

# Why is marriage and family important and desirable?

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By *Christiann Hausmann*

U PF Stuttgart dedicated its October meeting to the topic of marriage and the family because it is a topic of current interest.

More precisely we considered the question: Why is marriage and family important and desirable? Or should we rather say: is this still the case? Is it outdated to support and protect a model of the family that is based on one man and one woman, as anchored in article 6 of German Constitutional Law? Or has our society long since developed in a direction that no longer considers this reasonable but rather as antiquated and restricting?

Even as supporters of the family, we cannot deny that it is not easy to establish a partnership and to educate children in this time of secularization and changing values. Besides influences from changes in culture, economy and technology, individualistic ideas of self-fulfillment have proliferated and there have been shifts in sexual morality that question and modify the institution of marriage and the family and its traditional, Christian based values.

Where can we find help and orientation in these difficult times? Is there such a thing

as a manual where we can find a life of happiness in marriage and the family and perhaps the impulse to initiate a cultural counter revolution?

Mrs. Piepenburg addressed these questions under three headings:

## 1. Sexual liberation and the question about human nature

As well as positive developments, such as overcoming unnatural inhibitions, shame and feelings of guilt, there are also negative effects such as the marketing of sex as a commodity, as is found in the media, pornography and prostitution.

And beyond this, the natural man-woman relationship is being threatened by the introduction of the scientifically unproven gender ideology, supported by public funding and propagated in universities and school curricula. The absurd preliminary climax of this development is the propagation of 'polyamory' as a type of love relationship between three or more people, given a standing equal to that of traditional marriage and family.

## 2. Research on attachment and its contribution to the interpretation of marriage and family

An understanding of the new, and unfortunately too little regarded research on attachment based on the theory of the English psychiatrist John Bowlby, was presented according to a summary and interpretation of psychologist and couple therapist, Sue Johnson. Attachment theory states that the better the child's emotional needs are satisfied by its primary attachment figure, the more secure is its attachment and the later autonomy and

personality development. This understanding throws a lot of doubt on the current policy of entrusting the care of children under the age of three to strangers in nurseries.

New scientific research, introduced by Sue Johnson in her book „Love Sense“, questions many assumptions about the nature of humans and the course of love relationships. She comes to the conclusion that human beings are happiest in monogamous, lasting partner relationships. This is what Johnson has to say:

- Our first and foremost instinct is neither sex nor aggression, but the search for contact and the reassurance of bonding.
- Romantic love between adults is one based on a bond of affection, just as between mother and child.
- Passionate sex does not lead to a stable love relationship, but rather stable attachment leads to passionate sex and also to lasting love.
- Emotional dependence is neither immature nor pathological. It is our greatest strength.
- We can only bring out our best when we feel deeply connected to someone. 'Splendid isolation' is something for planets, not for people.
- Our nature is not egoistic, but empathetic. Feelings for others are inborn.

## 3. The spiritual dimension and the meaning of love

In the last part of her presentation, Mrs. Piepenburg spoke about life after death and the meaning of love when, for example our partner is no longer physically alive, and illustrated this with reports from those who have had near-death experiences.

Mrs. Piepenburg ended her presentation with the statement that the purpose of life is to come close to God by learning unconditional love. Hence the family has a fixed place and goal, also in modern society, as the highest school of love.

One of the main concerns of the Universal Peace Federation and the World Peace Blessings that it organizes, is to rediscover this meaning; to establish it as the new mainstream in society, and to make a contribution by realizing these ideals.