

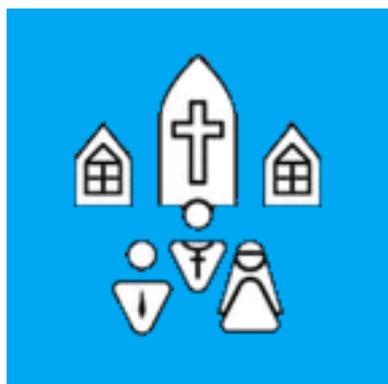
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FAITH & FAMILY

Marriage and Religion Effects

“I would rather share one lifetime with you than face all the ages of this world alone.” – J. R. R. Tolkien, Author of *The Hobbit* and *Lord of the Rings*

Men and Women Perceive Marital Quality Differently



A large US [2018 study](#) evaluated gender differences in the structure of marital quality, and, a subsample of 491 pairs of twins, explored gender differences in genetic and environmental influences on marital quality.

Findings indicate that women’s perceptions of marital quality depend more on the behaviors involved in

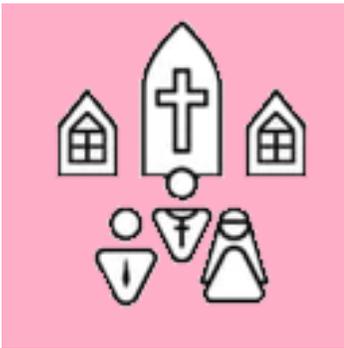
collaborative problem-solving, shared power in relationships, expressed emotional support, and being able to rely on their husbands. For men, the behavior that makes the difference is “support from their wives”. [Editor’s comment: this confirms much of [Emerson Eggerichs Love & Respect: The Love She Most Desires; The Respect He Desperately Needs.](#)]

High Marital Quality Translates into Better Health



A [2014 meta-analysis](#) of 126 published empirical articles over the past 50 years, involving over 72,000 individuals, investigated the association between marital relationship quality and physical health, and found that greater marital quality led to better health, lower risk of mortality. Further: even during marital conflict cardiac reactivity is lower.

Religion Increases Marital Quality



A [2017 longitudinal study](#) explored the link between the level of religious practice and marital outcomes (specifically, relationship quality and couple generativity) among 97 Catholic couples in Italy who were recruited from prenuptial courses. These courses are compulsory for Catholics in preparation for marriage in the Church.

Couple generativity refers to the degree to which partners are involved as a couple in their community and take care of their social bonds. Findings suggested that men with a high level of religious practice had higher scores on relationship quality and on couple generativity than men with a low level of practice, while women with a high level of practice had higher scores on couple generativity than women with a low level of practice.

Sweet Dreams Come from Great Marriages

A [2017 study](#) of 108 couples examined changes in insomnia as a result of marital therapy. Only the husbands showed significant improvement: a 36% decrease in their incidence of insomnia.



Religiosity & Spirituality Correlate with Positive Psychosocial Functioning



A [2003 longitudinal study](#) examined the relationship between religious practice, spirituality (having a transcendental outlook but with a rejection of identification with an organized religion), and three functions in late adulthood:

1. Sources of well-being.
2. Involvement in tasks of everyday life; and
3. Generativity. “Generativity” in this study means ‘being giving, protective, sympathetic and warm, being socially perceptive, and having broad interests’.

This Berkeley study found that not spirituality, but religious practice in early and late-middle adulthood, led to positive relationships with others, involvement in social and community service, and “generativity” in late adulthood. Additionally, religious practice in early adulthood was related to involvement in creative life tasks and wisdom in late adulthood.

Spirituality in late middle but not early adulthood, had a statistically significant association with well-being from personal growth, involvement in creative and knowledge-building life tasks, and wisdom in late adulthood.

Neither religious practice nor spirituality practice were related to narcissism.

Religious Attendance, Family Structure & Adolescent Psychological Well-Being: Continuity in the Two Great Loves:



A [2014 longitudinal study](#) of 5,739 adolescents, aged 10 and older, who participated in the National Longitudinal Survey of Youth examined whether family structure, parent-child relationship quality, and religious attendance (independently or together) influence psychological wellbeing. Children in always intact married families had better parent-child relationships. And those who attended religious services with their parents in late childhood had higher psychological well-being compared. Moreover, adolescents who interacted with their parents frequently and attended services together had the highest levels of well-being.



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