

Divisions in the Church: The Death of Marriage I Corinthians 7:1-40

BACKGROUND

1. The Decline of The Practice of Traditional Marriage From 1960 to 2008

The practice of marriage in the United States has changed over the past five decades. Based on a comprehensive study published in 2010 conducted by the Pew Research group, the study looked at marriage practices from 1960 to 2008. The study, entitled *The Decline of Marriage and the Rise of New Families*, examined data collected from the Census reports. A few examples are listed below. The full report can be read at www.pewsocialtrends.org¹

	%	1960	1990	2008
1. More people are separated/divorced (%)	+9	5	11	14
2. More children are living with separated/divorced parents (%)	+10	5	15	15
3. More people are remaining single (%)	+12	15	23	27
4. More children are living with unmarried parents (%)	+14	<1	7	14
5. Fewer people are getting married (%)	-20	72	58	52
6. More people are living together (%)	+21	na	34	55
7. Fewer children are living with married parents (%)	-22	92	76	70
8. More children are aborted (%)	+22	.01	27.9	22.2
9. More children are born to unmarried mothers (%)	+36	5	28	41
10. Fewer children are born (# births for 1000 women)	-47	120	71	64
11. Women are getting married later (yearly av.)	+5.6	20.3	23.9	25.9
12. Men are getting married later (yearly av.)	+5.3	22.8	26.1	28.1
13. Nearly 9 in 10 married couples lived together before marriage (89% in 2010)				
14. Unmarried couples increased by 12% between 2009 and 2010 from 6.7 million to 7.5 million.				
15. The number of births have declined by nearly 50%				
16. Over 8 in 10 abortions are performed on unmarried women (85%)				
17. Nearly one-fourth of all births are aborted (22%)				

2. The Decline of the Beliefs About Traditional Marriage Among Four Generations

The beliefs about traditional marriage in the United States have progressively declined along with marriage practices. The same study as mentioned above looked at marriage beliefs among four generational groups (Builders—Born before 1946; Baby Boomers—1946-1964; Generation X—1965-1980; Millennial—1981 to 1992). The study conducted surveys among the four groups. A few examples are listed below.

BELIEF

Date of Birth

	Before 1946	1946-1964	1965-1980	1981-1992	
1. Marriage is becoming obsolete (%)	+12	32	34	41	44
2. Homosexual couples raising children is good (%)	+13	7	10	11	20
3. Traditional marriage is not the most satisfying (%)	+15	63	69	70	78
4. Single women with children is not bad for society (%)	+17	20	30	33	37
5. Marriage has changed for the good (%)	+22	24	28	35	46
6. Unmarried couples raising children is not bad (%)	+22	42	58	58	64
7. Children do not need father/mother to be happy (%)	+23	21	35	38	44
8. I have lived together without being married (%)	+26	18	42	57	44
9. The growing variety of families is not bad (%)	+30	59	67	70	89
10. Living together is not bad for society (%)	+37	36	54	61	73
11. Homosexual couples w/ children are a family (%)	+43	37	58	67	80

¹ <http://www.pewsocialtrends.org/2010/11/18/the-decline-of-marriage-and-rise-of-new-families/> .

THE STANDARDS OF MARRIAGE

GENESIS 1-2

1. GODLY WORSHIP

POWER: In the beginning, **God created** the heavens and the earth. The earth was without form and void, and darkness was over the face of the deep. And the Spirit of God was hovering over the face of the waters. And God **said**, “Let there be light,” and **there was** light. (Genesis 1:1-3 ESV)

AUTHORITY: And the LORD God **commanded** the man, saying, “**You may surely eat of every tree** of the garden, but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil you shall not eat, for in the day that you eat of it **you shall surely die.**” (2:16-17 ESV)

2. OPPOSITE GENDER

MALE / FEMALE: So God created man in his own image, in the image of God he created him; **male and female** he created them. (Gen. 1:27 ESV)

MAN: then the LORD God **formed the man of dust from the ground** and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life, and the man became a living creature. (Genesis 2:7 ESV)

WOMAN: So the LORD God caused a deep sleep to fall upon the man, and while he slept took one of his ribs and closed up its place with flesh. And **the rib that the LORD God had taken from the man he made into a woman** and brought her to the man. Then the man said, “This at last is bone of my bones and flesh of my flesh; she shall be called Woman, because she was taken out of Man.” (Genesis 2:21-23 ESV)

3. PARENTAL CHILDREARING

CHILDREN: And God blessed them. And God said to them, “Be **fruitful and multiply and fill** the earth and subdue it, and have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the heavens and over every living thing that moves on the earth.” (Genesis 1:28 ESV)

GENERATIONS: These are the **generations** of the heavens and the earth when they were created, in the day that the LORD God made the earth and the heavens. (Genesis 2:4 ESV)

4. DIVERSE ROLES

HUSBAND: When no bush of the field was yet in the land and no small plant of the field had yet sprung up—for the LORD God had not caused it to rain on the land, and there was no man to work the ground, and a mist was going up from the land and was watering the whole face of the ground— then the LORD God formed the man of dust from the ground and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life, and the man became a living creature. And the LORD God planted a garden in Eden, in the east, and there he put the man whom he had formed. And out of the ground the LORD God made to spring up every tree that is pleasant to the sight and good for food. The tree of life was in the midst of the garden, and the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. (Genesis 2:5-9 ESV)

WIFE Then the LORD God said, “It is not good that the man should be alone; I will make him a helper fit for him.” Now out of the ground the LORD God had formed every beast of the field and every bird of the heavens and brought them to the man to see what he would call them. And whatever the man called every living creature, that was its name. The man gave names to all livestock and to the birds of the heavens and to every beast of the field. But for Adam there was not found a helper fit for him. So the LORD God caused a deep sleep to fall upon the man, and while he slept took one of his ribs and closed up its place with flesh. And the rib that the LORD God had taken from the man he made into a woman and brought her to the man. Then the man said, “This at last is bone of my bones and flesh of my flesh; she shall be called Woman, because she was taken out of Man.” (Genesis 2:18-23 ESV)

5. VOLUNTARY DEPENDENCY

Therefore a man shall leave his father and his mother and... (Gen 2:24 ESV)

6. LIFE COVENANT

hold fast to his wife... (Gen. 2:24 ESV)

7. SEXUAL EXCLUSIVITY

they shall become one flesh. (Gen. 2:24 ESV)

8. GUILTLESS INTIMACY

And the man and his wife were both naked and were not ashamed. (Gen. 2:25 ESV)