

# The Family Friend



A collection of articles and quotes to aid your family in daily living.

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## Juvenile Delinquents - Big Ones!

Ever feel sorry for a rhinoceros? Now you can. In the South African bush they're being attacked by juvenile delinquents. Big ones. Really big ones. The size of elephants. In fact, they are elephants, according to a recent edition of **60 Minutes**.

In one season, 10% of the rhino population was wiped out. These have been protected animals, and the local rangers were hopping mad. But who was killing them? Answer: elephants. But elephants don't attack rhinos. Never happens. But the evidence was strong. Finally somebody put the puzzle together.

Twenty years ago a decision was made (for what seemed like good reasons at the time) to kill adult elephants and move the young ones to other locations. Now that the young ones have become teenagers, they are doing strange things. Like attacking rhinos and attacking tourist vehicles. Rangers tracked them and saw them in action: they taunted rhinos like 14-year-old schoolyard bullies, then they got nasty, and finally they

killed hapless rhinos. Eventually the offending elephants had to be shot (there are no reform schools for elephants).

But why this bizarre behavior? The rangers figured it out: These teenage elephants were growing up without male role models. This apparently (who would have thought it?) created a whole generation of traumatized young elephants without older males to teach them how to behave. Solution? Rangers went looking for surrogate daddies. They paired them up with the teenage elephants. The younger ones watched the big bull elephants, and they learned how to be gentlemen. No more rhinos have been killed. No more tourist vehicles have been attacked.

Elephants are not people. But could there be points of similarity in the way God's creatures develop? Dad, how are you spending time with your son this evening? Mom, what project will you and your daughter work on this weekend? Children need role models.

Gayle Crowe, Nashville, TN

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"Unless the LORD builds the house, those who build it labor in vain" **Psalms 127:1**

## Can You Wait Too Long to Get Married?

Most responsible professionals in the field of marriage and family therapy would agree that it is inadvisable for people to marry in their teens. We rarely stop to think that it hasn't been long since teenage marriages were much more common than they are today. I can remember when high school girls hoped to get a "ring before spring." Many of my college classmates (both males and females) were married long before they received their degrees. Today such liaisons are frowned upon and with good reason. However, the replacement may not always be that positive.

Norvall D. Glen is a professor of sociology and American studies at the University of Texas. He recently presented a paper at the meeting of the American Sociology Association in San Francisco. He gave the results of a study from five data sets, which were designed to measure how well people fare when they first marry at an older age as compared with those who marry young. His conclusions are rather startling. He noted that those who marry at a later age (past their mid-twenties), are more likely to stay

married than those who marry between the ages of 22 and 25. That probably doesn't surprise you, but here's the fly in the ointment. "...the later marriages fare very well in survival but rather poorly in quality." His research would suggest that chances for marriage satisfaction are not improved if couples put it off beyond a certain age. You can get a full copy of his paper by sending an e-mail request to:

[ndglenn@austin.utexas.edu](mailto:ndglenn@austin.utexas.edu)

Mark Regnerus is also a sociology professor at the same university. He's been taking a lot of heat because he has suggested that Christians ought to consider encouraging earlier marriage. When he wrote an article for the Washington Post, many readers thought he was not only out of touch with today's values, but wrote him off as some kind of lunatic-fringe sexist, who is totally out of touch with twenty-first century values.

In reality, Regenerus makes a strong case for not postponing marriage too long. He's highly critical of contemporary Christians who emphasize sexual abstinence, even though he believes that sex should be postponed until marriage. Unfortunately, we have not been highly successful in convincing our young people that Paul's advice is good in 1 Corinthians 7:1-4, when he urged Christians to marry in order to avoid fornication (1 Corinthians 7:1-4). Regenerus says that 90 per cent of American adults experience sexual intercourse prior to marriage, then he shocks his readers when he says, "In a nationally representative study

of young adults, just under 80 percent of unmarried, church-going, conservative Protestants, who are currently dating someone, are having sex of some sort." If he's right that means a large number of our younger people aren't agreeing with us when we say that sex needs to be deferred until marriage.

But he doesn't stop there. He believes the church has been so preoccupied with promoting abstinence that it has failed to speak positively, practically, and effectively about marriage. He points to a number of factors that complicate the problem. For example, we tell our young people that they need to marry those who share their spiritual perspectives, but we ignore the fact that in most churches there are about three single women for every two single men. What's going to happen to that rather large group of women, who can't find a marriageable male with the same perspective? The problem is further exacerbated by the tendency of today's young men to attempt to maintain an adolescent mindset long after their teens – a phenomenon that has even been observed in the work place. Many Christian young women are forced to wait for the right person, who may not show up for years or they will have to settle for remaining single. It also helps to explain why women often marry men who are several years their senior.

I'm not advocating marriage among immature people. All the studies indicate that for the most part marriages formed among teenagers is a recipe for disaster, but we should not think that people have a better chance for marriage success if they wait un-

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til they are 35 to get married. There are many other issues that we don't have space to discuss. You can read his entire article

at [www.christianitytoday.com/ct/2009/august/16.22.html](http://www.christianitytoday.com/ct/2009/august/16.22.html)

Norman Bales, *All About Families*, September 17, 2009

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### **ABORTION RATE DROPS**

The Guttmacher Institute, which is an abortion rights group, released a scientific study on February 3 showing that there was a 13% decline in abortions from 2008 to 2011 causing the abortion rate in the United States to be the lowest since the legalization of abortion in 1973. There is no single thing that has caused this drop. The birthrate in 2012 was the lowest on record, and advances in contraception have also affected the rate of unwanted pregnancies. If you believe that a child comes into existence at conception, then infanticide is a part of our culture and 1.1 million abortions were recorded in 2011. The dropping of the abortion rate does offer some hope that there is a third choice in the abortion dilemma, and that is to reduce the abortion rate to zero, or as close to zero as possible.

Source: *Time*, February 17, 2014, page 18

—via *News & Notes, Does God Exist?*, May/June 2014