THE FAMILY
A PROCLAMATION TO THE WORLD
The First Presidency and Council of the Twelve Apostles of
The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints

WE, THE FIRST PRESIDENCY and the
Council of the Twelve Apostles of The
Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints,
solemnly proclaim that marriage between a
man and a woman is ordained of God and
that the family is central to the Creator's
plan for the eternal destiny of His children.

ALL HUMAN BEINGS—male and
female—are created in the image of God.
Each is a beloved spirit son or daughter of
heavenly parents, and, as such, each has a
divine nature and destiny. Gender is an
essential characteristic of individual
premortals, mortal, and eternal identity
and purpose.

IN THE PREMORTAL REALM, spirit sons
and daughters knew and worshipped God as
their Eternal Father and accepted His plan
by which His children could obtain a
physical body and gain earthly experience
to progress toward perfection and ultimate-
ly realize their divine destiny as heirs of
eternal life. The divine plan of happiness
enables family relationships to be perpetu-
ated beyond the grave. Sacred ordinances
and covenants available in holy temples
make it possible for individuals to return to
the presence of God and for families to be
united eternally.

THE FIRST COMMANDMENT that God
gave to Adam and Eve pertained to their
potential for parenthood as husband and
wife. We declare that God's commandment
for His children to multiply and replenish
the earth remains in force. We further
declare that God has commanded that the
sacred powers of procreation are to be
employed only between man and woman,
lawfully wedded as husband and wife.

WE DECLARE the means by which mortal
life is created to be divinely appointed. We
affirm the sanctity of life and of its
importance in God's eternal plan.

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WE DECLARE the means by which mortal
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HUSBAND AND WIFE have a solemn responsibility to love and care for each other and for their children. They are an "inheritance of the Lord" (Psalm 127:3). Parents have a sacred duty to rear their children in love and righteousness, to provide for their physical and spiritual needs, and to teach them to love and serve one another, observe the commandments of God, and be law-abiding citizens wherever they live. Husbands and wives—mothers and fathers—will be held accountable before God for the discharge of these responsibilities.

THE FAMILY is ordained of God. Marriage between man and woman is essential to His eternal plan. Children are entitled to birth within the bonds of matrimony, and to be reared by a father and a mother who honor marital vows with complete fidelity. Happiness in family life is most likely to be achieved when founded upon the teachings of the Lord Jesus Christ. Successful marriages and families are established and maintained on principles of faith, prayer, repentance, forgiveness, respect, love, compassion, work, and wholesome recreational activities. By divine design, fathers are to preside over their families in love and righteousness and are responsible to provide the necessities of life and protection for their families. Mothers are primarily responsible for the nurture of their children. In these sacred responsibilities, fathers and mothers are obligated to help one another as equal partners. Disability, death, or other circumstances may necessitate individual adaptation. Extended families should lend support when needed.

WE WARN that individuals who violate covenants of chastity, who abuse spouse or offspring, or who fail to fulfill family responsibilities will one day stand accountable before God. Further, we warn that the disintegration of the family will bring upon individuals, communities, and nations the calamities foretold by ancient and modern prophets.

WE CALL UPON responsible citizens and officers of government everywhere to promote those measures designed to maintain and strengthen the family as the fundamental unit of society.

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