May and June are approaching and the wedding season looms. Many June brides are busy planning, picking colors and finishing minute details to multiple events. The grooms meanwhile are oblivious.

I had the great joy of attending Catie and Philip’s wedding a few weeks ago. It was beautiful culmination of many hours of loving work. What I am referring to is the hopes and dreams of those four parents that sat on those front pews on that Saturday afternoon.

The Defense of Marriage Act was much in the news as the Supreme Court of our land considered who can officially marry according to our civil government. I’ll stay out of that deep water for now and only wade in as far as this, I’m for marriage. Even the go to the courthouse method. It’s official, deliberate and intentional. You mean it when you take the trip to the judge.

In my work, I frequently come across folks who try the test drive method. They say, “we’ll live together for a while and see how it works out.” My reading of this is it won’t, work out that is. This lack of commitment and selfish “if it works out for me” attitude almost automatically torpedoes their effort.

Sure, it starts out nice and easy, they like each other, and the idea seems reasonable, even wise. “Let’s make sure we’re compatible,” they say. But its not, it’s a cheap, easy; seemingly pain free way to couple.

What they are missing is the strength of those families and friends, even the whole community that joins together in strength and hope to bind these two together. And it does take all of this strength. Coupling is difficult. Your relationship needs support.

Weddings are expensive events. Mothers seem to relish every aspect, fathers dread every detail. But my friend Rick said it was worth it. When he gave Catie away, he said it was one of the most meaningful and emotionally moving experiences of his life. He said he will remain awestruck at the power of that moment forever.

What I did see was two fathers who invested time, creativity, and love in a life event for their children. As much as this was a culmination for them of raising and launching a child into a successful life of their own. It was obviously for the couple a momentous beginning.

A momentous beginning and a good start. A start that one person moving into another’s house misses.

Children add another dimension. When people couple, children are a natural result. And all too often, the children end up with a parent, not parents. When the relationship starts easily, it ends easily. Lots of people are hurt. Commitment is the piece that is missing.

Here’s the counterpoint argument. Bubba has lived with the mother of his children for seven years. He’s had some trouble but he’s working through this and he’s quit drinking. The upshot of his newfound clarity and dare I say commitment is this; they set a date in September to wed. That’s right, after living together all of these years and struggling through ups and downs, they are going to finally tie the knot.

Congratulations and Best Wishes!