the bully's views as their own—to keep the peace.
- And that's what happened in America.

God is the ANSWER!!!

- Now that we've surveyed the sad road to family destruction we as a nation have merrily gone down, let's ask the obvious question: Is there a way back?
- The answer, of course, is yes. It's uphill all the way, but it's a glorious road.
- Men and women need to adopt a Godly view of the institution of marriage.
 - It helps to frame marriage in a realistic perspective...it isn't a fairy tale
 - We need to study the roles God has created us for, and, with God at the center of the committed relationship, strive to manifest our marriages and families as a form of sacrifice, praise, and worship for His glory.

God is the ANSWER!!!

- We must rise above our selfishness, anger, ego and our favorite delusions and search with a sincere intent, for the real reason for marriage—the development of strong character, fulfillment of our highest potential, true happiness, and spiritual growth.
- In other words, all the things feminists led us to believe we would find by abandoning marriage.

Now Seeking: Men of God....

- Can you remember a time in your life when you used to think men should grow up to be knights in shining armor? And by knights I don't mean just fighters, but fighters for what's right, possessing great character and nobility—confident, unselfish, mature, wise—faithful in word and deed to the last detail of life.
- That's how God intended man to lead. The problem in our “original sin,” an inborn nature that tends toward pride, selfishness, laziness, denial, self-gratification, and anger. So how do men grow from the immature mix of latent nobility and compulsive selfishness into a true man? For most men, the answer is marriage.
- Marriage comes complete with all the trials, tribulations, obstacle courses, tests, rewards, and consequences necessary to fulfill your highest potential as a human being—the challenge to serve a higher ideal than self. If you fail in that, marriage can crush you.

Reality Check....

- Let's adjust the zoom of our lens and take a closer look at marriage. Not the storybook, Hollywood fantasy version—but the real thing.
- Marriage is full of difficulty. And not just because any two people living and working together are going to have their differences and conflicts that need to be resolved.
- Difficulty because, when you put a man and a woman together, that relationship can lead either to tremendous spiritual growth and fulfillment of their inborn potential, or it can lead to such conflict and hatred between them that they would rather die than be compelled to spend the rest of their lives with each other “in hell.
- Truly, when they get married, most newlyweds have no idea what they're getting into.
- At first, they think their infatuation is love; it's not.
- They think their physical and emotional need for each other is love; it's not.
- He thinks her enthusiasm for intimacy is love: it's not.
- She thinks his giving in to her on every issue is love; it's not.

Reality Check....

- Fast-forward a few years.....
- Most often children have come along—which logically should help cement the father and mother’s relationship.
- Instead, in half of American marriages, what started as wedded bliss has turned inexorably into the nightmare of hatred and divorce.
- So what happens in those few years? What turns heaven into hell?
- What is so bad, so intolerable, that they have to explode the relationship, break their solemn vows to God and to each other, and devastate their children?
- To put it perhaps too plainly, there is something in a man’s makeup that is capable of drawing the worst out of women.
- And there is something about a woman’s makeup that is capable of drawing the worst out of men.
- This is a spiritual inheritance we all share, having roots deep and profound.
- **Thus, without also a shared love of truth to lead them both into the nobler realm of life, theirs will never be a “marriage made in heaven.”**
- **And that, again, is the ultimate purpose of marriage—to lead us to a closer relationship with our Creator by developing within us the character traits that befit God’s children.**

Reality Check....

- For those sincere enough to embrace this challenge, marriage is the arena of life.
- The willingness to face one's own weaknesses and failings honestly, to suffer gracefully without becoming angry and resentful, to bear with patience the slings and arrows coming from the "crazy" side of your spouse—that's love, real love.
- And out of that slow growth of virtue comes, invisibly (no one else can see where your happiness comes from), the good life you've always wanted.
- Then come the green pastures, the still waters of marriage, the ever-deepening affection and concern for the other, the comfort of true companionship, the deep reservoir of strength sufficient to deal with any and all adversity—all of the transcendent joys of a long and fruitful life together.
- Why does this ideal seem so foreign, so unreal?
- Why do moral confusion, "me-me-me" instant gratification, cynicism and doubt about anything truly noble seem "real," while selflessness, true moral strength, real masculinity and real femininity seem to be unreal and old-fashioned?

Marriage is SACRED to the LORD

- DEATH DO US PART MARRIAGE IS indeed a divine institution—something created by and provided for by God.
- Not only for the propagation of the species, but so that men and women could discover what real love is—not just the love that brings children into the world, but the love that enables us to experience betrayal and yet not hate, the love that learns to forgive, that learns to be strong and to stand up for what's right, that learns to delay gratification—in other words, the love that makes us fully human.
- Without the matrimonial promise made before God and man to stay together forever—without a lifelong commitment inoculating them against hard times—the trials, difficulties, and pain of marriage and raising a family would be too much for many people to handle.
- Considering this man and woman coming to a committed marriage with different backgrounds, baggage, and problems, and with their imperfect, incomplete natures crying out for all the wrong kind of love from each other, what enables them ultimately to triumph—to have a truly happy long-term marriage and family?
- One thing only. Both of their lives must revolve around a love of truth.
- If they have that, they both have the same spiritual father, they're members of the same spiritual family.

Marriage is SACRED to the LORD

- All disagreements ultimately find resolution—not because one knuckles under to the other, the submissive to the dominant, but because they both have placed God’s will at the center of the lives, the center of their family.
- I’m talking about a shared, deep understanding of life, obtained by honestly confronting our imperfections, standing up to our own lower nature (instead of running away into denial, distraction, and pleasure), facing up to each painful reality as it presents itself in marriage and in life.
- This is not a matter of rigid dogma but rather the moment-to-moment presence of the Living God shining into our lives and our relationships.
- Any less than that, and we’re failing. This is why God ordained marriage—so we could find Him.

“LET NO MAN PUT ASUNDER”

- WHEN A man and woman are married—one of the most joyful days of their lives—the officiating minister traditionally seals the wedding ceremony by warning the rest of the world to keep their hands off:
- “Those whom God hath joined together let no man put asunder.”
- Yet no-fault divorce laws, which by making divorce so easy have deprived couples of much needed protection of their marriages during periods of conflict and anger, represent an unimaginably broad and destructive policy of government “putting asunder” those whom God joined in holy matrimony.
- So while men and women need to approach marriage with a mature, spiritual paradigm such as we’ve discussed, it’s also critical that the government wake up and learn from the sad legacy of its no-fault divorce laws: a generation of broken homes, broken promises, broken spirits.
- Marriage is too important, too wonderful, and too challenging to have the odds stacked against it due to shortsighted and pernicious easy-divorce laws.
- “Enlightened” legislators and other leaders must revisit and refashion divorce laws so they serve to preserve marriages, not dissolve them.
- We must once again realize that marriage really is meant to be forever.