

## Is Cohabitation “Just as Good” as Marriage?\*

*“Let marriage be held in honor among all.” Hebrews 13:4*

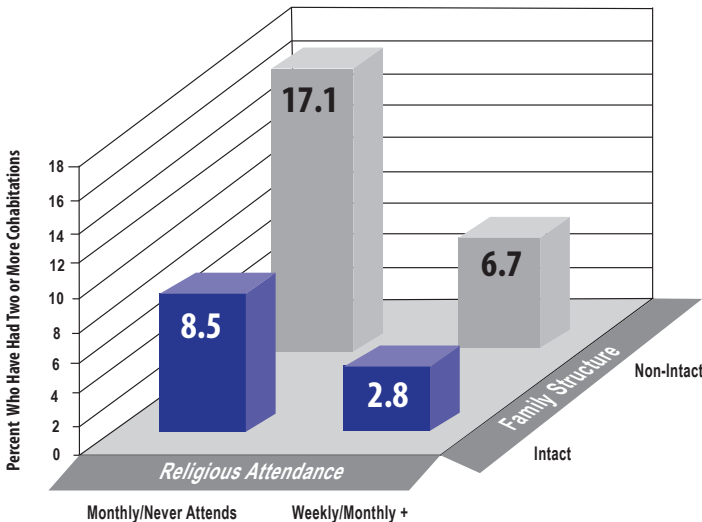
**Culture tells us that cohabitation is a substitute for marriage. However, God’s Word and social science research say something very different:**

- Marriage (without prior cohabitation) has a positive effect on worshipping God regularly.
- Children from always married families are more likely to enter legal marriage as their first union.
- Cohabiting couples are significantly more likely to worship God less frequently and to think of worship as less important.
- Women who cohabit are more likely to hold favorable views about divorce.
- Early adolescent dating and sexual intercourse increase the likelihood of choosing cohabitation over marriage.

**Cohabitation is not a substitute for God’s way. Can you use this information to help your children see marriage as God’s place for sexual relationships?**

**Women Aged 14-44 With Two or More Cohabitations in Lifetime**  
**by Religious Attendance and Family Structure**

Source: National Survey of Family Growth, 2002



This chart shows that women who never worship God and who come from non-intact families are more likely to cohabit than women who come from intact families and worship weekly. If a woman grows up in a cohabitating household, she is more likely to cohabit herself. Non-intact families breed non-intact families. A cohabitating culture does not offer stability and health to the next generation in the way that marriage surely does.

For links to the research behind these statements, please visit [www.marri.us/churchbulletins](http://www.marri.us/churchbulletins)

\*It bears emphasizing that these patterns hold for the groups involved, not for all the individuals who make up each group. There is naturally a wide variation among individuals.



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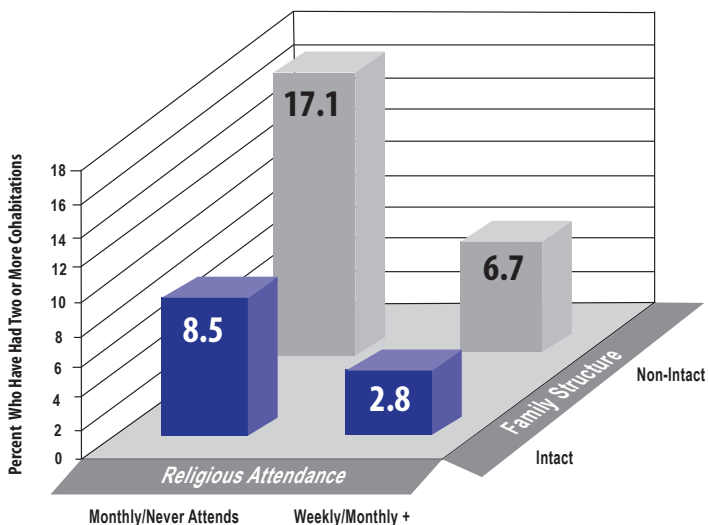
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