

Why Marry?

Marriage makes a relationship unusually lovely. It is a sacred institution created by God in the Garden of Eden. At the heart of God's design is companionship and intimacy. Marriage brings two people together under the authority of something bigger than themselves. Until a couple is married, their commitment to each other is a human commitment. Marriage elevates that commitment beyond human limitations. Marriage is intended to be a faithful, exclusive, lifelong union of a man and a woman.

Let's be honest. Marriage is a big step. It is a statement to all those around you that you are in a permanent relationship. It is a promise to your husband that you will work through problems. It is commitment to your kids that you are going to be there. Marriage **IS** a big step. When you are married, you don't get to choose to leave. Instead, you are choosing to work through the hard times, even if it is very uncomfortable.

Great Things About Marriage

Married people have much higher levels of happiness than unmarried people.¹ In general, married people appear to feel better about themselves and their lives than people living in an unmarried relationship. Marriages are more stable, better for children, better financially, and better sexually.

Marriage provides for a better financial picture because it increases individual earnings and savings.² Married men are more successful at work. They get promoted more often and receive higher performance appraisals. Married women earn more than their single counterparts.

Great Things About Marriage

Marriage has been studied many times, and those studies show there are many advantages to being married rather than living together. Here are just a few:

Married People ...

- ... are happier!¹
- ... are better off financially.²
- ... are more successful at work.²
- ... have a better sex life.³
- ... fight less.⁴
- ... tend to be better parents.⁶

What About Just Living Together?

Living together outside of marriage (sometimes called cohabitation) has also been studied. It has been found to have many downsides or disadvantages, including those listed below:

Partners living together are ...

- ... twice as likely to have affairs.⁷
- ... more likely to get an STD.⁸

- ... more likely to break up.⁹
- ... more likely to live in poverty.¹⁰
- ... more likely to have children with emotional and behavioral problems.¹⁵
- ... less likely to marry and stay married.¹²

Marriage provides the highest levels of sexual pleasure and fulfillment for men and women.³ Over 40 percent of married women say their sex life is emotionally and physically satisfying and for men it's 50 percent — about 12 percent higher than the rest of the population.

Married couples fight less.⁴ Of course, one of the best features of marriage is that you have found someone who loves you — even when you are being irrational or erratic. You have someone who will overlook your faults, and provide either a safe sparring partner or an excellent sounding board.

Living Together: It Is Not the Same Thing

Couples that chose to live together would tell you that they are just as committed to each other as married couples; however, statistics don't confirm their statements. The stresses on an unmarried couple are much more intense as they have more money issues, more fights, and more troubles with their children.

Affairs happen twice as often with individuals that are living together than those who are married.⁷ Living together brings a greater risk of sexually transmitted diseases, because men who are living with their partners are four times more likely to be unfaithful than husbands. **The rate of sexually transmitted diseases** among couples who live together is **six times higher** than among married women.⁸

Children suffer the most. The poverty rate among children of couples who live together is five times greater than the rate among children in married households.¹⁰ Children ages 12–17 are six times more likely to exhibit **emotional and behavioral problems**¹⁴ and 122 percent more likely to be expelled from school.¹⁵

It's about Love

If you really love your partner, standing in front of witnesses and publicly declaring that love is the most powerful way to show that your commitment is real. If you want to do what is right for your children, ending cohabitation and getting married is one of the most powerful things you can do. Making daily sacrifices for each other, sharing mutual joy, and walking hand in hand for life with and for your spouse – the best friend you will ever have.

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