



CHRISTIAN INFLUENCE IN A SECULAR WORLD

## What we believe

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### Marriage is sacred

It is now being argued that marriage is no better than any other type of relationship and should not have a special status in law. It is said that marriage is just a piece of paper.

But this is not how God sees it. At the beginning of creation God spelled out the importance of marriage to mankind when, after Eve was created for Adam, the Bible records: “For this reason a man will leave his father and mother and be united to his wife, and they will become one flesh”(Genesis 2:24). Marriage is a creation ordinance and therefore God’s teaching on marriage and sex is relevant to the world as well as to the church. Marriage is meant for the good of all people – not just Christians.

Marriage clearly *is* different from other types of relationship. Marriage is part of God’s ‘common grace’.

The Bible clearly teaches that the only context for sexual activity is within lifelong monogamous marriage (1 Corinthians 6:9). Marriage is the proper context for raising children. Even secular research shows that marriage is head-and-shoulders above other types of human relationships in terms of the benefits it gives to adults and children.

In the past marriage was protected in the Western legal tradition because of the unique social benefits it offers. Today marriage has lost much of its unique status in public policy. The Christian Institute is concerned about any legislation, public policy, benefit or tax requirement that

undermines marriage and Christian family patterns. The family is a fundamental carrier of values and is at present being undermined. This is evident not least in the area of divorce. Jesus emphasised that marriage was for life, but successive reforms of the divorce law have fostered a rampant divorce culture. God hates divorce (Malachi 2:16) and Jesus clearly aligned himself against easy divorce (Matthew 19:3-9; Mark 10:11-12). Successive reforms of the divorce law in Britain have increased both the divorce rate and the number of children born outside marriage. The Institute believes that the legal framework should be reformed so that divorce is discouraged and reconciliation encouraged. Divorce law should not acquit the guilty and condemn the innocent.

When Paul went to Athens he found it “was full of idols”. Paul attacked the rampant idolatry (Acts 17:16-34). In our own day there may not be idols on every street corner, but there is the all-pervasive worship of sex.

Christians must continue to argue for marriage. We also have to be firm that all sex outside marriage is wrong. This means that fornication, adultery and homosexual practice are wrong. Jesus said to the woman caught in adultery, “Go and sin no more” (John 8:11).