



Marriage and Religion: The Robust Seeds of the New Civilization and Its Undergirding Economy

“Happiness is prosperity combined with virtue” – Aristotle, known by Thomas Aquinas as “The Philosopher”

We live in an era that is likely the end of one civilization but prior to a new one emerging from the dust and chaos of modernity. All major institutions (family, religion, education, marketplace, and government) are bereft of consistently good leadership who work in unified acknowledgment of their mutual interdependence. At the same time the two great materialisms, the green and the red, battle it out in the marketplace (for now) ---- Western corporate elites and their bureaucrat allies on the one side and resurgent totalitarianism on the other. What makes these antagonists more and more alike is their distrust and suppression of freedom of religion and of natural sexual moral law.... in other words, their hostility to the traditional, natural family (which has always worshipped God in one form or another).

The good news is that it is precisely these conditions of decay that give rise to the new growth that can both survive and transcend these enemies of human nature. At the end of the last collapse of a great civilization, the fall of Rome, Augustine and Benedict appeared, giving cogence and structure to the long trek back to the new coherent civilization of the 1100's. There is a high likelihood that the new intellectual shoots will come, not from among the celibate but from among the happily married. This need not necessarily be so --- just more likely. Celibates have always penetrated the meaning of the Song of Songs, maybe more than the married (St. John of the Cross and St. Bernard come to mind). John Paul II, a celibate, gave us the new theology of the body, a theology of marriage. However, by necessity, the expert practitioners will definitely be the married and the field to be won --- in intellect, mindset, heart and existential existence --- is definitely the marriage bed, not the monastic cell or the altar – though these both are central (one more than the other).

Eventually, the intact married family that worships God weekly, will be the acknowledged core of the new civilization and those nations allied to build it and the international order it can sustain. All other paradigms will be shown to fail. Big data and supercomputing, neuroscience and biology, developmental psychology and all the social sciences will be on that side – albeit with caveats, for that is the always incomplete nature of human knowledge.

Here below are a few recent findings to soothe the troubled soul in our anxiety-provoking times, and to remind us of our fundamental nature: bodily-entwined-spirits (or spirit-entwined-bodies) that exist as bonding/social creatures, from their moment of first existence in their mother's womb to the last breath they breathe, all hoping that last moment alive will be in the company of loved ones.

Religion Correlates with Prosperity



A 2019 book entitled “[The Wealth of Religions: The Political Economy of Believing and Belonging](#)” by Harvard’s [Rachel M. McCleary](#) and [Robert J. Barro](#) asserts the economic value of religion by exploring the extent to which religious beliefs motivate people to be economically productive. Gathering data on levels of religiosity in church attendance and in spiritual beliefs about the afterlife, the authors found such religiosity to be a very strong motivation for living a good productive life. Among churchgoers, they found a positive relationship between belief in an afterlife and economic growth and advancement.

Intact Married Families and Christianity are Foundations for Economic Prosperity



One of the most prolific researchers and writers on the social science of marriage and religion is Professor [William Jeynes](#) of Cal State Long Beach. His chapter “[The Two Biological Parent Family, Christianity, and Economic Prosperity](#)” in [The Wiley Handbook of Christianity and Education](#) (2018) shows that

Christianity, by encouraging marriage, marital fidelity and the raising of children, while exhorting parents to love, care, and serve their children so that they can turn into responsible and loving adults, supports a system that fosters income and savings in individual families and in the nation as a whole. It further shows that nations that enjoyed the highest standard of living and the most advanced cultures since 1100 A.D., found an unmistakable pattern of the flourishing of Christianity, cultural advancement, and economic prosperity.

Economic Prosperity at the State Level



A [2015 publication from the American Enterprise Institute/Institute for Family Studies](#) by [Wilcox](#), [Price](#) and [Lerman](#) found that higher levels of married-parent-families are strongly associated with more economic growth, more economic mobility, less child poverty, and higher median family income at the state level in

the United States. The state-level link between marriage and economic growth is stronger for younger adults (ages 25 to 35) than for older adults (36-59), suggesting that marriage plays a particularly important role in fostering the enabling work ethic among young men.



For More Information about [Healthy Marriages](#), please visit [Marrimedia.org](#)



[View E-mail in Browser](#)

This email was sent to <<Email Address>>

[why did I get this?](#) [unsubscribe from this list](#) [update subscription preferences](#)

Marriage and Religion Research Institute · 8801 Kensington Parkway · Chevy Chase, MD 20815 · USA