

Title: Daring to Hope
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Some stats

- 60 percent of marriages for couples between the ages of 20 and 25 end in divorce.
- 50 percent of all marriages in which the brides are 25 or older result in a failed marriage.
- 65 percent of altar-bound men and women live together before getting married.
- Research indicates that people who live together prior to getting married are up to 50% more likely to have marriages that end in divorce.
- Children of divorce have a higher risk of divorce when they marry, and an even higher risk if the person they marry comes from a divorced home. One study found that when the wife alone had experienced a parental divorce, her odds of divorce increased to 59 percent. When both spouses experienced parental divorce, the odds of divorce nearly tripled.
- Half of all American children will witness the breakup of a parent's marriage. Of these, close to half will also see the breakup of a parent's second marriage.

What's the big deal?

- Studies in the early 1980's showed that children in repeat divorces earned lower grades and their peers rated them as less pleasant to be around.
- Teenagers in single-parent families and in blended families are three times more likely to need psychological help within a given year.
- Compared to children from homes disrupted by death, children from divorced homes have more psychological problems.
- Children of divorce are at a greater risk to experience injury, asthma, headaches and speech defects than children whose parents have remained married.
- Following divorce, children are fifty percent more likely to develop health problems than two parent families.
- Children living with both biological parents are 20 to 35 percent more physically healthy than children from broken homes.
- A study of children six years after a parental marriage breakup revealed that even after all that time, these children tended to be "lonely, unhappy, anxious and insecure."
- Seventy percent of long-term prison inmates grew up in broken homes.
- Children of divorce are four times more likely to report problems with peers and friends than children whose parents have kept their marriages intact.
- Children of divorce, particularly boys, tend to be more aggressive toward others than those children whose parents did not divorce.
- People who come from broken homes are almost twice as likely to attempt suicide than those who do not come from broken homes.
- Children of divorced parents are roughly two times more likely to drop out of high school than their peers who benefit from living with parents who did not divorce.

1: It's very good

Genesis 1:26-31

²⁶Then God said, "Let Us make man in Our image, according to Our likeness; let them have dominion over all the earth and over every creeping thing that creeps on the earth." ²⁷So God created man in His own image; in the image of God He created him; male and female He created them. ²⁸Then God blessed them, and God said to them, "Be fruitful and multiply; fill the earth and subdue it..." ³¹Then God saw everything that He had made, and indeed it was very good. So the evening and the morning were the sixth day.

Proverbs 5:18

¹⁸Let your fountain be blessed, and rejoice with the wife of your youth.

Proverbs 18:22

²²He who finds a wife finds a good thing, and obtains favor from the LORD.

Proverbs 31:10-12

¹⁰Who can find a virtuous wife? For her worth is far above rubies. ¹¹The heart of her husband safely trusts her; So he will have no lack of gain. ¹²She does him good and not evil all the days of her life.

2: He planned it that way

Genesis 2:15-25

¹⁵Then the LORD God took the man and put him in the garden of Eden to tend and keep it... ¹⁸And the LORD God said, "It is not good that man should be alone; I will make him a helper comparable to him."... ²¹And the LORD God caused a deep sleep to fall on Adam, and he slept; and He took one of his ribs, and closed up the flesh in its place. ²²Then the rib which the LORD God had taken from man He made into a woman, and He brought her to the man. ²³And Adam said: "This is now bone of my bones and flesh of my flesh; she shall be called Woman, because she was taken out of Man." ²⁴Therefore a man shall leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, and they shall become one flesh. ²⁵And they were both naked, the man and his wife, and were not ashamed.

3: To show the world (and each other)

Ephesians 5:25-33

²⁵Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ also loved the church and gave Himself for her, ²⁶that He might sanctify and cleanse her with the washing of water by the word, ²⁷that He might present her to Himself a glorious church, not having spot or wrinkle or any such thing, but that she should be holy and without blemish. ²⁸So husbands ought to love their own wives as their own bodies; he who loves his wife loves himself. ²⁹For no one ever hated his own flesh, but nourishes and cherishes it, just as the Lord does the church. ³⁰For we are members of His body, of His flesh and of His bones. ³¹"For this reason a man shall leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh." ³²This is a great mystery, but I speak concerning Christ and the church. ³³Nevertheless let each one of you in particular so love his own wife as himself, and let the wife see that she respects her husband.

4: Godly offspring

Malachi 2:15

¹⁵But did He not make them one, having a remnant of the Spirit? And why one? He seeks godly offspring. Therefore take heed to your spirit, and let none deal treacherously with the wife of his youth.

Genesis 1:27-28

²⁷So God created man in His own image; in the image of God He created him; male and female He created them. ²⁸Then God blessed them, and God said to them, "Be fruitful and multiply...