

# Ministering to Families in a Permissive Society

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## I. What's Really Happening to the Family?

In recent years, there has been a monumental amount of concern expressed over what's happening to the American family. A proliferation of family research and literature has been produced by secular humanist and quasi-religious leaders. Concern for the family's strategic role in the church is expanding just as rapidly, if for no other reason than the family's struggles and problems are spilling like raw sewage into the life of the congregation. The church is located nearest to the scene of the accident and because of the Gospel has a responsibility to aid the victims. Today, like no other time in the history of the world, Satan is challenging a foundational unit of the church - the family the disciples already won for Christ.

What follows is a sample of the social, economic, psychological, and spiritual trends which are ultimately having an affect upon the families/children with whom we deal. They are offered so that you might recognize the influences and consider their impact upon families if intentional ministry is to be structured for the purpose of assisting families.

### A. *Social Factors*

1. Today, the nuclear family consisting of a husband wage earner, a wife homemaker, and two or more dependent children, that was once held up as typical and normal, accounts for less than 10 percent of all households. (*The State of Families*, p. 8)

2. Though over 90 percent of Americans presently marry, by the year 2000 this figure is predicted to drop to 85 percent. Stemming from the weakening of religious, social, and legal taboos, greater sexual freedom will promote continued growth in cohabitation, single-person households, unwed single-parent families, and homosexual couples. (*The State of Families*, p. 7)

3. The ages at which men and women have been marrying for the first time have been increasing rather steadily. In 1986, the median age at first marriage for men was 25.7 years and for women was 23.1 years. ("The American Family," p. 5)

4. Young women today expect to have, on the average, two children. Small families, for several reasons, will remain the norm in our society for the foreseeable future.

5. In 1980 one out of every two first marriages ended in divorce. At the present time it is more accurate to say this trend will decline slightly to perhaps forty to fifty percent of first time marriages ending in divorce. (*The State of Families*, p. 8)

6. Of all divorced people, eighty percent will re-marry; half within three years. Over sixty percent of re-marriages will end in divorce. This pattern appears to be here to stay. (*The State of Families*, p.8)

7. Single-person households were 10 percent of the total households in 1955. In 1984, they were close to 25 percent, with additional growth predicted in the near future. (*The State of Families*, p.

8. Nine of every ten single-parent families in the United States are mother-children families. Currently, close to one-fourth of the nation's 60 million children under eighteen-live with only

one parent. By 1990, the figure is predicted to rise to one-third. In addition, half of all children will have spent some time in a single-parent family before reaching the age of eighteen. (*The State of Families*, p. 10)

9. Sixteen percent of all married couples today involve step situations and there is little question that the proportion will continue to grow. Tomorrow's children will grow up with several sets of parents and an assortment of half and step-siblings. Over the next five decades secular society will redefine its concept of the family. ("The American Family," p. 8)

10. Traditional sex roles for adults within the family will continue to undergo modifications arising from the repeated changes which education, work, recreation, leisure time, and pursuit of career will bring about in family life style. (*The State of Families*, p. 11)

11. Recent research indicated the average couple spend only 27 minutes a week talking with each other in open, accepting conversation. In addition, the average child, age 10 and older, talks with Mom and/or Dad only 13 ½ minutes a day, with 12 ½ of those minutes receiving commands or reprimands. That leaves only 2 minutes a day between parents and child for "quality" conversation. Additional research indicates that Dads may spend as little as 37 seconds a day with their children. ("How to Strengthen Today's Family," Video Tape A, Program 3)

12. The birthrate among teenage women has risen 141 percent. Over two-thirds of all first births to teenage girls occurred out of wedlock. 20 percent of America's births are out of wedlock. ("How to Strengthen Today's Family," Video Tape B, Program 5)

13. Minority group populations—Black, Hispanic, Asian—are growing at a faster rate than Whites, due to births and legal and illegal immigration. By 1990 it is projected that there will be more than 50 million Blacks and Hispanics in America. More than 40 percent of Black families are single parent families headed by women, a jump of 35 percent in a decade. (*The State of Families*, p. 25)

14. If present trends continue, in a 40-member class graduating from high school in the year 2000: two class members will give birth before graduation; eight will drop out of high school, eleven will be unemployed after graduation, fifteen will be living in poverty, thirty-six will have used alcohol; seventeen will have used marijuana; eight will have used cocaine, six will have run away from home, and one will commit suicide. ("Skills for Growing," DiRaddo)

15. Crimes committed by adults and juveniles in America are terrible and getting worse. Of the industrialized nations, the only country with a worse juvenile crime record is England. In 1980, 65 percent of all teenage deaths were due to violent causes (i.e. car accidents, suicide, homicide). ("How to Strengthen Today's Family," video Tape B, Program 5)

16. In the home, children attend the television set for more hours annually than they attend classrooms. Between absent working parents and a general social permissiveness, there is usually little parental guidance in program selection. (*The State of Family*, p. 40)

#### B. Economic Factors

1. The middle class will be further weakened economically by corporate restructuring. Witness the fact that social agencies are increasingly seeing first-time clients, formerly members of the

middle class, coming through their doors with problems associated with lower class poverty. (*The State of Families: Work and Family*, p. 12)

2. Women who want work, family, and motherhood may find it difficult to perform all roles adequately. Men, too, are torn by conflicts between family and work values. A growing temporary solution to role conflicts is to postpone or avoid marriage while pursuing a career, although some couples may live together in the meantime. (*The State of Families: Work and Family*, p. 14)

3. Women enter the workplace from all types of family situations. In 1985, work-force participation rates for married women were 48 percent with no children at home, 68 percent with children, from six to seventeen years of age, 54 percent with children younger than six years, and 49 percent with children younger than three years.

4. Two-thirds of working women claim to work out of necessity. They are either single, divorced, separated, or have husbands earning less than \$15,000 a year: (*The State of Families*, p. 69)

5. Women are expected to constitute forty-eight percent of the total work force by the year 2000. Current statistics indicate that full-time jobs are being held by seventy percent of working mothers. (*The State of Families*, p. 62)

6. Wages and salary increases over the next decade are predicted to show a modest four percent growth. The middle class is shrinking in size. There will continue to be regional differences in wage prosperity. During 1981 to 1985 the average wages in the Heartland declined significantly compared with those in the bi-coastal states. (*The State of Families: Work and Family*, p. 23)

7. For a majority of Americans, work is central to their identity, their self-esteem, and their life goals. (*The State of Families: Work and Family*, p. 13)

### C. Psychological Factors

1. Shifting values have shaken the confidence of parents regarding the value orientation of their children, particularly in the middle class. Parents have doubts about their responsibilities, their capabilities, their rights and appropriate values for dealing with children at all ages from infant to young adult. (*The State of Families*, p. 8)

2. The persisting high divorce rate and existing family structures suggest that perhaps value shifts and other changes in society are creating expectations fair the family which are much higher than previous generations. Sharing, intimacy, and emotional support awe yet too high. to be sustained by many people forming families. (*The State of Families*, p. 10)

3. The changing system of values in America encourages life styles with patterns stressing lack of permanence, variety, short-term time orientations, and self-fulfillment. (*The State of Families*, p. 11)

4. Ours is a complex and technological society. As society increases in complexity and technology, family insecurity will increase. (*The State of Families*, p. 58)

5. Families appear to be lacking in the confidence or know-how to deal with the complexities of marriage and raising children. Witness the rise in commercialism of marriage and parenting education materials.

#### *D. Spiritual Factors*

1. Shifting values are fueling changes throughout society in America. “The American family”—long celebrated as the social institution most impervious to change—has been forced to adapt to many of these value changes.. This adaptive process will accelerate over the next twenty years as the debate over the health of the family heats up. (*The State of Families*, p. 7)

2. Evidence of a declining faith-life can be seen throughout the major Christian bodies of America. Church leaders are reporting a general decline in all areas of congregational activity. In a recent book *American Mainline Religion: Its Changing Shape and Future* authors William McKinney and Wade Roof reveal the startling fact that between 1952 and 1987, the American Protestant majority slipped from 67 percent of the population to 57 percent. As many as ten of the largest Protestant denominations are in the throes of what can only be described as a serious religious depression.

3. The leaders of many church bodies have begun to view the Christian education agency approach inadequate to produce mature Christians in the modern sense. The trend is to re-enlist the home as a close ally. Church renewal has been spawned by the insistence that Christian education agencies are no longer productive. This trend began to develop in mainline Christian churches during the 60’s and has recently surfaced in the WELS. (*Family Ministry*, p. 28)

4. The majority of church bodies in America are advocating unscriptural stands on family issues such as abortion, the role of man and woman, divorce, marriage, and homosexuality.

5. Church attendance, Bible class attendance, stewardship, and church growth figures are at best, in a state of equilibrium, or in actual decline within the Wisconsin Evangelical Lutheran Synod.

6. Interfaith marriages continue to increase, resulting often in homes of mixed values and mixed lifestyles.

7. Understanding the relationship between teaching religion, teaching the Word and nurturing faith continue to be difficult concepts for many Christians.

8. The number of children and wives being reported as abused emotionally, physically, or sexually is increasing. Witness the fact that 1.5 million cases of child abuse and neglect are reported annually in the United States. Of special note, emerging as an issue that will increase in visibility over the next two decades, is reported incest. (*The State of Families*, p. 36)

9. The number of adult bookstores across the country currently outnumber McDonald’s restaurants by a margin of at least three to one. The hard core pornography industry is growing rapidly, estimates are that it currently grosses 8 billion dollars annually. (“How to Strengthen Today’s Family,” Video Tape B—Program 2)

10. Today’s Christian families mix the two value worlds in which they live. Some secular values when applied at home, clearly conflict with the traditional values of church and family. Scripture tells us that this trend will continue until the end.

11. Many single-parent families feel excluded from congregational offerings because they believe that they are directed at two-parents-and-their children family. (*Five Cries of Parents*, p. 28)

## **II. A Solution: Intentional Ministry for the Family**

Taken seriously, family ministry is not a tacked-on “special emphasis” in church life; it is far more than an annual family night supper or a short-term class for parents. A ministry to families focuses not only on individuals and their relationship with God, but also upon the relationship between people in their homes. Christian family ministers recognize the sinful nature of people and apply Law and Gospel to the attitudes and relationships in the home. They seek to build and equip families for mutual blessing and for service to their Lord.

### *A. A Philosophy of Family Ministry*

Of the many passages in the New Testament from which a philosophy of ministry for the family can be formulated, the Great Commission found in Matthew’s Gospel, chapter 28, is significant: “Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I will be with you always, to the very end of the age” (Matthew 28:29-30).

These words of Christ establish the Church’s mission. The ministry imperatives found in this passage are also critically interrelated with a ministry to the families of our churches.

The family is the source of primary relationships. It provides the social organization in which identity, values and skills are first learned. A family is the primary group in which the Christian disciple making process takes place. Parents are God’s primary agents for discipling children. Husband and wife are united by God to encourage each other in spiritual growth: Through family relationships God wants to bring the Gospel to those who are not yet believers. It only makes sense that the Church ally itself with the family for disciple making. For those without viable Christian families, new “family” structures may have to be built within God’s family, the church.

The importance of the family to the Church is much more than we may realize; and the present attack upon the integrity of the family may well be the most effective attack of the enemy upon the Church. When the Church strengthens its families, it allies itself with its families in such a way so as to effectively fulfill its own purpose for being, the fulfillment of the Great Commission.

### *B. The Goal for Family Ministry*

Philippians 1:9-11, “This is my prayer: that your love may abound more and more in knowledge and depth of insight, so that you may be able to discern what is best and may be pure and blameless until the day of Christ, filled with the fruit of righteousness that comes through Jesus Christ—to the glory and praise of God.”

### *C. General Objectives for a Christian Family Ministry*

1. Assist family members to grow in their faith in Christ and the certainty of their salvation.
2. Bring families and their individual members into greater contact with the maturing and healing influences of the Word of God.
3. Encourage families by showing them how to live their faith more fully in the home, church, and community.
4. Assist family members with their understanding and commitment to their important role in God’s plan for home, church and world.

#### *D. Specific Objectives for Christian Family Ministry*

Several of the following objective's have been adapted or taken from the book by Charles Sell, Family Minister (Zondervan Corporation, 1981).

#### Adults

- That husbands and wives be able to explain and learn to apply in their lives God's unconditional, forgiving love as it is revealed in the Gospel of Jesus Christ.
- That husbands and wives, motivated by the Holy Spirit's working through the Gospel, model the unconditional, forgiving love of the heavenly Father in family relationships.
- That husbands and wives be able to explain and properly apply Law and Gospel in family relationships.
- That husbands and wives be able to explain and learn to apply in their lives the Scriptural concepts of marriage, family, love, sex, roles and sanctified Christian living.
- That parents possess skills and information in regard to Christian discipling: teaching, disciplining and providing Christian values training for children.
- That adults be able to discern between Scriptural and unscriptural family-life resources.
- That adults possess and improve their skills of Christian witnessing, problem solving, flexibility, communication, contentment, commitment, conflict management and praying for and with others.
- That adults be able to state and practice principles related to emotional, spiritual, and mental health.
- That singles, single parents, the widowed and the divorced be able to explain Scriptural concepts related to their situations.
- That parents be able to discuss ways to relate to their youth and explain the characteristics of youth.
- That adults be able to apply Scriptural principles when handling special family problems and crises.

#### Youth

- That young people be able to explain and apply in their lives God's unconditional, forgiving love as it is revealed in the Gospel of Jesus Christ.
- That young people, motivated by the Holy Spirit working through the Gospel, imitate the unconditional love of the heavenly Father in family relations.
- That young people be able to explain the Scriptural concepts of marriage, family, love, sex, roles and sanctified Christian living for the family.
- That youth possess some elementary skills in Christian problem solving, flexibility, communication, contentment, conflict management and praying for and with others.
- That young people be able to explain and apply to their lives Scriptural values, goals and information related to friendship, dating, engagement and mate selection.
- That youth be able to discuss adolescent experiences and be given ways to relate properly to parents during adolescence.

#### Children

- That children be able to explain and apply in their lives God's unconditional, forgiving love as it is revealed in the Gospel of Jesus Christ.
- That children, motivated by the Holy Spirit working through the Gospel, imitate the unconditional love of the heavenly Father in family relations.
- That children be able to state and apply to their lives Scriptural principles related to family, sex and marriage, and their roles in the Christian family.
- That children begin to develop skills of Christian problem solving, flexibility, communication, contentment, commitment, praying with others and conflict management.

## Adults, Youth, and Children

- That all demonstrate an appreciation for the work of the Trinity on behalf of the family in lives of worship.
- That all grow in their faith through daily contact with God's Word,
- That all accept their roles in life.
- That all demonstrate an appreciation of family life and the Scriptural principles related to family living through daily obedience and service to God.
- That each family member and single person have regular intergenerational learning and worship experiences, both formal and informal.
- That in particular, each single person, single parent, and child of a single parent, periodically experience intergenerational Christian fellowship.

### *E. Principles of Family, Ministry*

The visible church of Christ on this earth is faced with an enormous task. Evangelism, Christian education, worship, missions, Bible study, sharing and serving, counseling, and administrative matters make many demands on Christians who are intent upon faithful service to the Lord. Some are fearful that family life ministry could make additional demands upon church leaders and modify established programs to such an extent that it would dwarf the outreach of the church.

Some critics of the family ministry concept have contended that this is a “new idolatry.” Hyperfamilism—a virtual idolatry of the home—Is always a danger. Caution should keep us from permitting family ministry to jeopardize the church's larger task of evangelism. There are basic principles which should guide the church's family-life ministry.

1. We need to recognize the importance of the family in God's purpose and our mission. God's Word emphasizes the importance of family. We simply act on the promptings of Scripture.
2. The spiritual growth of individuals or of a family rests upon the Word of God. Family ministry programs should provide spiritual nurture and be preventative in nature. Christian support and healing are an integral part of the healthy family.
3. The church and the home should not be in conflict. If the church's schedule or approach does harm to family life, it should be changed because both family and church have Scriptural mandates. In turn, a family ministry emphasis should not be at the expense of outreach or nurturing programs of the church. Keep in mind that the spiritual wellness and commitment of a congregation of believers is interrelated with the spiritual well-being of the family. If we are too busy to minister to the family, we are too busy.
4. Family life concepts are best communicated by the way family life is fostered and valued in the church setting. People can train for Christian family life in a church setting that is family-like (ie. relationship building, caring, loving). The early New Testament “house church” nurtured in a “family” setting. The church in essence is a “family of families.”
5. Family ministry isn't a “program.” It is a ministry to utilize programs. It must be considered an ongoing ministry of the church.
6. Family life education can be built into existing programs (Bible class curriculum, Lutheran Elementary School curriculum, Sunday services, organizations for men and women, youth, couples or school parents).

7. Christian education should be carried out in home and church with an integrated plan and program. A coordinated Christian education curriculum for both adults and children can be developed. A modification of the traditional “agency” approach to Christian education for adults and children would shift emphasis to a home-centered approach.

Family ministry has two mayor dimensions. Christian education *of* the home and Christian education *in* the home. Our major task is not to choose between the church and the home as agents of nurture, but to integrate their efforts.

8. Family life education should be seen as a means to evangelize non-Christian parents and children.

9. Do not neglect the many church members who are not living in a nuclear-family household. Atypical households, such as single parents and childless couples, often feel isolated and forgotten by the church.

10. A total family ministry should provide for intergenerational interaction. Special activities should be scheduled throughout the year which celebrate family (singleness, grandparents, motherhood, etc.).

11. Labeling and compartmentalizing individuals may be counterproductive to a congregation’s purpose. The differences in the ages and life-stages of the family can be addressed in components of an over-arching, wholistic approach to the family. (For example: Newly Married, New Parents, Having Young Children, The First Teenager, The Empty Nest, Single Parenting)

12. The majority of family life materials are written from a topical point of view. It is important to note that people change throughout the human life cycle. To teach without reference to these differences, will make the instruction less effective. (For example, the sexual needs of a couple will not be identical throughout the various stages of life. Nor will communication during the empty nest years be identical to what occurs during the time the first teenager grows up in the home.)

13. Called workers and lay people can be enlisted for the various phases of family life ministry (leadership, teaching, training, networking, and support). Utilizing the spiritual gifts of lay people should be given primary consideration.

14. Programs should be initiated on a voluntary basis. It would be a mistake to plan family ministry with the short-term goal of total participation. An ultimate or ideal goal for the future would be full voluntary involvement.

15. In today’s society fathers need instruction concerning their God-mandated role in the Christian family. Both parents need encouraging and admonishing as to their spiritual role with children.

Programs which minister to youth should communicate that the parent is responsible for the child’s nurture (Dt. 6, Eph. 6). Leaders must have this principle clearly in mind and strive for maximum parental involvement in the Christian education process.

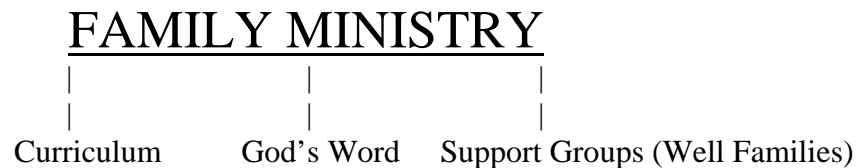
16. The church’s mission of nurturing disciples to maturity should be related to family life (2 Peter 1:1-9). Truth must be applied to contemporary life, including family situations. (Drug and Alcohol Abuse, Satanism, Abuse and Stress in the Family, AIDS, Financial Planning, etc.) This



is not a social Gospel, but a ministry of the Word to the believers where they are most vulnerable in today's society.

17. Christian family ministry must impress upon men, women, and children, the need to fall on their faces before the Lord, repenting of their sins and asking for forgiveness and renewal. Sanctified family life is a fruit of such renewed and growing faith. Growth in Christian family living is centered on the saving grace of God which renews hearts and motivates scripture-led lives. Beware of Reformed materials which tend to stress law-based living for the here and now benefits.

#### IV. A Model for Family Ministry



#### V. Concluding Thoughts

The swing toward a family life approach to ministry by the church is essential as well as encouraging. But approaching this area of ministry takes commitment to God's power that "apart from (me) Him you can do nothing" (John 15:5). Bold faith will need to guide us through our ministry. We realize the Lord has given us a special task: to make disciples so that they in turn, may make disciples of others.

As noted earlier, Satan is effectively attacking and destroying the church by subverting family life. The Christian church has felt this debilitating challenge. It's time we rise up to fight the attacks of Satan and the world; to rebuild the walls. The weaponry is at our disposal.

Recall how David made his claim of confidence when he "faced Goliath. "You come against me with sword and spear and javelin, but I come against you in the name of the LOU Almighty" (I Samuel 17:45). David's trust did not exclude wisdom and skill. He rejected Soul's armor, not to demonstrate faith, but because he had never used it before. David took the best he had, but his trust remained in the Lord.

It is important to underscore that programs and methodologies are not to be trusted on their merits alone. Larry Richards warns against "a plastic packaging of highly promoted curriculum which never touch the real needs." Programs will need to be proposed and carried out with reliance on our Redeemer and Savior, Jesus Christ. He is the One who is glorified. He is the One who promises to send His Holy Spirit to make things happen by His power. The pastor/teacher will apply the Word of God faithfully and lovingly; the results are in the hands of the Lord.

May we never lose sight of the Lord's goal for our life, and may His Word be our ever-present guide for "teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness so that the man (families) of God may be thoroughly equipped for every good work" (2 Timothy 3:16, 17). May it be said of our people as Paul said of his dearly beloved Philippians, "This is my prayer: that your love may abound more and more in knowledge and depth of insight, so that you may discern what is best and may be pure and blameless until the day of Christ, filled with the fruit of righteousness that comes through Jesus Christ—to the glory and praise of God" (Philippians 1: 9-11).

## Family Ministry Issues

**Instructions:** If you disagree, explain why you disagree. If you agree with the proposition, consider specific ways to put the matter into practice. The questions that accompany each statement are intended to help, you focus on the issues involved.

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### A. Family Ministry Defined

For strategic planning purposes family ministry might be described as a ministry of the Word to two or more people bonded together by marriage or parenthood. At the heart of this definition is the strong implication that such a ministry must have its greatest impact upon the hearts and minds of people. Thus, at least in one sense, it might be suggested that the people most deserving of the title “family minister” are family leaders (usually parents).

- Where do people who live alone fit into family ministry?
  - Our approach to family ministry programs has traditionally been to expect people ‘to come to us: How do we bring family ministry to those who seem to need it the most?
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### B. Pre-eminence of the Word

The pre-eminence of God’s Word and Jesus Christ as personal Savior must be established as the source of Truth over and against the theories of humanistic psychology and its gurus as the guiding Light for Christian families.

- What role should psychology play in family ministry?
  - What should be our position concerning family life materials which are produced by others?
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### C. The Family Altar

The goal of family ministry is on-going spiritual growth within Christian families through daily contact with the Word, and increased corporate prayer and worship opportunities in the home. To this end family ministry programs will need to help family leaders become more comfortable at handling God’s Word.

- What kind of worship opportunities might be appropriate to the home setting?
  - How can we help family leaders become more comfortable with the Word?
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### D. Proactive/Reactive Ministry

Family ministry is ministry of two kinds: a first kind, proactive, is a ministry directed to families that are spiritually healthy having as its goal ongoing spiritual growth; a second kind, reactive, is a ministry of compassion designed to help troubled families overcome obstacles that stand in the way of spiritual growth. Each of the ministries requires a different strategy.

- What fundamental strategy drives a proactive ministry?

- What fundamental strategy drives a reactive ministry?

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### E. Support Groups and Networking

Leadership skills and attitudes among the laity at the local congregational level will need to be developed to maintain an ongoing program of support groups and networks within the congregation for ministry to people with special needs or interests.

- How can we help local congregations “own” the concept of family ministry?

- What kinds of support group and network programs can our laity be expected to lead, and what kinds of programs need to be left to the called workers?

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### F. Groupings

As one of the keys to developing the concept of family ministry, the church can become more effective by:

1) creating family ministry programs that facilitate unity whenever possible; and,

2) whenever that is not possible, as a secondary, alternative, employ the theories of small group dynamics in family ministry programs.

- How has the church traditionally grouped people when developing plans to minister to families?

- How can the church become a facilitator of family unity?

- Why are small groups preferred over large groups in family ministry programs?

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### G. Ministry Roles

The church should follow wise stewardship principles and the model established in Acts 6:1-7 by evaluating its family ministry needs to determine if it is necessary to create new leadership roles in the public ministry. Prudence ought to dictate that planning for such new roles has provided:

1) clear focus for the new role; and,

2) adequate training.

- What are the advantages and disadvantages of called positions like that of “Minister of Family Growth?”

- How can we expect that pastors and teachers become more involved in family ministry while still maintaining good stewardship of their time?

- What role should the nurturing agencies of the church assume in the matter of family ministry?

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## H. Scheduling

Organizations and regularly scheduled activities can be used to facilitate family ministry for congregations which are plagued with scheduling problems and manpower shortages.

- Self-study is a healthy activity for congregations to pursue. Are there activities in a congregation's life which could be altered or abolished?
- How do Lutheran Elementary Schools contribute to the demise of family life?

## Resources

The number of resources which accurately reflect the truths of Scripture are somewhat limited.

### 1. Premarriage / Marriage Enrichment

- "Before You Say 'I Do'" – A premarriage counseling workbook published by Harvest House Publishers, available from Baker Publishing House, 2768 East Paris SE, Grand Rapids, MI 46546, Telephone: 616-957-3110. Price: \$5.95.
- "Marriage Enrichment File Series" – Eight-part video series published by Sweet Publishing, may be rented from Northwestern Publishing House.
- "Keeping a Good Thing Going" – Marriage enrichment workbook published by Concordia Publishing House. Price: \$3.50.
- "More of a Good Thing" – Marriage enrichment workbook published by Concordia Publishing House. Price: \$3.50
- "After You Say 'I Do'" – Marriage enrichment workbook published by Harvest House Publishers, available from Baker Publishing House, 2768 East Paris SE, Grand Rapids, MI 46546, Telephone: 616-957-3110. Price: \$5.95.
- "Christian Family Communication" – A six-session video based program from Concordia Publishing House which is designed to address different aspects of family communication. Price: \$69.96

### 2. Christian Parenting

- "Preparing for Parenthood" – A workbook for couples who are about to become parents. Published by Regal Books, also available from Baker Publishing House, 2768 East Paris SE, Grand Rapids, MI 46546, Telephone: 616-957-3110. Price: \$5.95.
- "Family Life Under Christ" – A Bible study series produced by Northwestern Publishing House. Price: \$2.50
- "Growing a Family Right From the Start" – A seven week course for the parents of newborn children, designed to lay the foundation for Christian growth in the home. The material may be ordered from Concordia Publishing House. Price: \$39.95.
- "The Family of God" – Ten-part video series published by Northwestern Publishing House. Price: \$39.95/video.
- "Parents Touched by the Word" – Three-level parenting workbook published by Kremer Publications, Inc., 7203 West Center Street, Milwaukee, WI, 53210-1125, Telephone: 414-257-1998/ Price: Leader's Guide, \$4.50; Workbook, \$3.50.
- "Living in Grace" – Ten-part filmstrip series published by Wisconsin Lutheran Child and Family Services. May be purchased direction from WLCFS for \$225/kit.
- "Christian Parent Series" – Eleven topical family-life workbooks published by Concordia Publishing House. Price: \$2.85/booklet.

- “Learning about Sex: A Series for the Christian Family” -- The six components of this video program are a recent Concordia Publishing House production, designed to involve the parents in this important family matter. Price: \$74.75, Complete Set; \$6.95, Parents’ Guide.
- “Changes and Choices” – A four part program published by Concordia Publishing House for junior high students. The video based program is designed to teach youth to treasure God’s gift of sexuality. Price: \$69.95.

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