

WHERE HAVE ALL THE FATHERS GONE?

Where have all the fathers gone? Unless you have been out of the country the last few years you will probably agree with me when I say that the traditional and biblical standard for the “nuclear family” is being attacked. As defined by the *Merriam Webster’s Deluxe Dictionary*, such a family is described as “a family group that consists of father, mother and children.” You will have to search a long time to any more find family-shows on TV such as “Father Knows Best,” the “Donna Reed Show,” or—our favorite—“The Beaver,” except on stations that specialize in re-runs of productions of the ‘40s and ‘50s. Small-children’s text books now refrain from depicting such families because such are unfamiliar to many children, especially to those with no father present. The single-parent household is becoming ever more common and acceptable. As Biblical standards are being cast aside, the blessing of two parents in the rearing of children is becoming rarer and rarer. Children are routinely being born into the world to young women who consent to sexual relationships without the security of “holy matrimony.” Divorce statistics continue to mount, leaving mothers to raise children alone, or with little input by the fathers. Feminists maintain that a father is no longer needed, other than to be a sperm-donor, enabling them the freedom to have children without the further need for a male. Lesbian couples are trying to convince us that two women can raise children as effectively as a man and a woman together can. Statistics show that in 1960, 5 percent of America’s children were without two parents—a mother and a father. Twenty years later the number had risen to 18 percent; and by 2000, to 33 percent. I believe that number now stands at 41 percent. While public welfare is a need in a humane society, some women admit that it is monetarily an advantage to remain on welfare as a single parent in preference to taking a low-paying job and hiring baby sitters. Some have discovered that they can “make” even more money by having more children, allowing an automatic raise in benefits. A poll taken by the *Los Angeles Times* in 1985, asking whether poor women often have children to increase benefits, showed that while non-poor residents said “No”, 64 percent of those considered poor said “Yes”. With the redefinition of marriage to include same-sex couples, we can only expect the situation to worsen.

Are fathers needed? Obviously, God’s pattern from the beginning was that of a father, mother and children. To depart from it is at our peril. Let Isaac Shakur, a rapper who was killed, possibly in a gang-related murder a few years ago, answer: *“I know for a fact that had I had a father, I’d have some discipline. I’d have more confidence.... Your mother cannot calm you down the way a man can. Your mother can’t assure you the way a man can. My mother couldn’t show me where my manhood was. You need a man to teach you how to be a man.”* He admitted to running with gangs to seek structure and protection. Not surprisingly, the *Journal of Research on Adolescence* revealed from a study that children who have never had a father available are the most likely to end up behind bars. It is predictable that as our nation continues to live in a world of “virtual reality” instead of facing the fact that God knows best, the situation will continue to deteriorate. And as the family-structure is destroyed, our blinded nation can only expect a similar fate. One day we will wake up and ask, “Where have all the fathers gone?”

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