

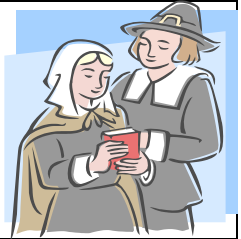


# Marriage & Family Savers Institute

## November

NEWSLETTER

2009



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By the time we began to put this "October" newsletter together the month was almost over, so instead of a late October issue it is now an early November issue. Thanksgiving is a better theme than Halloween goblins anyway. We pray this issue will help you to experience new levels of thanksgiving for all that God has blessed you with, beginning with the love He gave by sacrificing His only Son that you would know Him and eternal life. If that is all we have, we have more than what we deserve; reason enough to be thankful. It's a busy time of year. We'll be making some changes in the way we operate so we included a questionnaire for you to help us decide how to move forward and also to streamline our mailing list, so **be sure you return it to us if you want to stay on the list.** As always, if you have any special needs or concerns feel free to call or e-mail us. We count it a privilege to serve you as we all serve Him.

## MARRIAGE LOSING STRENGTH,

*REPORT SAYS The Washington Post Ellen McCarthy Oct 24, 2009*

WASHINGTON - The institution of marriage in the United States has steadily declined in strength over the past four decades, according to a report released last month by a panel of scholars and advocates.

THE U.S. MARRIAGE INDEX, the brainchild of David Blankenhorn, president of the Institute for American Values, seeks to quantify the health of marriage in the United States in the same way economists use leading indicators to parse the state of the country's economy.

"We're just proposing a way of numerically capturing these trends so that people can see them," he says.

The index combined five statistics - the percentage of adults ages 20 to 54 who are married, the percentage of adults who reported being a "very

## DVD MARRIAGE SAVED Part 2

*In last month's newsletter we reported about a couple that had watched our Marriage Saver Seminar on DVD after they had divorced, and as a result were seen in church together. Well, we just received an update from Marcy and Kyle our warriors in Ulysses, Kansas. They just returned from a "Weekend To Remember" Conference in Denver. They took the young couple with them. Here's their report:*

The Weekend was so full of joy! Just amazing and so grateful that Kyle and I were attending conference we attended 3 yrs ago when we were in crisis and to think of all that God has transformed since! Couples shared their personal stories with us as we worked the HomeBuilders table. Giving the devil's works a huge blow! Overwhelming! The couple, Greg and Jenny, announced as they got in the van to leave Ulysses for the conference that they were engaged! They were so impacted by the conference that by end of last session Jenny, with

## PENNY ORDAINED

On November 22nd, Penny will be ordained by Elim Fellowship at a special service at New Harvest Christian Church in Vail's Gate. Penny was first ordained by CNET. This transfer of credentials brings her under the same covering that Bill has been a part of for more than 10 years. Elim Fellowship's recognition of God's ordination on Penny is one more testimony to God's grace as Bill and Penny have worked together in this particular vineyard since 1997 to see marriages saved, families restored and the Kingdom of God advance - one more step forward to see the vision of this institute become reality.

## DELAWARE DETACHMENT

Tim and I have had the privilege of having Bill and Penny in our lives for close to 12 years. We first met them when Bill was our family counselor after the death of my mom. Then a couple years later, we were having serious marital issues, to the point that we were talking of divorce. Bill

(Cont. P. 3)

(Cont. P.3)



## Season of Joy and Thanksgiving



This time of year should cause us to reflect on the blessings we've have come to know throughout the year, and to focus on giving Thanks to the Source of all blessings. It is so important to purposely recount our blessings, to "forget not our benefits" (Psalm 103:2). This helps us develop a grateful heart. This "muscle" of gratitude is worked out until it is strengthened and eventually becomes visible in our attitudes, particularly in the way we speak to each other.

It has been reported that communication is 65% body language, 28% tone of voice and only 7% in the actual words we use. When a heart of gratitude has been developed it becomes apparent even in the way we look at each other. It shows in the kind and gentle tone of voice we use to address each other, instead of a tone that may have a sharp edge communicating anger, frustration, annoyance or condescension. Whatever it is, it certainly is not a tone that provides a safe warm atmosphere for effective communication, and relationship building.



The Bible tells us that it is out of the heart that flow the issues of life. We think of the heart as the center of our emotions, the center of our attitudes. So if we really want to evaluate our spiritual maturity, we need only to look to our attitudes, not on Sunday in Church -that's just a show- but at home throughout the week. That's the real measure of our spiritual maturity. What is my attitude toward my husband or my wife? That should be the real question. Is it tenderhearted and kind? Does it reflect gratitude for the gift I've been given (my spouse)? Am I grateful for the privilege of sharing in God's gift of "holy" matrimony? Am I grateful that I'm not getting what I deserve -Hell, but God has given me what I don't deserve -Heaven? Am I grateful that my sins have been forgiven though it cost the life of the very Son of God? As we go from Thanksgiving toward Christmas and the birth of Jesus, am I grateful that he may be birthed in my heart all over again, and I can walk in His love, as I surrender my life to Him?

This is a time for introspection and meditation, and as we surrender to Him, it becomes a time for transformation. It's a time to surrender all to Him. Let Christ be born again in your heart; It will change you; it will change your attitude. You'll know the "joy" of the season.

Each morning when I awake to realize that I am not burning in hell, I thank God that in His mercy He is not giving me what I deserve -hell, but by His grace He is giving me what I don't deserve -Heaven, and I can begin my day with a heart of Thanksgiving. From that point on, everything else is a bonus!

*"Enter into His gates with Thanksgiving and His courts with Praise."*

-Psalm 100:4



happy" with their marriages, the percentage of first marriages intact, the percentage of births to married parents and the percentage of children living with their own married parents - to reach a composite score illustrating the state of America's nuptial unions. In 1970, that score totaled 76.2; by 2008, it had dropped to 60.3.

Almost 90 percent of children were born to married parents in 1970; last year, it was 60 percent. Of adults ages 20 to 54, 78.6 percent were married in 1970, compared with 57.2 percent in 2008. The portion of first marriages that remained intact dropped from 77.4 percent in 1970 to 61.2 percent last year.

Blankenhorn says the index was born partly out of his frustration with the difficulty of talking publicly about the subject of marriage.

"There's a lot of genuine opinion out there that really marriage is something that we ought to leave to people's private decision-making and it's not society's business to get into," he concedes. "You're going into their bedroom. You're going into their private lifestyle choices. You're going into situations you can't possibly understand."

Blankenhorn takes issue with that stance largely because marriage has such a significant impact on children. He points to statistics showing that kids who grow up in homes where their parents are married to each other are, on average, less likely to live in poverty, to have emotional or behavioral problems, to engage in premature sexual activity, to use drugs or commit suicide.

"Every single pathology or problem or difficulty a child can experience - every single one - growing up outside of a married-couple home elevates the risk," he says.

Blankenhorn's hope is that the index, a collaborative effort by 15 academics, researchers and policy experts intended for release every other year, will become a bellwether signaling the direction marriage is headed in the United States and that it will galvanize concern and support for the institution.

"It's impossible, really, to make progress unless you have some shared understanding," he says. "There's no disagreement among us about high rates of unemployment - nobody runs around saying it's fine to have 20 percent of us unemployed. But we really are not at that level of agreement about marriage."

Blankenhorn says increases in divorce and in out-of-wedlock childbirth are the two factors that contributed most to the decline in the health of marriage in the past half century. The index includes 101 suggestions to strengthen marriage in America, written by Blankenhorn and collaborator Linda Malone-Colon of Hampton University in Virginia. Among them: creating community-based marriage-mentoring programs and encouraging government funding of marriage education.

"All we're saying here is: Can we just think about that for a minute?" he says.

and Penny then became our marriage counselors. The thing I remember most about that time was that I was steeped in sin and Bill and Penny loved me through it all. Tim and I reconciled and are 'living happily ever after' in Delaware.

We have since become team leaders for the marriage ministry at our church. Bill and Penny came down and conducted a Marriage Saver Seminar Part 1. We had 12 couples in attendance. We have had positive feedback from all who attended especially from our pastor and his wife. One couple was in such crisis they were not even speaking. Although things are far from well between them, they are working on things, and she is planning on joining him on a business trip next week.

Bill and Penny not only ministered to 12 couples with their testimony and teaching, they have also planted seed in our church for restoring marriages, making good marriages better and better equipping engaged couples. This is only a beginning! 😊

#### (DVD MARRIAGE From P. 1)

tears flowing said "I don't want to wait till January (to get remarried)"

God is doing what He said He would do!

Love ya,

Marcy

Go To our Website,

[www.marriageandfamily.org](http://www.marriageandfamily.org)

and click on

**"MARRIAGE EVENTS"**



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Dear Friends,

We're so grateful to God for His goodness and all that He has done for those who would be willing to allow Him to rule in their hearts and in their minds. The reports from Kansas, Delaware and right here in the Hudson Valley encourage us to keep on going, keep on growing, keep on sowing and watch the miracles happen - miracles of changed hearts and restored marriages, and happy children! You can't put a price tag on that.

But we are concerned about the future of this ministry, because, unfortunately, we still have to pay the bills each month, and lately it's been a real challenge. So please keep us in your prayers. Pray that God would provide for the needs of this ministry, or provide direction for any changes He may want us to make. We're open to whatever it is that God would desire. This is His ministry; We're simply the caretakers.

It is our prayer that this Thanksgiving season will be one in which God will fill your hearts with His love, His presence and His power to love, selflessly as Christ has loved you. Pray for those who don't know Him. Let your light so shine before others that they will see Christ in you, and through your witness be drawn to the Savior.

We are ever grateful for your love and support.

God Bless!

*Bill and Penny*