

permanency. Marriage between two people who have a great affection for each other, but who have no children can be a beautiful relationship, but it is much less likely to be a broad and satisfying experience than is a marriage with children. The work of the world is to be carried on by our children. Because children need the love and care of both a mother and a father, there must be the security of an undoubting affection." Solomon teaches that the ties between parents and children are the most permanent. "Children's children are the crown of old men; and the glory of children are their fathers". "Her children arise up and call her blessed; her husband also, and he praiseth her."

11. Failure to Recognize Rights of

Each Other. The Apostle Paul gives a frank discussion of the Christian attitude toward some of the intimate problems of married life and his words do not call for an explanation. "But, because of fornication, let each man have his own wife, and let each woman have her own husband. Let the husband render unto the wife her due: and likewise also the wife unto her husband. The wife hath not power over her own body, but the husband: and likewise also the husband hath not power over his own body, but the wife. Defraud ye not one the other, except it be by consent for a season, that ye may give yourselves unto prayer, and may be together again, that Satan tempt you not because of your incontinency." The Hollywood portrayal of the sex side of marriage

has been overemphasized, and there is grave doubt that this is as great an angle in the divorce court as is oftentimes intimated.

12. Lack of Reverence for God. This is placed last not because it is considered to be of less importance, but because it is felt that it is at the bottom of all of the problems that lead to divorce. When men and women recognize that God is and that He is the head of the house and the unseen guest at all times most of the problems of marriage will vanish. Reverence for God's divine marriage laws will make for the stability of the home. Prevention of divorce is to be found in an intelligent and Christian handling of all of the difficulties that may arise, and a recognition of God's law about marriage. ~

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The Vanishing American Home



Glenn L. Wallace, Abilene, Texas, published in The Gospel Guardian, May 4, 1950

An editorial in the Life magazine entitled "The Family" reads in part as follows:

"We are witnessing an intercontinental divorce spree. The all-round champion is the U. S., where about one urban marriage

in two goes on the rocks, thus approximating the record hung up by the 'Bolshevik free lovers' prior to Russia's familial reformation of 1936. And nobody knows how many American upper middle-class families are precariously held together because the partners feel that the Internal Revenue Bureau doesn't leave them enough money to support separate establishments. The morality

of this situation is no less extraordinary than the statistics. As Dr. Holmes has truly said, 'When a Hollywood actress takes a fourth husband who is finding in her a fifth wife . . . they have no more to do with marriage than prostitution has to do with chastity.'

The editor further suggests that many relief measures have been offered but that none have

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reached the bottom of the problem. Dorothy Thompson and many others would approach the divorce problem from the legislative side by urging national divorce laws. Such laws would prevent states offering competitive divorce bargains and thus bring more security to children. The editor suggests that some sociologists urge the Swedish system which includes loans to encourage early marriages, a subsidized family housing, etc., while there are others who would "lay the cold facts before the prestige class of America." The editor then concludes that every remedy to rescue the American family today was grasped at by the Augustine Caesars in their attempts to restore the family in the last 200 years of the Roman Empire.

The real solution to our divorce problem is a spiritual, religious, and moral one and any attempt to solve it without taking into consideration the divine plan is doomed to failure.

Gibbon in his Rise and Fall of the Roman Empire lists as one of the reasons for the decay of Rome, "Rapid increase of divorce, and the undermining of the sanctity of the home, which is the basis of society."

One of the greatest problems facing our American civilization and the church of our Lord is the problem of divorce. 500,000 people will be affected by divorce this year. A broken home affects on the average, 8 people: the father, the mother, two children, the maternal and paternal grandparents. The divorce rate is two times as large today as it was nine years ago and is increasing yearly. The

New York Times has stated that two out of three war-time marriages end in divorce. This is a shocking truth for Americans to face. Two reasons are offered by this newspaper for the failure of war-time marriages. They are: (a) hasty marriages (b) separation of husband and wife. The increase of the divorce rate among young people in this post-war period is evidence of the truth of the prophecy made by the New York Times. A statement from the American Home reads, "There are more orphans in America than in bomb-riddled Europe." These are the orphans of divorce. No greater tragedy can come to any nation than the filling of its ranks with orphans of divorced parents. Death leaves a child a certain amount of dignity, but a divorce leaves him only tattered remnants of a broken faith in humanity and especially in those dearest to him.

The difference in the divorce laws of our states creates a social problem for America and leads oftentimes to competitive divorce bargains, which is a disgrace to civilization. Grounds for divorce range all the way from adultery (the only ground offered in New York) to neglect and cruelty, which are lightly interpreted by the courts. Christian citizens should seek, by their influence and vote, to remedy this situation. In 1947, the city of Abilene, Texas, and Taylor County, issued 880 marriage licenses and 321 divorces were granted. This percentage is greater in the larger cities of our land. In Dallas county in 1945 more divorces were recorded than marriages.

Causes Of Divorce

There are many reasons for broken homes but the following will be sufficient to help us understand the problems entering into the divorce court.

1. Hasty Marriages. Many states have laws that require a waiting period after the application for a marriage license has been made; such regulations are to the advantage of the parties to be married. Marriages that are proposed in a moment and consummated within a matter of hours are due for some tragic awakenings. There are many weeping Christian parents today who are suffering as a result of the thoughtless actions of a daughter or a son in a hasty marriage. A marriage that cannot wait at least a few days or better still for several weeks after it has been proposed is being built upon a weak foundation. Young people should approach the marriage hour slowly and prayerfully. Christians should use their influence in helping to enact laws that require a proper waiting period.

2. Immature Parties. Marriage counselors say that one of the great problems created in the marriage union is the "general immaturity" of those contracting the marriage vows. Not only should young men and women grow up in years; but they should be able to make emotional adjustment to meet the problems of the home. The divorce courts will testify that many of the problems of broken homes are to be found in childish fits of temper and the desire to "have my own way."

3. Wife Not Interested in Husband. The making of a successful home is dependent upon two parties, husband and wife. Real happiness

cannot be found when either neglects his responsibility, but it is an undeniable fact that the woman has the power to either make or break the home. It is old fashioned to argue that woman's place is in the home, but it is both sensible and scriptural. Young woman, God has given to you a tremendous responsibility. He has made you the queen of the home and it is there that you will find your greatest opportunity for service and your sphere of greatest influence for good. What other work can compare with providing a place of joy and comfort for your husband and molding your children for a life of service to God and humanity? During the days of our nation's emergency, perhaps "Rosy the Riveter" was needed at the factory bench, but in these days of building a peaceful world "Rosy" can find a greater place of service at home. Even the editor of American Home says that the chief duty of woman is to make and maintain a strong family unit.

4. Difference of Races.* "The marriage of couples representing two fundamentally different races, even when happy for the individuals concerned, creates social difficulties of the most serious sort for the family, and, in the case of the marriage of a white and black in this country, results in tragedy for the child which makes normal development impossible." Although we may feel that such a marriage is not sinful in the sight of God, in our complex civilization it creates so many problems that no gospel preacher can afford to be a party to such a marriage.

*[Editor's note: There is nothing scripturally wrong with such marriages. In fact, Moses had married

an Ethiopian woman—Numbers 12:1. Attitudes toward interracial marriages have changed much since 1950. But there is still added stress upon such marriages which affect them and the children born of them.]

5. Parents separated by work. It may become necessary for a husband to be engaged in a profession or occupation in which he is called upon to travel and be separated from his family for many months, and although it is possible for husband and wife to live moral lives under such conditions, such is not ideal and adds hardships to the lives of all concerned. Groves suggests, "Although this does not by any means constitute a broken family, it is occasionally the first cause of a family catastrophe. To a certain extent family conditions are similar to those where the husband has died. The children are excessively under the influence of the mother and lack the comradeship and insight of the father at times when they are forced to meet a crisis while the father happens to be away." An ideal home calls for husband and wife to live together and to meet life's responsibilities jointly.

6. "Gypsy Type Homes". This is the house trailer age for America. Traveling along the highways one is impressed with the hundreds of families who make their homes on wheels. Every city and village advertises trailer camps for this type of dweller, but no real home can be built by these traveling families. Every family should take "root" in some community, and seek to build a happy home and a sound community.

7. Marriage for Spite. Every minis-

ter of the gospel has witnessed marriages of this type. A young lady who has been jilted and in spite accepts a marriage proposal from some young man she does not love is headed for trouble.

8. Jealousy. Marriage counselors agree that the lack of trust and confidence on the part of husband and wife leads to the breaking of the marriage bond. An envious and suspicious spirit can lead to the divorce court. Love is not blind to sin, but real love "believeth all things".

9. In-law Trouble. Modern psychiatry testifies that many of the problems of husbands and wives today can be diagnosed as "in-lawitis". The Lord has solved the problem of the in-laws for the Christian in this statement, "For this cause shall a man leave his father and his mother and shall cleave to his wife". A young lady should love her mother and father, but her husband should come first. A young man should sever himself from his mother's apron strings and cleave to his wife. The housing situation in the crowded American life today has contributed to the in-law problem. Where Christian couples are forced to live under such conditions, they should make every effort to put into practice the Christian way of life and keep their home secure.

10. Childless Couples. "Parents need children as much as children need parents." No home is complete without children, and the home as God would have it calls for babies. Children help to make permanent ties in the home circle and the divorce rate is higher in the homes of childless couples. "Children tend to contribute to