

# What God Has Joined

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Though the constitutional amendment to protect marriage passed in the state of Tennessee by an overwhelming majority, the passage does not minimize the importance of continued citizen interest and involvement in this issue. More initiatives in other states are on the way, and they are critical to national success.

On a national scale, the outcome of marriage protection initiatives will strengthen or destroy the traditional American family. And, as has been demonstrated throughout history, the health of a national culture largely depends on the health of traditional marriage and family.

The United States, in particular, was established on Christian principles; the traditional family and its covenant with God a cornerstone.

## **A National Issue**

The state initiatives are critical to national success because they signal the desire of the people for a marriage protection amendment to the U.S. Constitution.

Today, 45 of 50 states have a state constitutional amendment or statute with the definition of marriage as a union of one man and one woman. Unfortunately, activist judges have struck down state laws protecting marriage and have made aggressive attempts to redefine marriage. But while *laws* may be over-ruled in certain situations, a *constitutional amendment* stands strong.

In 1996, the Defense of Marriage Act (a law; not a constitutional amendment) was approved by Congress by large majorities in the House and Senate, and President Clinton signed it into law. Since then, 19 states have held referendums to amend their state constitutions in order to protect the definition of marriage. Some people became aware of our nation's growing need to propose a national constitutional amendment to protect marriage. One such individual, Matt Daniels, founded Alliance for Marriage, and wrote a constitutional amendment, originally proposed by Rep. Marilyn Musgrave (R-Colorado) in 2002.

The amendment stated: "Marriage in the United States of America shall consist only of the union of a man and a woman. Neither this constitution or the constitution of any state, nor state or federal law, shall be construed to require that marital status or the legal incidents thereof be conferred upon unmarried couples or groups."

Because of controversy over the second sentence in the original amendment, an alternative version was written. Though Musgrave introduced a new version in 2004, only the original amendment went up for a vote in July, 2004. The amendment failed to pass in both the Senate and the House. The most recent vote on the proposed Federal Marriage Amendment took place in June of 2006. The measure failed in the Senate.

Still, marriage protection is clearly the will of the American people. At an average approval rate of 70%, 27 states have adopted state constitutional amendments defining marriage as a union between one man and one woman. More states are expected to include constitutional amendments to protect marriage on their ballots in 2008. Despite resistance, these amendments are expected to pass overwhelmingly, and may bring out

new pro-family voters, according to the Christian Coalition, a grassroots organization dedicated to “defending America’s Godly heritage.”

### **A Family Issue**

The outcome of this issue on a national basis could strengthen or destroy the traditional American family.

Dr. James Dobson, in an article titled “Why Marriage Matters” ([www.family.org](http://www.family.org)), says, “Historically, the definition of marriage has rested on a foundation of tradition, legal precedent, theology, and overwhelming support of the people. After the introduction of marriage between homosexuals, however, it will be supported by nothing more substantial than a single judge, or by a black-robed panel of justices. After they have reached their dubious decisions, the family will consist of little more than someone’s interpretation of ‘rights’.”

Given the whim of legal interpretation, it’s clear that when the idea of one man and one woman is shattered, there are no limits to what marriage could become.

Dr. D. James Kennedy, founder of The Center for Reclaiming America, says: “If laws against same-sex marriage are unstable, so, too, might be those laws against polygamy, marriage to relatives, and so forth.”

Erwin Lutzer, in His book “The Truth About Same-Sex Marriage, states, “If marriage is no longer the union of one man and one woman, who is to say it must be limited to two people?...After all we must extend ‘equal rights’ to all individuals to live according to any arrangement they wish. The end result is destruction of marriage as we know it...”

Dobson continues in his article, explaining that “Given the unstable legal climate, it is certain that some self-possessed judge, somewhere, will soon rule that three men or three women can marry. Or five men and two women. Or four and four. Who will be able to deny them that right? The guarantee is implied, we will be told, by the Constitution.”

In the world in which we live, it has become absolutely necessary to constitutionally state the exact way something (in this case, marriage) should be established. Otherwise, the definition might be construed to even the most inconceivable arrangements. Marriage must be defined so clearly in black and white that no one can even try to read between the lines.

### **A Child Development Issue**

The health of traditional marriage and family greatly affects the health of a national culture as it promotes the emotional and even physical health of individual citizens.

Looking at the individual first, it’s clear that the love and marital commitment of a father and mother are God’s plan for proper child development. The Bible says that man was made in God’s image (Genesis 1:26). God gave men and women different characteristics on purpose.

Erwin Lutzer explains this as he says, “Men tend to be aggressive and depend upon a rational analysis of life’s problems. Women have a strong sense of intuition, basic trust, and sensitivity....The point is simply that both genders mirror different aspects of God on earth. Both genders bear the image of God, though they reflect God in different ways.”

In an August 2003 article titled “Why Children Need Father-Love and Mother-Love” Glenn T. Stanton explains that, “To be concerned with proper child development is to be concerned about making sure that children have daily access to the different and complementary ways mothers and fathers parent.”

Stanton expounds on this point to explain the many differences mothers and fathers hold in parenting.

Among other things, Stanton said, mothers and fathers: play differently, communicate differently, and prepare children for life differently. Together in the home, mothers and fathers teach respect for the opposite sex and provide children with a unique but separate view of the world of men and the world of women.

Stanton quotes Anthropologist Suzanne Frayser regarding the need for both mother and father parenting styles: “Each process complements the other. The boy can look at his father and see what he can do to be a male; he can look at his mother and see what he should not do to be a male. ...The importance of contrasts in gender roles and specification of gender identity may be clues to the psychological importance of sexual differentiation in all societies.”

“The same-sex marriage and parenting proposition says (gender contrast in parenting) really doesn’t matter,” Stanton says. “They are wrong and their lack of understanding will hurt children.”

### **A Culturally Defining Issue**

For anyone who could care less about these studies, there are plenty of statistics to back up the fact that children truly do need both mother and father present. These

statistics show that children in families with heterosexual parents contribute to the good health of our national culture as they are less likely to be involved in crime, drugs, and abuse.

Matt Daniels (author of the constitutional amendment to protect marriage), grew up in a fatherless home. He stresses the need for involved fathers as he says, “Sadly, over 25 million American children (more than one in three) are being raised with no father present in the home....research now shows that the percentage of fatherless families in a community more reliably predicts that community’s rate of violent crime than any other factor, including race.”

James Q. Wilson, in “Why We Don’t Marry,” ([www.cityjournal.org](http://www.cityjournal.org)) states that: “Almost everyone,-a few retrograde scholars excepted-agrees that children in mother-only homes suffer harmful consequences: the best studies show that these youngsters are more likely than those in [mother/father] families to be suspended from school, have emotional problems, become delinquent, suffer from abuse, and take drugs.”

According to Deborah A. Dawson, who analyzed data from the National Health Interview on Child Health, said that children in traditional families are physically healthier: “Health scores are 20 to 35 percent higher for children living with both biological parents, compared with those living in single or stepfamilies.”

“We should disavow the notion that ‘mommies can make good daddies, ’” said David Popenoe in a 1996 article in “New York: The Free Press, “just as we should disavow the popular notion of radical feminists that ‘daddies can make good mommies.’...The two sexes are different to the core, and each is necessary-culturally and biologically-for the optimal development of a human being.”

Clearly, research confirms that children do best when raised by biological, married mothers and fathers. It should be equally clear that a nation is culturally healthier with this arrangement. Increased instability in “marriage” is now proven in Norway and Sweden, where a 2004 study presented at an annual meeting of the Population Association of America found that same-sex male couples are 50% more likely, and lesbian couples 200% more likely to “divorce” than heterosexual couples.

But no matter what evidence is available, it will be difficult to convince the radical fringe, because what’s really at stake for those who promote homosexual marriage and adoption is not the health and well being of children and society, but a desired change in social and economic status.

As Lutzer asks, “How better to belong to the majority (when you’re really on the fringe) than by taking possession of the next generation?”