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Plenary Series Continental Congress on the Family

The Formerly Married

The Church's New Frontier

by **Britton Wood**



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CONGRESS ON
THE FAMILY**

ST. LOUIS '75

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The people of God are on the edge of one of the greatest adventures the church has ever known. We are beginning to see all persons—particularly the divorced, widowed, and separated adults—in our midst. Ministry with and to them is the church's new frontier.

These formerly married persons represent a segment of adult society that has, up to now, been virtually ignored by churches. We have entered into a new era with the

“The vision of the church today needs to be enlarged to include the single adult.”

widowed and the divorced—remaining single as a viable life style option. It's okay to be a single adult today.

The church has in the main been composed of married adults since the first century. Not until the 1960's have we been forced to accept the reality of an increasing number of single persons—especially those who were formerly married.

The vision of the church today

needs to be enlarged to include the single adult. We need to see the church as two thirds two adult family units (married adults) and one third one adult family units (single adults) because one out of three adults in our society is single.

Other than single persons who have never married because of choice or lack of choice, persons are single due to death of spouse (widowhood), death of a marriage relationship (divorce), or a dying marriage (separation).

Difficulties in Ministering

The local congregation of believers often finds it difficult to minister to formerly married adults for several reasons.

1. **The formerly married tend to blame God for their present marital status.** This feeling of “God doing me in” comes from an inaccurate understanding of prayer, of God's will, and an unwillingness to accept responsibility for all that occurs in one's life. It is common to want to blame someone else for the things that are not working right in our lives.

2. **The divorced adult feels guilty because the official word from the church regarding divorce is “thou shalt not.”** If divorced persons feel this guilt much at all, a sense of alienation and utter failure in relation to the church permeates their lives. Frequently I have talked



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with divorced persons about becoming involved or visiting the single adult groups of Park Cities Baptist Church, and they have been hesitant to come until I say that we do not hang imaginary signs on them in large letters that say “Divorced” nor do we ask them for their “reason for being single.” Our concern is that the divorced person, or any single for that matter, be accepted as he or she comes. We want broken lives to be healed and to become more fully the lives God through Christ wants them to become. We must practice “forgiving one another...even as Christ has forgiven us” (Eph. 4:32). The issue is not whether persons should or should not divorce. God's intention in marriage is consistent. The fact is that people are divorced and will continue to divorce. Our concern as the church must be how to minister to these broken lives.

3. **The formerly married usually feel “out of place” in most churches because adequate programming has not developed to meet their needs.** Although changes are occurring rapidly, many churches are programmed only to meet the needs of the two-adult family units (married adults). Many married persons lack the sensitivity or the awareness to understand that a ministry which is

healthy for married persons may not be equally healthy for single adults. Single adults and married adults have similar needs, but their needs are unique and must be cared for in different ways.

4. The formerly married resent the attitude of many married adults that reflects a superior-inferior kind of relating. Many persons who are married feel that the most important way to help the single person is to find a suitable marital partner. They find it inconceivable that some single adults choose to be single. Persons in two adult family units often feel that the single adult has not "arrived" until he is married or to put it another way "exactly like us married folk." Some married adults find the single adult life style threatening to the married adult life style because of the "everyone should want to get married" attitude held by married adults.

5. Church leadership is often uncomfortable with the responsibility of styling a program that meets the needs of single adults. Most churches are inadequately staffed even to meet the needs of two adult families. It is not surprising that they are reluctant to jump into a whole new arena of ministry. But I am happy to observe a growing awareness and willingness on the part of many

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pastors and religious educators to expand the ministry of the local congregation to include the single adults.

Concerns of Formerly Married

The concerns of the formerly married are varied and vast. They cannot all be adequately developed at this point, but calling attention to some of them will challenge many in church leadership to explore more fully these concerns with their local communities of believers.

The concerns of the widowed adults are somewhat different from the divorced adult. For both the divorced and the widowed the death of the relationship is accompanied by the process of coping and understanding. Both need time to adjust to the death of the relationship, but the widowed have more help from society and do not have to cope with the presence of an ex-spouse.

The process of divorce begins in a marriage when there is no longer trust and when a growing isolation is allowed to grow into resentment and hate. The process of divorce continues with a growing separateness which may or may not include physical separation. At this point the erosion of the marriage begins to show itself to friends and family members. Divorce becomes a final reality through the legal process,

but this may occur long before it is emotionally accepted as reality by the divorced individual.

The death of spouse can come with no warning at all and leave the widowed in a state of shock. The coping process for the widowed is generally slow and takes place after the death of spouse. If the death process is not immediate, the widowed person has time to lower

"The process of divorce begins in a marriage when there is no longer trust and when a growing isolation is allowed to grow into resentment and hate."

the guilt level by expressing love and care during the dying process.

The concerns of the widowed and the divorced adult are similar in several ways.

1. Coping with being alone Family oriented society has provided little help for the single adult. In many cases we have added dimensions of isolation from the two adult family units by having

apartments for singles only, singles bars, singles clubs and very few organizations which bring singles and married adults together in our social milieu. Aloneness is unique to single adults whereas loneliness is not. Another way of stating "single adults" could be "alone adults." It is often difficult to cope with being alone because of the pressure to marry as the fulfillment in life's option. Creative efforts

"When a person does not like or accept oneself, it is seldom possible to relate well to others."

need to be made for the single adult to live alone well.

2. Caring for self When one's marital status is changed from married to "widowed" or "divorced," a great loss of identity often follows. The self confidence of the formerly married is often very low due to failure in marriage or rejection in death. Many times single adults attempt to overcome low self esteem with excessive activity or by becoming selfish and intolerant of persons and situations

which do not please them, or by withdrawing from other persons by staying at home. When a person does not like or accept oneself, it is seldom possible to relate well to others. Unfortunately, the single person who does not like himself tries various solutions which are unhealthy such as liquor, drugs, or suicide. If God through Christ can express his acceptance of us in that "while we were yet sinners Christ died for us," could we not at least begin to accept who we are, too?

3. Choosing a direction in life

Although the choices in life have already been formed to some degree by the time a person is adult, the "suddenly" single person has to begin a new direction as to life style, vocation, or meaning in life. Women who were married and not working outside the home, must begin to function adequately in a vocation. Often the formerly married woman is not equipped professionally because of interest, children, or putting her husband through school. One difficult aspect of choosing a direction in life is that many formerly married persons thought they had already made that choice. Now that they are single again they dislike having to start all over.

4. Companionship with other single adults Our society has up to this point provided very few outlets



"The church can provide opportunities for single adults to meet in a non-threatening environment."

for single adult peer group friendships that are healthy. As a result, many men and women become so desperate for companionship that they will join a singles club for \$250.00 to \$500.00 just to be "included" in some social events. Bar hopping becomes a method for meeting potential companions. Panic seems to overcome Christian teachings when one "must" meet someone whatever the consequences are. I have yet to meet an engaged couple who established their relationship at a bar. The church can provide one of the few opportunities for single adults to meet in a non-threatening environment. At Park Cities Baptist Church single adults are encouraged to postpone dating each other while in the group situation. Friendships are developed with all persons present and not developed on the basis of those who seem interesting enough to date. One result of this approach is the great sense of family and caring for and about one another. The single adults of Park Cities Baptist Church have many good friends with whom they can share joys and sorrows because they know they care what happens in each life. Good marriages do occur out of good friendships. In one single adult department alone we had 25 persons who married in a six week

period, 22 of whom met in the department. When single adults have opportunity to be friends, they are free to be themselves. When they are free to be themselves, their true attractiveness and uniqueness comes out. A friend of mine has said that we need to become aware of who we are and let people know us that way, then they can forgive us for what we are not.

5. Concern for the children

Many formerly married persons are parents. The one parent family has many adjustments to make and many pressures from the two parent families as to the care of their children. At times these children tend to be excused when there is a discipline by saying "what can you expect, her parents are divorced." Unfortunately, we put undue pressure on one parent families and far too little on two parent families. Single parents often indicate to me that they are tired of parenting. They are exhausted from the 24-hour a day parent pressure with no help from the ex-spouse. My contention is that if the church can help the parent like himself, encourage him to be involved in the single adult ministry where understanding friends are, and give God a chance to work in the single adult's life, then parenting can be bearable and

"We need to become aware of who we are and let people know us that way, then they can forgive us for what we are not."

fun. The church can assist greatly by having two parent families available on various occasions for baby-sitting purposes so the single parent can go on a retreat or a singles conference. This kind of caring contribution helps the single adults to know that the whole church cares.

The religious education program of the church needs to educate all workers to be sensitive to the needs of children of single parents and still not treat the children different from children of two adult family units. Special seminars or sharing groups for single parents can be most helpful in the cope ability of parents.

6. Commitment to Christ Many problems occur in all lives if commitment to God in Christ is omitted. Being a formerly married person with too much advice at times and not enough at other times can blur the issues quite thoroughly. A consistent prayer life that seeks God's guidance is difficult for the two adult families where each partner can encourage the other, but when one is alone the difficulty is greater. The absence of a caring person to encourage formerly marrieds underscores the importance of the Christian community of single adults. Much encouragement for personal Christian living can take place in a single adult group.

One's commitment to Christ can make the difference for single adults as they attempt to face realistically all areas of their lives.

Challenge of New Frontier

The formerly married are definitely the challenge of the new frontier for the church today. It is

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imperative that church leadership consider wisely the approaches of ministry with single persons. Single adults will help the church become more dynamic than it has been in the past because a new awareness of persons, a new willingness to be honest in relationships, and a forgiving spirit among believers who

are becoming more vulnerable.

Some of the challenges for the church to consider in response to the formerly married are highly significant.

1. The church must provide channels of healthy relationships for young single persons (18-25). Young adults need encouragement to become productive persons who know who they are and postpone marriage until they have been on

“Being a formerly married person with too much advice at times and not enough at other times can blur the issues.”

their own for a few years. Recent research indicates that the best time to marry is age 27-31 for men and age 25 for women (The Family Coordinator, July, 1974, p. 240). The highest divorce rate (50%) comes from teenage marriages and the lowest divorce rate (1 in 5) is in marriages that begin after age 25.

Many churches have activities and leadership training for high school and college aged youth but

few care for the single person after college days. It is generally assumed that by age 22 or so most single adults will marry. In Park Cities Baptist Church are approximately 450 single adults between the ages of 21-30 many of whom are not yet ready to get married. These persons are not in a limbo period of their lives. They need opportunities to be the church and to have valid ministries that form an accepting community for singles. The person who is newly single due to death or divorce and the new single in town need a community of singles with whom to relate. We as the church have worked diligently to care for married adults. Let us care equally for our single adults.

2. The church must re-consider its attitude to divorced persons. We need healthier ways to care for persons going through divorce. I find I can no longer be silent when I learn that a friend is having marital problems or is in the process of divorce. I am not interested in the details of the divorce, but I am interested in the person. I can't change anything that has happened, but I can care in the midst of the changes that are occurring. As one divorced friend said, "What really matters is what happens to me."

How can we as the church assist divorced persons to have a

healthier transition from married to single life with less trauma and loss of identity? The church can respond well to the widowed adult at the time of death of spouse but says or does little with and for the divorced person. The divorced person is in need of community and persons who care. A support group in the church for caring, listening and sharing of insights regarding divorce would be most helpful.

3. The church must assist all formerly married persons with friendships which can give insight regarding finances, all kinds of decision making, vocational guidance, the process of grief, and spiritual nurturance in the midst of suffering. Park Cities Baptist Church is an employment information service for the single adults who are in between jobs and to counsel those who feel they need to change professions. Many times getting the "right" vocational position helps one relate to God better.

4. The church must recognize that the presently married can learn much from the formerly married that will enrich their marriages. Every marriage relationship is vulnerable and can potentially end in divorce. With divorce as the one alternative least preferred for any marriage, the presently married should renew and update

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their marriage covenants. Church life must include some marital growth groups and other preventive maintenance for presently married adults. Let the presently married become more honest about life as married adults so the non-married can become aware that conflicts exist in marriage and can be worked through.

Married adults need some general advice as to what to do when a friend is having marital problems. Also, they need some specific advice as to the steps to take, books to read, or suggestions for marriage counselors.

5. The church must encourage presently married persons to accept the responsibility for being the unique couple they are with all their good points and imperfections. This will release them from having to be an example couple for all to follow. We need many models as to how couples are in marriage rather than some unreal examples which are not authentic because the people are not free to be themselves. A good example of what I mean is the response I received from a couple who were asked to teach in one of the Park Cities Baptist Church single adult departments. Both husband and wife felt they were still working on their relationship with each other and their relationship



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with God. I told them that I preferred persons who were still concerned about relationships and who didn't have everything worked out already. Those who have it all worked out are not learners. Single adults need learners or disciples to lead them.

6. The church must recognize that all single adults are not the same or at the same level of personal and spiritual development. It is impossible to minister to single adults with only one approach. I find that single adults tend to be in one of three developmental stages: (1) Low self-esteem, or an unhealthy concern for self, (2) Healthy self-esteem and (3) Healthy concern for others. We try to be sensitive in curriculum planning to include all three stages so as to meet the needs of all the single adults of Park Cities Baptist Church.

We need to allow for the fact that some single adults participate in single adult programs for reasons other than spiritual development. Some of our single adults have been part of the single adult game night crowd for a long time before eventually attending Sunday School or a retreat. In time some of these persons have professed Christ and become active participants in our church.

7. The church must recognize

that single adults who do participate in the life of the church are to be commended for their efforts. Unlike married adults, single adults need quite a lot of determination and discipline to be involved in the church. They are moving against the trend being set by other single adults.

Perhaps they can be encouraged by giving them more opportunities

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of responsibility in the life of the church. Single adults are actively involved in all aspects of church leadership and church committees at Park Cities Baptist Church. They are very responsible and provide healthy ideas for our church as a whole to consider.

8. The church must recognize the importance of family in the lives of single adults. Many for-

merly married persons have become severed from family relationships and need a warm, accepting, caring family of single adults who understand what they have been through. The acceptance of single adults from the two adult family units can assist in the healing process.

Help on the Frontier

So much more could be said about the formerly married being the church's new frontier. Let us begin to express the belief that the church is the best avenue of help and health for the single person, especially the formerly married.

The church is the only institution that is styled to include all persons regardless of where they are at any point in their lives. It is the character of the church to be forgiving and personal. The nature of the church is to provide spiritual growth for persons of all ages and that persons of all ages are part of the church. Most available group situations are peer-group oriented. The church provides peer group activities but is also cross-peer group oriented.

The formerly married are fighting for their lives to live as healthy, growing persons. With or without the help of the church, they will attempt to have their needs filled. The people of God must not let this challenge be

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assumed by lesser lights in our world.

Misty Stewart, one of the single adults of Park Cities Baptist Church, expresses very well the feeling many formerly married persons have when they begin to consider the Christian alternative for their lives. It reads:

It Starts With A Breeze

I'm on the way
to an Experience

I'm afraid
I'm worried
I might fail.

Reach out I'm told
Don't hold back

For you might really
Be very much like a kite
Never put up in the wind.

How high will it fly
No one knows

And they won't till it's
Put to the test.

It starts with but a breeze
Then there's that tug
on the string.

It's on the way to an
Experience

It's afraid
It's worried it might not fly

But if not for the first breeze
That starts it to rise

It would be bound to the Earth,
Only to die

Never to know
How high it could fly.

Go on to the
Experience

Be afraid
Be worried
It's possible you might fail.

But reach out like the kite—
What could happen?

Well you might enjoy
The flight.

May we be as wise as serpents and as innocent as doves as we seek to be effective on the new frontier with single adults in churches. I can tell you, I'm really enjoying the flight.

The opinions expressed in this book are those of the author and not necessarily those of the Continental Congress on the Family.

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ST. LOUIS '75

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Christian Parenthood/ in a Modern World

by **S. Bruce Narramore**



ST. LOUIS '75

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An airline pilot on a nighttime trans-continental flight spoke over the intercom saying "Ladies and gentlemen, I have some mixed news for you tonight. Some of the news is good and some is bad. First, the bad news—we are low on fuel, our instruments are out and we have lost our way. Now for the good news—I am happy to report we are making excellent time!"

I believe many modern parents share this pilot's mixed emotions. They have an ideal goal or destination for their children but they are not sure how to get there. At times they feel completely lost. In spite of poor directions, however, they know they are making excellent time. They realize that in a few short years some destination will be reached. Their children will be grown and the opportunity to make an impact on their lives will be lost forever. Looking back, many of these parents will see they needed better guidance.

Those in places of Christian leadership are in excellent positions to offer this direction. To do this, however, they must have a deep sensitivity to the problems parents face and a clear understanding of ways of helping them cope with the demanding tasks of parenthood.

What Parents Ask

As I travel around this country I find certain questions consistently

on the minds of Christian parents. Parents of rebellious later adolescents most often ask, "Where did we go wrong?" or, "Why do teenagers from 'fine Christian families' rebel?" From slightly less conflicted families I hear questions like, "How do you get a teenager to communicate?" Parents of younger children ask questions about practical daily hassles. They want to know, "How do you stop a temper tantrum?" "How do you get children out of bed and off to school each morning?" "How do you get a finicky child to eat a balanced diet?" "How do you stop children from fighting?" and "How do you get children to take out the trash or feed the dog?" I also hear a whole range of questions about behaviors that border on the pathological. Concerned parents ask "Why is my child so withdrawn and unable to communicate?" "Why does one of my children have such an uncontrollable temper?" and "Why is our teenager flunking when we know he has at least average intellectual ability?"

Four Concerns

I sense that inherent in these questions are four primary concerns. Christian parents are really asking "How can we insure our children's moral and spiritual growth?" "How can we handle daily family conflicts and frustra-

tions?" and "How can we help our children grow up to be emotionally healthy?" I believe these are important questions. The church should be able to help its members insure the future emotional and spiritual stability of their youth. It should be able to help parents cope with the frustrating daily hassles that occasionally trouble us all, but I believe one more question is basic. "Does the Bible really give a realistic set of guidelines for raising children and if so, what is it?"

The Family Fad

The past twenty years have seen great changes in the attitude of the church toward the parents in its assembly. Prior to that time practically no good books on Christian parenting were available. Sunday School curricula, while occasionally dealing with the subject, typically overlooked this crucial area of life. Parenting was thought to be a tangential concern, elective material (not really to be placed in the center of study). But with the growing influence of psychology and a national concern for the family, all of this is changing. Books on the family are consistently among the national religious bestsellers. Psychologists, educators, pastors and dozens of others have started ministering to the Christian parent.

Frankly, I view this movement

with mixed emotions. It is clearly speaking to deep and vital needs within the church today, and much of the material is helpful. Unfortunately, as is so often the case, the emphasis on the family is growing to almost fadish proportions. It seems like everyone who has had a child (and some who haven't) now

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fancies himself an expert in the field. In preparing this paper I read through several relatively recent Christian books and papers on rearing children. The lack of consensus

was amazing. One pamphlet (published in four languages) purporting to give a biblical view of discipline has this to say about physical spanking:

"My obedience to God to train my child requires that every time I ask him to do something, whatever it is, I must see that he obeys. When I

"What is really right? Who holds the correct answers? Is Christian-son right? Is Dobson right, is Gothard right? Is Hendricks right? Is Lovett right? Is Narramore right? The truth is that no one is entirely right."

*have said it once in a normal tone, if he does not obey immediately, I must take up the switch and correct him enough to hurt so he will not want it repeated."*¹

4 In contrast another Christian author writes:

"There are too many people running around with a biblical two by four who really don't know very much of what the Scriptures teach

*regarding discipline."*²

Regarding motivation one author writes:

"If I were to ask, 'Which emotion should fathers and mothers use to counter Satan's appeals?' you'd come back with the sweet reply — 'LOVE.' That sounds very nice and proper, doesn't it? Well, I'm sorry — that's NOT the emotion. We need something more powerful than parental love. There's only one emotion that is greater — FEAR. I know that startles you. But mama-love and papa-love do not have the same effect on them it used to."

*"Parents, seeking to compete with Satan, must answer with the countering emotion of fear. Fear is the one great emotion to which everyone responds. Fear alone can check the awesome forces unleashed in teens."*³

On the same topic another Christian author writes:

*"Genuine parental love, naturally demonstrated, comes nearer to being the 'cure-all' for all the problems of child care than anything else that one could possess. Your love as a parent is most important to your child at the very moment when he is least love-able."*⁴

Needless to say this kind of contradiction leaves the man on the street in a very confused position.

What is *really* right? Who holds the correct answers? Is Christianson right? Is Dobson right. is Gothard right? Is Hendricks right? Is Lovett right? Is Narramore right? The truth is that no one is entirely right. Each parent approaches the task of child rearing from the point of view of his own biases and preconceived notions. As much as I hate to admit it, this is certainly true of me. While I try to be sensitive to my own personal needs and biases I certainly cannot claim infallibility for my perspectives on the parent-child relationship. This focuses on one major problem in rising to the needs of Christian parents. We must carefully avoid taking either our own subjective experience or the subjective experience of secular psychologists and baptizing them with selected verses in order to claim the authority of God.

1. THEOLOGY OF CHILDREARING

This leads to my first specific suggestion for changing the quality of living in the Christian home: Christians desperately need a theology of child rearing. No longer can the church be satisfied with a three point theology that says "Husbands love your wives;" "Wives submit to your husbands;" and "Children obey your parents." While important, these commands contain only a very small part of the biblical view of family inter-

actions. If Christians are to put some constraints on their tendency toward subjectively derived child rearing approaches, they must arrive at a thoroughly comprehensive and biblical view of parenting. Over 5,000 references in the Bible use the words "father" and "son." On top of this, one of

"We must carefully avoid taking either our own subjective experience or the subjective experience of secular psychologists and baptizing them with selected verses in order to claim the authority of God."

the Bible's central themes is God's fatherly relationship with Israel. In the New Testament a number of passages speak of the parallels between earthly fathers and the heavenly Father. Surely all these passages must hold a rich treasure for the parent of today! But I am not aware of one truly comprehensive biblical treatise on parenting that takes most of these

Scriptures into account.

To illustrate the type of Scriptural insight I believe is available to us let me share just one example. I believe that Christian parents are to look at God's relationships to them as a model for their relationships with their own children. Passages like Hebrews 12:3-11 and Matthew

"I would suggest that the Christian parent should never punish his child. He should discipline but never punish."

7:9-11 point out this parallel. If we carefully study how God as heavenly Father relates to us as earthly children we should find some very clear principles for parent-child relationships.

Punishment vs. Discipline

For example, in God's dealings with man a clear distinction is made between punishment as a means of administering retribution for misdeeds, and discipline which is designed to promote the growth of the disciplined one. God never punishes His own children. All of His righteous demands were met by Christ's atoning death on the cross. Once a person accepts Christ as

personal Savior, he receives no more punishment. Instead, he is disciplined, chastened or corrected. This is a crucial distinction and one that I fear is often overlooked. Discipline is not a means of justice. Justice has already been satisfied. Discipline is God's way of *maturing* His children. It is instruction or training designed to correct misbehavior and develop the disciplined one. It doesn't involve justice, punishment or getting even.

Based on this theological distinction between God's discipline and His punishment, I would suggest that the Christian parent should *never* punish his child. He should discipline but never punish. The following chart summarizes some of the major distinctions.⁵ I believe an understanding of these differences is as important for the effective training of children as it is in one's own walk with our Heavenly Father.

Comprehensive Theology

This is just one example. A useful theology of parent-child relations must, due to the complexity of the task, be biblically comprehensive. It must include attention to biblical anthropology, for example, since the view of man influences the entire approach to discipline and child training. If children are basically good, a permissive or democratic approach to

child rearing may be justified. If, on the other hand, man is viewed as basically evil these approaches will not be consistent with the theology of man.

A theology of child rearing must also give attention to theology proper. Since this branch of theology deals with the nature and attributes of God it is to this study the church must turn if it intends to look at God as the model parent. Only as parents fully grasp the implications of God's character for their own lives can they then attempt to model His character in their relations with their children.

Fertile Ground

Ecclesiology is also a fertile ground for the aspiring parent. Since a major mission of the church is the edification and maturing of its members (Eph. 4:1-13) the principles of growth, relationships and change that are laid out for the church in Scripture can certainly give us much needed insights into the process of growth that our children must pass through. And what about soteriology? What effect does the fact that our children have undergone a salvation experience have on our view of them and on our discipline?

	PUNISHMENT	DISCIPLINE
PURPOSE	To inflict penalty for an offense. (II Thessalonians 1:7-9)	To train for correction and maturity (Proverbs 3:11 12)
FOCUS	Past misdeeds (Matthew 25:46)	Future correct deeds (Hebrews 12:5-10)
ATTITUDE OF THE PARENT	Anger (Isaiah 13:9-11)	Loving concern (Revelation 3:19)
RESULTING EMOTION IN THE CHILD	Fear, guilt and hostility	Security and Respect (Hebrews 9:28)



I personally believe that nearly every branch of theology holds important teaching for effective parenting. I would suggest that until many of these teachings have been studied out the church should not claim to have a truly biblical view of child rearing. It may be on the right track and may have a great deal of biblical truth. But the church will not have gone as far as it can in applying the riches of God's Word to the needs of contemporary parents.

2. TRAINED LEADERS

A second need for an effective ministry to parents is trained church leaders who understand basic principles of discipline and child rearing, who are sensitive to the feelings and needs of both parents and children and who are qualified to conduct training sessions for parents. I realize this is easier said than done, but I believe it is vitally important. Churches need men and women who have had sufficient life experience to be sensitive to the feelings of parents and their children and who are also sufficiently schooled in the biblical view of parenting that they are not driven from pillar to post by their own subjective reasoning or that of persons confronting them with problems. These people must have the maturity to hold out high goals without placing themselves

"above" other learners. They must also be able to encourage honest and open sharing rather than creating a critical environment that reinforces feelings of guilt and failure.

Needless to say, I do not see today's seminary curriculum training this sort of Christian leader.

"What in the seminary curriculum helps prospective pastors become sensitive to the feelings of a rebellious adolescent, a fearful eight year old, a stubborn 2 year old, an anxious mother or a disinterested father? Very little, I suspect. Perhaps this shouldn't be the seminary's role, but if the seminary doesn't do it, who will?"

Many divinity students do not have as much as one course on the Christian family let alone an entire

course on parent-child relationships. While I am not suggesting that every minister should be competent to lead a seminar on Christian parenting, somebody has to do it, and these people will need training.

Divorced from Issues

Can seminaries be expected to assume this responsibility? Frankly, I am not sure. I am afraid too much seminary education is divorced from real life issues. Hebrew, Greek, Theology, Church History, Homiletics and English Bible are obviously important to the training of a minister. But Jesus was "touched with the feelings of our infirmities." What in the seminary curriculum helps prospective pastors become sensitive to the feelings of a rebellious adolescent, a fearful eight year old, a stubborn 2 year old, an anxious mother or a disinterested father? Very little, I suspect. Perhaps this shouldn't be the seminary's role, but if the seminary doesn't do it, who will? Should someone set up institutes for training pastors and other leaders for parent ministries? I believe the church should. Either within the seminary or in some other setting church leaders need thorough training experiences that ground people in the biblical view of parenting *plus* help them become

sensitive to the feelings and infirmities of parent and child alike. This, of course, presupposes the personnel to train future leaders.

3. NEW MATERIALS

A third need is new material for Christian parents. Although much of value has been produced in recent years, I think that most

"The church needs material that is action centered. It needs programs, workbooks and planned activities that will help parents apply basic biblical and psychological insights to daily family problems."

would have to agree that Christian parents still do not have any clearly definitive works that lay out a complete biblical foundation for parenting and then practically apply that foundation to the myriad of problems faced by the average parent.

The church needs material that is action centered. It needs programs, workbooks and planned activities that will help parents apply basic biblical and psychological insights

to daily family problems. Simply stating the principles is not enough. The life long habit patterns of most parents rarely change with a few intellectual insights or prophetic exhortations. Instead, they change only when they have consistent support and guidance from other people.

“To tell a parent he should not correct his children in anger or attack their self-esteem is one thing. For that parent to gain sufficient insight into his own hostilities to avoid punishing instead of disciplining or to avoid demeaning his children’s sense of self-esteem is quite another.”

10 Let me share a personal perspective on this issue. I find it quite easy to go into a church or large group meeting and speak for an hour or two on parent-child relationships. I can entertain the audience. I can give new biblical

and psychological insights. And I think people generally go away feeling they have received their money’s worth! But I sometimes walk away with a certain empty feeling. I realize that when the sun comes up the next morning most people who heard my lecture won’t really be so very different in relating to their children. Oh, they may have some new insights, and they may try a couple of new “techniques.” But few really deep basic changes will have taken place. For example, to tell a parent he should not correct his children in anger or attack their self-esteem is one thing. For that parent to gain sufficient insight into his own hostilities to avoid punishing instead of disciplining or to avoid demeaning his children’s sense of self-esteem is quite another. This is certainly true in my experience with my own children.

The Scriptures make it clear that growth is a process and that we need other people to provoke it (Eph. 4:14-16). Most of us can change if we have someone who can stick with us over a period of time to allow us to express our feelings and frustrations, to help us gain a greater measure of objectivity and to gradually improve our parenting behavior. But most parents don’t have this opportunity. They attend a lecture



or read a book, and then they are on their own. This should not be. This leads to my fourth suggestion.

4. EDUCATION FOR PARENTS

Churches need to structure classes and seminars into their ongoing educational outreach. I personally believe that every church should have at least one full quarter class

“What better way to learn something of the character of God then to study the implications of God’s dealings with His children for our dealing with one’s own children?”

for parents each year. This class could be during the Sunday School hour, on Sunday evening or during the week. But it should be a vital part of the church’s Christian education program. Ideally, it should not be an elective that is offered *after* church members have taken other *basic* teachings. Instead, it should be at the very heart and core of our entire Christian education program. What an opportunity to make our theology relevant! What better way

to learn something of the character of God then to study the implications of God’s dealings with His children for our dealing with one’s own children? What greater opportunity to understand and appropriate God’s forgiveness than to think of one’s own forgiveness of his children? And what better way to see God’s loving hand of discipline than to begin to see the difference between the times a parent lovingly corrects his children for their good and the times he punishes them out of his own frustration?

Structure Needed

These classes or seminars need to be structured to maximize participation. Hearing the principles is not enough. Parents need individual or small group attention and support to apply the principles to their children in their situation. Small study groups serve as ideal vehicles for taking a theology of child rearing, communicating it through a trained leader and appropriate materials and weaving it into the fabric of daily living. These groups take important principles from the real of the abstract and put them into practice.

5. COMPREHENSIVE RESEARCH

As a psychologist I see one other basic need. This is for a *series of comprehensive research studies into the workings of the Christian home.*

By singling out certain obviously effective Christian parents and studying their relations with their children perhaps the church could gain clear insights into some of the essential ingredients for effective parenting. Do emotionally mature and spiritually committed children come from homes where the father spends a great deal of time with the children? Do they come from homes that have daily family devotions? Do they come from families that rely heavily on physical spanking? Do they come from families with good husband-wife communication? Or is the overall emotional tone of the family the most important factor?

And what is going on in the many apparently "fine Christian homes" that have produced rebellious, spiritually disinterested children? Was an unseen authoritarianism at work? Were the parents so busy in church activities the children felt neglected? Or did the children feel an excessive need to "be good" because they were held out as an exemplary Christian family? Answers to these and similar questions could be very helpful in shedding new light on effective parenting.

Some recently initiated research studies at the Rosemead Graduate School of Psychology illustrated another type of research that can

be helpful. Flick and Day⁶, for example, studied the relationship between the perceptions a group of college students had of God and of their parents. They found that college students who were

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converted prior to ten years of age had very similar God and parent concepts while students converted at 17 or older showed much less similarity.

The Image of God

In a related study Edwards⁷ found a positive relationship between the image of God a group of college students had and the quality of their spiritual experience. Taken together these two studies give a demonstration of two important principles: (1) a person's image of God is apparently a function of the way he perceives his earthly parents and (2) this image of God is related to the quality of the person's spiritual experience. The implications of this are wide ranging. If a child has unforgiving parents he is likely to see God as unforgiving. If he has perfectionistic parents he will probably have difficulty believing God is every pleased with his performance. And if he has a nagging parent he will tend to view God as being constantly "on his back." I believe confusion of God and parent is one of the major causes of spiritual rebellion among adolescents. They blame God for their parent's failings, identify God with their parents and rebel against them both. This vicious cycle can only be changed as parents give children a healthier image of what God is like through their daily relations with their children.

In another study, Foster and Edwards,⁸ found that parents from Christian homes were a more

important source of influence in the development of their children's self-esteem than non-Christian parents. Although children from Christian homes showed no higher levels of self-esteem than those

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from non-Christian homes their parents did make a greater impact (for better or worse) on their children's self-esteem! This study also raises some important

questions. Why, for example, didn't children from Christian homes evidence a higher level of self-esteem than those from non-Christian homes? And why is it that Christian parents apparently have a greater impact on their children's self-esteem than non-Christian parents? I won't venture

“The church could study the effects of the separation of missionary children from their parents. The church could study the effects of parents' personality styles on the adjustment of children. The church could study the effect of church attendance and peer influence on Christian children.”

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any answers at this point but would like to suggest the church needs to find some answers.

Scratch Surface

These studies only scratch the surface, but they do indicate the type of information that is available

if we take time to seek it out. Many more practical problems can be researched. The church could, for example, study the effects of the separation of missionary children from their parents. The church could study the effects of parents' personality styles on the adjustment of children. The church could study the effect of church attendance and peer influence on Christian children.

A final area of research could be on the effectiveness of various training programs for parents. What lasting effects come, for example, from attendance at the many types of conferences and seminars now being offered. Do family conferences really change the family? Do seminars for parents really change the parents? An evaluation of several types of training programs could tell us what type of training really works. The church may currently be wasting a lot of time in unproductive efforts. If so, it should eliminate them. On the other hand, if some programs are working, find out why and how and begin to utilize them even more productively.

On Our Way

These are just a few areas that call for the church's attention. A topic as complex as Christian parenthood really deserves much lengthier study. I do believe,

however that if the church develops a theology of child rearing, a group of trained leaders, practical new materials, structured classes and seminars and a series of comprehensive research studies the church will be well on its way to a vastly improved ministry to parents.

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The opinions expressed in this book are those of the author and not necessarily those of the Continental Congress on the Family.

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ST. LOUIS '75

*Dr. Harry N. Hollis, Jr.
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Special Moral Concerns
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of the Southern Baptist Convention.*

Many contemporary people would not feel comfortable saying a prayer of thanksgiving for sex. Some are not thankful because they are ashamed of sex. Others find sex a burdensome problem. Too seldom do people find the capacity for the authentic celebration of sex.

What People Are Missing

What people desperately need today is the Christian good news about sex. Caught up in the sexual confusion of our culture, they need

the liberating good news about sex that can be found in the Christian gospel.

Look at the people around us. Here is the jaded businessman who has tried everything so often that he enjoys nothing. He needs the good news about sex. The bored housewife contemplating adultery because she is caught up in a vicious cycle of dishes and diapers needs the good news about sex. The teen-ager struggling with that

perennial problem of "to bed or not to bed" needs the good news about sex. The counselor who helps people all day long to try to solve their sexual problems, while harboring himself the secret that he cannot solve his own problems, needs the good news about sex.

The good news about sex is needed by the adolescent anxious about masturbation. The good news about sex is needed by the married couple who cannot enjoy inter-

course because of their puritanical upbringing. By the middle-aged man who turns to pornography as a way to try to recapture his fleeing manhood. By the wife who has an uneasy conscience because she uses her body to manipulate her husband. By the homosexual who wonders if anyone will help him or treat him as a person.

The Christian good news about sex is needed by all people. It is not that society has tried a Christian

Lord, it's hard to know what sex really is—
Is it some demon put here to torment me?
Or some delicious seducer from reality?
It is neither of these, Lord.

THANK GOD FOR SEX

I know what sex is—
It is body and spirit,
It is passion and tenderness,
It is strong embrace and gentle hand-holding,
It is open nakedness and hidden mystery,
It is joyful tears on honeymoon faces, and
It is tears on wrinkled faces at a golden wedding anniversary.

Sex is a quiet look across the room,
a love note on a pillow,
a rose laid on a breakfast plate,
laughter in the night.

Sex is life—not all of life
but wrapped up in the meaning of life.

Sex is your good gift, O God,
To enrich life,
To continue the race,
To communicate,
To show me who I am,
To reveal my mate,
To cleanse through "one flesh."

Lord, some people say sex and religion don't mix;
But your Word says sex is good.
Help me to keep it good in my life.
Help me to be open about sex
And still protect its mystery.
Help me to see that sex
Is neither demon nor deity.
Help me not to climb into a fantasy world
Of imaginary sexual partners;
Keep me in the real world
To love the people you have created.

Teach me that my soul does not have to frown at sex
for me to be a Christian.
It's hard for many people to say, "Thank God for sex!"
Because for them sex is more a problem than a gift.
They need to know that sex and gospel
Can be linked together again.
They need to hear the good news about sex.
Show me how I can help them.

Thank you, Lord, for making me a sexual being.
Thank you for showing me how to treat others
with trust and love.

Thank you for letting me talk to you about sex.
Thank you that I feel free to say:
"Thank God for sex!"¹

approach and has failed; our society has not tried a Christian sex ethic at all. The desperate jadedness of our times demands the remedy of the Gospel. This paper will examine an outline of a Christian approach to sexual understanding and behavior. The word "sex" will be used to refer to everything about a person that has to do with being a male or female.

A MODEL

Here is one approach to follow in communicating the Christian good news about sex. The basic idea of this model is that God has acted

“One implication of creation is that the sexuality of our bodies is a good part of God’s creation. Sex, which is wrapped up with the total human personality, is good. Sex is not evil.”

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and is acting in the world as Creator, Judge, and Redeemer; and he calls us to respond with celebration, self-discipline, and love.

The late theologian, H. Richard Niebuhr, developed this model in his writings; but he never published an extensive treatment of it in relation to sexual behavior. This paper is an attempt to add to what

others have done in applying this model to sex.²

The treatment of God’s actions as related to creation, judgment, and redemption will deal with the theological understanding of sex. The overview of human response to God’s activity will deal with the ethical dimension of sexual behavior.

What is said here will be developed only with the largest brush strokes. More detailed treatment has been given elsewhere.³ This discussion makes no claim to be *the* Christian approach; rather, it is a Christian approach which demonstrates how Christians can discuss sex in ways that will be helpful to people inside and outside the Christian community.

CREATION AND SEX

The Bible documents God’s activity in the world as Creator (Gen. 1:1; John 1:1-3; Col. 1:15-16). Out of nothing (*creatio ex nihilo*) God created everything. One implication of creation is that the sexuality of our bodies is a good part of God’s creation. Sex, which is wrapped up with the total human personality, is good. Sex is not evil; nor is it neutral depending on how it is expressed. Sex is good, because it is a gift of God. The only “not good” uttered by God during creation concerned the fact that man was alone (Gen. 2:18). God remedied this by making a female.

The unity of personhood is another implication of God’s creative ability. This unitary view of people has important meaning

for sex. Because we are psycho-physical persons, sex is part of our total personalities. We do not have sex; we are sexual beings. Thus, a solely physical view of sex is contrary to biblical teachings. The body and soul are knit together in such a way that one is affected by the other. This unity of personhood stands against casual intercourse because the attempt to limit intercourse to physical involvement and pleasure violates the biblical teachings about the nature of human beings.

No Accident

The creation of human beings as male and female was no accident, but the conscious intention of the Creator. God planned the sexes (Gen. 1:27; Gen. 2:21-22). This reality points to the relational aspects of sex. It also means that the idea that sexual equality requires sexual identity is contrary to the biblical witness. Some in the women’s movements have, at times, blurred the differences between the sexes. This negates God’s intention as Creator.

What does God’s creation of sex have to do with marriage? Woman was created to be a helper fit for man (Gen. 2:18). The man leaves his parents and enters a “one flesh” union with his wife (Gen 2:24). The marriage of man and woman is God’s intention for creation. It is a social structure by which human life in community is maintained, a sacred task to guide us in our work in the world.⁴ In the covenant of marriage, the genuine fulfillment of

a shared sexual relationship is possible. Sexual expression needs marriage for two people to share with each other their total life experience. Marriage needs sexual expression to provide unity and quality in the covenant.

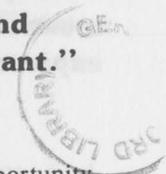
Must all people marry then? No. God’s creative intention gives dignity to marriage, but his redemptive actions place limits on marriage. Jesus said that there were some, including himself, who become eunuchs for the sake of the kingdom (Matt. 19:12). People called to be celibates and those who

“Sexual expression needs marriage for two people to share with each other their total life experience. Marriage needs sexual expression to provide unity and quality in the covenant.”

simply do not have the opportunity to marry can be fully human by living for others, as Jesus did.

Marriage is the norm, in spite of these exceptions, and the Creator intends for sexual intercourse to be expressed in the covenant of marriage. There is really no justification for intercourse outside of marriage. At least four purposes of

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intercourse can be found in the Bible: (1) union in one flesh (Gen. 2:24); (2) procreation (Gen. 1:28); (3) pleasure (Prov. 5:18-19); and (4) communication (Gen. 4:1).

Having looked at some implications of God's creative activity in relation to sex, what should be the human response? We can respond with celebration which involves praise to God, acceptance of self, and respect for other sexual beings.

Joyful Celebration

Praise to the Creator requires the joyful celebration of sex. In Christian communication about sex, sex

sex. Sex is God's good gift. Problems with sex come from people and the manner in which they express sex.

Praise to the Creator also means accepting God's purpose for marriage and sexual intercourse. We can rejoice in the "one flesh" union. We can accept the procreative purpose of intercourse which means that a healthy couple should remain childless only for such exceptional reasons as the likelihood of a serious hereditary disease, the dangerous overpopulation of a country, or a period of nuclear war.

Praise to the Creator involves the guiltless appreciation and intense enjoyment of the pleasure of intercourse. It further involves the privilege of communicating with each other through sexual intercourse and the sharing of the mystery of sex.

The celebration of sex means a shift of emphasis within the church, for the church can proclaim good news about sex. Praising the Creator for sex can also keep us from taking sex too lightly or too seriously. When we see that God has made us sexual beings, we will neither belittle sex or make it a god.

Sexual Self-Acceptance

Response to the Creator involves accepting ourselves as sexual beings. Self-acceptance means the enjoyment of our humanity and of our maleness or femaleness. We dare not be strait-jacketed by society's stereotypes about males and females, but we dare not seek

to obliterate our male or female distinctiveness either. Differences between the sexes are not merely the result of culture; some differences may be innate.

The acceptance of self as a sexual being is a "recurrent developmental task."⁵ As a child develops, teachable moments are reached at which he or she must learn given tasks (including the task of the acceptance of self as a sexual being) in order to continue the process of maturity that leads to happiness and social adjustment.

Environment (parents, school, church, society) guides us in sexual self-acceptance, but, as human beings, we have freedom to choose. We are not determined by culture. We are free to be the male or female sexual beings that God intended us to be.

Respect for Others

We can respond to the Creator not only with the celebration of sex and sexual self-acceptance but also with respect for others as sexual beings. We can show appreciation for the creation by treating others as persons and not things. In marriage this means mutual respect for the distinctive needs of one's mate. Manipulation in marriage is a form of prostitution just as devastating as that of the street walkers. Premarital behavior must also be based on a mutual respect which stands clearly against the selfish attempts to divorce the pleasure of sexual intercourse from the involvement with an individual as a total personality.

Respect for others as sexual beings also requires an end to the male arrogance that has so long been an unhealthy part of our culture. The true quest of all liberation movements should be the liberation of everyone to be the human beings which God intended.

Having looked at God's actions as Creator and human response to these actions, we can now turn to judgment and sex.

JUDGMENT AND SELF-DISCIPLINE

The Bible clearly reveals that the Creator of everything is also the

"When things go wrong with sex, the problem is not with sex. Sex is God's good gift. Problems with sex come from people and the manner in which they express sex."

"Human estrangement from God is based on the attempt to overthrow God's sovereignty. Rebellion against God is found in all of life, including sexual expression."

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and play, sex and laughter, and sex and joyfulness need to be linked. For too many people sex is too serious a business. The humanists do not have a monopoly on the joy of sex. Celebration of sex means changed attitudes and behavior. It means expressing positive attitudes toward sex. When things go wrong with sex, the problem is not with

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Judge (Gen. 3). As Judge, God exercises control over what he has made and condemns of the misuse of his creation. He is no angry tyrant but a just governor sustaining what he has made.

Many people are confused about sex and judgment. The Fall has repeatedly been attributed to sexual misbehavior, although the Bible

makes it very clear that human estrangement from God is based on the attempt to overthrow God's sovereignty. Rebellion against God is found in all of life, including sexual expression. Given the reality of the Fall, however, sex is a ready place for the expression of sin. Sensual pleasure is not to be condemned, but the excessive preoccupation with the bodily senses leads to the idolatry of pleasure.

Reinhold Niebuhr has pointed out that sensuality often is expressed as excessive self-love, the deification of another person, or

“To reduce marriage to a remedy against sin is to misunderstand the nature of marriage. This view sees the wedding ring as a mark of slavery instead of a symbol of celebration.”

8 the flight into sub-consciousness.⁶ In sexual behavior, self-love often leads to Don Juane or *femme fatale* manipulation of partners for lustful self-fulfillment. The deification of another leads to an idolatry which is doomed to failure because it cannot deliver what the idolater needs. The attempt to use sexual intercourse as a means to escape

from conscious reality is a misunderstanding of God's intention for sex. In releasing us from tension, intercourse frees us not from life but for life.

Experiencing Judgment

How do we experience God's judgment in relation to sex? Shame (Gen. 3:7) is the result of sin's limitation of the personal manifestation of sex.⁷ Judgment is also experienced through anxiety which may come from a guilty conscience or from personal dilemmas related to sexual misbehavior such as the discovery of a clandestine affair. We experience judgment through longing which means that sin has entered the sexual relation so that we can never find ultimate satisfaction through sexual consummation.⁸ Judgment can be seen in the antagonism between the sexes which results when the capacity for community is distorted by sin.

Some consider marriage an order of judgment and a remedy against sin. To reduce marriage to a remedy against sin is to misunderstand the nature of marriage. This view sees the wedding ring as a mark of slavery instead of a symbol of celebration. It sees sin largely in terms of external acts instead of self-centeredness and rebelliousness. It is true that marriage does serve to bring order and stability to society. It is a part of judgment, therefore, in the sense that it protects the goodness of the one flesh relation and the children who are born to such a union. Marriage, therefore, is a constructive channel

for God's gracious government of his creation.

Responding to Judgment

How can we respond to what God is doing in the world in relation to judgment and sex? We can acknowledge God's judgment in our own lives, repent and exercise self-discipline, and seek to restrain evil in society.

Our capacity for self-deception finds fertile soil for development in the realm of sexual behavior. We are called, therefore, to acknowledge that God's judgment applies not only to others but also to ourselves. Like Adam and Eve, we blame others for our own disobedience (Gen. 3:12-13). Our tendency to self-deception can be overcome by the recognition and acknowledgement that God who created sex also wills that it be controlled and used for his purposes.

Acknowledging God's judgment can lead us to repentance for the misuse of sex. Beyond a feeling of remorse (which may only lead to more anxiety) there must be a genuine *metanoia*, a turning about face. As we recognize God's intent in creation, we can accept God's restraint upon us.

9 Growing out of this repentance is self-discipline. The discipline of self is indeed a gift from God, which is accepted by us as we realize what God demands in his creation. Discipline requires us to reject the self's attempt to seek pleasure without giving in return. It necessitates the resistance of sexual tempta-

“Attempts to restrain sexual behavior will bring strong objections, but we cannot remain indifferent to social distortions of sex in the communities in which we live.”

tions in order to maintain the fidelity of the marital covenant. It rejects the use of others as things, even when the pursuit of pleasure causes another to want to escape personhood and become a thing.

Not only should we restrain evil in our own lives by accepting the gift of self-discipline, but we are also called to restrain evil in the society in which we live.⁹ Attempts to restrain sexual behavior will bring strong objections, but we cannot remain indifferent to social distortions of sex in the communities in which we live. It is true that sexual expressions are private, but they are not entirely private. The powerful nature of sex and the social implications of sexual behavior combine to make the need for some control and restraint imperative. The difficulty comes in knowing where to set the boundary between the private and social implications of sexual behavior.

In seeking to restrain the misuses of sex, moralism will be of little help. Instead, an attempt must be made to deal with the anxiety and emotional impoverishment which have led to sexual misbehavior. Here psychology and theology can, and indeed must, work together. The spiritual transformation of the individual must be accompanied by an understanding of the psychological dynamics of sex.

Restraining the misuses of sex depends not only on the constructive discipline of individuals but also on the changing of society. For example, individual sex educa-

tion is often negated by advertising's commercial exploitation of sex. It is foolish and futile to seek to restrain the misuses of sex while allowing advertising's constant sexual stimulation of the young and those who wish they were young.

The social restraint of sexual misbehavior is no easy matter. Yet, the fact that God is active as Judge summons us to work through the community of Christian believers to find guidance for this restraint. The Christian response must be neither the imperialism of saints correcting sinners, nor the

“Forgiveness can cleanse us of the guilt and anxiety that lurk within us when we commit sexual transgressions.”

indulgence of sinners refusing to correct sinners, but involvement where sinners lovingly correct sinners as they are corrected by God.⁹

God's actions as Redeemer bring hope for the proper understanding and expression of sex. This deserves our attention now.

REDEMPTION, SEX, AND LOVE

A theological statement that concentrates on creation can lead us to be too optimistic about the possibility of correct sexual

behavior. Focusing on judgment makes us too pessimistic. A treatment of redemption is needed, therefore, to help us have a balanced realism about sex.

The Bible teaches that the God who creates and judges also redeems. The work of the Creator and Redeemer are inseparable (Isa. 44:24). The motive of God's judgment is redemption. This redemptive activity has implications for us as we seek to understand sex.

Forgiveness

In the first place, the fact that the Redeemer graciously offers forgiveness has far-reaching significance for sexual understanding and behavior. Before dealing with specific acts of sexual sin, however, we must first deal with the more basic attitude of pride which estranges us from the Creator. It is fruitless to concentrate on specific acts of sin to the neglect of the new life made possible through the work of the Redeemer. When we acknowledge that we have rebelled against God and misused the life that he has given us, we can find forgiveness from the One who was in Christ reconciling the world unto himself (II Cor. 5:19). Then we can participate in a new life which makes possible the responsible stewardship of sex.

When we accept God's forgiveness we are in a position to deal with specific sexual sins. These sins often cause anxiety which can cause us to seek relief in further acts of sexual exploitation. Forgiveness can cleanse us of the guilt and

anxiety that lurk within us when we commit sexual transgressions.

The Holy Spirit and Sex

An understanding of God's actions as Redeemer also requires an exploration of the Holy Spirit and sex. How many discussions have you heard on this subject lately? Probably not many. Since the Holy Spirit convicts of sin and gives the power of self-control, much more attention to the Spirit's work is needed.

The Holy Spirit enables us to resist an isolated sexual temptation by considering the totality of life: family and fidelity, home and community, persons and covenants. By bringing temptation from darkness to light, the Spirit helps us resist sin. When sin does occur, the Holy Spirit convicts us of our sins. Further, the Spirit is the source of the love which gives quality to the one-flesh union. Indeed the Spirit gives the fruits so essential to stable sexual adjustment and community: love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control (Gal. 5:22-23).

Example of Love

A third implication of God's redemptive activity is that he provides us an example of love. God's love is most clearly revealed in the life of Christ. This love has an effect upon us in our sexual relationships. As we realize that we are loved by God, we are given the capacity to love ourselves and others. Here Christian theology and psychology agree: we learn to love and trust, as we are accepted by

someone other than ourselves. As we realize that we are accepted by God, we can bring quality to all our relationships.

Pattern for Community

A final implication of God's redemptive activity is that we are provided with a pattern for community. Redemption makes community possible in our sexual relationships. Although ours is not perfect community, we can have a new life and direction which enable us to draw ever closer to the goal of fulfillment which we seek. The bridal theology of the Bible is significant for understanding sex. It gives a pattern for a covenant relation between people. The metaphor of marriage between God and his people demonstrates the possibility and the significance of such a covenant between a man and woman (Isa. 62:4-5).

What about redemption and marriage? Redemption means we can marry not out of necessity (due to the intention of the Creator), nor to prevent sin (due to the control of the Judge), but in response to the Redeemer who calls us to live a life of love (in the realm of redemption). Marriage has a redemptive purpose in that it serves as an analogy of the relation of Christ and his church.

Sexual Response to Redemption

How can we respond to the Redeemer's actions as they relate to sex? We can respond with forgiveness, love, and participation in a community of hope. By accepting the loving forgiveness of the Re-



"God's love is most clearly revealed in the life of Christ. This love has an effect upon us in our sexual relationships. As we realize that we are loved by God, we are given the capacity to love ourselves and others."

deemer, we are enabled to be forgiving toward others. Accepting forgiveness enables us to enjoy sexual pleasure and to associate it with wholesome laughter and good humor. Indeed, laughter helps to keep sex in its place. The Redeemer's forgiveness also encourages us to respond with forgiveness toward others. Indeed, Jesus' treatment of sinners gives us a pattern for such forgiveness. He did not single out sexual sins for special condemnation, but he was a physician to those who were sick with sexual problems. Without approving sexual misconduct, Jesus responded with acceptance and forgiveness. This quality of forgiveness is needed by the church in its ministry to men and women who misuse sex.

We can also respond to the Redeemer with love. In relation to sex, a response of love toward God means gratitude to him for making us sexual beings. It means trusting God to give us guidance in the right use of sex. It means being able to offer a prayer of thanksgiving to God for the enrichment of life that comes from sexual relationships. We can also respond with love for others. Such love for others is patterned after the self-giving love of Jesus.

We can respond to God's redemptive activity by participating in a community of hope, because this can protect us from cynicism and despair about the possibility of controlling sexual behavior. Many are so jaded in sexual matters that

they feel little hope for restoring beauty and meaning to sexual behavior. The church as a community of hope offers the good news that control is possible through the Holy Spirit, and demonstrates in its life the beauty of healthy sexual relationships.

Responding to the Redeemer by sharing in a community of hope is important because this will spare us from that hyper-individualism which says that sexual behavior concerns the couple and no one else. In the fellowship of community, we come to realize that

"The church as a community of hope offers the good news that control is possible through the Holy Spirit, and demonstrates in its life the beauty of healthy sexual relationships."

sexual behavior involves families and societies as well as individuals. This will enhance not hamper sexual intimacy. A couple who lives in isolation from the *koinonia* is not able to bring to intercourse the shared life which makes it an act of completeness and fulfillment. Sharing in a community of hope is also an important response for the

unmarried, who can find in the church an opportunity for the sublimation of sexual desires.

At times the church has not been a community of hope in relation to sex. It has sometimes responded to sexual problems with legalism or silence. To offer good news to people, the church must, therefore, relate sex to what God is doing in the world as Creator, Judge and Redeemer.

Summary

I have now outlined a model for sexual understanding and behavior. God has acted as Creator and we

“Wholesome modesty must be maintained while suspicious prudery can be exposed as an antisexualism contrary to God’s intentions.”

are summoned to respond with celebration, self-acceptance, and respect for others. God’s actions as Judge require a response of acknowledgement of his judgment, repentance and self-discipline, and the restraint of evil. God has acted as Redeemer, and we are called to respond with forgiveness, love, and participation in the church as a community of hope.

SEX AND THE FUTURE

As we move into the future, it is imperative that we develop models (like the one presented in this paper) to use in proclaiming the Christian good news about sex. The task is urgent, because it is likely that sexual pluralism will continue to be a characteristic of North American society. Fewer and fewer laws will regulate behavior. Anonymity and mobility will enable people to do just about what they want. If people exercise sexual purity, it will be because they want to.

How shall we respond to sexual pluralism of the future? We are called to respond to the Creator by affirming actions which celebrate sex as an enriching part of human life. Actions which demean sex must be rejected. We should seek to protect the mystery of sex. The Creator has built mystery and wonder into sex, and it cannot be reduced to charts or statistics. Wholesome modesty must be maintained while suspicious prudery can be exposed as an antisexualism contrary to God’s intentions.

As Judge, God is acting to make self-defeating those sexual styles which violate his intention for human behavior. The new “thou shalt” legalism of the day pushes people to conform to permissiveness. We should respond to this new legalism by sharing the good news of genuine freedom in a life patterned after Jesus Christ.

A False God

Some people are tempted to set up a private kingdom away from the problems of life in which sex becomes a personal god. But divinity is too great a burden for sex to bear. It will break down under the load, bringing disaster to those who seek salvation through it. We must respond to the Judge by rejecting this misuse of sex.

The threat of sexual pluralism requires that we affirm sexual expression which promotes love. By demonstrating in our lives the love revealed in Christ, we can offer an alternative to practices which lead to anxiety and frustration. Both men and women need the hope of redemption that we are moving toward the time when they will not be exploited sexually.

How can the church be a community of hope in the midst of pluralism? The church must share God’s requirements in a spirit of forgiveness and love. Without adopting the world’s standards the church must openly listen and minister to people with varied sexual lifestyles. The church can influence society as a whole by holding up the ideal of sexual intercourse within a loving marriage covenant. It can help homosexuals find the aid they need to express sex as God intended. It can work for the reform of laws which aim at the punishment instead of the rehabilitation of sexual offenders. The church can work for responsible programs of sex education. It can reject discrimination

“The biggest prostitution problem in our country does not come from the bordellos but from the advertising agencies and business suites where sex fantasies are linked to products in order to increase sales.”

against women and work for human liberation through Christ.

Sexploitation

The exploitation of the erotic for financial profit must be diminished. Until something is done to reverse mass media sex miseducation, the church's positive witness will have much less impact. The biggest prostitution problem in our country does not come from the bordellos but from the advertising agencies and business suites where sex fantasies are linked to products in order to increase sales. Consumers share some of the responsibility for such prostitution. The church can foster religious values and cultivate sexual integrity as a way to get at this exploitation.

As we seek to respond in love to God's activity as Creator, Judge,

and Redeemer, we can move toward an understanding of sex which will bring responsibility, pleasure, and meaning to sexual behavior.

Christians have good news to proclaim about sex! People caught up in a frantic search for sexual meaning need this good news that responsibility and celebration can be joined to bring genuine happiness. It is our task in the Christian community to share this good news.

The opinions expressed in this book are those of the author and not necessarily those of the Continental Congress on the Family.

¹Harry N. Hollis, Jr., *Thank God for Sex* (Nashville: Broadman Press, 1975).

²E. Clinton Gardner and Waldo Beach have both given attention to Niebuhr's model as it relates to ethics. See Gardner, *Biblical Faith and Social Ethics* (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1960), pp. 207-247; and Beach, *The Christian Life* (Richmond, Virginia: The CLC Press, 1966), pp. 38-101.

³Hollis, *op. cit.*

⁴Emil Brunner, *The Divine Imperative*, trans. Olive Wyon (Phila-

delphia: The Westminster Press, 1947), p. 336.

⁵Robert Havighurst, *Human Development and Education* (New York: David McKay Company, 1953), p. 27.

⁶Reinhold Niebuhr, *The Nature and Destiny of Man* (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1941), I, 239-240.

⁷Emil Brunner, *Man in Revolt*, trans. Olive Wyon (Philadelphia: The Westminster Press, 1947) pp. 350-351.

⁸*Ibid.*

⁹Beach, *op. cit.*, p. 87.

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Part 1
Women and Men:
How Different Should They Be?

Several years ago while looking through an alumni magazine, I was rather startled to see a headline announcing: "Betty Crocker Earns Ph.D." Sure enough, the woman who for fifteen years had represented General Mills in promotional work and whose neat signature appeared on cake mix boxes and cookie recipe pamphlets was now beginning a retirement career in communications. After being awarded a doctorate by New York University, she was asked about her future. "One thing is certain," she said. "I'll spend as little time in the kitchen as possible. I hate to cook."¹

More recently, the news media carried reports of the first woman in history to reach the top of Mount Everest. For *anyone* to scale the world's highest peak is no mean achievement; for a five-foot, ninety-two pound *woman* to do so surely should dispel those old ideas about the alleged weakness of the female sex! Mrs. Junko Tabei, mother of a three-year-old daughter, trained for nearly three years to take part in the expedition. Her proud husband told reporters that she had financed the \$5,000 trip through her own earnings as a piano teacher.²

Stories such as these can leave little doubt: women's roles are changing. And so are men's. Rugged athletes admit they enjoy

knitting and needlepoint. Men are enjoying cooking and baking and writing books about it. Large numbers of husbands are enrolled with their wives in natural child-birth classes and are fighting hospital policies which bar fathers from the delivery room. Men want to share the special moments of childbearing and childrearing, too.

"One thing is certain," she said. 'I'll spend as little time in the kitchen as possible. I hate to cook.'"

Increasingly, men are realizing that they've been cheated out of a tremendously rich aspect of life because older ideas about male roles have kept them so busy with breadwinning that they have had all too little time with their families. Many men are wondering if it has really been so wise after all to insist that "women's place is in the home," because that notion seems to carry with it another side: "man's place isn't in the home." Somehow that doesn't seem fair. At the same time, many women also feel hindered from living up to their full potential. To say, "man's place is in the world," has all too often implied that woman's place isn't there. In the past, both customs and laws have reinforced such ideas.

All this is being questioned and

challenged in today's changing world. Many Christians are perplexed, groping for the security of some prior time that in retrospect seems ideal—a time when sex roles weren't blurred, and everybody knew his or her place. As television's Archie Bunker sings: "Girls were girls, and men were men. Those were the days!"

In the Beginning

When Jesus was asked about men and women and how God intended them to relate to one another, He too suggested going back in time—*really* back. Back to the very beginning. The Pharisees had come to Him with a question about divorce; and in His reply, Jesus said, "Have you not read that He who made them from the beginning made them male and female and said, 'For this reason a man shall leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh?'" (Matt. 19:4-6).

It's important to notice here that Jesus specifically indicates God's purpose in creating the human race in two sexes. God "made them male and female," Jesus said, and "for this reason...the two shall become one flesh." Joined in marriage, the woman and man could be fruitful and multiple and share in the Creator's work, carrying out His mandate through bringing new human lives into the world.

However, both men and women were told to share in God's work in still another way as well, by having

dominion over the works of God's hands (Psalm 8) and subduing the earth. According to Genesis 1:27 and 5:1-2, human beings—both male and female—were created by God in His image. According to Genesis 1:28, both male and female were commissioned by God to have responsibility in both areas of life: the family and work in the outside

"Many Christians are groping for the security of some prior time that in retrospect seems ideal—a time when sex roles weren't blurred, and everybody knew his or her place."

world. Division of labor was not by gender.

Gender Roles

The title of this presentation, "A Christian View of Men's and Women's Roles in a Changing World," raises an important question at this point. Exactly what are roles anyway? And what are gender roles (or sex roles)?

Sociologists use the term *roles* to apply to the parts people are expected to play in human society, somewhat as an actor plays a part in a drama. The actor studies a pre-written script and then comes upon the stage to enact the role of a particular character. What he says and what he does fits with what is ex-

pected of him *as long as he is in that role*. Offstage, he may be altogether different. Similarly, in everyday life, people act according to roles—that is, they fulfill social expectations for behavior that is considered appropriate according to their particular role at the time—doctor, pastor, salesperson, teacher, student, friend, parent or whatever.

“Increasingly, behavioral scientists are showing that the sexes have far more in common than they have differences. Thus, today perhaps as never before, ascribed roles on the basis of gender seem totally out of place.”

The roles we play in life come about in two ways. Some roles are *achieved* (such as when a person wins an election and takes on the role of mayor or obtains the necessary credentials for a profession and assumes the role of a lawyer or psychiatrist). Other roles are *ascribed* on the basis of characteristics over which a person has no control, such as race, age or sex. For example, in a caste society divided by race, a person would be assigned either a privileged role or a subservient role simply by having

been born into a certain racial category. Abilities or achievement would have nothing to do with the assigned position and the behaviors expected to go with it.

Gender roles are of the ascribed type. Persons have no control over whether they are born male or female. Yet, regardless of individual abilities, interests and proclivities, persons have been expected to fill a role according to their sex laid down for them in advance—just as surely as the actor is expected to order his behavior according to the prewritten script. Males are expected to behave one way and females another, and they are taught these expected behaviors or gender roles from childhood onward. This idea is being called into question today.

However, the questioning isn't really new. In the late 1700s, a sea captain's daughter, writing under the penname "Constantia," published a series of pamphlets calling for equal educational opportunities for women. As a Christian, she was convinced that the more training a woman had, the better she would be equipped to utilize her talents for God. Yet women were barred from higher education. (Some clergymen claimed that education would just make women restless and make them want to leave their husbands. Furthermore, they said, women were told in the Bible that if they had questions they should simply ask their husbands at home, so why would they need an education?)

Constantia wrote:

“Is it reasonable that a candidate for immortality, for the joys of heaven, an intelligent being, who is to spend eternity in contemplating the works of Deity, should at present be so degraded as to be allowed no other ideas than those which are suggested by the mechanism of a pudding, or the sewing of the seams of a garment?”³

In the middle of the nineteenth century, Lucy Stone spoke out similarly. Referring to the words of abolitionist Wendell Phillips who had said, “The best and greatest thing one is capable of doing, that is his sphere,” Lucy Stone spoke up for women's rights:

“I have confidence in the Father to believe that when He gives us the capacity to do anything He does not make a blunder. Leave women, then, to find their sphere. And do not tell us before we are born even, that our province is to cook dinners, darn stockings, and sew on buttons... I know not what you believe of God, but I believe He gave yearnings and longings to be filled, and that He did not mean all our time should be devoted to feeding and clothing the body.”⁴

Complaints about assigning or denying privileges on the basis of sex go back much further than the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. The Old Testament book of Numbers tells the story of a man who died leaving five daughters and no sons, which meant that the family name and inheritance would

go elsewhere. The daughters felt this was unfair and agitated for justice. “Why should the name of our father be taken away from his family because he had no son?” they complained to Moses. “Give us a possession.” Moses took the matter to the Lord and the Lord said, “The daughters of Zelophehad are right; you shall... cause the inheritance of their father to pass to them” (Numbers 27:1-11).

Should Gender Matter?

Increasingly, behavioral scientists are showing that the sexes have far more in common than they have differences. Thus, today perhaps as never before, ascribed roles on the basis of gender seem totally out of place. *Individual* capabilities and achievements and personalities are what count, not one's membership in a certain social category labeled “black” or “white”: “male” or “female”—at least ideally. It puzzles me that so many Christians find this threatening and, in some cases, are calling for a more extreme and rigid segregation of sex roles than ever before. At a time when women and men could be coming so much closer together because of all that is being found that they have in common, some are saying that they are so radically different they must each make sure they keep in their “proper place.” Perhaps it will help to examine just what is involved in gender roles and behavior expectations associated with them.

In speaking of differences between the sexes, persons

generally are not referring to biology (because everybody knows about these physical differences which make possible reproduction); rather, they are thinking of assumed differences in appropriate activities and appropriate attributes.

Gender-Assigned Activities

Many persons simply take for granted that there is a natural

“I don't think we can use Genesis 3 to insist that the care of home and children belongs exclusively or primarily to women and that caring for the affairs of the world is the province of men only.”

6 division of labor according to sex. A man is assigned the role of family provider; a woman is assigned the role of caretaker of the home and children. Certain tasks are designated as “women's work,” other tasks as “men's work.” What is often overlooked, however, is that there is no universal consensus about what *is* “women's work” (except childbearing) or “men's work.” Persons aren't programmed by nature to gravitate toward certain activities according to sex; they *learn* what is expected of them according to their particular society's ideas of gender roles.

Anthropologists have found some tribes where weaving or pottery-making are exclusively men's work; in other tribes these activities are exclusively women's work. In still other tribes, both men and women perform these tasks. Similar patterns are found with regard to such activities as housebuilding, harvesting crops, manufacturing leather products and so on.⁵ If dividing labor a certain way according to sex was simply “natural,” they wouldn't find such differences.

According to Genesis 1, division of labor was not gender-linked at creation, but some Christians feel that Genesis 3 commands such a pattern. After sin entered the world through their disobedience to God, the woman was told that she would labor in bringing forth children while the man was told he would labor in bringing forth food from the soil. It seems to me, however, that the main point in this passage is that sin not only has consequences for men and women in their relationship with God but also in their relationship with each other. The husband would “lord it over” the wife (Gen. 3:16), Jerusalem Bible translation). The perfect partnership of Genesis 1 and 2 was spoiled, and the effects of sin would be seen in both areas of life mentioned earlier: family life and the world of work. Also, God wasn't showing Adam and Eve what *should* be but rather what *would* be as a result of the fall. Christians are not called to

perpetuate the sinful order but to seek to live in newness of life in Christ Jesus and in the redemption order that He makes possible.

At any rate, I don't think we can use Genesis 3 to insist that the care of home and children belongs exclusively or primarily to women and that caring for the affairs of the world is the province of men only.

“In Colonial America, the Puritans gravely exhorted their children to find their ‘particular calling’—the vocation God had for each one.”

The Bible contains numerous examples of godly women with outside careers: Deborah who judged Israel and led an army, Lydia the business woman, Priscilla the tent-maker, the “virtuous woman” or “good wife” of Proverbs 31 who managed the household finances and made major purchases and also had her own garment manufacturing business. The Bible also speaks of men in terms of tasks that are too often labeled “women's work.” Jesus cooked fish and served breakfast to the disciples in a post-resurrection appearance (John 21). Paul compared himself to a nurse gently caring for her children or a father exhorting or encouraging them (I Thess. 2:7, 11). Jesus compared Himself to a hen longing to

gather her chicks. Both the Old and New Testaments urge fathers as well as mothers to be involved in training their children.

In Colonial America, The Puritans gravely exhorted their children to find their “particular calling”—the vocation God had for each one. Boys were told they could discern God's will by paying attention to the talents God had bestowed upon them and through their own interest in and inclination toward a certain occupation. Adults encouraged them in their aptitudes for farming, skilled trades or one of the professions such as the ministry, teaching or medicine. They were apprenticed and schooled accordingly. But girls were given apprenticeships in domestic work only. Parents, teachers and clergy simply took for granted that God's “particular calling” for each girl was exactly the same—home-making and motherhood.⁶ No one seemed to consider applying the same reasoning to girls that they applied to boys, namely, that God directs us in our occupational choices through the talents He bestows and through our own interests in particular careers.

7 Yet, according to the Scriptures, the Holy Spirit apportions gifts “to each individually as he wills.” Nothing is said about limitations according to gender, and there is not room here for ascribed roles. Each person *as an individual* is responsible to use the abilities God gives—regardless of one's sex (I Cor. 12; Rom. 12). Women and

men alike are God's stewards and responsible to Him to use the talents He places in their hands; they have no right to bury them in a napkin (Luke 19:20; Matt. 25:25).

I hope that Christian parents today won't make the same mistake the Puritans did. Through the toys they are given, the personal examples (role models) to which they are exposed, and the books they are given, let's help and challenge our daughters so that they won't be limited to the idea that the domestic side of life is the *only* choice open to them. And let's help our sons see that personal aptitudes and interests should guide them in various activities instead of being bound by sex-role stereotypes. ("Boys don't do that." "That's sissy.") I wonder, for example, why parents are often so alarmed when a little boys wants to play with dolls. Why can't this be viewed as something good—rehearsal for parenthood in adulthood—as we view it for girls?

Gender-Assigned Attributes

Not only are certain activities considered to belong to one sex or the other, but so are certain personal characteristics. Men are thought to be by nature aggressive, rational, courageous, strong, tough and so on; women are thought to be non-assertive, nurturant, tender, more passive than active, intuitive and so on. However, many behavioral scientists are pointing out that these qualities may be and should be found in all human beings. Labeling "masculine" or

"feminine" qualities and training males to develop one set of such qualities and females to develop another is wrong. Men are all too often afraid to be tender, poetic or to admit weakness because they think this is to "act feminine." Women are often afraid to display strength and assertiveness because they fear it means they are being "unfeminine" or "masculine." As a result, all of us are denying our full humanness.

The whole idea of labeling characteristics "masculine" or "feminine" is patently unscriptural. Otherwise, we'd have to call the fruit of the Spirit a list of feminine qualities (Gal. 5:22); and admonitions to "fight the good fight," be strong, courageous and "put on the whole armour of God" would have to be called masculine. Yet all these qualities—from meekness to being more than conquerors—are qualities expected of all Christians and have nothing to do with whether we are male or female. Jesus wept, as did other men who weren't afraid to display emotions of sorrow or affection (John 11:33-36; Acts 20:37; 2 Tim. 1:4). Just as many examples of tenderness in men are described in the Bible, examples of rationality, courage and assertiveness in women are abundant throughout the Bible.

Sociologists speak of two sides of life—the *instrumental side* which is concerned with mastery, rationality and getting things done; and the *expressive side* which is concerned with feelings and relating to people.

These terms seem preferable to "masculine" and "feminine" because to have a rich, full life persons of both sexes need to be instrumental (task-oriented) and expressive (people-oriented). These ideas also relate to recent psychological findings about the working of the human brain, with one side functioning in logical,

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rational, linear thinking, and the other side functioning in thinking that is intuitive, symbolic, making analogies and metaphors.⁷

Fears about "Unisex"

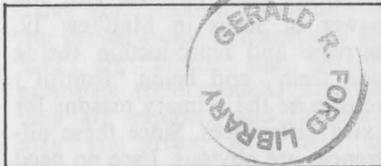
Many Christians fear that doing away with clearly defined sex roles in terms of gender-assigned activities and attributes will confuse children about their sexual identity. Psychohormonal researchers John Money and Anke Ehrhardt allay such fears by reminding us of the natural differences that cannot be erased—hair grows on men's faces, women have breasts, the voice pitches of the sexes differ. And of

course, men impregnate and women give birth. Obvious biological differences between males and females cannot be denied; God designed people this way and pronounced it very good. But from both Genesis and the answer of Jesus in Matthew 19, marriage and reproduction (being "one flesh" and being "fruitful") seem to be the primary reasons for sexual differences. Since these differences are obvious, I see no need to add to them through arbitrarily assigning certain activities and attributes to one sex or the other. As Drs. Money and Ehrhardt write:

"Provided that a child grows up to know that sex differences are primarily defined by the reproductive capacity of the sex organs, and to have a positive feeling or pride in his or her own genitalia and their ultimate reproductive use, then it does not much matter whether various child-care, domestic, and vocational activities are or are not interchangeable between mother and father. It does not even matter if mother is a bus driver and daddy a cook."⁸

The term *unisex* implies that there would be one sex only, but God created us as two sexes. In matters of physical sex, let us rejoice in our differences. But in all other areas of life, let us cultivate what we have in common and work together, women and men, as partners in the service of God. Gender roles are changing, but let's not permit misinformation and misunderstanding to cause us to

resist the good that these changes can bring about. What needs to be stressed is not *uni-sex* but *uni-ty*. "There is neither male nor female; for you are all one in Christ Jesus" (Gal. 3:28).



References

Part 1

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**Part II:
Changes in
Marital Gender Roles—
Authority to Affirmation
by John Scanzoni**

A few years ago, the media literally bombarded North Americans with the theme of family change; the generation gap, the counterculture, communes, unisex, the zany antics of some women's libbers, group marriage, and especially the "sex revolution." The major thread connecting these various items was the notion that America was on the verge of something cataclysmic—a kind of convulsive upheaval in terms of sex and family. Many evangelists and preachers joined the chorus and prophesied that the family was decaying and in danger of collapsing. But then some funny things happened on our way to the extinction of the family. The nation's attention was turned away from these alleged catastrophes by recession, Watergate and energy. Nevertheless an unfortunate reaction to the decrease in sensationalistic journalism could be the belief that all that "noise" about family change was a mere fad. Indeed, some have concluded that whatever was going on was ephemeral and transitory, and that it's back to "business as usual" for the family.

Unfortunate Reaction

Such a reaction is terribly unfortunate, because it masks the really fundamental changes that

actually are taking place. It fails to distinguish between what was faddish and inconsequential from changes that are firm and of lasting significance. What is happening is at least as old as Plato's *Republic*. Seeds of it are found in the New Testament and even at times in the Old Testament. Roman Law supported it, and over the last 400 years it has become pervasive throughout all modern nations. And since 1900 it has moved with considerable rapidity, especially with regard to family. We refer to a very simple yet profound notion—the notion of *individual* affirmation and all that implies.

Plato said that the State should go into all its homes to identify intelligent and gifted boys and girls from all social classes. These talented children would then be trained by the state to the fullest extent of their capabilities. They would then serve as an elite pool from which the State could draw to lead its political, economic and educational institutions. In that way the State would be utilizing its best people in the most efficient ways to achieve the most desirable and ideal State possible. Regardless of the merits of the scheme, note its revolutionary nature. It asserts that individuals should be affirmed in terms of their own talents and abilities, rather than being judged by things over which they have no control—sex, race, social class of the family into which they are born. Affirmation means that individuals should be given every

opportunity to explore and develop all their talents, gifts, abilities to the full—and should be rewarded accordingly. It also implies that the society as a whole will be better off because of the maximum contribution of talented individuals.

Affirmation of Women

Now I don't know if St. Paul ever read Plato or not—probably he did. Likewise he was probably familiar with the sentiments behind a prayer that devout Jewish males uttered each morning:

"Blessed are Thou, O Lord our God, King of the Universe, Who has not made me a heathen, a slave, or a woman."

Such a statement of course is the precise opposite of individual

"Individuals should be affirmed in terms of their own talents and abilities, rather than being judged by things over which they have no control—sex, race, social class of the family into which they are born."

affirmation. Persons are downgraded if they happen to be a member of a different racial or ethnic group (Gentile, heathen), or of a lower economic group (slave),

or a member of the female sex (a woman). And worse, this prayer assumes that people are locked in to their inferior positions because of divine will and sovereignty. Thus when St. Paul wrote his first letter, Galatians, one of the most exciting parts of it is his affirmation of the individual in what we now call 3:28 (RSV):

“There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free, there is neither male nor female, for you all are one in Christ Jesus.”

By these words, Paul takes a broadside against the ancient

“Few are aware that in 1848 the Seneca Falls Convention was called by women who felt that most men were unwilling to apply Jefferson’s words specifically to women.”

Jewish prayer asserting special privilege for Jews, freepersons and men. In the context of this verse Paul is arguing that old customs and ideas have been replaced by Jesus Christ. He becomes our salvation—our life. His kingdom destroys special privilege. Within His visible Church—the Kingdom here and now—people of all racial and ethnic groups have equal op-

portunity to use all their God-given talents. The same holds for people of different socioeconomic backgrounds; and it holds just as strongly for women as well. What matters is not something over which the individual has no control—background factors—but rather that his or her own talents and abilities should be affirmed to the full. Not only will that person be rewarded for exercise of those gifts—the Church and probably the larger society too will be better off because of it.

Unfortunately, for hundreds of years the theme of individual affirmation lay dormant both in and out of the Church. The Reformation and the Renaissance breathed new life into it, and all of us are familiar with Thomas Jefferson’s elegant 1776 formulation of it in the Declaration of Independence: “All Men are created equal...they are endowed by their Creation with certain...Rights...Life, Liberty, and the Pursuit of Happiness.” But perhaps few are aware that in 1848 the Seneca Falls Convention was called by women who felt that most men were unwilling to apply Jefferson’s words specifically to women. And so they met—many of them committed Christians—to revise the earlier Declaration—to assert that God has given talents and gifts to women, and that women ought to have full opportunity to explore these talents and use them for the good of others. Indeed this biblical perspective characterized the

writings and speeches of many of the 19th century feminists. (L. Scanzoni, 1973)

During this period the idea that individual affirmation was meant for women as well as men began to spread—though very slowly. And at this point changes in the conjugal family (husband, wife, dependent children) became gradually observable. Today the notion of individual affirmation is much more pervasive, and its consequences for family are much more obvious. Therefore, when the fundamental and long-term changes in the roles of husband and

“There has been considerable stigma and sometimes suspicion of women who have lived apart from marriage and family.”

wives within families are identified, the focus is on something that’s been around for at least 2500 years but only recently has become significant for women.

In short, the application of individual affirmation to women has been changing the family, it is the major force changing the family right now, and it shall continue to do so for as long into the future as anybody alive can reliably project. Therefore, to understand “what’s happening” to the family—what genuine

changes are occurring—one must do so in the context of the changing positions and roles of women and of men. That’s the fundamental question. It is not a fad, nor is it ephemeral or transitory. It will not go away in five or fifty years. Such changes are part of inexorable social forces that have been contained within both church and society for two millennia.

Affirmation in Marriage

Look at husband-wife relationships and ask what individual affirmation means there. Most Christian men have traditionally found that Christian women have been only too happy to affirm and support them. The dedicated man has said, “I will not marry if singleness will be a better vehicle for God’s work through me. If I marry it shall only be to a woman who would encourage and support me in the exercise of my gifts in whatever vocation God has for me.” What is crucial here is that the central focus of the man’s life has been his vocation. Men have lived apart from marriage and family, but not from occupation. If they married, family needs were “fitted in” to occupational demands.

In contrast, women have been able to live apart from vocation, but there has been considerable stigma and sometimes suspicion of women who have lived apart from marriage and family. To be as plain and practical as possible, one very basic aspect of female affirmation is the desire by an increasing number of women to experience vocation.

Conversely in the past some wives worked merely to help out with pressing family expenses. They worked at non-demanding jobs, and they generally quit when financial needs became less severe. But a very radical change is beginning to occur among increasing numbers of well-educated women. They are coming to view occupation or vocation as their right or rightful opportunity—a right which is theirs as much as it is any other person's right.

In the past men have not worked primarily for money, but because it was the *chief means* to gain respect and identity. Besides those benefits, some jobs provide a great deal of fulfillment and satisfaction. In spite of what some say about our becoming a "leisure society," we only need observe the negative consequences for men when they can't work to see how central it is to their existence. Times in point are the depressions and recessions of the 30s and 70s; or men in retirement. Men out of work become painfully aware that work is more than just money.

After all what is called the "work ethic" to a large degree has a biblical and especially theological base. (J. Scanzoni, 1973) The exercise of one's gifts in vocation is the prime way for all Christians to serve God in the world. And since He will reward both now and in the future we can concentrate on the doing of work—on faithful service—rather than on the material outcomes. While the

saying "work is its own reward" may be trite, it contains a germ of truth in that ideally for Christians their work is supposed to be intrinsically rewarding. Affirmation means that the Church gladly extends this right to women in all areas—including ordination—as Holiness and Pentecostal groups have been doing for many decades.

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Therefore, in the days ahead an increasing number of marriages will contain two persons in vocation—or two achievers—both equally serious about the tasks to which God calls them. Interestingly, the New Testament provides an example of such a marriage, though there are not many examples from Scripture of married couples who did engage in the biblical ideal of mutually affirming one another in the exercise of gifts. But there was at least one Christian couple which took the message of

Christ seriously and supported each other's gifts. I refer, of course, to Aquila and Priscilla.

A Biblical Example

They are first mentioned in Acts 18:2. Aquila was a Jew, and most scholars agree Priscilla was a Roman—a Gentile from an upper-class family who had been well-educated as many upper-class Roman women were at that time. Evidently they had both become Christians in Rome. As Christians, they may both have been outcasts from their own extended families, but they came to love each other and to marry.

Acts 18:3 says that Paul stayed in Corinth with *them*—not solely with Aquila. Priscilla was not relegated to the kitchen or to the local women's sewing circle, while Paul and Aquila discussed theology. Why not? Well, in the first place she was just as bright as they were and knew as much theology as they did. And secondly, Paul and Aquila recognized those gifts in her and knew that she had to be supported in those gifts by including her as an equal partner in their discussion. And third, Priscilla wouldn't have gone to the kitchen even if they'd asked her to. She knew that she belonged with them and that any one of them could have done the cooking as well as she.

But besides the intellectual and spiritual equality that all three shared was their manual skill. Priscilla and Aquila had probably picked up that skill to earn a living after being disowned, in all likeli-

hood, by their families on account of their Christianity and their marriage. The text says that all *three* of them worked at tent-making, not just Paul and Aquila, so that all three of them affirmed each other in their manual skills as well as in their intellectual abilities.

In verse 24, we read that both *Priscilla and Aquila* took Apollos aside and straightened out his theology. It was not just Aquila—instead each mutually supported the other in the task at hand that God had given to *both* of them. Paul mentions both of them again in Romans 16:3 as *fellow-workers*, and he says they "risked their necks" for him. Apparently Aquila and Priscilla affirmed each other in danger and manual work. And he says in verse 4 that all Christians give thanks to *both* of them. In verse 5, we read that they had a church together—their house. Undoubtedly each of them affirmed the other in the exercise of the gifts of preaching, teaching and theology. I Corinthians 16:19 is an additional reference to their mutual ministry of preaching and teaching—the church in *their* house, together. Some Christians are aware of that body of scholarship that attributes the Epistle to the Hebrews to the pen of Priscilla. Whether she actually wrote it or not, no one can be certain. But that she was spiritually and theologically competent to do so is abundantly clear. She had the necessary gifts to do it. And what is even more clear is that Aquila would have been

right there supporting her in the exercise of those gifts.

That last reference to Aquila is of central significance to this whole issue of family change. So far we have focused mainly on changes in the wife's role and have said little about the kinds of changes that must necessarily take place simultaneously in the husband's role.

"Aquila was extraordinary for his day in the way he affirmed Priscilla and in the way he 'gave up' claims to inherent male power."

Aquila was extraordinary for his day in the way he affirmed Priscilla and in the way he "gave up" claims to inherent male power. He was extraordinary in the ways in which he was willing to sacrifice his individual privileges and prerogatives for her sake. But ultimately, I'm sure, his willingness to be a servant, as Christ was a servant, resulted in greater good for both of them as a couple than would have been the case had he tried to exercise male power. Therefore a discussion of family changes looks not only at shifts in wives' roles but in husbands' roles as well. These changes not only permit greater freedom, options and autonomy to women, they do the same for men as well. By way of illustration, the

originator and producer of Sesame Street is a woman named Joan Ganz Cooney. She administers a budget of \$13 million and staff of 200 persons. Her husband Tim is engaged *without salary* as the head of a volunteer project among New York City blacks to train them in the use of political pressure to obtain better housing. Tim jokingly refers to himself as being like "the wife who does volunteer work" (Aronson, 1973).

Freedom and Flexibility

The implications of this kind of freedom—of this option—are enormous for Christians. There are many important tasks in the Christian community for which salaries are not available. Some married men might have gifts to perform those tasks. Their wives might have gifts which at that point in time lead them into paying jobs. It makes great sense for the sake of the Kingdom of Christ for those men to perform those nonpaying tasks, and for those wives to be responsible for the material well-being of the family.

By the same token, there are many Christian wives who feel restricted from the kinds of *full-time* commitment to *voluntary* work in the Church, or in organizations where they feel they can use their gifts for God's glory. Changes in the affirmation and authority of married women must not be assumed to mean that all will seek paid employment. Some women will seek to use their gifts in *significant* ways as non-paid leaders in

religious, political or community organizations. In the past many husbands have "allowed" their wives certain voluntary involvements so long as the involvements did not "interfere" with the husband's interests or plans—whether in job, family or leisure. But affirmation of women means that if their gifts are ap-

"These changes won't affect all women. Some will always prefer traditional patterns of marriage, and if that is their conviction, they must be allowed that freedom."

propriate, and if they feel so led, they should be able to participate in non-paid tasks with the same degree of involvement and concentration that a person might give to his or her job. Obviously I'm not talking about the usual stereotypes of the Ladies Aid, women's missionary and sewing circles or weekly reviews of missionary biographies. Instead I have in mind projects within the Christian community or the larger society that are of the same order of significance as the one noted above—the one that Tim Cooney's involved in.

The major point is that within the family that is emerging among

a steadily increasing minority of persons, the watchwords are *freedom* for the exercise of gifts, and *flexibility* to allow for changes over time. At point 1, a Christian couple may both be involved in paid employment; at point 2 perhaps only the husband works while the wife uses her gifts in a nonpaying challenge; at point 3 the wife seeks paid employment while the husband pursues nonpaying challenges. And incidentally these nonpaying full-time challenges could sometimes include major responsibility for childcare. Child-care could be the chief province of one parent at one point in time, and of the other parent at a different point.

Of course, these changes won't affect all women. Some will always prefer traditional patterns of marriage, and if that is their conviction, they must be allowed that freedom. Nevertheless, a major complaint by modern critics of marriage is that after a few years it becomes a drag—it gets old and stale, and people get tired of each other. Some married persons then get involved sexually with other equally bored married persons, and they may or may not stay married. Some couples join swingers' clubs to relieve the tedium. If they stay married, they may simply live a life of "quiet desperation." These kinds of situations are just as common in the church as out of it, but Christian marriage after five years should be something more than bland existence. But why do

Christian marriages become bland? **Growing in Marriage**

There are obviously many reasons, but one is that men, when they marry, keep right on growing and developing as persons—marriage does not change their lives all that much. But most women when they marry—and especially if a child comes along—experience their *first* change-of-life, and a radical one it is. For they somehow cease being persons and become mere extensions of their husbands and children. While their husbands develop in response to the world around them, wives turn inward to their families, forget the world and stop developing as individuals.

Can you imagine Priscilla, Phoebe, Lydia, Euodia, Syntyche being forced into staleness just because they inherited femaleness? Little wonder that modern husbands and wives grow tired of each other after a few years. What does the wife have to contribute to her husband that is new and fresh and exciting? How can she understand the world outside the home that is so important to him? Our response is that if Christian husbands and wives paid more attention from the outset of their marriage onward to the biblical principle of affirming each other's gifts, then there would be an ongoing lifelong mutual stimulation of all that God had put into both of them. Their marriages would be healthier, the church would be more dynamic and the

woman would retain her personhood, her unique identity—her identification in terms of what she alone can contribute as a unique person to the kingdom of Christ.

Such husbands and wives are less likely to grow tired of each other—too much would be happening all the time for boredom to set in. Can you imagine Aquila and Priscilla

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getting tired of each other? Who knows what adventure God might next send their way? At one point, God might lead Aquila along a certain path, and Priscilla would follow. But at another point, God

might lead Priscilla along another route and this time Aquila would follow because he loved his wife and wanted to see the exciting things God would do with her gifts.

It goes without saying that such profound changes bring challenges. Some Christians believe that these changes and challenges are evidence of decay and decline in the American family. Indeed some argue that changes are *unscriptural*. Their logic proceeds something like this: “Things are bad now in modern families and they're getting worse. The way to reverse that trend is to go back to something we had when things were better—when families were better off.” And what was that? “Greater recognition of male headship and authority.” It is alleged that if men rule their households and wives are subject to them, this pleases God and makes for healthier families and persons.

The Challenge of Authority

If couples experience marital difficulties, they are counseled to let the husband lead and the wife follow, and marriages will be happier, more successful. Interestingly, in recent years a new variation on this theme has emerged in that wives are advised to use sex to manipulate their husbands in subtle or covert fashion. Such female manipulations parade under labels such as “fascinating woman” or “total woman.”

At the same time Joe Bayly in the March 1975 issue of *Eternity* magazine reminds us that not all

Christians agree as to how far male headship should be pressed. He says that while he accepts male headship he does *not* believe (in contrast to Bill Gothard and his disciples) that the Bible teaches that the father is a hammer, the wife a chisel and the child a stone; nor does he believe that the hammer is supposed to hit the chisel. Nor does he believe the Bible teaches any chain-of-command notion between husband and wife.

What counsel does Bayly offer to Christian couples? In effect: I am an executive, and I have good people working for me, yet I often let them make inputs and decisions; and the result is that we are all better off because I am that kind of enlightened leader. And that, he says, is how we should counsel Christian husbands to lead their wives.

But what Bayly forgot was that he didn't get to be an executive because he is male—he got the job because he is capable. Second, he is accountable to his superiors. If Bayly's leadership and ultimate final authority lead to poor decisions that result in falling sales of his product—Sunday school materials—then Bayly's superiors will have to replace him with someone who can make better decisions.

Challenges of Accountability

And that is precisely the fatal flaw in the arguments of those who propose that a major solution to marital problems is some sort of ultimate male headship. For there is no other social relationship

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where persons or groups who hold power are not accountable to other persons or groups. The Pope is accountable to Cardinals, Presidents are accountable to Congress and the Courts, clergy are accountable to their own congregations or the presbyteries or bishops, or other superiors or peers. Power must always be tempered by justice or

“Kings, clergy and presidents with unchecked power become greedy and selfish and exploit others. The same is true of husbands with unchecked power.”

else it corrupts, and the Nixon administration was a prime example of that. (J. Scanzoni, 1974)

But who is to hold the husband accountable if not his wife? Who else can resist him when he is wrong? It is folly to assert “he is responsible to God.” Bitter experience has convinced us of what the theologians call “total depravity.” Kings, clergy and presidents with unchecked power become greedy and selfish and exploit others. The same is true of husbands with unchecked power. This point is one of the most significant that the Christian counselor can make to married couples or to those thinking about

marriage. And that is that all of this fuss, emphasis and worry about ultimate male power can be terribly damaging to them as persons and to the marital relationship itself. The desire to have and maintain power for its own sake can have seriously negative consequences for spiritual life.

For example, you recall that the mother of James and John came to Jesus and asked that her sons be Prime Ministers with Him after He overthrew the Roman rule of the Jews. When the remaining 10 disciples heard it, they were indignant because they too wanted that power. And so Jesus said to all twelve:

“It shall not be so among you; but whoever would be great among you must be your servant, and whoever would be first among you must be your slave; even as the Son of man came not to be served but to serve, and to give His life a ransom for many” (Matt. 20:25-28).

Jesus was clearly warning about power and about its ability to corrupt. Authority or leadership for the Christian means service—it means doing what Jesus did—*giving up* rights, privileges and power—it means often being willing to give up what one thinks is the right thing to do and letting the other person decide what is the right thing to do. And that is an extremely important point to communicate to married persons who are struggling to work out a fair and just arrangement. If each partner is

occupied with letting the other person decide what is right and just, the relationship will turn out to be enormously satisfying and beneficial to both. Jesus Himself described that strategy in very practical terms when He said, “Do unto others, as you would have them do unto you” (Luke 6:31) Or to be just as practical, St. Paul said (Phil. 2:4), “Let each of you look not only to his own interest, but also to the interests of others.”

The unfortunate thing is that when we travel about speaking on themes of changes in men's and women's roles, the first issue that Christians raise is the theme of authority. *Many Christians — especially men — are just like the disciples — worried about power and authority when instead the biblical message is affirmation.* The issue that the Christian man must face in terms of a Christian woman is not, “How much authority do I have over you?” Instead, “What can we do for each other; what can I do for you?”

In practical terms, this is the most significant point regarding change that can be made to Christian men—single or married. For 1900 years Christian women have not been affirmed in terms of their gifts—in the senses we described earlier. Therefore, as the servants of women, men have a special responsibility to be conscious of and to atone for the sins of their fathers. This affirmation should flow towards at least two categories of women.

Affirming Wives

First, how can the man who is married affirm his own wife? Here Aquila's behavior is the model in that he went out of his way to do four things for Priscilla. *One*, he consciously identified what her gifts were; *two*, he told her about them; *three*, he encouraged her to use them at every opportunity; *four*, he was willing to sacrifice some of his own interests so that she could fulfill hers. Those four things are precisely what the church must encourage Christian husbands to do for their wives. The last—sacrifice of self-interest—is obviously the most difficult.

Suppose, for example, a man stimulates a gift in his wife and after several years, she becomes so involved in its exercise that he has to become equally or even more involved than she in childcare or domestic duties. Will he sacrifice some of his interests to take on more of those duties? Or suppose that an opportunity arises to use her gifts in another city—would he be willing to move and leave his job in order to accommodate her interests? These are some nitty-gritty implications of Jesus' Golden Rule or Paul's words about the interests of others.

The great majority of Christian men simply do not realize that most Christian women—especially over age 30—have not been trained to seek for marital justice. All their lives they have learned that it is wrong to seek justice. Instead they have learned only to serve their

husbands. They often feel intense guilt if they even entertain the thought of bringing justice into balance with service. Therefore the Christian husband who seeks to affirm his wife must deal specifically with that issue of false guilt. He must remove the guilt by assuring her that it does not displease God for her to be "all she can be" (L. Scanzoni and Hardesty, 1974). Quite the contrary—it pleases God when she as a Christian woman seeks to discover and develop all her gifts and use them for His kingdom on earth.

Affirming Daughters

The second category of women that men have a responsibility to affirm includes their daughters, and indeed all female children ranging from pre- and actual adolescents to post-high school women. The Church must rethink its whole concept of the learning or socialization of females. In the past it pointed them chiefly to role models such as Mary the mother of Jesus, or Susannah the mother of John Wesley. Always it was towards the mother of *somebody*—their life was to be wrapped up in that of a male child—they were to be the "hand that ruled the world by rocking the cradle." To hold that up as the only or chief role model for young women to follow is to make a serious error. For there is also Mary the sister of Martha and Lazarus who pleased Christ by discussing theology with Him. There are the wealthy women referred to in the Gospels who followed Jesus

and supported Him and the disciples. In the book of Acts, we read about Lydia, the businesswoman who took care of Paul and Silas at Phillippi. Priscilla herself is an ideal kind of role model for women to follow. There is Phoebe and Eunice and a number of others mentioned in Acts who were enjoying the freedom that the Roman Empire at

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that particular point in time allowed a small handful of educated, highly privileged women. Down through church history, there have been other women who can serve as role models for Christian women. (See Nancy Hardesty's series, "Great Women of Faith," over several months in 1974-1975 *Eternity* magazine.) And where would the modern missionary movement be without women such as Mary Slessor in West Africa or Gladys Alyward in China?

The point of these role models is that young Christian women should grow up learning that they have

gifts of leadership, or that they can contribute in many significant ways to the Christian community. In the past such contributions have been stifled, much as Archie Bunker tells Edith to "stifle yourself." Christians need to stress that *both* parents should socialize girls in this way. At the same time it is very important that younger boys should be trained to respect females not as *feminine dolls*, or fragile ladies, but as equal persons who can contribute just as much as they can in all areas of life.

The Challenge of Subjection

Unfortunately many Christians worry about authority and forget about affirmation. Some worry that the Bible teaches that woman's place is to recognize man's *headship*, that somehow God made men and women different in more than anatomy. Unfortunately, we have space only to begin to probe this issue. (See J. Scanzoni, 1974 for a fuller treatment of the authority question.) Earlier in these remarks I made the point that those who hold power must also be held accountable. Only God—omnipotent and omniscient—is accountable to no human being. All humans including husbands must be held accountable to other humans. But a further point has to do with how to interpret Paul's words for wives to be "subject" to husbands. Many of us have talked to persons who struggle with those words in the light of Paul's saying that all Christians should be "subject to each other" (Eph. 5:21), or

that male-female distinctions in privilege and power are no more (Gal. 3:28). What do I say to persons who are puzzled by this seeming inconsistency? (See L. Scanzoni and Hardesty 1974, for a fuller treatment.)

The first thing I say is that Paul was writing to a pagan world where wives were already subordinate to their husbands. Why should he tell them to do something they are already doing? The only answer that makes sense is that some Christian women had taken his earlier statement in Galatians seriously and were agitating for freedom and equality. But the sad fact is that the vast majority of those women were not ready for freedom. They were ignorant and illiterate—and their husbands kept them that way—barefoot, pregnant and in the kitchen. Furthermore, there would have been no place for them in the larger Roman society. That kind of revolution—or a similar rumbling by Christian slaves—would have brought persecutions from Rome even more severe than what they already faced.

Therefore, Paul in order to preserve *order* tells Christian wives to keep on being subordinate, but he adds, "as to the Lord." He takes the sting out of what they know to be unfair by saying "do it for Jesus' sake, and for the sake of order in the Kingdom." Then he tells husbands to love their wives as much as "Christ loved the Church" or as much as "they love them-

selves." And as we said before that kind of love or headship means servanthood in which rights and privileges are given up for the good of the other.

But recall that tiny percentage of educated women such as Priscilla, Phoebe, Euodia, Syntyche and so forth? Paul didn't have these dear friends and coworkers in mind when he wrote about continued subjection. Not at all—these women were every bit the equals of their husbands in the home and out of it. What of today? More and more Christian women are getting more and more education. They are waiting to be affirmed so that they can contribute to the kingdom. To dwell on the authority question in a selfish manner is to sidetrack the important practical questions of how to affirm women in today's changing world!

Needed: a Vision

For the most important thing we can get from this Congress is a vision—a vision in which we are inspired to see that the inevitable changes in men's and women's roles and the changes in marriage and family can be beneficial, and healthy and good. A vision is needed of what new and exciting things women can contribute to men, to the church, to marriage, to other women. A vision is needed of how women can contribute to their own well-being as persons—as Christian disciples. Once we catch sight of how exciting and challenging and interesting it would be if women were affirmed, we would

begin to do it with considerable enthusiasm.

The doing of it raises many practical questions for the Christian some of which we've already raised. But the point is that once we catch a vision of "All that women can be" and all that marriage can be once women are affirmed, then the Christian can begin to grapple successfully with the practical problems in the light of that vision.

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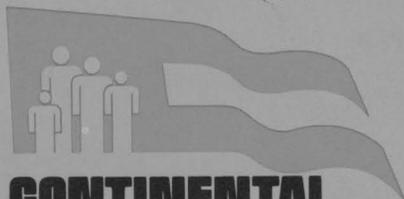
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The Church and the Unmarried

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ST. LOUIS '75

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Following World War II and a dramatic increase in postwar divorce rates, serious observers of the American scene expressed concern for family solidarity. They feared breakdown in the social structure of the nation. Fresh evidences of that concern appeared in the rise of media interest in the family, the installation of new college courses, the increase in pre-marital counseling and the extension of depth analysis to family life. But forces weakening families increased more than protective or strengthening influences. Although statistics on marriage and divorce improved during much of the decade of the fifties, before 1960 the trend had turned downward again. The problem intensified. Local and national conferences on family life were convened and well attended. Efforts to halt family erosion seemed unavailing. During the first years of the decade of the 1970s the record of marriage failure became the worst in history. Some analysts are convinced that marriage collapse has become sufficiently complete that new concepts of marriage and the family will emerge. Several alternatives to traditional marriage are in trial. One of these is the historically appropriate option to marriage—to remain single.

Increasing Single Population

While the controversy about traditional marriage grew in intensity, little was written or said about the status and life style of the single

adult. Even with growing disillusionment in marriage, the assumption held in general society that normal adults either were married or wished to be. If that is the case, singleness is a temporary experience transitional to marriage. Almost without public awareness, the number of single persons increased at the rate of about two million persons a year during the decade of the sixties. Extended education, uncertainties about life changes in social mores, and a score of other causes influenced increasing numbers of persons to delay marriage if they were to marry at all. Partly disillusioned about marriage in their observation of the attitudes and conduct of husbands and wives toward each other, more and more young adults opted to remain single.

Shift in Standards

Other reasons for maintaining single status included the change in sexual standards which permitted greater freedom than heretofore in sexual expression. Sex was taken without responsibility. Easy availability of birth control techniques changed the perception of many relative to sexual activity. Moral issues were played down. In addition, the marriage gradient became more complex. That gradient is the tendency of men to marry down and women to marry up. As the education and status of women improved, there were fewer women perceiving men to be in advanced positions and fewer men perceiving women to be in lower

economic and educational positions. At the same time, almost imperceptible shifts in population took place. More men remained in rural areas and in the American west. Single women moved in great numbers to the largest population centers. Men were not where the women could be found. And well known to nearly all is the fact that in upper age groups women outnumber men. Even if they wish to, some women can never marry. There are too few men, by several million, to go around.

Only recently has one of the most important reasons for remaining single been discussed in depth or with conviction. Many persons, especially women, remain single because that is their choice. Remaining single is perceived by them to be a gratifying and satisfactory option to marriage. But evidence is sketchy. For whatever reason, one in three marriageable age adults in America is single at any point in time, and one out of ten persons never marries.

Reasons for Singleness

Jesus described the sanctity of marriage in terms which stimulated mild protest or astonishment from His disciples. They suggested that the expectation of Jesus' idealism might cause persons to evade marriage. To this, Jesus implied that for persons either married or single there is a gift of insight pertaining to either status. And the option to be single is wholly legitimate.

The most significant statement

made on the issue by Jesus is recorded in Matthew's gospel:

"For there are different reasons why men cannot marry: some because they were born that way; others because men made them that way; and others do not marry because of the kingdom of heaven. Let him who can do it accept this teaching" (Matthew

"During the first years of the decade of the 1970s the record of marriage failure became the worst in history. Some analysts are convinced that marriage collapse has become sufficiently complete that new concepts of marriage and the family will emerge."

19:12—*Good News For Modern Man*).

Some persons are born eunuchs. That is to say, they are physically incapable of sexual intercourse implied by marriage. Some are born either without sexual desire or ability to perform as sexual partners, just as a few persons are born blind or deaf or lame. As one congenitally blind should not be mocked or berated for his blindness, neither should one be treated insensitively who, in the provi-

dence of God, has been denied the function of sexual organs. Only closest family members, his personal physician and the man himself may know the circumstances of his life. Should he explain his situation? I think not. The right to privacy and freedom from ridicule are presumed.

Some are made eunuchs through disease or surgery. Debilitating diseases may take their toll of sexual organs or any other. Cancer, venereal disease, prostate problems and other illnesses may render men or women, as the case may be, impotent or incapable of sexual intercourse. And mutilation of both sexes, but especially men, has been commonplace in history. The number of slaves castrated for the service of wealthy or royal families is large but unknown. Legitimate and humane surgery continues, while, thankfully, mutilation has all but ended.

Some choose to remain single, remain eunuchs, for life, as did Jesus, Paul the Apostle and others. Or they may choose to be single for a protracted period of time. The word "eunuch" does not always refer to sexually impotent persons. The patriarch Joseph, son of Jacob, was a eunuch at the time Potiphar's wife alleged he attempted to seduce her. The Bible presents Joseph, the single man, as an example of sexual purity and integrity. Ultimately, he married and fathered many children.

A person may remain single, remain a eunuch, for all or a

portion of life for religious reasons. Some church teachers have implied single life to be superior to marriage. The vows of celibacy for men and women were presumed by them to be of a higher order than marriage vows. If a person chose to marry, he might do so with God's blessing, for he might generate children sufficiently gifted and dedicated not to marry. By this means a celibate clergy could be provided for each generation.

Other Motivations

Other religious motivations have applied. Some persons are made eunuchs through divorce, separation or death of a mate. At least for periods, once-married persons with deceased or absent mates become single. Widow and widower are single. Limitations for sexual intimacy placed upon men and women bereft of mates are the limitations placed on single persons. Following the Viet Nam truce of 1973, the media opened public discussion on the issues of sexual intimacy and returning prisoners of war. Some wives believed themselves unable or were unwilling to live as single women during the incarceration of their husbands. Unfaithfulness and divorce were found to be more common among them than was at first believed to be the case by the public. The husbands were forced to live as eunuchs in prison, unless they engaged in deviations practiced among some of the men. During the first year following the truce a much larger than expected

number of divorces occurred for the returnees.

Jesus referred, then, to three basic reasons for remaining single: 1) the circumstances of birth, 2) of surgery, 3) of religious commitment. There is no compelling reason to believe that Jesus meant to be exhaustive with His list. However, if the references may be

“Single persons, like Paul, have written about marriage and counseled with insight. Paul asserted that he had the right ‘to lead around a wife as Cephas did.’ He chose not to do so. Apparently, his reasons were related to his religious commitment.”

expanded somewhat from common interpretations, all known reasons for remaining single are implicit in Jesus' words. The circumstances of birth may not be limited to sexual performance. One may be born with organs intact but by normal development to become physically, emotionally, socially and intellectually complete without marriage or intimate liaison with any person.

The Gift of Singleness

That one is born with a gift of self-control, something Jesus Christ practiced perfectly. The Apostle

Paul was single. The arguments that he was married and became a widower are made on the slimmest of evidence, all circumstantial. That he was a leader among the Jews and wrote knowledgeably about marriage are not in themselves persuasive that he was once married. Members of the Sanhedrin were married, but there is no compelling evidence Paul was in the Sanhedrin. Single persons, like Paul, have written about marriage and counseled with insight. Paul asserted that he had the right "to lead around a wife as Cephas did." He chose not to do so. Apparently, his reasons were related to his religious commitment. His missionary travels could not easily be accommodated to a wife's needs. In his frontal approach to church ministry there was significant differential from that made by Peter and most of the other disciples. Controversy, riot, jail, shipwreck and travel experiences were in that history suitable only for males, if suitable for anyone.

Crucial Matter Emerges

A crucial matter emerges from the life of Jesus. Why did He remain single? If marriage for Him would have carried the taint of carnality or untoward sensuality, then married persons are, in the spiritual sense, less devoted than single men and women. Certainly, Jesus will claim His Bride, the Church, at the last. But this is something other than physical sexual union. Earth cannot explain it. Jesus warned his questioners not

to carry human marriage into their concepts of paradise. To deny Jesus sexuality or sensual desire while on earth is to deny that He was touched in every point as we are. Some biographers have attempted to link Jesus and Mary Magdalene in romance, even sexual liaison. Absolutely no evidence supports the claim except an extension of the limited concept of human nature as inevitably sensual to the point of yearning for sexual intercourse. Jesus remained single for religious reasons, as we may suppose John the Baptist did, so that His ministry would sustain itself equally between the sexes. The responsibility of His ministry was taken as self-fulfillment. Jesus maintained a special relationship with Mary, Martha and their brother Lazarus. Apparently, His three friends were unmarried. The Protestant church has not generally recognized the force of celibacy upon history. It is believed by many that the vow of celibacy taken by Ghandi helped his effort for the people of India. And it appears that Martin Luther lost some of his influence when he married.

6 Married persons are afforded the privilege of completing some of their religious commitment by practicing Christian virtues with their mates. A comparison of differences between the married and unmarried states appears to be the burden of Paul's writings in First Corinthians, chapter seven. In the passage (verse 7) the Apostle

supports the concept that to be single requires a spiritual gift. Paul did not visualize the church as a federation of families.

Prejudice and Singles

Confusion and illusion about singles have become particularly mischievous because many singles have partly believed depreciating claims and statements about them.

“Singles will be unsure and defensive until they perceive their status as a legitimate and appropriate option for them.”

Just as Black citizens and American Indians could not emerge in society as long as they believed the common reports of their alleged inferiority, so singles will be unsure and defensive until they perceive their status as a legitimate and appropriate option for them. All should know that God generally provides acceptable options for the eminent decisions of life. And to choose either marriage or single-ness is an eminent decision.

One of the delusions about single status arises from a common delusion about marriage. Enos Hawkinson wrote: "...our treatment of unmarried people is a symptom of our misunderstanding of Christian marriage." Hawkinson argued that husband and wife often treat each other as property. The

man presumes to own his wife, and vice versa. The presence of an unmarried man or woman may be taken as a threat to the solidarity of a marriage. The single may steal marriage property. And the concept leads to the assumption that a single person is unclaimed property. Perhaps one approach to an enlightened insight into the status of singles would be to repair the alleged construct of what marriage is.

Sticks and Stones

Singles encounter widespread prejudice. Jokes about "bachelors" and "old maids" are commonplace. Even the names for singles suggest unhappy and drab circumstances. Apparently "spinster" came from a single woman who filled out her life in the occupation of spinning. One source provided the following adjectives to relate to "spinster": "ardent, unpredictable; resigned; anemic, withered; hopeless; contented; man-shy; miserable." Perhaps only two of the nine words would be interpreted as attractive—"ardent" and "contented." And both have been challenged by some analysts as inappropriate to the unmarried.

It is not the purpose here to analyze prejudice. Prejudice is sometimes man's reaction to his own embarrassment or a means for justifying his unsatisfactory attitudes and conduct. It is at its worst when the object of prejudice believes it. To eradicate prejudice is impossible. It has its seat in the human condition. And everyone, at

some time or another, is an object of prejudice. Common prejudices are heaped on persons because of: age (especially the young and old), sex (especially on women in middle age), body size (especially the obese and the short of stature), race (especially upon any minority in a geographical area), hair (especially the unkempt young and the bald),

“Perhaps one approach to an enlightened insight into the status of singles would be to repair the alleged construct of what marriage is.”

occupations (especially the farmers and servile occupations, like garbage collecting), education (especially the non-high school graduate), and even marriage (especially childless marriage, or, as is becoming the case, very large families). Combining several prejudices may create almost intolerable situations. In *The Pyramid Climbers*, Vance Packard stated: "The worst status of all is that of a bachelor beyond the age of 36."
Ignorance and Pride

7 Prejudices are constructed on ignorance and pride. Ignorance is evidenced in stereotyping and lack of information. Pride is evidenced in the belief that all, or nearly all, persons should express their human natures as we do. Some marrieds, crude and thoughtless,

presume moral superiority for their status. But some singles have presumed their status to be superior. The Scriptures argue that he that marries does well and he that remains single also does well. Each status is dependent upon the gifts and insights of each person, on his life purpose and ministry.

Responses to prejudice may

“A single person is an element. He has his own properties and functions. When two single persons unite in marriage a compound is formed—the twain have become one flesh.”

provide clues to self-acceptance. The single person may rise above prejudice. He recognizes human tendencies and is sophisticated to the degree that he will refuse to be offended by unthinking remarks. There are Blacks of my acquaintance who genuinely feel sorry for persons prejudiced against them because of race. If all objects of prejudice would respond to their tormentors in that spirit, but never yield on truth, correction of evil might be easier to come by. The single person is often overly sensitive. Each slight and “old maid” or “bachelor” tale is taken as a personal affront. In such an in-

stance a prejudice is enlarged from the original.

The single person may join the humor, even turn the joke back to the originator. I’m a bald person and know many jokes on baldness. I have been asked what polish I use, what wig I would prefer (I’ve even been presented with a toupee made from pancake batter and straw) and what office I would take in the organization of the “chrome domes.” I have been asked to wear a toupee in order to be a candidate for a position someone wished for me to take. I have rejected all suggestions for change, humorous and otherwise. I have overcome. And so may singles.

Failing to accept himself, the single may fail. He does so when he tries to take what he perceives to be the best of both worlds. He lives independently of family responsibility, but is willing to enter into the privileges of sexual liaison with another. He prostitutes his life. He becomes a “swingle.” A “swingle,” a slang term derived from “swinger,” is caught somewhere between marriage and single life. He fails at both.

Element or Compound?

An analogy of elements and compounds serves to explain the difference between marriage and single life. An element possesses its own properties and is basic to nature. The beginning of things is with elements which cannot be subdivided. Compounds are the combining of elements. New properties are observed and the elements lose

their identity in the compound. Hydrogen is a gas, as is also oxygen. Both are elements. But combined as a compound by burning, the two gases become a liquid, water, and inhibit burning.

A single person is an element. He has his own properties and functions. When two single persons unite in marriage a compound is formed—“the twain have become one flesh.” Each has given up the elemental life (single) for the compound life (marriage). The married person must surrender the independent use of his elemental character, and the single person, as long as he chooses to remain single, may not presume to function in the compound relationship. No person may, under God, have it both ways. He is afforded options and should choose, but he cannot morally engage the functions of both forms.

Let us presume that the decision is made and a person elects to remain single. He will, if the reports are faithful, encounter frustrations. Even though those frustrations are intense, they are common human ones. They require perspective.

Loneliness

The most common frustration, if the literature is accurate on the issue, is loneliness. No other complaint appears as often from singles. The wish to share personal experiences and insights is strong. Nearly all human beings desire an identity with a significant other who will respond at least with the quality of parental interest.

Singles inquire about the resolution of their sex drives. Those drives have not always been as intense as the current generation may find them. But in a society which cannot sell automobile batteries or toothpaste without appealing to prurient interests, the sublimation of the drive is more difficult. Privacy of thought is assaulted daily. More and more the analysts are referring to the sexual drive as mental. We know much of current sex is more in the psychology than the physiology of man. Some generations have overly repressed sexual activity and communication on the subject, as others have overly extended them. The media violation of intimacy in sex has led to conspicuous consumption. The pattern provides temptation which may be insurmountable for many singles or marrieds. The counsel of Scripture is that strong sexual urges which may not be brought under self-control may be evidence that those persons should marry. The control of the sexual urge appears to be an important part of the gift to be single. It is likely that women, who are not socially permitted to be aggressive in initiating marriage proposals, are partly compensated by greater self-control. Women permit substitutions for marriage and sex more readily than men. Women are more patient than men to delay marriage, more likely to find satisfaction in a meaningful occupation and not marry at all if prospective marriage threatens career plans.

According to many observers, singles are troubled about their status. They find doors of opportunity closed to them because, without marriage, they are presumed to be less responsible, a potential threat to the solidarity of the marriages of their peers, and perennially passing through puberty. In a family-centered society the ab-

“Responses to the frustrations of loneliness, sex, status and concealment vary with individuals. Some determine to be single at any cost.”

sence of wife and children places the single man at less than equal opportunity in any race for professional or political prizes.

Concealment

Concealment is another major problem for singles. They cannot express their feelings as marrieds do. The focus of society is on homes, children and mates, with all the social accoutrements of family life, including vacations, education, conversation and the like. Singles live in a different world, which is largely silent, except when they are drawn together in their own cadres. This concealment is discussed by Paul Tournier:

“I know that for every normal woman who as the years go by sees her hope of marriage

evaporating, spinsterhood is a terrible trial, and one the acceptance of which can never be final; it is always likely to reappear in the most painful form. Other sorrows, such as the tragic death of a husband, wife, or child, are also ineffaceable. But they can at least be freely expressed, and they arouse ready sympathy. The spinster has to conceal her sorrow. If she allows it to show she may have to suffer mockery and the sort of pleasantry to which people are so inclined as soon as any allusion is made to matters of sex. Or else she brings upon herself facile and wounding advice, such as, ‘You have just got to accept it!’ Or perhaps the stinging reply of some married women: ‘You should consider yourself lucky! You can do whatever you want—no children to worry about, no selfish husband to kowtow to. You’ve got a good income and can do what you like with your money’ (Tournier, *The Adventure of Living*, pp 131, 132).

Responses to the frustrations of loneliness, sex, status and concealment vary with individuals. Some determine to be single at any cost. Family-building interests are either not present or sublimated. The individual may become a recluse, may hate half of the human race which is the opposite sex, or more likely erect barriers which ward off anyone with a mating instinct. The attitudes may ultimately affect even the voice, the eyes, the face and the



general nonverbal communication of the person.

Matter of Preference

Some singles wish to get married as a matter of preference. Most of these will. They proceed with their jobs, involve themselves with society and attempt to make themselves presentable. They may dream, even fantasize about marriage, but they survive and refuse to lose the benefits of living because they have not been married.

Some singles will be married at any cost. Acceptance of mates significantly different in culture and conduct is forced in order to be married. Perhaps sacrifice of morals and integrity is made in order to ingratiate oneself and gain marriage. Unhappiness, disillusionment and failure commonly follow, and life may never get on track again.

The Unhappy

Many singles wish to be at peace in their status. They may or may not marry, but are fulfilled in the life they possess. Again, women are more likely to accept their status. Norman Bradburn, working with the National Opinion Research Center of the University of Chicago, found single men to be the unhappiest of all persons tested in the American society. He discovered that single women are more satisfied with their choice to remain unmarried. We do not know if some persons are unhappy because they are single or remain single because they are unhappy.

We do know that many married persons are deeply unhappy, and that many singles are happy. And too little has been written about the happy single. The answer may be in the persons more than in their marital status. Some analysts claim that among singles there are many personality types which make difficult marriage partners. They

“We do not know if some persons are unhappy because they are single or remain single because they are unhappy.”

wisely remain single.

George Gilder, in his book, *Naked Nomads*, argued that single males are losers. He described the single state for males as almost wholly unsatisfactory. But most of what is written about singles comes from counselors who work with troubled singles. The generalizations leave out too much. By comparison, if marriage were to be evaluated on the basis of unhappy wife and husband experiences, the assumptions about marriage might be faulty. Much is said about the single male, and the critics presume that things would be better for him if he were married. George Gilder wrote: “The chief perpetrators of these [social] problems are men. Men commit over 90 percent of major crimes of violence, 100 percent of the rapes, 95 percent of the

burglaries. They comprise 94 percent of our drunken drivers, 70 percent of suicides, 91 percent of offenders against family and children. More specifically, the chief perpetrators are *single* men. Single men comprise between 80 and 90 percent of most of the categories of social pathology, and on the average they make less money than any other group in the society—yes, less than single women or working women. As any insurance actuary will tell you, single men are also less responsible about their bills, their driving and other personal conduct. Together with the disintegration of the family, they constitute our leading social problem” (George F. Gilder, *Sexual Suicide*. Quadrangle Bantam Books, New York Times Book Co., 1975, pp. 5, 6.)

Task for Critics

It would be well if the critics would review neglected but crucial issues related to the problems they cite. The ages of most singles who become involved in social deviation are ages which find them unsatisfactory as marriage risks. The problems presented by single males may be consequential to a peculiar mixture of youthful biological development and an environment which permits or encourages deviant behavior. The assumption that marriage would correct youthful male deviant conduct or that fault is related to marital status are assumptions which require more competent analysis.

Even so, evidence that single life is less desirable than married is

strong. Even older singles appear less willing to be involved in social issues, less willing to carry responsibility, less likely to pay their bills and less likely to put down roots. The advertisements geared to singles accent self-centeredness. They also accent youth. The single male is fantasized as a “womanizer” without responsibility.

The unmarried wishes to participate in the exchange of human emotions. The single must confront the problem of giving and receiving affection. If there are no family members with whom he may exchange affection and care, or if he is alienated from his family, he may not know where to give and from whom to receive. He may develop a tendency to do good things for the wrong reasons. For example, the single may attempt to raise a child to fulfill his own longings or meet his own loneliness. But loss of shared responsibility makes child care difficult.

The Truly Happy

Certainly, singles possess significant advantages over their married counterparts. They may be more discriminating buyers, may devote more time to art and intellectual achievement, may be more mobile and able to serve man and God without concern for family responsibility. The implication of Scripture is that a man’s duty is to God, family and occupation or service and in that order. The single may eliminate the middle duty, if he has no continuing commitment to his

paternal family, and respond with greater energy to life service. The eminent advantage for the single, according to the Apostle Paul, is the elimination of competition for his time. He can serve fully the calling whereto he is called. To achieve that purpose, the single must accept himself, come to terms with what he is and expects to be.

“Evidence that single life is less desirable than married is strong. Even older singles appear less willing to be involved in social issues, less willing to carry responsibility, less likely to pay their bills and less likely to put down roots.”

He must learn to live in a society in which marriage flounders.

The happy singles I have known have accepted themselves; they find meaningful relationships with their relatives or family substitutes; they do not permit themselves to be separated from the mainstream of life activity; they are unselfish; they have more than average interest in culture and the arts; they find meaningful fulfillment in their jobs; and they maintain appropriate social activity. They date, usually a variety of persons to avoid any illusion of romantic commitment.

They are humorous, interesting conversationalists and are well aware of the facts of life. They are effective counselors and confront standard problems intelligently. Most are devoted Christians and work wherever they are asked in church service. If Christian missions should be called upon to release single women missionaries serving around the world, the overseas enterprise of the church would become chaotic.

Practical Suggestions

In summary, the future happiness of the increasing number of single persons in society will be related to:

1. **The acceptance by singles that their status is an appropriate option to marriage.** It would be helpful if all persons accepted the character of the option, but singles should fully accept themselves in any event. Singles tend to perceive their status as given to them, not taken as a matter of choice. They are single, have been single, and that is the way of it. If by choice they strengthened the natural state, the effect would be more gratifying.

2. **The interests of singles as different from marrieds.** Singles are not as likely to sustain a profound social interest in family security and development. They are not as vitally interested in the purchase of land property or the education of youth. Singles will be more interested than marrieds in their own education, in culture and the arts, in travel and the like.

3. **The identity of singles to**

their paternal/maternal families or family substitutes in order to give and receive love and approval. Happy singles often fill in as family leaders and counselors. For several centuries in Europe, and carrying into the Renaissance, the voices of uncles and brothers were more authoritative than husbands when some marital issues arose for relatives. Various cultures continue to afford high regard to those voices. Singles should not retreat from participation.

4. The determination to act responsibly in all life activities. Some responsibility is forced by society, such as the assessment of taxes which benefit marrieds and nuclear families. Both the amounts paid by singles and the direct benefits returned to them are imbalanced. The social order appears to require all citizens to share in providing for the welfare of children. But the singles must also freely choose to identify more fully with society—to vote, to put down roots, to become better credit risks. All singles should take an interest in their image. Responsible and happily fulfilled singles appear to be the victims of stereotyping perpetrated by insensitive marrieds, and more recently in new ways by advertising and the press.

5. The understanding that the choice to remain single is to choose to abstain from sexual intimacy. The acquiescence may be the clearest evidence that a single will act responsibly. Perhaps sexual intimacy is the only significant dif-

ferent experience of marrieds. All other issues advanced relative to the problems of singles are present with marrieds. Those issues differ in matter of degree and in methods of expression. Loneliness, so often referred to by singles, is a standard human ordeal and may be unrelated to marital status. Investigations into our times reveal loneliness as a common experience for all accentuated in part by a near universal fear of it.

6. The condescension that the society at large tunes its life to the nuclear family. Most privileges will be provided to mother, father and dependent children. Perhaps that is as it should be. Responsible singles may need to form organizations and develop programs which will meet their needs. These should be creative and competitive to the "swingle" and playboy philosophy which currently perpetrates the worldly and self-centered images for singles. A careful observer of the passing scene finds effective living by singles in competition with the irresponsible patterns which are widely advertised.

7. The activation of corporate interests for singles should be based upon commitment to service. Present secular singles organizations often become a means for pleasure-seeking, illicit sex and self-indulgence. Some are designed to bring singles together for the ultimate purpose of marriage. Even church singles classes and clubs may lose their way. Counselors complain about the moral level of

some of the church singles subgroups. For the church-related singles organization to succeed, there may need to be limited taboos applied to conduct and a clear sense of purpose adopted. Because of the current styles which resist rules and guidelines, the proposal may be resisted. But without a few signposts and speed limits the travelers will encounter unnecessary difficulties.

8. The insight that there are good and ill reasons for being single as there are good and ill reasons for being married. One study revealed that 45% of those persons going into marriage do so because of the strength of the sexual drives. Within a few years after marriage the force of the motivation drops to fifteen percent. Other motives include social and parental pressure, the desire for security and romantic love. If marriage were initiated with the strong desire to serve and care for "a significant other" the track record would be better. If singles elected to maintain their status because they could serve mankind more effectively, could find fulfillment in developing their highest individual potential, and could become exemplary in conduct, their choice of elemental life might not be questioned.

9. The dedication to God of larger differentials of time than marrieds for direct service purposes. This dedication supports the concepts of the Apostle Paul that singles may engage directly in

Christian occupation and avocation without concern for the needs and comforts of mates. Unmarried Christian men and women appear to devote more time to their jobs than marrieds, are less concerned with financial rewards or recognition, and are more willing to do onerous chores. One study showed that forty percent of the Catholic

"Unmarried Christian men and women appear to devote more time to their jobs than marrieds, are less concerned with financial rewards or recognition, and are more willing to do onerous chores."

clergy which withdrew from the ministry did so because of a desire to marry. During the same period covered by the Catholic study, forty percent of the Protestant ministers who dropped the ministry did so because of tensions in their marriages. The publicity for the abandonment of celibacy was widespread, for marriage failure negligible. Research is widely controlled by marrieds and by scholars who confront an inordinate number of troubled singles. New studies and fresh approaches are needed to set the record straight. Observation of Christian singles provides quite a different profile of them than that

which characterizes the secular singles. Christianity can fulfill human needs for men and women, regardless of marital status.

10. The belief that the Church belongs to Jesus Christ and is made up of God's family. The whole Church is not an accumulation of nuclear human families. The institutional church is out of order

“Singles will need some activism. In the spirit of forbearance they need to apply appropriate pressure on the church ministry. They will succeed as they match their activism with creative and Christ-like lives.”

to accent the human family at the expense of the unmarried man and woman. This injustice may be corrected by planning programs for singles as would be done for marrieds, by electing them to church offices other than as secretaries, by balancing the personal and social attitudes in the church, and by applying Biblical

truth to individual needs rather than to the family, when the individual application is the most appropriate. And, in Christian humility, marrieds may need to ask forgiveness for their lack of sensitivity and empathy toward singles who, under God, become what they were meant to become.

Singles will need some activism. In the spirit of forbearance they need to apply appropriate pressure on the church ministry. They will succeed as they match their activism with creative and Christ-like lives. And Christian singles are not to be compared to singles in the general society.

At this juncture in history much more is known about marriage and the family than the unmarried and society. If the differential is to be made up, it will be done in part by responsible married persons in society who have broken down barriers to understanding. The additional part must be assumed by singles who will prevail as men and women exemplary as Christian citizens.

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**CONTINENTAL
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ST. LOUIS '75

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Recently, I selected twenty-five clergy of a variety of denominations in representative cities and towns of varying size, serving congregations inclusive of a broad spectrum of North American culture, to evaluate what they found to be the most crucial problems their people faced in living the Christian life. I was not surprised that the majority of responses included marriage and the family.

In conferences and retreats across the nation, I often take an inventory of the participants to evaluate the greatest concerns in their lives. The question I ask repeatedly is, "In what area of your life do you need to experience and express the power of Christ?" Most of these responses have been "In my marriage," "In communicating in my marriage," "In my family."

I tried somewhat the same survey in the First Presbyterian Church in Hollywood. In preparation for a Lenten series of Wednesday evening meetings, I wanted to build the content around the deepest needs my people were experiencing. There is nothing more foolish than an answer to an unasked question and nothing more powerful than a clearly articulated, personally illustrated, biblically-rooted answer to the central questions people are asking. We passed out cards on successive Sundays on which was written, "My greatest need is:" There was room for each person to write what he discerned to be his most pressing need. The response was

overwhelming. Many of the evangelical Christians in my congregation expressed that their most excruciating problems were in their marriages. They found it most difficult to share what they believed in their homes, found their relationship with their mates to be one of the most challenging to express Christ's love, and discovered the greatest contradiction to their commitment to Christ to be in the kind of persons they were in their marriages. Needless to say that series and subsequent programs have been established to meet this expressed need.

Off Target

The Church in North America has hit wide of the mark in its inability to be personal, practical and penetrating in healing what I call the hidden malignancy of contemporary Christians. The Church must be a healing community in which people's emotional needs are met by Christ, and an equipping center for the ministry of the laity to be faithful in society's central structure, the family. Congregations must become laboratories of life in which remedial, reconciling, renewing help is given to enable people to discover Christ's strategy in their marriages.

The virulent virus of religion clogs the bloodstream of the Body of Christ in North America. As man's effort to win, placate, please, or serve a power greater than himself, religion blocks the jugular vein of Christ's grace. Many congregations have become more religious

than gracious. The result is a bland conceptualism, a competitive self-righteousness and a compulsive pretense to measure up. The Gospel has been replaced by a contemporary allegiance to self-generated goodness and propriety. The consequence is that the local church is often the last place where people can be themselves, expose

"Many of the evangelical Christians in my congregation expressed that their most excruciating problems were in their marriages. They found it most difficult to share what they believed in their homes...and discovered the greatest contradiction to be the kind of persons they were in their marriages."

their needs, experience the re-orientation of their values around the mind of Christ, explore the healing of their emotional wounds and exchange honestly about difficulties in their relationships. The Church is not personal enough to illustrate the impact of the Gospel to help people to see what Christ

could do with them and their marriages.

Ill Equipped

In seminars for Christian divorcees around the country, I have tabulated the effectiveness of the congregations of which these divorced people were a part. Many of them found their pastors concerned and loving, but often ill equipped to help them. Church officers were often little help because of tensions in their own marriages. Fellow members were part of a conspiracy of silence, or far too outspoken in favor of either the husband or wife. Many of the divorcees agreed that the one comment they had heard from their fellow members was that, "I had no idea you were going through this difficulty. You're the last person I would have suspected would get divorced!" Judgment, stigma, a sense of failure, inability to be Christian enough, and sin were communicated verbally, non-verbally, and in the body language of subsequently strained social relationships.

Reasons for this are many. Christian marriage has been ineffectively dealt with in most congregations. Too little preparation has been given for marriage, too little help in assisting married people to discover Jesus' style and strategy for marriage, and too little remedial opportunity for healing and hope for people who are discouraged and disturbed by the distance between their expectations for marriage and what they are ex-

periencing.

Most Disturbing Problem

My conversations with clergy in unguarded times of sharing at clergy conferences lead me to believe that marriage is one of the most disturbing problems in their own personal lives. Many find their own marriages to be the area of life which most often contradicts what they say and do in their leadership roles. It is a quirk of leaders to avoid subjects and implications of the Gospel in which they are most ineffective themselves. The nature of the contemporary ministry, with its time, energy and emotional demands, militates against healthy marriage and fulfilling family life. To whom can a clergyman talk when he faces a breakdown in communication in his home? His superiors in church structures determine his destiny. He thinks that his members demand that he be the "Pastor Perfect". The consequence is that he must bank the fires to endure the long, cold night of failure. And what's worse, he must pretend. The church members must do the same with him and church officers. The hidden malignancy is left to spread its roots into the heart of the Body.

4 Biblical Marriage

The purpose of this paper is to honestly face this problem. I want to talk about the biblical meaning of marriage; the discovery of Christian marriage by Christians who are married but have never experienced the Lordship of Christ for marriage as it was meant to be;

"To whom can a clergyman talk when he faces a breakdown in communication in his home? His church superiors determine his destiny. He thinks that his members demand that he be the 'Pastor Perfect.' The consequence is that he must bank the fires and endure the long, cold night of failure."

the role of the Church as the laboratory for marriage enrichment; and the ministry of the laity in marriage evangelism to touch and heal one of America's aching sores.

THE MEANING OF MARRIAGE

We must return to Christ himself for the focus of the biblical meaning of marriage. In his response to the Pharisee's questions about divorce, he pressed them back to the roots of God's eternal purpose for life, marriage and the family. A prayerful and thoughtful study of Mark 10:5-12, when considered in the light of the other Gospel passages on marriage and divorce, gives God's intent for marriage. The recovery of Christian marriage begins with the profound message of the Master. Only what is effectively rediscovered, can be dynamically reproduced. We must do just that.

Easy Out

The context of the text on marriage focuses our own times. Divorce was easily obtained. The jeopardy of family life resulted. The Pharisees did not come to Jesus for his wisdom on how to solve the problem of divorce but to pit him against Moses and his commandment. They did not see divorce as failure or inadequacy, but as a volatile subject for disputation. This gives us insight into the disregard of the sacredness of marriage among the leaders of Israel. Divorce had become so common that it was no longer a matter of concern or conscience. The Phari-

sees knew that divorce was lawful. Their question was a trap. "Is it lawful for a man to divorce his wife?" Note the emphasis, "Is it lawful?" Not, "Is it the only way to deal with an impossible, broken relationship, when everything else has been tried?" Or, "Is there a possibility of forgiveness, admission of failure, and a chance to try again?"

Right From the Start

Jesus' retort sent them back to the very one whom they were trying to expose him as opposing. "What did Moses command you?" The Pharisees' response came as quickly and easily as people repeat the conditions of divorce in our day. They said, "Moses allowed a man to write a certificate of divorce, and put her away." The prejudice of the masculine patriarchy is obvious immediately—so inconsistent with Jesus' reverence for the nobility of women and the sanctity of the family. Then Jesus had something to say about Moses that they had not anticipated. He boldly told them the deeper reason for Moses' injunction. Hardness of heart was that reason! God's intention was not that men should change wives like tunics, but allowing divorce was Moses' way of dealing with their sin and failure. Jesus used hardness of heart to describe resistance to God, negativism to his love, hostility to his intervention, refusal of reconciliation. For Jesus, a hard heart was a cold, calloused, cantankerous heart. It

was no longer open, warm, flexible, sensitive, and free. The Pharisees got more than they had bargained for! Now he had their attention for a much more profound message on marriage than they had anticipated.

The key for us is that Jesus' remedy for divorce is not more rules and regulations, but the rediscovery of God's eternal purpose for marriage. What started in a negative disputation occasioned a very positive proclamation. Jesus did not heal the wound lightly; he did not deal with symptoms. He cut to the core of the problem. The same must be true for us. We are not to wring our hands at the divorce statistics, but uncover the essential nature of marriage as God intended it to be. If the Church would do that, it could do something about the divorce rate!

When considering Jesus' message on marriage we know we are on holy ground. We must not only take off our shoes, but open our minds and hearts to allow what he said to reorient our presuppositions, cultural patterns, and prejudices.

Authentic Personhood

He began with the basic purpose of our existence. "But from the beginning God made them male and female." There is an image shattering, deeper truth here: God made us for himself. Life is not just to get married and have children, but to be authentic persons. Male and female are not only for procreation but for profession of faith and progress in personhood. We are

created persons, not puppets, given the capacity to know him, love him, and be filled with his Spirit. Jesus came, lived, died so that our basic need of reconciliation with God could be fulfilled. We belong to God! We are to live in fellowship with him as persons in the particular focus of our masculinity and femininity. Reconciliation with him, the experience of his forgiving love, issues forth in the healthy expression of our personalities.

Marriage is not the answer to the dilemma of life or loneliness! If we do not know him, we will never know marriage as he intended it to be. Our frenzied quest of marriage as the alternative to frustration and unfulfillment is inconsistent with God's plan. Yet in our culture a mate is supposed to do for us what only God can do. I believe that is the reason so many people find it difficult to be married and Christian. We have tried to fill the God-shaped void within with a spouse. It won't work. God created us for himself, and our hearts will be restless for him even in marriage. Unless we love God more than our mate, we can never love our mate, really!

This is crucial for our contemporary difficulties in marriage. There are no problem marriages, only problem people who are married to each other. The root of the problem is in our relationship with God. If we do not begin there, no beginning of new hope for a marriage is possible. We do what we do because of what we are. Only

God's love and forgiveness can heal that. Separation from him, rebellion against our purpose to love and trust him is the cause of our interpersonal difficulties. We cannot love anyone unselfishly or care deeply until Christ has invaded the bastion of our aggressive self-assertiveness. When our hearts have been melted by the love of the

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cross, and our minds have been gripped by the Good News of the Gospel, and our nature has been filled by the Holy Spirit, then alone can we be containers and transmitters of creative love in marriage.

The lie of our culture is ingrained in most Christians. We believe that love is a human capacity. Not so! It is a gift. The Holy Spirit's gift. The fruit of the Spirit in love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control

is desperately needed in every marriage. We are not to try to produce these by human effort in order that God will approve us. They are given to us because he has accepted and loved us in Christ. We are far too timid in sharing the secret of Christian marriage. It is a Christ healed, Spirit filled, relationship.

In many years of counseling troubled Christian marriages, I have learned to get to the taproot of the spiritual problem. The personality disorders or distortions can be exposed by the best methods of psychological analysis, but healing begins with an ultimate return to the living, loving Lord for forgiveness and a new creation.

Oneness in Marriage

That leads to Jesus' second point. "For this reason a man shall leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, and the two shall become one. So they are no longer two but one." Oneness is based in the equation of God's purpose for marriage: one plus one, plus one equals one! Christian marriage is for three people: a husband, a wife and our Lord. Christ's prayer for his disciples exposes the yearning of his heart for us today: "That they may be one."

A Christian marriage is not one in which there are two people who believe in Christ who are married to each other. The trouble with many marriages among Christians is exposed exactly at this point. A young woman articulated this distortion to me recently. "I am look-

ing for a good Christian man so I can have a Christian marriage," she said. She is in for painful disappointment if she continues to think that is all that is required for a Christian marriage. The sickness of marriages among so many church people is diagnosed in this fallacy.

Oneness in marriage is the result of experiencing the relational implications of the Gospel. It begins with grace. Because of the unmerited love of God, we are made right with him through the cross. This is the focal experience of our salvation. Acceptance of ourselves as loved, enables us to love ourselves as loved by him. This experience of self-acceptance frees a person to be delighted in himself, excited by his own uniqueness and potential. Emotional healing of the syndrome of self-negation and disease is made possible by this experience of grace in the depths of personality. This alone can reverse the "not okayness" which is communicated through our growing up years. Many "Christian" families have failed miserably in being a gracious womb of healthy self-appreciation. Too few children of Christian homes can say, "I'm glad I'm me!"

8 Self-esteem, based in God's grace, is an undeniable ingredient of Christian relationships. We cannot affirm anyone until self-acceptance has liberated us for extravagant self-giving. The litmus test of our relationship with the Savior is that we can be to others what he has been to us. Oneness is a direct

"Personality disorders can be exposed by the best methods of psychological analysis, but healing begins with an ultimate return to the living, loving Lord for forgiveness."



result. Our Lord is active continually to bring the "wholeness" of our experience of salvation to fruition in oneness in our relationships. But never more so than in marriage. When we know we are loved by him as we are, we can love another as he is; when we know we are forgiven, we can forgive; when we experience the freedom of acceptance, we can be accepting; when we've been liberated from self-negation by a Lord who is for us and not against us, we can be "for" our mates and on their side in their struggle for identity and self-appreciation; when the barriers to our own self-discovery have been removed by the Spirit within us, we can face and confess the barriers which exist between us as people.

Marriage is for oneness: loving, expressed in giving. A great Christian marriage is the unrestricted giving of mind, emotion, body, will and soul to a mate as if given to Christ. A marriage is most Christian, not when it is free of problems and difficulties, but when two persons open themselves to the Spirit of Christ, surrender their wills to him, commit their living to him, and as a conscious dedication, seek to love each other and give themselves to each other as they have been loved and given to by Christ. This is more than making Christ the head of the home. It is the daily, hourly, moment by moment willingness to see Christ in our mates and to serve, love and honor him by what we say, do, give, and forgive.

Only in this way can differences of personality be blended, the uniqueness of each affirmed, the defensiveness of our own rights be healed, and the hurts done to us be forgiven. The miracle of Christian marriage occurs when two minds seek the mind of Christ. Thought patterns, values, preconceptions and expectations can be unified only as we seek to know and express his mind for us. Another word used to translate Paul's Philipian term, "mind of Christ," is disposition. This is thought in personality expression. Our disposition in marriage is radically altered when it is shaped around Christ's person, purpose and power. An emotionally loving Christian who has experienced the healing of his memories and has actually felt the penetration of Christ's love, can express warmth with the gift of his emotions. Then when the will is liberated to deliberately seek Christ's will with a mate, he can unite two people in profound closeness as fellow adventurers in the new life. Marriage and the family become expressions of the Kingdom of God, his rule within, between and amongst. In this context, two bodies can be given in unreserved sexual freedom to satisfy, enjoy and delight each other as gifts of God. That's what Paul Tournier calls "total marriage" and what one of T. S. Elliot's characters tried to express by saying to his mate, "The new person—us!"

A great marriage flows out of the

oneness that God intended. He not only created us for himself but for one another as his gifts. Marriage is a supreme expression of this intention. "So they are no longer two, but one." What keeps us from this oneness is sin.

But the gifts of God in our mates are often strangely wrapped in the tissues of cultural, psychological, and personality patterns. The honeymoon is soon over and the challenge of spending a lifetime with another person is formidable. What can be done with our human nature that, regardless of what we believe, is bent toward separateness and bristled individualism? Everyone who is married knows of those things which debilitate oneness.

Building or Breaking

That presses us on to Jesus' challenge, "What, therefore, God has joined together, let not man put asunder." Often, we have interpreted this statement to mean external forces and persons who wrench apart the oneness God intended for a couple. Or we relegate it to a defense against divorce. I want to go deeper.

What are the internal seeds of destruction in a couple's own relationship which put asunder what God has joined together? This forces us to consider the dehumanizing and debilitating attitudes, patterns and traits with which we negate or nullify the oneness God wants to give. Bartered love, hidden agendas, inability to listen, refusal to express initiative affection, determined repatterning of an-

other's personality, manipulative behavior, and judgmentalism are unproductive devices people use to gain control in the "power game" of marriage. The question, "Who's in charge here?" is beneath the tug of will. The masochism of human nature is nowhere more vividly dramatized than in our distortion of the one relationship which can give greatest pleasure and satisfaction and in our devaluation of the one person who, if loved and affirmed, can give us the greatest ego refortification.

BUILDING BLOCKS

Now I want to deal in a very positive way with things we do in marriage which put asunder the oneness God wants to give. Five things have worked for me and my wife. I have found that they also are extremely helpful to others to whom I speak in marriage seminars and in individual counseling. They are honesty, vulnerability, working contracts, initiative love, and affirmation.

Honesty

Honesty is not just telling the truth. In marriage it is being open to the truth about ourselves. The persistent work of the Holy Spirit is to illuminate Christ's love and to show us ourselves. The two are inseparable, but the latter is most difficult. This is the daring prayer of the Psalmist. "Search me, O God, and know my heart! Try me and know my thoughts! And see if there be any wicked way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting!" (Psalm 139:23-29) He wanted God

to introduce him to himself, to excavate deeply and expose the truth about his thoughts. This prayer is a good place to begin to see ourselves in marriage, especially when "wicked ways" is understood in its root meaning of forced labor or compulsive patterns. The Psalmist wanted God to get to the bottom of his heart

"When the will is liberated to deliberately seek Christ's will with a mate He can unite two people in a profound closeness as fellow adventurers in the new life."

and personality structure to show him the things he did which deliberately opposed God's way for him.

When I pray this prayer and allow God to show me what I am like, then I can see what I have done or been to break the oneness God intended for my marriage. If I begin with myself and not my wife's faults, tabulated out of an "if it weren't for her" reservoir of judgment, then I know what I must do to change. I can still remember the time I prayed, "God help me!" in the first year of our marriage. I was constantly tripping over the

perpendicular pronoun and was not able to creatively love my wife in the language and ways she needed. I had acquired a thick membrane between my emotions and my highly polished rhetoric by abusing my years of theological and psychological training. God answered that prayer. I was able to surrender my efforts to remold my wife and began to accept her as the very special and unique gift God had given me. The truly fulfilling and satisfying marriage I have now after almost twenty-five years began that night I asked God to take control of my marriage and make me the man he needed me to be in our life together. I am thankful for the liberating secret he gave me about radical self-honesty because it has enabled me to empathize with people who struggle with problems in their marriages. New hope usually begins for me and them in the prayer, "Lord, change my marriage, beginning with me!"

I have found it helpful to get people to take a clean sheet of paper and prayerfully allow God to guide them in writing down what their expectations of marriage were when they fell in love and were married and what has happened to that dream. Then I ask them to list the things they have done and are consistently doing to debilitate that hope. It's only after that is done that I allow them to write out what they feel their mates have done which disturbs them. Christian honesty is not telling another

person his faults; it is being honest before God about ourselves and our failures.

Vulnerability

The next step is equally necessary. Vulnerability means that the things we have confessed to God must be expressed to our mates. It's comparatively easy to tell God what we have been, but to

"People have asked it a thousand times: 'What if you are willing to be vulnerable and your mate isn't?' My answer is to dare to do it regardless. Do it because of Christ's love. Do it out of love for the other person, and do it because you love yourself."

expose ourselves to our mates demands even greater courage. That's what initiates healing. It opens remedial conversation, makes way for mutual confession, enables healing and provides the possibility of a new beginning.

A question begs for an answer at this point. People have asked it thousands of times, "What if you are willing to be vulnerable and your mate isn't?" My answer is to

dare to do it regardless. Do it because of Christ's love; do it out of love for the other person; and do it because you love yourself. The cleansing of honesty, vulnerably communicated, will provide the assurance that we have done what love demands to go to the uttermost in seeking a depth relationship.

In most cases, this vulnerability is contagious. It begets a response of openness. If we follow James' admonition to "confess your sins to one another and pray for one another, that you may be healed," the steam of the other person's judgment is let out of the boiler of resentment. It's difficult to accuse a person of the very things he has confessed. The result is introspection and a reciprocity of honesty.

Working Contracts

This opens the way to the third aspect of healthy relationships. Honesty and vulnerability can never replace the true expression of our needs. A part of loving one's self as loved by Christ is the freedom to be equally open about our expectations. Without this, anger will fester and block creative love.

Marriage is more than a contract, yet a great marriage has contractual dimensions. It is absolutely essential to clarify what two people need and expect from their marriage. Again writing can be creative. Hidden agendas are destructive, but when husbands and wives clarify and talk out what they want, then neither need shadow

box with suppositions. Life's changing demands and the evolving of our personalities necessitates renegotiations of our hopes and dreams. Being Christ's person in marriage does not mean the negation of our unique personalities nor the relinquishment of the kind of marriage we feel guided by him to desire and work for. If there

"She was a burning caldron of guilt and remorse. She had decided that no one who loved Christ should have such feelings and that she was the only Christian who had such fantasies!"

were more open expression prior to marriage, a more creative give and take, some marriages would never be consummated.

Because romance often swallows up authentic exchange of goals, people put off sorting out their needs and desires in the hope that life together in the joy of marriage will solve differences. It seldom does. Often it only intensifies them. When this happens, people need help to talk about aspects of their life together which are not satisfying and creative. A new agreement needs to be hammered out and

tried together. Most frustrations in marriage come from unexpressed desires and uncommunicated dreams. When these are brought out into the open, a realizable new working agreement can be worked out. This needs to be done repeatedly and often. We need to learn the Christian art of negotiation in marriage. We cannot live satisfactorily without certain undeniables, but we should also be willing to see secondary desires as "trade offs" for crucial things we need and want. A healthy marriage is punctuated by lots of these Christ-centered "bartering sessions."

In this process, people need sensitive assistance in understanding the dynamics of why they chose a certain mate, what are the roots of their image of marriage and what it is that prompts them to want a particular kind of marriage. For example, I have come to believe that people select a mate in affirmation or negation of the parent of the opposite sex. This is natural, but volatile. With the mixed feelings we all have about parental influence or lack of it, we run the danger of pressing a person into a straight jacket or reincarnated expectation, or work out unresolved tensions and hostilities of childhood.

I counseled a woman the other day whose father was a tough, hard-hitting baron of industry. He was strong, manipulative and dictatorial. Her feelings about him were a mixture of anger and

admiration. The first prompted her to marry a weak, "milquetoast" man whom she proceeded to dominate and control. The latter made her dissatisfied with his lack of masculinity. Underneath, her admiration for her father's strength won out, and she proceeded to try to reshape her husband to be stronger and was constantly nagging him for his lack of forcefulness. The significant thing for our consideration in this paper is that this woman is a committed Christian, a leader in her church and a pious person of prayer. What prompted her to seek help were her hidden sexual fantasies with other men and her infatuation with several men with whom she works. All the men who attracted her were strong, dynamic men. Because of her deep Christian convictions, she was a burning caldron of guilt and remorse. She had decided that no one who loved Christ should have such feelings and that she was the only Christian who had such fantasies! The truth is that those like her are legion in most congregations. She needed Christ-guided counseling to see what was happening to her and then become part of a fellowship group which supported her in sorting out the implications of what she discovered about herself and her marriage.

Cultural patterns also contribute to people's image of marriage. We all participate in contributing to the idea that marriage is a panacea and blissful in every way. Most people are left with self-incrimination

when trouble begins. They feel something must be wrong with them because they are failing in the one relationship they are given to believe is the answer to all their needs. The pretense of Christian friends incarcerates them in the feeling that if they only loved Jesus more, everything would be all right. The point is that love for Jesus

"Often what little preaching and teaching about marriage that is done in the church sandbags people with the illusion of perfection."

should provide the freedom to face the difficulties and receive help.

Often what little preaching and teaching about marriage that is done in the church sandbags people with the illusion of perfection. Preachers talk a great deal about ideal marriage and little about the dynamics of dealing with our humanity. The love of Christ should free us to see ourselves, honestly consider our wish-dreams for marriage, change what in ourselves is crippling a relationship and prayerfully negotiate the particulars of lifestyle, values, finances, and family life.

Initiative Love

But all of this is impossible with-

out the gift of initiative love and affection. This is the freedom to act on what prayer and creative counseling has revealed. The liberating question which I find breaks the bind of catatonic immobility of a marriage stuck on dead center is, "If you loved Christ with all your heart, what are the three things you would do to express his love to your mate?" I often suggest a "just because" period of a thirty-day experiment. Consider first what a mate needs and wants. Are they creative and constructive? Would they signal to a mate that we are willing to change before our standards are met? Then the challenge is to do exactly those things, "just because" of Christ's love and as an expression of initiative affection. I have seen marriages revolutionized when people have tried this thirty-day experiment.

In a congregation I served some time ago, I gave the "just because" challenge to both the Men's Counsel and the Women's Association. It happened that my talks to both groups occurred on the same day. I was amazed to see what happened in the troubled marriages of that congregation.

Every day can be that kind of day for Christian marriage. The question is constantly before a Christian who desires to find Christ's strategy for his marriage. "What can I do to express willingness to change, openness to grow together, freedom to accept the other person and desire to do the

practical or romantic or affectionate things which will delight and communicate esteem?"

Affirmation

Affirmation is the sum and substance of all of this. It is the final key to a Christian marriage. We are all starved for affirmation. We dare take no one for granted. Professional success, the accolades of

"The greatest gift a couple can give their children is to experience Christ's love in their marriage. A child will reproduce in his own life and marriage what he has seen and felt at home."

others, the encouragement of progress in other areas of life will never satisfy the need for affirmation in marriage. Marriage is not to straighten out another person or reshape him to our specifications. It is a God-intended relationship in which the parched places of our lives are watered by the affirmation of love in action. It is Christ in us reaching out to another to communicate that, in spite of inadequacies and failures, he or she is accepted. The desire to be all that our potential affords flows naturally from that affirmation.

A very human reaction to this was expressed by a man the other day, "Why should I affirm my wife? It will only solidify her determination to be the person which I can't stand!" My response was to ask him what he did like about his wife. I tried to help him find the things he could affirm honestly without negating his integrity. It

"Church boards need to ask. 'What are the needs of our people in their marriages, and what can we do in the parish program to meet these needs?'"

would have been more his problem than hers if he could think of none. He was an Elder in his church, and his difficulties in his marriage soured every aspect of his leadership in his church. But when he tried the liberating power of affirmation, not only did his wife begin to change, but he also began to grow out of the negative syndrome which had blocked the Spirit of Christ in his total life.

The implications of a healthy marriage are profound for the establishment of a creative family. The greatest gift a couple can give their children is to experience Christ's love in their marriage. The

warmth and security will nurture the realization of self-esteem in them. A child internalizes the conflict and frustration of his parents. But the far-reaching result will be that he will inadvertently reproduce in his own life and subsequently in his own marriage what he has seen and felt. The sickness or health will be "visited to the third and fourth generations."

I cannot deal extensively here with the power of these dynamics. They are simply practical, relational Christianity applied to the problems and potential of marriage. Having made this very introductory clarification of Christian marriage, we must now ask how can we help Christians in the Church to discover Christ's power in their marriages?

LORD OF THE CHURCH

The missing ingredient in contemporary church people is the Lordship of Christ. Many who have discovered Christ as Savior have greatest difficulty in trusting their relationships and the affairs of their living to him. The commitment we made to Christ when we began the new life must be repeated specifically and particularly for marriage. After people have tried to live together and find some semblance of happiness, they are usually confronted with personality problems which seem insurmountable. Our Lord stands at the tightly locked door of our marriages with his loving entreaty, "Behold, I stand at the door and knock; if anyone hears

my voice and opens the door, I will come in to him and eat with him, and he with me." (Revelation 3:20) In the case of marriage the pronouns are changed from "him" to "them" and "us." Growth in Christ is allowing him to enter, control and guide all facets of life. There is no greater need among Christian couples than this. The marriage

"The aching need in our society is to deploy couples who have found new life in their own marriages."

ceremony is so intertwined with custom and sentimentality that the reality of the Lordship of Christ over the marriage relationship may be stated but it is not comprehended nor appropriated. Only after people have faced the challenge of marriage do they feel the need for the experience of the pledge they made.

Laboratory of Life

This is where the Church as a laboratory of life for the enrichment of marriage must be discovered and worked out. The life of the congregation must include two absolutely necessary aspects. The biblical message of God's intention for Christian marriage must be explicated, communicated,

personally illustrated and forcefully witnessed to by clergy and laity. And equally necessary, the structure of the program of the Church must be reshaped.

The content of preaching, the curriculum of adult Christian education, the strategy of small groups, and practical conferences on marriage must become the backbone of every program. The health of the Church, and subsequently the nation, is at stake!

The pastor is pivotal. He must become open and vulnerable enough to allow the congregation to see that his own marriage is a frontier of his growing faith. This will provide an atmosphere in which Christ's surgery can be performed on the hidden malignancy of marriage difficulties in the congregation. His preaching and teaching should become a spearhead of adventuresome discovery of what can happen in a marriage in which Christ is welcomed and trusted completely.

Goal-Oriented Planning

Church boards need to get back to goal-oriented planning for the congregation. A page from marketing research will help us ask, "What are the needs of our people in their marriages and families, and what can we provide in the parish program to meet these needs?" The realizable goals should be set. A basic minimum should include a careful revision of adult education materials and the provision of leisurely, contemplative, honest, open conferences and retreats for

couples and families. The church of all places must become a vulnerable fellowship in which failures, needs to grow, and dependence on power of Christ's plan for marriage can be expressed.

A marriage enrichment conference should include times of teaching, specific witnessing to what Christ has done in the lives of people who have begun the adventure with him in their marriages and prolonged periods of quiet for individual contemplation and introspection. People need a chance to sort out alone with our Lord what is said. Then they need time together as couples. This should be punctuated by small group experiences in which people can express both their frustrations and discoveries with other couples who are fellow adventurers and pilgrims on the way to new life in their marriages. Again, writing out expectations, disappointments and genuine affirmations will help crystalize each person's and couple's unique situation. Times of dedication or services of remarriage are helpful at the conclusion of such conferences.

These conferences or retreats usually forge a deep bond of mutual concern and supportive love between couples. Often they need small enabling groups to continue to live out what they are discovering. Like flyers, they need to move from one omni point to another in progressing toward the clarified quality of Christian marriage. A biblically oriented,

sharing, caring, praying group makes this possible. People can rediscover where they are, confess patterns which do not work, and get marching orders for the next steps with the Savior in their homes. Study guides, helpful discussion questions and group methods need to be provided these "churches in miniature".

"The dynamics of parent-child relationships can be immensely helped by both adults and children sharing with other families what has worked or failed in their homes."

Evangelism

This all has a very exciting evangelistic implication. Surveys indicate the marriage and family problems are infecting the tissues of North American life. If the church could begin to help Christians deal with the hidden malignancy, then it could deploy couples for a very needed kind of relational evangelism in the context of marriage. The bridge of relationship could be built to non-Christians to meet their problems in marriage and family life. The aching need in our society is to deploy couples who have found new life in their own marriages.

Creative evangelism has always been sharing Christ in the context of people's particular personal and interpersonal problems.

Some of the most effective lay evangelists I know are couples whose marriages have been healed and who are free to talk with non-church couples about what they are discovering. They march before my mind's eye. They are broken bread and poured out wine for other couples in trouble and for others who realize in their presence what's lacking in their own marriages.

One couple comes to mind particularly. Their relationship with each other and Christ was on the rocks. They sought help and were led to find Christ's power for their marriage. Now they see that the painful process through which they have passed is for what Christ wants to do through them with other couples. They have discovered the secret that everything that has happened to them is for what Christ wanted to do in them and everything they go through now in the evolving process of growing in oneness is raw material for identifying with others in need. They have a group of couples which meets in their home. I can account for dozens of marriages which have been saved through these two. But the crucial thing is that they have been able to lead many of the husbands and wives to Christ, to a new marriage and eventually into the church.

The urgency of the Church focusing on marriage and the

family is not only to make congregations therapeutic, viable healing centers, but also to prepare couples for ministry in the world Christ died to save.

Renewal of Marriage

Yet, any thoughtful analysis of congregations in North America forces us to admit that we are not what Christ has called us to be to meet this problem. A national renewal movement focused on marriage and the family is badly needed. It is not too late! Allow me to conclude with a hope, a vision, a dream.

There is a need for clergy conferences focused on the Church's role in Christian marriage and family life. Pastors desperately need an opportunity to deal with this area in their own lives and their congregations. We need to begin with ourselves. Nothing can happen through us which is not happening to us. Then the image of the congregation as a healing community needs to be communicated, focused and modeled. Practical, useable materials for adult education and strategies for marriage enrichment conferences need to be prepared and presented. Clergy must have an opportunity to experience the dynamics of such a conference in order to reproduce them in their own congregations.

If these opportunities for clergy could be regional, pastors could be helpful to each other in leading local conferences and assisting each other in the intensification of each other's congregational programs.

Often cross-fertilization of leaders is helpful. Pastors could assist in leading conferences in each other's churches. Lay witnesses who are discovering breakthroughs in Christ-liberated marriages could be used to incarnate the viability of what they have been given and serve as small group enablers. This first step could be followed by a

“What we want to happen in the Church in North America and in society must begin with us. Our Lord desires a model of hope in what happens here. He wants to renew our relationship with Him and send us home as new people.”

creative approach to “Family Life Conferences” in which couples could be helped to share with their children what is happening to them. Families need each other to discover the Church in the home. Often the dynamics of parent-child relationships can be immensely helped by both adults and children sharing with other families what has both worked and failed in their own families.

A FINAL WORD

The CONTINENTAL CONGRESS ON THE FAMILY should be more than an exchange of theories, conceptual reflection, and seminar discussion. It must be all these in depth but something much more. What we want to happen in the Church in North America and in our society must begin with us. Our Lord desires a model of hope in what happens here. He wants to renew our relationship with him and send home as new people those of us who are married. All of us as leaders need a new vision of his dream for the families in which we live, and, the families we will touch as counselors, pastors, church leaders, and social workers.

The Vision Is His

Our assurance is that the Lord is behind this Congress. It was his idea! We can dare to ask his blessing on all that's said and done because the vision is his. Prayer for our time together begins with him, sweeps down into our hearts and gives us boldness to ask for what he is more ready to give than we may be to ask. He desires to change our nation beginning with the strategic unit of the family. I am thankful and delighted to be a part of the adventure with you.

The opinions expressed in this book are those of the author and not necessarily those of the Continental Congress on the Family.

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ST. LOUIS '75

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of Phoenix, Arizona
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a Chicago-based Church Renewal
organization.*

An interesting assumption is reflected in the title of this paper: the church exists to minister, and one of the focuses of ministry is to be the family. The flow of ministry and support is viewed not as from the individual or family group to the local church but as from the church. The church is a support system, nurturing and equipping individuals and families for growth and for effective function. If this assumption is accepted, then thinking about the church and family, and the kinds of ministries the local church develops, will be radically affected.

To both argue for assumptions and provide practical examples of a church lifestyle growing out of them would require more space than is available here. So rather than argue for the assumption made in the title, or for presuppositions on which I operate, I will simply state them and proceed to indicate how they work out in practice.

**THE LOCAL CHURCH
AS A SUPPORT SYSTEM:
PRESUPPOSITIONS**

2 That Scripture portrays the local church as a transforming community is frequently acknowledged these days. In the Body believers minister to one another in such a way that growth in Christlikeness is both individual and corporate

(Ephesians 4:12-16). In this community each believer is gifted by the Holy Spirit. Thus each is a minister to others as well as ministered to by others. In the context of interpersonal relationships within the Body (Hebrews 10:25 26), ministry is an ebb and flow, a two-way process.

“The church is a support system, nurturing and equipping individuals and families for growth and for effective function.”

Realizing that the family is not, in its nuclear expression, a “church,” is also important. That is, the family is not meant to be a self-contained system. Family members, as individuals, and in all their family roles, have a tremendous need for support by the local Body. The notion that husband, wife and children are a complete unit without need for support from without is one of the romanticized fictions of secular society; it is not biblical. With the contemporary strains placed on the nuclear

family by such factors as the rapid pace of change, the pluralization of society, the distribution of functions that were once the family’s to other units of society, etc., for family members and family units to receive support from the local church is all the more vital.

These considerations give rise to a number of propositions which are treated here as presuppositions. They are not argued for so as to move quickly to practical considerations but they are affirmed.

1. The local church must accept responsibility to minister to and support believers “in family,” and to help individuals fulfill vital family roles.
2. Ministry approaches developed by the local church must avoid the “program” approach of “ministering to” but should involve believers in processes where ministry flow is two-way, with support given in warm, sharing, interpersonal settings. For example, a series of sermons on the family is *not* to be mistaken for the whole of what the church can do for families.
3. Families need support as units, with specific help given to develop a relational climate which makes possible ministries that flow two ways within each family unit.

4. Family members individually need help developing an understanding of, and skill in fulfilling, divinely ordained roles. Thus the widows of the New Testament church ministered to young wives, teaching them how to love their husbands and children (Titus 2:4, 5). Support is needed

“Family members, as individuals, and in all their family roles, have a tremendous need for support by the local Body. The notion that husband, wife and children are a complete unit without need for support from without is one of the romanticized fictions of secular society; it is not biblical.”

for the husband to understand his role; for parents to learn how to guide their children and exer-

cise their authority constructively, etc.

5. The introduction of *concepts* alone will be insufficient to provide the needed support. Basic to the church's support task is helping believers develop a distinctive Christian lifestyle and express that lifestyle in family living. The development of lifestyle is *never* accomplished by verbalizing of ideas alone.

**INCARNATION OF THE IDEA:
PRINCIPLES**

The final presupposition stated above, that family ministry must involve the local Body in supporting development of a Christian family lifestyle, and that lifestyle cannot be developed by communicating ideas alone, is a critical one. Developing lifestyle requires socialization—the sharing of a total way of living encompassing beliefs, values, attitudes, emotions and behaviors. This kind of lifestyle development is clearly implied in Old and New Testaments.

Deuteronomy 6 and 11 stress socialization. Only what is real about relationship with God in the parents' lives can be shared with the children. Such sharing is not to take place in the formal educational setting but in the flow of daily life and shared experience.

In Luke 6:40 Jesus points out that discipleship rather than educa-

tion is at issue. He affirms that "a disciple when he is fully taught will be like his teacher." Likeness is what is communicated, and what is to be communicated, in Christian faith.

When Christ sought to train men for ministry, he chose 12 "that they

"Family ministry must involve the local Body in supporting development of a Christian family lifestyle."

might be with Him" (Mark 3:14). In the subsequent years they experienced what He experienced, and learned by participating in His ministry. Far more was communicated than simply ideas about God.

In the missionary strategy of the early church stress was laid on incarnation of the Word in the life of the missionary (I Thessalonians 2:8-11). "Let me be your example" Paul often said to new converts. "Imitate me, as I imitate Christ."

Because young Timothy had intimately known both Paul's teaching and his way of life (II Timothy 3:10, 11), Timothy himself was

equipped to move on to his own ministry.

In selecting leaders for the young church, Timothy and Titus were instructed to confirm men who exemplified Christian maturity. Their attitudes and behaviors were to be consistent with the faith. Those who were only able to mouth Christian teaching were not acceptable as leaders: in leaders the spoken Word and the lived Word must correspond.

Why This Emphasis?

Why this biblical emphasis on correspondence of Word and life? *The communication of Christian faith has always been a matter of communicating lifestyle. The total way of life — those values and attitudes and behaviors that bundled together with beliefs constitute the growing person — must give living expression in this world to the reality revealed in God's Word.*

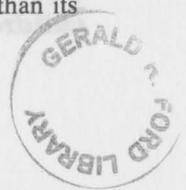
This principle of incarnation, or correspondence between what is said and what is lived, is of vital importance to the church concerned about family ministry. The message a local Body communicates to and about the family is conveyed more by what it *does* than what it says. What the church does must always correspond with what it says it believes.

For instance, a local church may sponsor a marriage enrichment

seminar. But if the pastor is too busy for his own family, and if the church program constantly breaks up the family unity by involving different family members most nights of the week, the people will come to place a low not high priority on the family. The lifestyle

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of the church and its family communicates more effectively than its words.



The church may affirm that nurture of children is the primary concern of parents. Yet if the church programs its children's Christian education through various church agencies, and invests time, money and training on activities for children *not* designed to equip or involve parents, then church mem-

6 **"The church may affirm that nurture of children is the primary concern of parents. Yet if the church programs its children's Christian education through various church agencies, and invests time, money and training on activities for children not designed to equip or involve parents, then church members will gradually come to perceive the church as responsible for their children."**

bers will gradually come to perceive the *church* as responsible for their children. They may verbally accept the idea that nurture is the parents task, but parents' actions will reveal that that responsibility has been abandoned to the church organization.

Thus if the church is actually to help the family face the future, and to become the powerful influence in the life of each member which God intended when he instituted the family, local bodies need to:

1. Recover its identity as a transforming community,
2. Recognize the importance of the family and the family's need for support,
3. Develop approaches to family ministry which *incarnate* rather than simply *verbalize* a family-enriching way of life.

**THE AFFIRMATION
OF THE FAMILY:**

PRACTICAL APPROACHES

For the church to give the family the support and help it needs in the contemporary world, the practices of the local Body must be shaped to affirm the family. That is, the life processes of the local church must incarnate both concern for the family and strengthening of individuals for family roles and strengthening of the unit. Here are just a few of the approaches essential for the church to take.

Modeling by Leaders.

The key biblical role of leadership focuses on the example leaders provide of the reality of Bible truths. Thus Phillips' appropriately paraphrases Peter's instructions to leaders entrusted with charge of God's flock, "don't be little tin gods, but examples of Christian living" (II Peter 5:3). What leaders do to model rather than what leaders say shapes the life of the Body.

For pastors and elders (deacons, board, etc.), this means first of all a careful reassessment of priorities. Too often the "ministry" is given priority over a man's family. Thus night after night away from home with committees and projects and counseling, etc., are justified as a "response to God's calling." If the concept that the leader *leads by example* (is accepted), and that his modeling is a necessary base of his

7 **"To minister effectively to believers in the Body who are 'in family,' church leaders must set for themselves the same family priorities they urge on others."**

authority and power to move others, this excuse for setting aside family priorities is shown to be invalid. To minister effectively to believers in the Body who are "in family," church leaders must set for themselves the same family priorities they urge on others.

But modeling in this area is more than setting aside time to be with wife and children. The family lifestyle of the leader must also become visible to members of the congregation. A Minneapolis pastor sees *hospitality* as critical to his ministry. Couples from his church are invited weekly into his home to spend an evening. In the talking and sharing which are features of this low key evening, he invites the people of the Body to know him and his wife and children as persons, and seeks to know the visitors better in a personal way. Hospitality may not totally replace traditional pastoral visitation—but it is a far more significant way to build relationships between leaders and people and affirm in a quiet way the importance of the family.

Other quiet ways can also affirm the family unit's importance. A church in NewPort Beach, California, has a strong leadership core of elders. These men are the recognized and respected leaders of the church. Yet often gatherings of the elders are designed to include

the wives as well. Relationships within the leadership core are *family* relationships. This quiet demonstration that no role in the church is an "individualistic" one is a powerful example to members of the church that the married cannot understand themselves outside of this "we—one flesh" relationship. When couples' retreats and marriage enrichment seminars are held in this church, with the leaders' families visibly involved, the importance of the family is strongly affirmed in another quiet way. Of course leaders and their families can model affirmation of the family in many other ways. Messages from the pulpit do have a vital place. They provide important biblical orientation for believers, and demonstrate the leader's concern. For anything said by them to be truly heard, the critical thing here is that the practice of leaders *must* reflect their own personal commitment to their family and its members.

Modeling by Organization

Modeling by individuals is the most powerful means of affirming the family in the Body, but the structure of the church's organization also demonstrates the priority on the family.

For instance, in most churches commissions (committees, boards, etc.) are assigned to focus on

critical dimensions of the church's life. Thus there may be an evangelism commission, an education commission, a worship commission, etc. How about a *family life* commission? If elders are assigned

"Often gatherings of the elders are designed to include the wives as well. Relationships within the leadership core are family relationships. This quiet demonstration that no role in the church is an 'individualistic' one is a powerful example to members of the church that the married cannot understand themselves outside of this 'we—one flesh' relationship."

to serve as chairmen of the various commissions, is an elder also assigned to a group concerned with the support of the family?

The same organizational emphasis (or deemphasis) is also seen in the assignment of professional leaders. One of the church staff may be called especially to work with youth. In larger churches it is not unusual to have a visitation pastor and a Christian education director as well. Yet, if the church really believes that the center of nurture for children is the home, why not—as an increasing number of churches are doing—call a minister of family life?

At a church in Chester, Pennsylvania one member of the pastoral team did specialize in family ministry and counseling, and was sponsored by the church in setting up a family counseling center for those outside as well as within the local body. *Organizationally* this local church was strongly affirming the importance of the family unit, and seeking to support individuals in fulfilling creatively their family roles.

Modeling by Programming

Another way in which the church either affirms or denies the family is programming. This shapes many of the attitudes and priorities of its people.

A church in Oklahoma City was one of the first churches, some 15 years ago, to attempt to restructure its calendar to free time for families. Noting that every night in

the week activities were planned for various members of the family, and that lay leaders as well as the pastors were normally involved in church activities six nights a week, the church restructured its activities

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to include everything on the Wednesday evening. This demanded many "sacrifices" including elimination of some programs and the choice of individuals between former activities. But it affirmed the importance of the family...and

had a very positive reception by pastors and people alike.

One Salem, Oregon church's "Ground the Family" week was a program designed to affirm the family. Using various activity plans, family interaction was designed to enrich the unit—and all church activities were cancelled.

“Many special ‘short term’ programs can be used to affirm the family. Marriage enrichment seminars, special emphases thru the church library focusing on books on family relationships, short training classes for parents, etc., are all avenues any local church can use to communicate to its members that the family is important—and to provide the kind of support that families need today.”



Family camp has become a significant program for many churches. The camp may be a simple Labor Day week-end experience—or an entire week away at a lake or mountain retreat. Some “family camps” make the mistake of breaking up the family unit as does much local church programming. Other family camps however keep the family units together, and focus on *helping mom and dad lead the children* in activities designed for fun, for opening communication lines, for spiritual explorations and enrichment.

An Atlanta, Georgia church took an exciting new resource and used it in a creative way. Gospel Light's *Family Life Today* magazine was given to each church family. The church was divided into two-family groupings, and rather than meeting in church for the traditional prayer meeting, each two-family group met for a quarter in homes. The two-family teams used the magazine's “family time” ideas for sharing and worship involving all ages. Evaluating, the pastor commented that next time he would take several weeks to model with his own family how to use the family time plans.

Many special “short term” programs can be used to affirm the family. Marriage enrichment seminars, special emphases thru

the church library, focusing on books on family relationships, short training classes for parents, etc., are all avenues any local church can use to communicate to its members that the family is important—and to provide the kind of support that families need today.

Modeling Within Programs

Planning new programs to affirm the family is not always necessary. The present activities of the local body provide many avenues.

A Christian education director of children's ministries in a Pasadena church works through her staff with families. Family times are planned which train parents how to

“The ministry to children is not seen as an ‘in church’ but an ‘at home’ issue. The works reach through the Sunday school into the home.”

communicate with their children through experience. Groups of parents meet informally to explore ways of solving common problems and meeting common needs. The ministry to children of this congre-

gation is not seen as an “in church” but an “at home” issue. The works reach through the Sunday school into the home.

At Our Heritage Church in Scottsdale, Arizona, “Family Style” Sunday school has replaced the traditional approach. A single master-teacher launches the learning experience of Sunday morning with a short, 5 to 10-minute introduction. Then the Sunday School is divided into two-family groupings. Mom, dad and all children from 4-11 are seen as a “family.” Those children whose parents do not come are “adopted” into one of the families there.) The parents and kids are given an eight and one-half by eleven sheet of paper on which are outlined six to eight different kinds of learning activities or studies. Each two-family group selects from the list, and moves on into its own learning experience. The learning activities are designed to encourage exploration of the Scriptures, sharing with others of inner feelings and experiences and applying truths discovered to present needs. Near the end of the Sunday school time, the whole school reassembles and one member of each two-family learning group shares a brief “report.”

This particular approach was adopted especially to affirm the family and the parent's role in nur-

ture. In Family Style Sunday school parents are being trained by participation to share with their own children. The instruction sheet is "the teacher"—and parents and

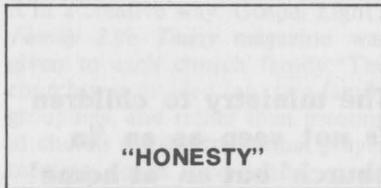
"Are there ways you respond to your child that makes it difficult for him/her to be honest with you? (Sometimes over-disciplining, suspicion and doubt of expressed motives, etc. actually encouraged your children to shade the truth!) See if you can help each other see any ways of responding you have developed that may not be helpful and talk over how to correct them."

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children are viewed as learners together, helping the parents learn to *share* their faith rather than *tell*

information. In addition, the instruction sheet goes home with each family, and provides further ideas for exploring the week's topic as the family lives together.

Even the Sunday sermon can stimulate family interaction. The following reproduces a bulletin insert from *Our Heritage* following up a message on Acts 5:1-11. It is designed to help the family explore in its various settings (as individuals, husband-wife pairs and units including children) the content and personal meaning of the passage as it was developed by the pastor, Rev. Robert Girard.



1—PERSONAL STUDY

1. There are many motives for dishonesty (shading the truth in our favor, keeping some things back, our outright lies). How many can you think of that might motivate people in a close, personal relationship (such as marriage, the Church family, parent/child relationships, etc.) List at least 5 possible motives.
2. Which of these motives do you feel is most likely to affect your relationship within your home? Why?
3. Looking over the story of Ananias and Sapphira (Acts 5:1-11), what do you think motivated them?

**2—TALKABLE
(between husband and wife)**

1. Share at least one incident in which you were not completely honest with your spouse. Why did you act as you did? Is there any way your spouse could help you avoid similar incidents? How do you avoid such temptations—is there anything you have found that helps you remain open and honest with him/her?
2. Think about each of your children as an individual. Do you feel he or she is quite honest with you? (What makes you think so.) Are there any behavior traits that you've been troubled about recently? (Try to pinpoint specific incidents.) Think together about this: Are there ways you respond to your child that makes it difficult for him/her to be honest with you? (Sometimes over-disciplining, suspicion and doubt of expressed motives, etc. actually encourage your children to shade the truth!) See if you can help each other see any ways of responding you have developed that may not be helpful and talk over how to correct them.

**3—DO-ABLE
(with the family together)**

1. Read Acts 5:1-11 together, and talk about the following questions. (Parents, make this a time to *listen* to your children's opinions and to *share* your own ideas and experiences. *Don't just tell them* what they are to think and do.)
 - Why do you think these people planned to tell a lie?
 - What was so bad about this particular lie?
 - Would this kind of dishonesty with other members of God's family bring people closer together? Why, or why not?
 - Do you ever feel "far away" from other people in our family? Who? What makes you feel this way?

- Do you feel it is important for us to be honest with each other all the time? What will help us be really truthful?
- God punished Ananias and Sapphira very severely, because what they did hurt the church family. This helped others learn not to do what they had done.

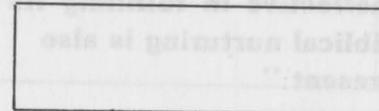
What will help us stop when we are being dishonest?

What will help us be really truthful with each other?

2. Make a "family fellowship flower" with one petal for each member of the family. When any member of the family feels "far away" from the others because of something he needs to tell to be really honest, he can take his petal and move it away from the "flower."

Sometimes it is hard to start sharing something that makes us uncomfortable. So when we notice a petal that's been moved "far away" we can sit down and talk with that person and help him tell us what's wrong.

Let's see if we can't keep our family fellowship flower close together all week! And let's help each other be honest with us by listening and caring.



In my own research these last three years I have come to feel increasingly that we must model *within present programs* the importance of the family, and work through present programs to shape and enrich family life. Thus this fall I am beginning a three year test of "Sunday School, PLUS," a new educational system that links the

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Sunday School and the home, and is designed to open up communication lines within the family, guide parents in sharing their faith with their children and build into the home those ministry flow principles which are at the root of communicating the biblical faith.

“A healthy stress on the importance of the Christian home and family is growing today. An awareness that tremendous pressures tend to tear the family apart, and render it ineffective in fulfilling its biblical nurturing is also present.”

Summary

A healthy stress on the importance of the Christian home and family is growing today. An awareness that tremendous pressures tend to tear the family apart, and render it ineffective in fulfilling its biblical nurturing is also present.

The danger is that the church will

grasp at superficial solutions to the family's very basic needs. Another danger is that the church will attempt to deal with family needs *apart from* the relationship of the unit and individuals with a local body of believers. While traveling seminars and enrichment weekends have a part in helping the family, it is only the *continuing long-term involvement in a ministering Body which can rebuild the Christian family's lifestyle.*

The support and help the family needs is help in rebuilding an effective family lifestyle. Patterns of behaving and feelings and valuing and thinking need shaping into a divinely ordained and biblically defined pattern. Such lifestyle changes do not come through the simple introduction of ideas. The gradual reshaping of lifestyle takes place in the ebb and flow of ministry, which is the give and take of supportive personal relationships within the Body of Christ.

Recognition of this places a great responsibility on the leadership of the local church. The local body must be designed (and in many cases drastically redesigned!) to affirm the significance of the family, and to provide those contexts in which lifestyle shaping ministry can take place. Helping the family face the future demands more than an annual Mother's Day sermon,

more than subscription to family magazines, more than lip service to the family's priority as a growing ground for vital faith.

“The danger is that the church will grasp at superficial solutions to the family's very basic needs.”

Today the church is on the edge of many great decisions. But certainly one of the most significant is

this: Are we willing to do what must be done for the church to help the family face an uncertain future? Or will we abandon the nuclear family to face essentially alone those forces it was not designed to overcome without the support of the Body?

To support or to abandon.

There seems to be no middle ground.

The opinions expressed in this book are those of the author and not necessarily those of the Continental Congress on the Family.

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What is a Family?



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ST. LOUIS '75

Love . . . thy family as thyself.

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**CONTINENTAL
CONGRESS ON
THE FAMILY**

ST. LOUIS '75

*Edith Schaeffer
is a distinguished
Christian author and lecturer.
She is the wife of
Dr. Francis Schaeffer
of L'Abri Fellowship
in Switzerland.*

In this day of women's awareness, dissecting of personalities, self-analysis, and the incessant asking of such questions as: "What is a man?" "What is a woman?" "What is a personality?" "Who am I?" "What is life?" "What is the universe?"—the question "What is the family?" is a very basic one.

No simple answer is available, nor are there merely several answers. A family is a complex blending of relationships. A family is an interaction of personalities, minds, and emotions. It is a living mobile. It is a museum of memories; it is form and freedom; it is a shelter; it is an economic unit; it is an endless number of things if it is as it ought to be.

A Living Mobile

A family may be thought of as a living mobile, made up of human personalities. It is a work of art that takes many years to produce but is never finished. The framework of a family gives form, yet the family mobile, constantly in motion, has freedom—for there are never any two days when any person in the family is at the same point of growth. Each individual is growing and changing in a multitude of areas—emotional, spiritual, physical, and mental. Every person in the family has an effect upon the other members in all of these areas. The family mobile is also meant to present a miniature picture of the much larger art form of the Family of Believers, those who have been reborn in Christ, with God as their Father.

The knowledge that people care in a warm, human, personal way often protects one from doing extreme or foolish things during times of sudden emotion, and encourages one to keep going when things seem hopeless or desperate. Caring promotes communication, which, in turn, needs to be worked at in every relationship. Everyone needs freedom to express himself without the fear of being misunderstood. This is basic to good communication.

No One Is Perfect

One thing should be made clear: No one is perfect; therefore, no relationships between two people are perfect, whether they be husband and wife, parent and child, or friends. Too many people daydream about having a perfect family, yet the perfect family

"A family is a complex blending of relationships—an interaction of personalities, minds and emotions. It is a living mobile... form and freedom. A family is an economic unit, a shelter, and a museum of memories."

simply does not exist on this earth. Over a period of time along with happiness, every family has some unhappiness, mistakes, frustrations,

and need for forgiveness. Paul wrote, "...tribulation worketh patience; And patience, experience; and experience, hope" (Romans 5:3, 4, cf. James 1:2). Patience cannot be without circumstances and actions which would naturally bring *impatience*. This is the way to *real* love. This is how one learns to accept another human being who is no more perfect than he is. Learning what human relationships are all about should begin in one's own family. As one begins to be patient in times of tribulation, the love of God will become more of a reality, and love for each other will grow into a richness that could not be possible without having lived through these tribulations together.

Someone in the family has to realize that it takes time, imagination, sacrifice, and planning to have good communication within the family. Someone must see that the overall relationship of the family is more important than breaking up over one blast of temper, or even a series of blasts and the frustrations of a long period of time. In addition, the Christian family must be guided by the Holy Spirit—yet it cannot be expected that *every* member of the family will be guided by the Spirit at *all* times or to the same extent.

In the twentieth century, not many people think of the family as a permanent lasting relationship. Too many people use families for temporary convenience—to be kept together only so long as they are fun or pleasing. This attitude

explains why so many marriages are splintered and homes are shattered. Every family mobile has been in danger of being broken. Every human being would like to

"Not many people in the twentieth century think of the family as a permanent or a lasting relationship."

run away, at one time or another, in search of perfection, or out of sheer frustration. However, continuity is vastly more important than insistence upon perfection, as perfection cannot be found in this world, and continuity is priceless!

People need to experience the beauty of being a part of a family mobile. Those who have not known of the existence of this beauty need to see it in action. In order to improve human relationships in the church and in the secular world, individual families have to realize that a valuable "art" career is to be started at home.

Family Environment

Great distress is expressed over ecological imbalances in nature. An ecologically correct environment is also needed for the development of balanced personalities. Without the proper environment, human beings will die emotionally, psychologically, and spiritually, just as a flower wilts or dies if it is denied the conditions it needs for growth. One basic purpose of the

family is to provide a balanced environment for the growth of human beings. It was God's idea to create first a father and mother to be ready for the first baby. He gave them the possibility of reproducing so that they could bring forth a human being who would be a part of each of them. As each person reproduced would be different from every other person...unity and diversity was demonstrated in God's Creation.

The Fall took place before the first baby was born. Because Adam and Eve chose to believe the lie of Satan rather than God's verbalized Word, the first family was a spoiled atmosphere for the first baby, instead of the atmosphere of security it was meant to be. Since that time, no baby has every been born into a *perfect* atmosphere.

What are the basic ingredients that go into an ecologically balanced environment for the growth of a child? A mother and a father are required to start. Each one is meant to contribute something that the other cannot give. Together they give their child the caring that is a human necessity. So many people, though aware of need in other areas of ecological upsets, do not feel responsibility for their own children. They become involved in causes and careers in their quest for "happiness" and "fulfillment," yet they do not give their own offspring the time and attention they devote to these outside activities or to "rare species." They are destroying the environ-

ment which their children need in order to grow. Someone who excitedly and creatively puts husband or wife and children first and puts aside her or his search for fulfillment, will probably find herself or himself fulfilled in diverse ways. As Jesus tells us, "He that loseth his life shall find it" (see Matthew 10:39). It is the "burial of a grain of wheat in the ground" in practical, imaginative, and even boring ways that brings forth the fruit of a three-generation family.

Shelter and Safety

From birth to death a human being needs shelter—a home. The home must have a *homemaker*—someone needs to work to fill the physical and intellectual needs of the other members of the family. The home and the family are meant to provide shelter and safety. A shelter is a place to run to in times of need. Someone in the family will always be giving more time and effort than someone else, at different times. No two-way relationship is ever equal. Therefore, one must give without constant expectation of return. At each point of life somebody has to do more than the other to make a relationship work between two people or within a family group. Along with this basic resolve, one needs to ask the Lord for His help, moment by moment.

The family as a shelter is meant to be a picture of what God is to His Family: "Hear my cry, O God... For thou hast been a shelter for me, and a strong tower from the

enemy" (Psalm 61:1, 3). If the earthly family is really a shelter, parents can help their children understand the faithfulness of God, whose faithfulness is perfect compared with the imperfection of human beings. A Home *is* waiting for every member of the Lord's Family, for each one who is born into that Family. The environment there is flawless. Jesus said "...I go to prepare a place for you... that where I am, there ye may be also" (John 14:2, 3). At present the storms of illness, psychological upset, crippling disease, handicapped children, old age, death, accident, need to be recognized as part of the career ingredients for making realistic preparation of a *shelter*.

Birthplace of Creativity

A family is the birthplace of creativity. As God created people in His image, He created personalities who could think and act and feel, have ideas, choose and create on a finite level. The individual family setting should provide an atmosphere and climate for a constant bursting forth of creativity.

However, creativity can be destructive as well as constructive. Constructive creativity not only affects other human beings, but also brings glory to God, because it blends in with the real universe. Human beings can destroy each other's humanness by their destructive creativity, even as Satan destroys. Artwork, even architecture, can deny humanness and turn people into machines by subtle influence.

The family should be a place where new human beings are encouraged to develop *constructive* creativity. First attempts by both adults and children should never be discouraged, because such discouragement could hinder further development. All creative attempts should be encouraged until some become obvious as special talents. Two-way communication—listening as well as talking—is needed, as well as interest in a child's idea and a husband's or wife's ideas. The trust resulting from cooperation and the serious treatment of an idea or a project, even if it does not work out, will pay off in more creative ideas and a closer relationship with a child and with each other. The whole atmosphere should be one of fresh ideas and projects bursting forth.

"At each point of life somebody has to do more than the other to make a relationship work between two people or within a family group."

Creativity needs appreciation, a response from another person. Criticism should never be given at the important moment of the unveiling of the completed project. Anything said at that moment must be of a positive nature, or dis-

couragement will be the result. The right response at the right time is essential to encourage the next stage of creative work.

The example of how creativity can express love for one another must be set by parents. Children who grow up in a family where practical expressions of thoughtfulness are the norm will tend to become spontaneously creative and thoughtful themselves. A rose brought to Mother by Dad, or a special cake made for Dad as a surprise, speaks more emphatically than lectures on love!

The Bible does *not* rule out creativity as an unspiritual experience. The instructions for the tabernacle, given to Moses in the Book of Exodus, included fantastic works of art. Obviously, people needed to have creative skills to produce these things. This artwork had beauty as well as spiritual meaning. God's House was meant to be beautiful. The works of art were made in family groups, and skills were developed in *this* atmosphere in ancient times.

Center for Human Relationships

Human relationships will always exist. People must treat other people in *some* way, whether it be badly or well. The family should be the *formation center for human relationships*. The understanding that people are important must be learned at an early age. Children should be taught that human beings are made in the image of God and are, therefore, very special in the universe. It is important that they

learn by example—examples that are in line with what the Bible teaches. Make it clear to children that everyone, including parents, sins and makes mistakes. The young need to be taught the meaning of forgiveness at an early age. Biblical truth should be discussed every day, in relation to parental and family actions and attitudes. When parents fail to do what the Bible tells them to do, they should let their children know that they hope to do better in the future. They need to let their children *know* that they consider themselves to be still growing and learning, while they are trying to teach their children.

At least one person in a relationship must take the initiative for trying to solve a communication problem, whether it be a disagreement or thoughtlessness on the part of one of the people involved. Someone must see that the solution is *not* to go separate ways, but to work together to improve the relationship. Again, no one is perfect. To insist upon perfection — or nothing—will always result in having nothing.

It was stated earlier that one angry fight or even a series of misunderstandings and thoughtlessness should not be used to judge the overall togetherness of a family. This is not to say, however, that such incidents ought to be ignored. When an apology is needed, it should be given. To ignore a string of incidents in which someone is hurt may have far-reaching and

damaging effects. Parents should carefully teach their children, however, that some things must *never* be said, especially in the heat of anger. For example—the reference

“At least one person in a relationship must take the initiative to solve a communication problem. Someone must see that the solution is not to go separate ways, but to work together to improve the relationship.”

to a physical or an educational handicap in the midst of an argument is too high a price to pay for winning any argument. Once said, words can never be unsaid. . . . It is possible to recognize and stay away from extravagantly costly criticism which can leave deep scars.

Communication Essential

Communication among people is essential to keep relationships alive. This means understanding and caring for each other. Physical needs should be taken into consideration. A person is much more willing to discuss a serious matter, and possibly compromise, if his or her blood sugar is at a normal count! This physical readiness to communicate includes appearance. Dress has an effect on the way people treat each other. Many

people form opinions from first impressions—but one is also affected in his actions by the way he is dressed.

Love is one of the basic commands given by the Bible. Verbalized expression of love for each other is an important ingredient in human relationships and should be taught in the mobile family. Love must also be real in action. The reality of love is brought out not only during the good times, but also in difficult times shared with another person—these include everything from bad moods to the loss of a job. “Love suffereth long, and is kind” (see 1 Corinthians 13:4). Love is meant to exhibit, within the earthly family, something of the love of God for all of His children: “Yea, I have loved thee with an everlasting love: therefore with lovingkindness have I drawn thee” (Jeremiah 31:3). He has shown His loving-kindness *not* when people were good, but when they needed it because they were sinners. He demonstrated His love when He sent His Son to die for sins.

Jesus told His apostles, “A new commandment I give unto you, That ye love one another. . . . By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples. . . .” (John 13:34, 35). The mark of the Christians was to be their love. The mark of the Christian family should be the love shown in the everyday situations of life. Along with this family love goes family loyalty, another trait that the Bible points out is meant to

be a mark of the whole Family of the Lord. When one person is affected by something, the other members of the family are also affected.

Relay of Truth

A family is in a perpetual relay of truth—from generation to generation. No one would have been ignorant of real truth had not someone “dropped the flag” in *this* relay race. Cain was the first to “drop out” and run in another direction! The truth of the existence of the Creator God was meant to be handed down from father and mother to children, from grandparents to grandchildren. The relay of truth was meant to continue without a break.

A reality of discussion and time taken for conversation is needed to keep alive on the part of children a trust in what their parents are saying. Communication with God Himself, as a *natural* solution when help is needed, must be observed by the children when they enter a room and see their parents praying spontaneously for specific needs. Children need to know that their parents *really* seek God’s answers for practical needs as well as spiritual ones.

8 Family conversation is very important in teaching actual truth. Real communication is a two-way interaction of questions and answers. Children need intelligent, honest answers to their questions. Their desire for answers must be taken seriously. Parents are disobedient to God when they do not

hand down truth to the next generation. It is not just the responsibility of the church or the Sunday school. Of course it is important to find the right church, but this cannot and should not replace the reality of the day-by-day teaching that the family must provide. Whether or not parents help their children to find God and to pray, is going to affect not only their children but also future generations. God comforts those

“Just as there is no easy way to teach children about God, there is no special time in which to do it. Good intentions and waiting for the right time to read and discuss the Bible do not get the job done.”

who have wasted time, with reassurance when a late start is made: “And I will restore to you the years that the locust hath eaten . . . And ye shall eat in plenty, and be satisfied, and praise the name of the Lord your God, that hath dealt wondrously with you: and my people shall never be ashamed” (Joel 2:25, 26).

Just as there is no easy way to teach children about God, there is no special section of time set aside

in which to do it. Good intentions and waiting for the right time to read and discuss the Bible won’t get anything done. Parents must talk naturally as they walk, eat, sit by a fire, and use any available opportunity to teach the truth to their children. A child must know that the time spent by parents with him explaining the Bible and reading and discussing other books is as important to the parents as time spent with anyone else. That time must be given top priority over everything else.

“My son, keep thy father’s commandment, and forsake not the law of thy mother” (Proverbs 6:20). This Scripture verse tells us that both parents are to have a say in setting the rules and regulations of the family. Of course, the father is the leader, but this does not mean that the mother should not contribute intelligent ideas about rules for the children. Punishments should be fair and diverse. Different kinds of misbehavior deserve different kinds of punishment. Different types of children need different types of discipline. The child must know why he is being punished. Later, if a parent has second thoughts about the fairness of the punishment given, he must not hesitate to say he was wrong—and to apologize.

If a child is constantly treated unfairly by his own parents—who claim to be Christian—then he may be turned off by Christianity in general. It is written in the Book of Ephesians, “And ye fathers,

provoke not your children to wrath: but bring them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord” (6:4). And further, in the Book of Colossians: “Fathers, provoke not your children to anger, lest they be discouraged” (3:21). No parent is perfect, and no child is perfect, but the admonition is strong on both sides, and the parent is clearly told not to discourage the child.

As the years pass, and a child grows up, the time may come when, after years of obedience to his parents, he feels that the Lord is leading him in a different direction from what his parents want for him. What should he do? Jesus tells us in the Book of Matthew, “He that loveth father or mother more than me is not worthy of me . . .” (10:37). One’s love for the Lord and willingness to do as He commands, must come before all else. The decision of a child to do the will of the Lord should be a cause for joy in his parents—but when it is not, the Lord’s leading comes first.

An Economic Unit

A family is an economic unit. The balance between affluence and poverty is a matter between the individuals and God. A family should discuss and decide together what comes *first* in the matter of the wife needed for creative “career” activity for the home and family, or the extra money and conflicting career outside the family. God gave Adam and Eve the possibility of leading a perfect existence—with creative work as a source of joy.

The only restriction on them was that they not eat of the fruit of a certain tree. They chose to believe Satan's lie rather than God's Word verbalized to them, and they ate of the tree. Part of their punishment was that they would have to work in order to eat. God said to Adam, "In the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread, till thou return unto the

"A family must not be so caught up in providing economic needs that they forget the importance of family life. Time slips away too swiftly to waste it by being too concentrated on things rather than on people."

ground..." (Genesis 3:19). To this day people must work to provide the necessities of life: however, through inventions and discoveries, God has allowed people to ease their work load as time goes on.

Family togetherness should be exercised in the area of economics, as in all other areas. Imaginative ways can be devised to survive hard times, while consideration is also to be given to those who have less. Jesus said, "...go and sell that thou hast, and give to the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven..." (Matthew 19:21).

Work involved in providing the necessities of life needs to be shared in the family. Yet a family must not become so caught up in providing economic needs that they forget the importance of family life. Time slips away too swiftly to waste it by being too concentrated on *things* rather than on *people*.

Lack of money need not mean leading a dull existence. On the contrary, it can help develop creative, hidden talents. Designing and making clothes and toys for children sparks imagination, and a gift made for someone else has more meaning than something bought and wrapped in a store.

At times no job is available for the father, but one is obtainable by the mother. This is a time for sharing, as Mother goes to work in the morning while Dad makes the beds. Nowhere does the Bible state that a woman cannot contribute to the material upkeep of a household. Rather, Proverbs 31 describes the Virtuous Woman, a woman of many talents and opportunities to use them. She not only takes care of her house but buys a field and landscapes it, while she still has time for her children and those outside her family. She has a good relationship with her husband. She is a believer—and her children and husband love her with enthusiasm. One important thing to remember about this Virtuous Woman is the fact that her husband trusts her in economic areas. Applied to husbands and wives today, this trust must be clearly demonstrated.

If the husband earns the money for the family, but the wife does many other things in the home—both creative and mundane—she should be given a portion of the money to be managed with skill to produce surprises as well as necessities. If she is a good manager, she ought to be given the opportunity to show her ability. To pretend that the family member who has a cash salary is the only one providing material things is to be totally blind to the one providing the balance to that contribution—by cooking, nursing sick children, interior decorating, planting gardens, preparing times to read aloud for fun or education, sewing, driving the family "taxi" and so on.

In Christian families, periods of economic need are also opportunities for real prayer. To merely think of imaginative ways to make ends meet, and to ask for the help of the Lord, is a poor demonstration to observers that Christians believe He exists. They must show that they believe "that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him" (Hebrews 11:6). Prayer should not be used as a last resort. Prayer should be a natural part of life, in the midst of the diversity of needs—small and large.

Education Monitoring System

A family is an education control, in the French sense of the word *control*—as a monitoring system: Parents need to be aware of how their children are being educated. They need to know what goes on in

the schools. Some schools hinder rather than help further education because of the teaching methods or the attitudes of the teachers or the content of what is taught.

The parents' job is to realize that open discussion and communication at home is vital to a good education. They must take the time to discuss and study with their sons and daughters. Parents must teach their children that education continues throughout life. They should be encouraged to ask questions of people. A wealth of knowledge can be gained from questioning an expert in any particular field and in talking to people of another generation. Reading in wide areas of current events, music, art, literature, philosophy and going to museums, bird-watching, attending concerts, constantly discussing—so that the home circle brings more educational stimulus than any other source—is important as a balance wheel!

It is wrong to assume that because a child attends a Christian school he will naturally receive a satisfactory education. No Christians are perfect, and a Christian teacher could be turning a child off for a variety of reasons—attitude, personality, or inaccurate teaching. This could create a dangerous situation, because if a young student feels unsatisfied by Christian teaching and finds excitement elsewhere, he may make the judgment that all Christians are uninteresting people.

Parents need to use imagination to decide what the home can give the child in the way of education which the school cannot give. For example, if a child attends the type of school with no structure, where everyone "does his own thing," he needs some sort of organization, some specific tasks to perform in the home, as a means of discipline.

An impersonal beginning of the universe—with only time and chance affecting the particles—is the predominant theory taught in the schools today, and the Christian parent must know how to offset it. Point out the logic of personality being there first. Show that those who do not believe in God do not have the key to wisdom: "The fear of the Lord is the beginning of knowledge..." (Proverbs 1:7).

Another problem parents must face is the follow-the-crowd syndrome. Drugs and liquor are in heavy use in many schools. A young person may find himself involved with these things, not because he desires them, but because he is seeking acceptance. Discussion and reading of articles about drugs and liquor and the damage they can do, both to brain cells and other parts of the body should take place in the home. The human body is precious to the Lord. He died so that one day these bodies can be raised from the dead, as He was raised. If these bodies are that important to Him, Christians should be careful how they treat them.

Parents need to tell their children that their education and their Christian faith are connected. The two cannot be separated. God is God of the *whole* person. The cross-relationship should be explained and material read to show the connections in *all* fields of study.

Museum of Memories

Memories can be either horrible things one would rather forget, or things he wishes to remember forever. Among the many things a family is meant to be, it should be a *museum of memories*. Someone in the family must be aware of the importance of memories, and the need to do things today that will be enjoyed tomorrow. Memories do not necessarily have to come about by chance, but can be planned for. Time and/or money must be wisely spent in creating precious memories.

One way of planning for memories is to carry on old traditions—or to begin some new ones. In families, the favorite days for carrying on traditions are usually birthdays and holidays, especially Christmas. It is a lovely thing to associate the giving of gifts to those we love with the thanksgiving for God's special gift—His Son, but some feel that Christmas should be a day of fasting and special worship, not a day of gifts and feasting. This is up to the individual family, but if Christmas is not a family day of fun and surprises, another day of the year should be selected as a festive occasion, complete with traditions.

Parents should help their children realize that time does not stand still. Wasted time can never be recaptured. Right now possibilities are around that were never there before, and probably will not be there later. Don't wait for the "proper time" to make a memory, for that time may never come. *Take* the time to make a memory, or the chance may be lost forever. Put aside duties and for the luxury of doing something that will never be forgotten. Spend the money tucked away for some practical purpose and take the family to the symphony. The wonder of the evening will be remembered more than the rug that wasn't bought!

Of course frustrations and arguments in the family are also remembered. These will not necessarily harm any family member. They can help a child to see that people have good and bad moods; people make mistakes and commit sins. Adults need to know and state that the bad times do not mean the home is falling apart. Facing the fact that the members of one's own family have faults and weaknesses will prepare a child for relationships outside the family by helping him to understand that no one is perfect. Time and time again people will fall into sin and need to make a fresh start by forgiving and asking for forgiveness.

Peter asked Jesus, "How many times shall we forgive? Shall it be seven times?" Jesus answered him, "I say not unto thee, Until seven times: but, Until seventy times



"Facing the fact that the members of one's own family have faults and weaknesses will prepare a child for life outside the family by helping him to understand that no one is perfect."

seven" (see Matthew 18:21-22).

The other side of recognizing weakness in another person is seeing the strong points of that person, and carefully praising him for them. Children and adults need praise and the feeling that they have succeeded in pleasing someone. God wants Christians to praise *each other* as well as Him. Being admired and appreciated gives stability to one's life.

Hinges and Lock

A family is an "open door" with hinges and a lock. "Use hospitality one to another without grudging" (1 Peter 4:9). The idea of a family as an open door—sharing their lives with those outside the family—is biblical. Believers are asked to open their homes not only to friends, but also to strangers, and for this may be rewarded: "Be not forgetful to entertain strangers: for thereby some have entertained angels unawares" (Hebrews 13:2). Lonely people and those in need deserve special consideration. The Book of Psalms says, "God setteth the solitary in families..." (68:6). Elderly people, the handicapped, and those who simply have no one to care about them need the comfort and love of a family. However, at times the open door must be locked to everyone but the family. In order to have something to share with others, the family must have times of togetherness which are private. Married couples have a need and a responsibility to spend time alone together as husband and wife. It is the only

way to grow together intellectually, spiritually, and in physical oneness.

Parents and children need *time* together with no one else involved, so that family relationships can grow. At times everyone needs to get a head start in their closeness to the Lord. Communication with Him often calls for new surroundings or new time periods. For instance, one may need to write instead of talking in prayer, and so on. In the same way, human relationships need variety and fresh starts.

It is not possible to share a family without *being* a family. A family which often has people sharing its meals and discussions should have at least one day a week when members do something alone—together only as a family. A picnic, a shopping trip, or just a quiet day at home is necessary to keep in touch with each other. An hour a day should be set aside for the parents or for one parent and the children to read together. This time alone develops communication and understanding. A vacation is needed at least once a year to rest, play, and renew relationships with one another. Demonstrating the reality of family life will have more effect on the needs of the twentieth century than merely *telling* how important family life is.

To show hospitality is a biblical command, but the extent of that hospitality needs the Lord's leading. The important thing is that we teach and live the Gospel, the real truth. Christians are meant

to be compassionate to those in need. No family should always live behind locked doors. When they share with others, they are really sharing with the Lord, but a family must ask the Lord to send no more at a time than they are able to care for—as human beings are not evangelistic objects.

Blended Balances

A family is "blended balances." It is a balance that matters in human relationships. The first balance was given in the human family, as people were created with the diversity of being male and female and the unity of being "one" in marriage.

In the *spoiled* Creation no one is perfectly balanced as an individual, but needs to struggle constantly for a measure of balance, first as individuals, and then as families. Families can ask for help. James writes, "If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God that giveth to all men liberally, and upbraideth not; and it shall be given him" (1:5).

Satan is behind all attempts to destroy the reality of the existence of opposites or of *antithesis*. God purposely created men and women to be different from each other so that they could fulfill one another in their diversity. Men and women have the possibility of becoming *one*, and of creating another person out of their union. Today, many women are struggling against their femininity, while men are waging the same battle against their masculinity—and it is Satan who is behind all of this, in an attempt to

wipe out this antithesis, along with his destroying the concept of "true and false" which exists in the whole teaching of relativity.

"Hearken unto me, O house of Jacob, and all the remnant of the house of Israel, which are borne by me from the belly, which are carried from the womb:...and even to hoar hairs will I carry you:

"Satan is behind all attempts to destroy the reality of the existence of opposites or of antithesis. God purposely created men and women to be different from each other so that one could fulfill the other through his diversity."

I have made, and I will bear; even I will carry, and will deliver you" (Isaiah 46:3-4). In this verse God is telling people that they should be dependent upon Him from birth to old age. God means for people to be dependent upon Him. Why is it, then, that *so* many parents try their best to make their children totally independent of them? Why is dependence feared today? Parents shut off communication in their efforts to make their children self-sufficient. Years later, when they are lonely, elderly people, they do not understand why their children

ignore *them*, or pay them only a minimal amount of attention. Meanwhile, the children are carrying out the principle that was forced upon them as they were growing up—never be dependent upon their parents.

Family life was *meant* to be a dependence upon one another, just as believers are to be dependent upon God. The security which comes from dependence gives birth to proper *independence*, without forcing it. A child needs to know

“Because the human family is a tiny picture of the whole Family of God, putting the Lord first will actually mean putting the family before all else at times.”

that he can depend on his parents, and a wife needs to know that she can be dependent on her husband, even as he is dependent upon her—so that dependence on God seems more natural and real. Dependence is not to be feared.

Portrait of God's Family

Because the human family is a tiny picture of the whole Family of God, putting the Lord first will actually mean putting the family before all else at times. If one

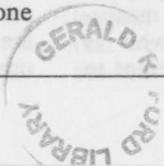
parent is so busy working for the Lord outside the home that he or she has no time for children and wife or husband, then this is really not putting the Lord first, because God has given the responsibility for a oneness in family life.

A family is a mobile strung together with invisible threads—delicate, easily broken at first, but growing stronger through the years.

A family—balanced, growing, changing, never static, but moving with a breath of wind—babies, children, young people, fathers, mothers, grandparents, aunts, uncles—held in a balanced framework by invisible bonds of love, trust, loyalty, compassion, kindness depending on each other, looking to each other for help, suffering long with each other's faults, hoping all things, enduring all things, never failing! Invisible threads turning into strong invisible steel which holds great weight but gives freedom of movement. A family—knowing always that if a thread sags or breaks help is available from the Expert—the Father—to whom the whole Family in heaven and earth is related.

The opinions expressed in this book are those of the author and not necessarily those of the Continental Congress on the Family.

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The Christian's view of the family is based on considerations and factors not necessarily held by mankind in general. Among the many social institutions several are unique in that they are specially framed and commissioned in Scripture. The family is one of these. The Christian sees the family as the vital linkage between the community of the redeemed and the offspring of that community. It is less a matter of possessiveness or individualism that underlies the Christian's concern for children than it is a matter of belief and commitment. For a Christian, no human relationship is more significant than one's family. No concern is greater than the need to enter faithfully into a God-centered reality of human love with each person in that family. The family is the unitary structural building-block of the church and, at the same time, the primary communicative source for the child's awakening awareness of God.

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The family makes several specific contributions to the child's development. Those contributions that are especially related to the development of moral and spiritual values are becoming more understandable through recent and current research. Following are several of the key contributions that relate directly to moral and

spiritual development.

Family Provides Environments

Experiences in the family that contribute to moral and spiritual development are:

1. An environment of nurturance, contributing toward a sense of security, identity and personal worth.

2. An environment of dialogue, contributing toward a rational understanding of self and others.

3. An environment of equity and justice, contributing toward a sense of righteousness as justice with love.

In addition, the roles played in the family provide the experiences upon which the child's perceptions of spiritual relationships are based. The two key functions follow.

The Family Provides Models

Relational involvements that are basic to spiritual perceptions are:

1. Mother and father, integrated by marriage, providing for nurturance, sustenance and "launching," prefigure the child's awareness of God.

2. The family unit, motivated in love and expressed in cooperative activity to meet needs unique to individuals through the shared resources of the whole, prefigure the child's awareness of the church.

The values of secular society are shifting away from those that undergird the God-centered family.

Thus the family within the community of Christians may become more distinct from the "evolved" family or its substitutes in the

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secular community. Teaching the developing child the reasons for the distinctive functions of home and family intended by God will be increasingly important as this trend continues. Clear applications of the principles of God to the standards of life must be the major concern. God declares His sovereignty. Christians must utilize all their rights as citizens, so long as they last, to influence secular society in godly ways. To carry out these tasks competently will demand the finest sort of integration within the adult Christian. Any arbitrary, dualistic split between the "religious life" and the "secular life" will create profound vulnerability and a lack of credibility.

Institutions of Society

Human institutions arise in response to needs. Each institution and its function (but not always its form) can be traced historically to a point of recognized need. The larger institutions—marriage, family, religions, health support, government, labor organizations, trade systems, monetary systems and schools of various sorts—can be understood as responses to needs that arise out of the nature of man and of human society. Institutions are maintained and supported only so long as they relate to functional needs of the society. The "youth conflicts" of the late 1960s

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can be seen as the beginning of the end for several institutional forms. This began with challenges of ineffectiveness, obsolescence, hollow traditionalism, and contemporary uselessness, and it will end in the disappearance of institutions that cannot defend or demonstrate their worth to society. The pragmatic bias of virtually every modern society is such that the final test is whether or not it works. If it doesn't, it will go. (But because of social momentum, institutional forms often outlast their functions!)

Christians make a distinction between institutions that arise in secular consciousness and those that derive from special divine commission. For example, the Church—in its rudimentary meaning as a body of believers in Jesus Christ—relates to needs of people because its origin is in God's purposes for His people. Its historical flow-line is in the special family of God's people from Eden, Noah's ark, Abraham's household of faith, and the faithful of the synagogue. Thus the Church, though in part a social institution, is substantially different from, for example, the International Red Cross. These two institutions have overlapping memberships and some points of similar purpose and function. But if the International Red Cross ever

becomes unrelated to substantial social needs it will fade away. Not so the Church; a divine decree and the continuing divine purpose in redeeming mankind and establishing the Kingdom of Heaven under the Lordship of Christ will maintain it until the fulfillment of its ultimate mission—whether or not it is weak and pragmatically in-

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adequate at one time of history or another.

Three Basic Institutions

Three social institutions share the distinction of special divine commission. These three, Church, Family and Government, are unique among social institutions. Each is ascribed certain scriptural roles. The Christian is instructed to relate positively to them and to recognize when they are and why they are not functioning in a sound, God-ordained manner.

For example note the double message of Romans 13 regarding government. It is ordained of God and the Christian is to be in constructive subjection, *but* government is to fulfill certain conditions for its part in the mutual obligation: “Rulers are not [to be] a cause of fear for good behavior, but for evil...a minister of God...for good...servants of God, devoting themselves to this very thing.” Other institutions, such as schools and hospitals, fulfill various noble purposes and especially in their acts of mercy and enhancement of human life they can be said to be manifestations of the beneficence of God. But though their purposes be goodly, their existence as institutional forms is more sociological than theological, and their destiny is unsure. The present attacks on schools and schooling suggest the

transiency of even such a venerable form as the ancient Greek approach to formal education.

Centrality of the Church

In a remarkable way, the three basic institutions are inter-related and, to some extent, mutually dependent. The central institution is the Church. The Church is the unitary “Body of Christ,” the actual

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and mystical fellowship of all those who are justified by faith in the redemptive work of God. It is more than an organization; the Church is *supra-organization* in that it exists above and beyond the ordinary man-made social entities and enterprises. The three basic institutions are instruments of God's purposes. They are the means through which

God determines to bring about His rule over His creation. What ties these three together is the Kingdom of God. God's authority is exercised through these three spheres which are sovereign in themselves.

The family serves a particular and apparently indispensable role within the Church. The family provides the perceptual models through which the principles of the Church take on their meaning. The synchronization of the Scriptural concepts of God, the linguistics of Christianity and the models of relationships that exist in the family are noteworthy.

The scripture uses relational terms based on family experience to deal with the most basic spiritual concepts: the father, children, brothers, sisters, the "only begotten son," adoption, sonship, heir, to name a few. These anthropomorphic tools would be useless if people had not experience of family. Indeed, it seems reasonable to suggest that if family structures and relationships continue to disintegrate or are further altered to accommodate the "evolution" of society, the community of Christians must stalwartly maintain biblical-style families as one of its key distinctives.

Experience with *father* and *mother* are vital ingredients in the

child's earliest consciousness of God. Long before a child is able to deal with verbal concepts of God, he or she experiences a series of nurturing, sustaining, supporting, encouraging, reproofing, correcting and guiding acts which, taken together and interlocked with the sacramental and worshipful experiences of the church, constitute

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the rudimentary base on which a child's God consciousness is built.

(Christianne Brusselmans, contemporary Belgian theologian, is a vital figure in the theory and research on the child's emerging sense of the presence and reality of God. She describes the parental roles — both the mother's nurturance and support and the father's

stimulus to explore "beyond the nest" — as the prefigure in a child's consciousness of the wholeness and complexity of God, as in the Hebrew El-Shaddai and Jahweh. When taken together with the child's early exposure to the symbolism and sacramental aspects of the church, the child gains a basis for comprehending God-related information in terms larger than the images gained from the faulted behaviors of the parents.)

Thus we see that for the Christian community, at least, the family plays a crucial part in the early cognitive development of the child. This reason alone would be an adequate cause for demanding that the family not be allowed to degenerate or disappear.

The Family

Would just any sort of family arrangement or family substitute suffice? Not likely. Though I have no great fondness for formalist or traditionalist positions on most issues, on this point the traditionalists seem to be on the right track.

The presupposition that God is the source of both general and special revelation suggests that evidence drawn from either of these sources, if rightly perceived, would be complementary and mutually supportive. Therefore the questions "What does research suggest that the family needs to be

today?" and "What does God expect of the family?" would be expected to have quite similar answers. In Scripture one sees that the family is expected to provide nurturance and emotional support. These responsibilities are placed upon mother and father, and no particular role is assigned outside the family, at least for the earliest stages of development.

(It is likely that North American individualism has led to the particular style of "nuclear" family that we tend to think of as basic; it

"In most of the world a different concept, the 'extended' family, is more typical. Grandmother, grandfather, and aunts and uncles all have a part in basic family affiliation and transaction with each other. Thus care must be taken not to assume that one form of family is somehow more correct or more biblical."

consists of mother plus father plus 2.3 children. In most of the world a different concept, the "extended" family, is more typical. Grandmother, grandfather, and aunts and uncles all have a part in basic family affiliation and transaction with each other. Thus care must be taken not to assume that one form of family is somehow more correct or more biblical. The discussion in this paper is related to function, not to form.)

The family is seen as the *locus* of important fulfillments of life—especially those that relate to self-awareness, personal identity, abilities, and a sense of worth. These needs are fulfilled largely through the growing sense of interdependence and the skills of relating oneself to others that first emerges in the child because of conditions and relationships of the normal family.

These skills and awarenesses develop into a sense of community that then becomes the basis for the assimilation of the larger society into one's consciousness. In a practical way, the family is a micro-community through which all participants (not just the children) "try on" and "try out" those relationships and transactions that become one's style in relating to the broader social world. Through the process of skill-development in the micro-

community one becomes more competent in the macro-community, especially in such skills as judging, decision-making, dividing of labor, sharing and cooperating.

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From a scientific viewpoint—more precisely a socio-psychological viewpoint—the family can be seen as a set of three functions.

1. The Coping Function

The first of these might be called the *protective* or *coping* function. It is most apparent in reference to children, but it is not limited to child-rearing. The sheltering teaching and launching processes are components of the protective function. They make the individual, child and adult, more competent to cope with social reality. The sheltering function phases down in reference to the adolescent so that the launching function can operate, but the teaching process goes on. For adult and child alike, on a day-to-day basis, the family provides the secure base from which the excursions into the macro-community are carried out with increasing competency.

2. The Modeling Function

The second function of the family is *modeling*. For people in the second of the three major levels of moral development, models play an especially important part in thinking about right and wrong. Parents recognize this when they begin to see results from such approaches as "Mother's good boy doesn't sneeze on people." Later in this stage of development, the young person patterns himself or

herself on hero figures and respected peers. All through this period the family is providing models of relationship and social behavior. Although providing sound models

"If family models are essentially hostile, competitive, and tense, the child will lack an adequate perceptual framework and predisposition to recognize the validity of the Church."

is by no means the highest contribution made by the family, it is surely basic. If family models are essentially hostile, competitive, and tense, the child will lack an adequate perceptual framework and predisposition to recognize the validity of the Church. Thus the quality of the models created by the family is especially important to the Christian.

Inherent in the model function is a kind of static and backward-focussed orientation. If too much is made of modeling, and especially if parents behave as if their "living a

Christian life" in front of their children is the top rung of the ladder, it will turn into mere enculturation (indoctrination by example) and lose effectiveness over time.

3. The Developmental Function

The third function should ultimately take precedence over the second. This third function, *developmental transaction*, is most difficult to describe, perhaps because more has been said and written about the other two. If modeling is static, then developmental transaction is dynamic. Learning takes place through experience. The sorts of experiences most likely to lead to significant learning gains are those which contain a bit of unsettling. Jean Piaget, the Swiss psychologist and developmental theorist, calls the unsettling "disequilibrium." Especially in the moral and ethical realm, a learner encounters many experiences that he or she cannot handle from the point of view of pattern dilemmas can lead to a dawning awareness that "there's more to it than that." Sometimes they lead to doubts. The old formula for judging right and wrong doesn't seem to cover this case very well, and even if it does, it isn't as clear-cut as it once seemed.

Such is the nature of disequilibrium! This is an absolutely normal, predictable and necessary part of

the process of learning and maturing. The tragedies that sometimes follow disequilibrium almost always occur when no one who has already won the confidence of the learner is standing by to help out in the exploration and resolution processes.

"As I see it, there are going to be more and more points of crunch ahead for Christians. Especially our children and our less mature brothers and sisters are going to need competent help at times of disequilibrium."

Upon realizing that a member of the family is encountering such a period of disequilibrium, the model-oriented or rule-wielding parent will likely tend to swing into action to quickly re-stabilize the "drifting" person. Perhaps just as bad is the "teacher" orientation that causes some to rush in and attempt to prematurely re-equilibrate the person at a new and higher stage of development. Instead

parents are teachers who should join the learner to explore the disequilibrium with him, to look for other instances of the dilemma, to consider why the previous value structure is becoming inadequate and, in general, to provide a comfortable and honest sounding board for the person in disequilibrium. From a growing sense of disequilibrium, ultimately the awareness of the next higher structure emerges to fill the gap. Christians know the process; it isn't magic or sourceless; it is a built-in human attribute. The apostle Paul writes about it (though in reference to a criticism of the wicked) in Romans 1:19, 20.

As I see it, there are going to be more and more points of crunch ahead for Christians. Especially our children and our less mature brothers and sisters are going to need competent help at times of disequilibrium. I can imagine great numbers of secure Christians helping others (and each other) explore their disequilibrium, calmly, quietly, with no impressions of fear and no oppressions of guilt. This would do more for the maturing of the saints than a dozen Sunday school attendance pins and would make the relevancy of the Scripture so obvious that buying people into Bible reading might fade out.

The Family Teaches Values

In very recent years important

leaps ahead have been made in the research on human values. We know now why the content-oriented "tell 'em what to believe" approaches don't work. Better yet, we know what *does* work. The most important research on this problem has been done by Lawrence Kohl-

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berg of Harvard University. Although coming at the problem from no clear religious position, Kohlberg's findings have a strangely biblical ring. For example, that a person's values are interrelated with what he knows. (Thus the earlier assumption that cognition and effect are different and separable is seriously challenged.)

Kohlberg finds that all children start off with a fixation on themselves as determinants of right and wrong—and that some people never outgrow this. He has found two subsequent levels of value-concept awareness. The second level takes its source from externals: "good people," models, rules, laws and an orderly society. The third level takes as its source *principles*—self-chosen, internalized principles that become a source within oneself. (Recall what Jesus said about the living water: *from* him as original source, accepted without reservation, becoming a source within!)

Kohlberg's research is at its best when it describes what he found through his exhaustive interviews. When he gets into the so-what questions, his humanistic presuppositions jeopardize the value of his conclusions. Nevertheless, one startling parallel with Scripture has commended his work to the attention of a large number of Christians

in scholarly positions: Kohlberg finds the essential element in values development is the issue of *justice*. Justice is central to the concept of righteousness in the Hebrew scriptures, and scripture as a whole sees righteousness as the norm for moral action.

“For Christians the most crucial concern for their families, for their local church congregations and their educational institutions is that they be placed where justice—the high sense of justice inherent in godly righteousness—prevails. There must be respect. There must be dialogue in equity. There must be due process. There must be mercy above retribution. And above all, there must be a concern for God’s principles.”

Kohlberg's most dramatic finding is that the quality of justice prevailing in a person's environment and in his or her transactions with others is the most important determinant of whether or not the person will continue to develop in moral reasoning and judgment.

The implications of this finding are overwhelming. For Christians the most crucial concern for their families, for their local church congregations and their educational institutions is that they be placed where justice—the high sense of justice inherent in godly righteousness—prevails. There must be respect. There must be dialogue in equity. There must be due process. There must be mercy above retribution. And above all, there must be a concern for God's principles, not as super-laws in the style of the Pharisees, but as transcendent guidance frameworks within which each member works out his or her own transactions with others and defines for himself or herself a continually maturing sense of right and wrong.

The Problem of Loyalty

Christians can be expected to give their first allegiance to the sovereign God. Since ancient times, as evident in such precedents as Moses, Joshua and Daniel, God's people have chosen and often paid a great price for obedience to God

rather than to the ordinances of men.

The Christian communities of North America have faced very few serious issues of this sort. To some extent the "Christian character" of the United States and Canada has been evident. When

“When the secular state and the principles of the Kingdom of God are in general harmony, and especially when the institutions of government are not hostile toward the church, Christians can become somewhat soft.”

the secular state and the principles of the Kingdom of God are in general harmony, and especially when the institutions of government are not hostile toward the church, Christians can become somewhat soft. The discipline of standing up for righteousness produces more strength of character when such a stand is taken at a real price.

Now, toward the close of the Twentieth Century, the distinctive and essential differences between man's ways and God's ways are becoming more pronounced, even in North America. Rampant materialism, with its twin evils of competitive greed and self-centered individualism are threatening the foundations of the democratic societies. The essential ingredient of democracy is a commitment to community, and such commitment is hard to find anymore.

Some are asking if it is even possible to govern such a mass of self-centered individuals as the city of New York. One suspects that only the most clear-cut of

14 **“Could it be that the ‘right to life’ issues are the leading edge of this crunch? Abortion, eugenic and genetic control, euthanasia, political assassination, and then what? Or perhaps it will be in the area of political philosophy that the severe tests will come.”**

overt attacks on the whole nation could stimulate a return to minute-man commitment. Meanwhile, the corruptions from within steadily erode the core of this once-honorable nation—this nation that sluggishly responds to the tragedy of Watergate but lacks the moral conviction to legislate adequate safeguards against future sellouts of the executive branch of government. The feeling one gets in Washington is that one wouldn't want to set up too many traps for the thieves of national honor because maybe next time one's own toes might get pinched. Integrity on the basis of principles is readily traded for relativism based on pragmatism.

What Then?

In a rather short time we can expect to see the Christian put into decision dilemmas in which his or her scriptural beliefs run strongly counter to the general will of the people. What then? Some may abandon their distinctives and converge with the secular society; others, and I believe *most* others, will find their voices and stand for righteousness regardless of the cost.

Could it be that the “right to life” issues are the leading edge of this crunch? Abortion, eugenic and genetic control, euthanasia, political assassination, and then what? Or perhaps it will be in the area of



political philosophy that the severe tests will come: at several turns of events in recent history the mood of America turned darkly totalitarian. Some of us who fear the threat from extremists, whether of the left or right, were grateful to learn that a handful of powerful political leaders closely watched the key military commandants during the dark moments just before and after Richard Nixon's resignation. They had foreseen the possibility of an attempted military take-over to “save America” at its time of political weakness. The same simplistic logic has been heard before

“If this be paranoia, I am willing to take down my academic shingle. Indeed it is neither paranoia nor defeatism, Instead, I am describing a highly probable confrontation between the secular society and the church, through which the church will gain strength, respect, stature and influence.”

in the inhuman screams for use of atomic weapons against China, Russia, Cuba, Cambodia, Korea, and Vietnam. Those of us who work on the international circuit have become accustomed to being called war-mongers. Although the label is hard to accept as a fair description, the day may come.

And what will the Christians say? Many—and again, I believe *most*—will stand up and be counted against exploitation, against brutality, against meddling manipulatively in the destiny of other nations, and against seeking further control of the earth's resources to serve our own selfish purposes. And we will be persecuted for righteousness sake. Rejoice! We are of the kingdom of Heaven!

If this be paranoia, I am willing to take down my academic shingle. Indeed it is neither paranoia nor defeatism. Instead, I am describing a highly probable confrontation between the secular society and the church, through which the church will gain strength, respect, stature and influence. When issues become more sharply defined, the posture of righteousness and justice becomes even more significant.

The Issue

Does this paper suggest unreachable standards and describe unworkable conditions? I believe not.

There are many examples of these standards and conditions of family development among Christians all over the world. Flawed, yes, in that none is perfect, but very much alive and *becoming!*

What is suggested here for the Christian family needs to be considered. What is described here is normal—at least in terms of how I see God's expectations and provisions and in terms of scientific evidences about human needs. That the secular society seems more ready than ever to abandon the family as "being just another 'defunct institution'" should make

little difference to us. Though the task of the Christian home will become even more demanding and important, and though the Christian family will be even more unusual, these very conditions may stimulate the adrenalin and growth hormones of the body of Christ, the Church! Amen.

The opinions expressed in this book are those of the author and not necessarily those of the Continental Congress on the Family.

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Plenary Series Continental Congress on the Family

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**CONTINENTAL
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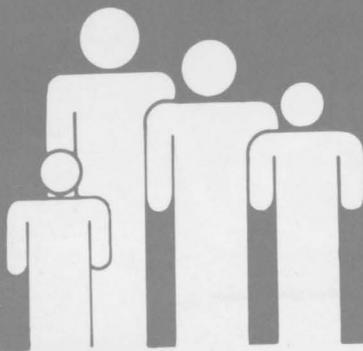
AN OUTREACH OF

FAMILY76 INC.

REGIONAL FAMILY CONFERENCES THROUGHOUT 1976

ATLANTA—CHICAGO—DALLAS—LOS ANGELES

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CONTINENTAL CONGRESS ON THE FAMILY



October 13-17, 1975 St. Louis, Missouri

LOVE
*... your Family
as yourself*

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CONGRESS GUIDE

**CONTINENTAL
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THE FAMILY**
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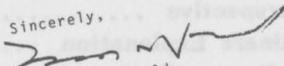
MARK O. HATFIELD
OREGON

United States Senate
WASHINGTON, D.C.

Dear Friends:
Welcome to the Continental Congress on the Family. The other leaders of this gathering and I do not believe that you are here by accident. God wants each of us to translate the experiences of this week into significant action for the benefit of the Church of Jesus Christ. Such purposeful responses, I believe, will have a positive impact upon our nation's family life.

Let us join one another in evaluating our family relationships and our responsibilities as agents of reconciliation in a world of loneliness and alienation.

Sincerely,


Mark O. Hatfield
United States Senator

from the Honorary Chairman

WELCOME

CHRISTOPHER S. BOND
GOVERNOR

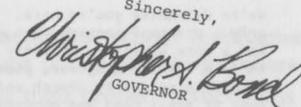
EXECUTIVE OFFICE
STATE OF MISSOURI
JEFFERSON CITY

GREETINGS!

As Governor of the State of Missouri, it is my pleasure to welcome everyone attending the meeting of the Continental Congress on the Family to the "Show Me" State.

Best wishes to all of you and may you have a most successful and enjoyable meeting.

Sincerely,


GOVERNOR



from the Governor of Missouri

PARTICIPANTS



CONTINENTAL CONGRESS ON THE FAMILY

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OMAHA, NEBRASKA 68114
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AN OUTREACH OF FAMILY '76 INC.

OCTOBER 13 17, 1976. ST. LOUIS, MISSOURI

Welcome to the CONTINENTAL CONGRESS ON THE FAMILY!

I'm sure you'll agree with us that we're here on serious business. We all recognize the fact that the North American family faces complex problems. It is not dying, but it is certainly changing. Never before has there been such pressure on the home both inside and outside the church. Everyone is concerned; and while families have always been of interest to the Christian church, that interest has grown phenomenally in the past decade.

We're delighted you're here. Your presence indicates not only a personal concern, but a desire for increased involvement and a more effective ministry to families. For this reason, it is a working Congress, planned to generate practical resources needed by church and community leaders in these days of great need and opportunity.

We've labored for many months to find resource leaders who can make a significant contribution to our understanding, and they've come to share their insight and experience with us. The spectrum is broad - we come from different molds - we do not all see from the same perspective. Though our emphases may vary, we share one common objective - to clarify our Biblical mission to the family and face the hard, real issues of a changing society.

Let's make the most of our days together. We are participants, not observers. Working together, we seek to gain a fresh perspective and new insights on how to best confront the many problems families face. Attend every session you possibly can, especially the morning interaction groups. Open your heart. Share your burden. Listen creatively. We have much to learn from each other. Let there be unity in our diversity.

More important than gaining new information is personal and marriage renewal. What we want to happen in our society must begin with us. God wants to model in us His vision for the world.

As he looked ahead, Malachi wrote in the last verse of the Old Testament, "He shall turn the heart of the fathers to the children, and the heart of the children to their fathers." That turning toward family unity which started with Jesus Christ is today a major trend in the church. As we take part in this adventure, we are participating in God's total plan for history. Let's pray that God will meet with us and send us home as new people.

Gary R. Collins *J. Allan Petersen*

Daily Emphases

What are the most crucial issues for the family today?
In what areas does the Christian family face its greatest challenges?
What are the key topics that should concern churches as they plan to strengthen family life?

The answers to these and other similar questions are suggested in the five daily emphases for the Congress: The Marriage, The Family, The Man and the Woman, The Single Person, and The Church/World.

The Marriage

Marriage as both institution and relationship is currently undergoing a series of radical changes in North American society. The church is sharply challenged by such trends as trial marriage, gay marriage, group marriage, open marriage, and easy divorce and remarriage. The perspective on marriage is foundational to all further thinking on the family. Developing distinctly Christian concepts of marriage will be the focus on Monday.

The Family

The demands of community activities, school involvement, television isolation, and even church programming are pulling family members away from each other. Many parents are confused about their proper relationships with their children and the place of discipline in these relationships. For some families these problems are intensified by alcoholism, mental and physical illness, the birth of a retarded child, military service, or financial problems. Mobilizing the churches to help these families will be Tuesday's emphasis.

The Man and the Woman

The many faceted women's movement is bringing about a sweeping and sometimes radical re-evaluation of the relationships between men and women. Women are defining themselves, their roles, and their relationships. Regardless of position, no individual or church is untouched. How can one be a woman, or a man, or prepare children for adult roles? The answers to these questions will determine the lifestyle of every married couple, every single person, and every family. On Wednesday the Congress explores how these answers affect the future direction of the family and the church.

The Single Person

Single people are a large but neglected minority, and they often feel left out of the church and society at large. Many circumstances can leave a person, at least partly, outside of the usual family structures: college students, the unmarried, separated, or divorced, the aged, widows and widowers, servicemen away from home, the physically deformed, even teenagers and neglected children. All of these people are part of the spiritual extended family of the church. Thursday's emphasis will be to find ways to minister to and use the ministry of single people.

The Church/World

The ultimate impact and value of the Congress is measured in terms of what happens out there, in churches and in the world. The conclusions, resources, and inspiration of the Congress must find their way to practical change in communities, churches, families, and marriages. On Friday, the thrust of the final hours of the Congress will be directed outward to the needy people in churches and in the world.



Congress Purpose and Objectives

The purpose of the CONTINENTAL CONGRESS ON THE FAMILY is to start a significant movement in North American churches for the strengthening of marriages and families through the Church. This Congress seeks to provide strategies and resources for every church in North America to use in their ministries with families. For that reason it has been planned as a working Congress.

In formulating the following objectives for the CONTINENTAL CONGRESS ON THE FAMILY, the Congress planners are aware of the deep human and spiritual needs facing the modern family, of man's inability to heal the estrangements between husbands and wives, between parents and children, and of their own failure to live fully as God's reconcilers in their own families. Nevertheless, they are convinced God's power can heal the wounds of the contemporary family.

The objectives of the CONTINENTAL CONGRESS ON THE FAMILY are to:

1. Clarify the biblical principles for marriage and family life and relate these to present spiritual and social problems.
2. Provide a forum for dealing with the hard, real issues of shifting roles, sexual mores, divorce/remarriage, which are affecting today's family and church.
3. Awaken our Christian consciences to the special family needs of minorities, singles, the handicapped, and the aged.
4. Share with each other successful patterns of family enrichment that God is using today.
5. Produce ideas and strategies for churches to use in revolutionizing family life in their communities.
6. Generate extensive family-help resources to be made available to pastors, churches, and needy families.

LOVE
... your Family
as yourself

Daily Schedule

This is a working Congress. Congress participants have already been involved through reading and responding to the plenary papers which were sent in advance of the Congress. Congress participants have also selected in advance the Action Seminars which are of most practical use to them. Interaction Groups have been planned for maximum value for each Congress participant. This study process makes possible the most thorough participation in the Congress of all participants.

The CONTINENTAL CONGRESS ON THE FAMILY is geared to action. It will be a failure if it is only talk. Each participant and each group should be continually thinking through what actions should be taken as a result of Congress input and discussion.

All Congress sessions are held in the Chase-Park Plaza Hotel.

Plenary Paper Responses

Each plenary speaker has read the reactions to the papers that were sent out in advance of the Congress and has prepared a response to present at the Congress. Because these presentations deal with broad issues, they provide a framework and philosophical reference that is important when dealing with the more

specific issues of the Action Seminars. For this reason, and because the presentations are substantially different from the written Plenary Papers, all Congress participants are expected to have read the appropriate papers before the Plenary responses are presented. This is true whether or not a Plenary Paper feedback form was completed before the Congress.

Sunday

2:00 PM — Registration

Registration takes place in the Chase Lounge of the Chase-Park Plaza. All participants are encouraged to complete their registration for both their hotel accommodations and for the Congress program before the Opening Celebration if at all possible.

7:30 PM — Opening Celebration: The Family Together (Khorassan Room)

Doug Oldham and the Re'Generation
Music: Steve Musto

Monday—The Marriage

PRESIDING FOR THE DAY: VIRGINIA LAW SHELL

9:00 AM — Opening Convocation (Khorassan Room)

Official Welcome and Opening of the Congress
Greetings to the Congress
Music Director: Steve Musto
Opening Address: Honorable Mark O. Hatfield

10:00 AM (Khorassan Room)

Speaker: Dr. Lloyd J. Ogilvie
Subject: Marriage as It Was Meant to Be -
The Dynamics of Authentic Relationships

10:30 AM — Coffee Break and Exhibits

11:15-12:15 — Interaction Groups

Each Congress participant has been assigned to an Interaction Group. These groups will meet each day to deal with the input of the Congress personally and in relationship with others. The same groups will meet each day in the same room. Interaction Groups are encouraged to continue their conversation over lunch each day.

2:30 to 3:20 PM — Action Seminars I

Location of Action Seminars is found in the Action Seminar directory on pages 18-21. Congress participants who returned the Action Seminar selection form are expected to adhere to their expressed preference.

3:40 to 4:30 PM — Action Seminars II

7:30 PM — Evening Program (Khorassan Room)

Music: Murk Family Musicale
Participants' Response
Keynote Address: J. Allan Petersen

CONTINENTAL CONGRESS ON THE FAMILY

Tuesday—The Family

PRESIDING FOR THE DAY: DR. LOUIS EVANS

8:30 AM — Worship and Bible Study (Khorassan Room)

Speaker: Dr. Ray Stedman
Subject: Hand-Me-Down Truth
Text: Deuteronomy 6:4-9

9:00 AM — Personal Perspective: Trends in the Family (Khorassan Room)

Speaker: Dr. C. Ray Fowler

9:30 AM — Plenary Session (Khorassan Room)

Speaker: Edith Schaeffer
Subject: What Is a Family?
Speaker: Dr. S. Bruce Narramore
Subject: Christian Parenthood in a Modern World

10:30 AM — Coffee Break and Exhibits

11:15-12:15 — Interaction Groups

Meet each day with the same group in the assigned room. Interaction Groups are encouraged to continue their conversation over lunch.

2:30 to 3:20 PM — Action Seminars I

Location of Action Seminars is found in the Action Seminar directory on pages 18-21. Congress participants who returned the Action Seminar selection form are expected to adhere to their expressed preference.

3:40 to 4:30 PM — Action Seminars II

7:30 PM — Evening Program (Khorassan Room)

Music: Steve Musto
Participants' Response
Speakers: Dr. Howard and Jeanne Hendricks
Subject: The Christian Worker's Marriage and Family
Film: "The First Days of Life" Jean Garton

CONTINENTAL CONGRESS ON THE FAMILY

Wednesday—The Man and the Woman

PRESIDING FOR THE DAY: REV. ROBERT DULIN

8:30 AM — **Worship and Bible Study (Khorassan Room)**

Speaker: Dr. Ray Stedman
 Subject: Caution! God at Work
 Text: Mark 10:1-12

9:00 AM — **Personal Perspective: Trends in the Family (Khorassan Room)**

Speaker: Dr. James J. Rue

9:30 AM — **Plenary Session (Khorassan Room)**

Speakers: Dr. John and Letha Scanzoni
 Subject: A Christian View of Men's and Women's Roles in a Changing World
 Speaker: Dr. Harry N. Hollis, Jr.
 Subject: A Christian Model for Sexual Understanding and Behavior

10:30 AM — **Coffee Break and Exhibits****11:15-12:15** — **Interaction Groups**

Meet each day with the same group in the assigned room. Interaction Groups are encouraged to continue their conversation over lunch each day.

2:30 to 3:20 PM — **Action Seminars I**

Location of Action Seminars is found in the Action Seminar directory on pages 18-21. Congress participants who returned the Action Seminar selection form are expected to adhere to their expressed preference.

3:40 to 4:30 PM — **Action Seminars II****7:30 PM** — **Evening Program (Khorassan Room)**

The Re'Generation presents a musical program of excerpts from the new musical on the family, "I Promise to Love" and other selections.

Thursday—The Single Person

PRESIDING FOR THE DAY: PAT BOONE

8:30 AM — **Worship and Bible Study (Khorassan Room)**

Speaker: Dr. Ray Stedman
 Subject: One Thing Needful
 Text: Luke 10:38-42

9:00 AM — **Personal Perspective: Trends in the Family (Khorassan Room)**

Speaker: Rev. Robert Dulin

9:30 AM — **Plenary Session (Khorassan Room)**

Speaker: Dr. Mark W. Lee
 Subject: The Church and the Unmarried
 Speaker: Rev. Britton Wood
 Subject: The Formerly Married - The Church's New Frontier

10:30 AM — **Coffee Break and Exhibits****11:15-12:15** — **Interaction Groups**

Meet each day with the same group in the assigned room. Interaction Groups are encouraged to continue their conversation over lunch each day.

2:30 to 3:20 PM — **Action Seminar I**

Location of Action Seminars is found in the Action Seminar directory on pages 18-21. Congress participants who returned the Action Seminar selection form are expected to adhere to their expressed preference.

3:40 to 4:30 PM — **Action Seminars II****7:00 PM** — **Evening Program (Khorassan Room)**

Music and Testimony: Pat Boone
 Participants' Response
 Speaker: Dr. Oswald C. J. Hoffmann
 Subject: The Dynamics of Family Unity

9:00 PM — **"I Love America Bicentennial Cavalcade" by John Peterson and Don Wyrzten**

—with producers Don and Doris Newman and vocal director Don Ricks in the Khorassan Room.

Friday—The Church-World

PRESIDING FOR THE DAY: DR. ADRIAN ROGERS

8:30 AM — Worship and Bible Study (Khorassan Room)

Speaker: Dr. Ray Stedman
Subject: When Stones Cry Out
Text: Luke 17:28-40

9:00 AM — Personal Perspective: Trends in the Family (Khorassan Room)

Speaker: Bettye Lechner

9:30 AM — Plenary Session (Khorassan Room)

Speaker: Dr. Ted Ward
Subject: Secular Society and the Christian Family - Two Way Influences
Speaker: Dr. Larry Richards
Subject: How the Church Can Help the Family Face the Future

10:30 AM — Coffee Break and Exhibits

11:15 AM — Closing Session (Khorassan Room)

Music: Steve Musto
Capsule Comments
Speaker: Dr. Leighton Ford
Subject: The Family - Foundation for Evangelism

Departure Information

Congress participants have until 1:00 PM to check out of their hotel rooms without being charged for an additional day's stay or making special arrangements.



**WORSHIP
AND
BIBLE
STUDY**

Each day (Tuesday through Friday) starts with Worship and Bible Study. These times have been planned to begin the day with attention focused on Christ. Full involvement by all Congress participants in Worship and Bible Study sets a spiritual tone for the entire Congress and gives perspective to the tough issues to be faced as the program develops. Plan to arrive in the Khorassan Room promptly at 8:30 each morning for Worship and Bible Study.

Dr. Ray Stedman is the Congress Bible teacher. Each morning he shares a fresh insight from the Word of God for the needs of families. The texts he is using are listed on each day's schedule (pages 11-14).

Prayer releases the power of God to be applied to specific needs. By beginning each day's work with prayer, the output of the day becomes potent for healing the wounds of families.



**PERSONAL
PERSPECTIVES**

The world is larger than any one person and his or her sphere of influence. Churches are not alone in their concern for families. Churches who wish to be effective with families must keep up with trends on the family scene, both in the most current needs of families and recent developments in family services.

Personal Perspective: Trends in the Family, at 9:00 in the Khorassan Room each morning (Tuesday through Friday), gives some of this flavor to the Congress. Each of the speakers has a professional involvement in a distinctive family service that gives him or her a unique perspective on the family, its needs, and how to meet those needs.

Action Seminars

Two sessions of Action Seminars are held each day (Monday through Thursday). Highly qualified personnel are leading groups in the study of specific topics. Congress participants select those Action Seminars of the greatest interest and value to them. Congress participants who returned an Action Seminar selection form in advance of the Congress will please adhere to the preference expressed there. Most seminars are offered twice to allow maximum flexibility in selection for Congress participants. By selecting one Action Seminar from each session for each day, Congress participants take part in eight of these practical experiences. Wives and husbands may select the same or different Action Seminars. The Action Seminar directory on pages 18-21 lists Action Seminars according to their time of offering, giving the title, leaders and locations.

Interaction Groups

The Interaction Groups allow each Congress participant to deal with the input of the Congress program in terms of his or her own experiences, needs, and place of service. The Interaction Groups provide the opportunity to pull together the loose ends of thought that have been provoked by the Congress program and to seek ways of personally applying and using them.

Each Congress participant has been assigned to an Interaction Group of about twenty people or less. The registration packet includes the Interaction Group assignment for each Congress participant. Questions about Interaction Group assignments will be answered at the Congress information desk. The same groups meet in the same places each day. This allows each Congress participant to become well acquainted with a few people through the week. Each group represents a kind of cross-section of the Congress: different vocations, backgrounds, ages, and

geographies. Everyone has something to contribute to and learn from their Interaction Group experience this week. Regular attendance in Interaction Group is more than sticking to the schedule, it is a matter of responsibility to the others in the group.

A leader has been appointed for each Interaction Group. Group leaders have written instructions to follow, which structure the group time so that it can be of maximum benefit for everyone. A recorder completes an Interaction Group Report Form each day and turns them in to the Congress information desk.

The Interaction Group instructions are flexible enough that everyone will profit from the experience. These times will help Congress participants clarify and draw together what they are learning. They are also planned to assist Congress participants in applying what they are learning to their unique situations, opportunities, and needs. For some this is a professional ministry

Evening Programs

Programs have been planned for each evening of the CONTINENTAL CONGRESS ON THE FAMILY that conclude each day's schedule with an inspiring experience centered around God's work in the family. Music, much of it under the direction of Steve Musto, characterizes these gatherings in the Khorassan Room at 7:30 each evening. After the day's work, Congress participants find spiritual refreshment at each evening's unique program.

LOVE
... your Family
as yourself

with a single congregation, while others are involved with denominations. For some this is in the arena of secular occupation, while others work for religious organizations. For many, if not all, Congress participants the most important application is to their own marriage and family relationships. Discussing the variety of these applications will make the whole Congress more profitable for all involved.

Many of the presentations made at the CONTINENTAL CONGRESS ON THE FAMILY are controversial and provocative. It is the purpose of the Congress to provide a forum for expressing and exploring a broad spectrum of sometimes competing ideas. The views expressed during the Congress program are not necessarily those of the Congress planners and staff. Congress participants are not expected to agree with everything on the Congress program or even with each other.

Therefore, controversy is likely to occur in the Interaction Groups. A spirit of

healthy Christian fellowship promoted by the Opening Celebration, Worship and Bible Study times, and Evening Programs, will make constructive dialogue of the controversy. It is in openly facing and discussing these hard issues, about which opinion varies greatly, that the most profitable work of the Congress is done.

Since the issues are large and the implications many, one hour each day is not adequate to deal with the input of the Congress program in a meaningful way. Therefore, Interaction Groups are encouraged to continue their conversation over lunch each day. On the other hand, the three-hour dinner break (4:30-7:30 PM) allows time for relaxation, and meals and conversation with friends. The impact of the CONTINENTAL CONGRESS ON THE FAMILY is highly concentrated. In the brief time together, Congress participants will want to make maximum use of their time so the Congress can have its maximum practical impact for them.

Action Seminar Directory

Monday

Session I

- The Church, The Retarded, and Today's Institutions* — Rina Florence (Chippendale Room)
- Developing Creative Home Teaching* — Wayne Rickerson (Tiara Lounge North)
- Divorce and Remarriage: A Fresh, Biblical View* — Dwight Small (Khorassan "A")
- Family Enrichment Through the Church* — Julie Gorman (Tiara Room)
- Family Financial Counseling* — Waldo Werning (Park Room)
- Integrating Teens into Family Life* — Jay Kesler (Stockholm Room)
- Marriage Enrichment Through the Church* — H. Norman Wright (Coach Room)
- A New Look at Christian Husbands* — Larry Christenson (Tiara Lounge South)
- The Practical Process of Premarital Counseling* — Howard Hendricks (Chase Club)
- Spiritual Gifts Versus Prescribed Roles in Marriage* — Louis and Colleen Evans (Starlight Roof)
- Training Christian Couples for Marriage Counseling* — Norman Wakefield (Regency Room)

Session II

- Adolescents, Drugs, and Delinquents* — Basil Jackson (Tiara Lounge South)
- The Church, the Retarded, and Today's Institutions* — Rina Florence (Chippendale Room)
- Community Influences on the Family* — Wildering S. Edwards (Coach Room)
- Divorce and Remarriage: A Fresh Practical View* — Lars Granberg (Khorassan "C")
- Establishing a Day Care Center in the Local Church* — Arnold Berntsen (Park Room)
- How the Church Splits the Family* — Lane Adams, Victor Glavich (Tiara Room)
- The Mentally and Physically Ill Family Member* — Markham Berry (Stockholm Room)
- Models of Marriage Counseling* — Donald Tweedie (Khorassan "A")
- A New Look at Christian Husbands* — Larry Christenson (Starlight Roof)
- A New Look at Christian Wives* — Gladys Hunt (Chase Club Pit)
- Premarital Counseling: Its Importance and Effective Use* — Anthony Florio (Regency Room)

Tuesday

Session I

- The Aged Family Member and the Church* — David Moberg (Park Room)
- Biblical Guidelines for Handling Family Conflict* — George Sanchez (Khorassan "A")
- Divorce and Remarriage: A Fresh Biblical View* — Dwight Small (Tiara Room)
- Family Financial Counseling* — Waldo Werning (Georgian Room)
- Integrating Teens Into Family Life* — Jay Kesler (Tiara Lounge South)
- Integrating Teens Into the Local Church* — Denny Rydberg (Colonial Room)
- The One-Parent Family* — Robert Pinder (Coach Room)
- The Practical Process of Premarital Counseling* — Howard Hendricks (Chase Club)
- Self-Image and Family Success* — James Dobson (Starlight Roof)
- Spiritual Gifts Versus Prescribed Roles in Marriage* — Louis and Colleen Evans (Regency Room)
- A Theology of Marriage and the Family* — Colemon Kerry (Tiara Lounge North)
- Training Christian Couples for Marriage Counseling* — Norman Wakefield (Empire Room)

Session II

- Adolescents, Drugs, and Delinquents* — Basil Jackson (Tiara Lounge South)
- The Aged Family Member and the Church* — David Moberg (Park Room)
- Community Influences on the Family* — Wildering S. Edwards (Regency Room)
- Divorce and Remarriage: A Fresh, Practical View* — Lars Granberg (Coach Room)
- How the Church Splits the Family* — Lane Adams, Victor Glavich (Tiara Room)
- Marriage Enrichment Through the Church* — H. Norman Wright (Chase Club)
- The Mentally and Physically Ill Family Member* — Markham Berry (Georgian Room)
- Ministering to the Family of the Alcoholic* — Jerry Dunn (Colonial Room)
- Models of Marriage Counseling* — Donald Tweedie (Empire Room)
- A New Look at Christian Wives* — Gladys Hunt (Khorassan "A")
- Premarital Counseling: Its Importance and Effective Use* — Anthony Florio (Tiara Lounge North)
- Self-Image and Family Success* — James Dobson (Starlight Roof)

Wednesday**Session I**

- Abortion* — Clifford Bajema, Phillip Ney (Coach Room)
Alternate Styles of Marriage — John Scanzoni (Tiara Room)
Developing Alternatives to Abortion — Judy Fink, Marjorie Mecklenberg (Lucas Place)
A Biblical View of Homosexuality — Dennis Kinlaw (Tiara Lounge North)
Christian Higher Education and Family Development — David McKenna (Colonial Room)
Collegiate Singles and the Church — Rich Berry, Barb Sroka (Palladian Room)
Developing an Adult Single Lifestyle — Nancy Hardesty, Lyle Hillegas (Stockholm Room)
Developing Creative Home Teaching — Wayne Rickerson (Starlight Roof)
Integrating Teens Into the Local Church — Denny Rydberg (Regency Room)
Masculinity Today — Gary Collins (Khorassan "A")
Ministering to the Family of the Alcoholic — Jerry Dunn (Park Room)
The One-Parent Family — Robert Pinder (Zodiac Lounge)
The Single Woman and the Church — Joan Salmon Campbell, Virginia McIver, Linda LeSourd (Georgian Room)
A Theology of Marriage and the Family — Colemon Kerry (Empire Room)

Session II

- Developing Alternatives to Abortion* — Judy Fink, Marjorie Mecklenberg (Lucas Place)
Alternatives to Abortion — Judy Fink, Marjorie Mecklenberg (Lucas Place)
Christian Sex Counseling — Ed Wheat (Regency Room)
The Church and the Homosexual — Guy Charles (Park Room)
Establishing a Day Care Center in the Local Church — Arnold Berntsen (Colonial Room)
Family Cluster Education — Del and Trudy VanderHaar (Coach Room)
Friendship Evangelism — Matt Prince (Stockholm Room)
Femininity Today — Dr. Mary Stewart Van Leewen (Zodiac Lounge)
Professional Family Counseling and the Church — Paul Walker (Tiara Lounge North)
Rapid Treatment for a Troubled Marriage — Andre Bustanoby (Starlight Roof)
Sex Education in the Home — Letha Scanzoni (Tiara Room)
Sex Inside and Outside of Marriage — David Seamands (Empire Room)
Strengthening the Pastor's Family Counseling Skills — John and Robina Drakeford (Khorassan "A")

Thursday**Session I**

- Abortion* — Clifford Bajema, Phillip Ney (Palladian Room)
Biblical Guidelines for Handling Family Conflict — George Sanchez (Tiara Room)
A Biblical View of Homosexuality — Dennis Kinlaw (Zodiac Lounge)
Christian Higher Education and Family Development — David McKenna (Georgian Room)
Collegiate Singles and the Church — Rich Berry, Barb Sroka (Park Room)
Developing an Adult Single Lifestyle — Nancy Hardesty, Lyle Hillegas (Coach Room)
Developing a Church Family Learning Center — Morris Sheats (Regency Room)
Developing Family Emotional Maturity — O. Quentin Hyder (Starlight Roof)
Leisure, Vacations, and the Family — Bill Gwinn (Tiara Lounge North)
Masculinity Today — Gary Collins (Empire Room)
The Single Woman and the Church — Joan Salmon Campbell, Virginia McIver, Linda LeSourd (Stockholm Room)
The School, the Family, and the Urban Community — Marjorie Branch (Colonial Room)
Verbal and Non-Verbal Communication in the Home — Mark Lee (Khorassan "A")

Session II

- Christian Sex Counseling* — Ed Wheat (Tiara Room)
The Church and the Homosexual — Guy Charles (Georgian Room)
Counseling Military Families — C. P. (Tark) and Alma Tarkington (Palladian Room)
Developing a Church Family Learning Center — Morris Sheats (Regency Room)
Family Cluster Education — Del and Trudy VanderHaar (Zodiac Lounge)
Femininity Today — Dr. Mary Stewart Van Leewen (Stockholm Room)
Friendship Evangelism — Matt Prince (Coach Room)
Leisure, Vacations, and the Family — Bill Gwinn (Tiara Lounge North)
Professional Family Counseling and the Church — Paul Walker (Park Room)
Rapid Treatment for a Troubled Marriage — Andre Bustanoby (Starlight Roof)
Sex Inside and Outside of Marriage — David Seamands (Empire Room)
The School, the Family, and the Urban Community — Marjorie Branch (Colonial Room)
Strengthening the Pastor's Family Counseling Skills — John and Robina Drakeford (Khorassan "A")

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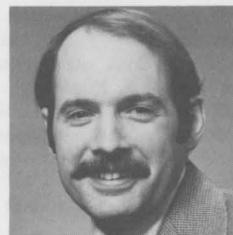


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The Congress staff wishes to acknowledge with appreciation the assistance and services of the following persons and organizations:

The late **Paul Little** who provided invaluable counsel and help during the last months of his life.

The **Convention and Visitors Bureau of Greater St. Louis**, Mr. Lanny Richard, for cooperation in Congress and accommodation arrangements.

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Graphic and Editorial Services of Glen Ellyn Illinois, Wayne and Ruth Ann Kiser, for graphic design and production of the contents of this program book.

Congress Personnel

Rev. Lane Adams serves on the Congress Executive Committee and is co-leader of the Action Seminar, "How the Church Splits the Family" (Monday II and Tuesday II). He is the Minister of Evangelism, First Presbyterian Church of Hollywood, California and was an Associate Evangelist with the Billy Graham Evangelistic Association. He conducted forty city-wide crusades and has written two books.



Rev. Clifford E. Bajema is co-leader of the Action Seminar, "Abortion" (Wednesday I and Thursday I). He is the Pastor of the Akron Christian Reformed Church in Akron, Ohio. The author of *Abortion and the Meaning of Personhood*, he is a part-time instructor at Kent State University and is active in the national right-to-life movement. He was an InterVarsity staff representative at the University of Colorado and has had pastorates in Colorado Springs and Denver.



Rev. Arnold C. Berntsen is the leader of the Action Seminar, "Establishing a Day Care Center in the Local Church" (Monday II and Wednesday II). He is the Manager of the Winkie Bear School Division of David C. Cook Publishing Company, where he has also served as Christian Education Consultant. He has been a Minister of Youth Visitation and Christian Education in two churches.



Charles Markham Berry, M.D. is the leader of the Action Seminar, "The Mentally and Physically Ill Family Member" (Monday II and Tuesday II). He is a Resident in Psychiatry at the Emory University School of Medicine in Atlanta, Georgia, and serves as Senior Resident Assistant at the Georgia Mental Health Institute.



Rich Berry is co-leader of the Action Seminar on "Collegiate Singles and the Church" (Wednesday I and Thursday I). He is an area director for the Navigators in Atlanta, Georgia. He joined the Navigators staff after his discharge from the Air Force and spent three years at Tuskegee Institute.



The Bicentennial Cavalcade presents its own program based on the musical "I Love America" by John Peterson and Don Wyrzten. This extra program available to Congress participants is produced and directed by Don and Doris Newman. Don Ricks is Vocal Director and Lynda Cleveland Technical Director for the troupe of thirty-five young people.

Pat Boone is presiding for the day on Thursday. He sings and presents his personal testimony that evening and is on the Congress Convening Committee. A recording artist, Pat Boone has written several books, including *A New Song*.



Marjorie Branch leads the Action Seminar, "The School, the Family and the Urban Community" (Thursday I and II). She is the Principal of the Leif Ericson Elementary School in Chicago.



Rev. Andre Bustanoby is the leader for the Action Seminar, "Rapid Treatment for a Troubled Marriage" (Wednesday II and Thursday II). He served as a pastor for twelve years before entering private practice as a counselor specializing in marriage and family in Bowie, Maryland. He has contributed articles to *Christianity Today* and conducts communication workshops and family-life seminars.



Rev. Joan Salmon Campbell is one of three leaders of the Action Seminar, "The Single Woman and the Church" (Wednesday I and Thursday I). She is Assistant Pastor at St. Marks United Presbyterian Church in Rockville, Maryland. She is a composing and performing musician. A Master of Divinity degree candidate, she specializes in the Black legacy to music and the arts.



Guy Charles leads the Action Seminar on "The Church and the Homosexual" (Wednesday II and Thursday II). He is the founder and Director of Liberation, the only full-time Christian organization involved solely in an outreach to homosexuals. An active homosexual for thirty-seven years, he now counsels homosexuals personally and through correspondence.



Rev. Larry Christenson is leading the Action Seminar, "A New Look at Christian Husbands" (Monday I and II) and serves on the Congress Convening Committee. He is the Pastor of Trinity Lutheran Church in San Pedro, California. His writing includes the book, *The Christian Family*.



Dr. Gary Collins is the Congress Program Director. He leads an Action Seminar on "Masculinity Today" (Wednesday I and Thursday I) and serves on the Congress Convening Committee. He is Professor and Chairman of the Department of Pastoral Psychology and Counseling at Trinity Evangelical Divinity School in Deerfield, Illinois. He is the author of several books including *Overcoming Anxiety* and *The Christian Psychology of Paul Tournier*. He was the National President of the American Scientific Association in 1974.



Dr. James Dobson leads the Action Seminar on "Self-Image and Family Success" (Tuesday I and II) and serves on the Congress Convening Committee. He is an Assistant Professor of Pediatrics at the University of Southern California School of Medicine and Director of Behavioral Research in the Division of Child Development for Children's Hospital of Los Angeles. Two of his books are *Dare to Discipline* and *Hide and Seek*.



Dr. John Drakeford, along with his wife Robina, leads the Action Seminar, "Strengthening the Pastor's Family Counseling Skills" (Wednesday II and Thursday II) and serves on the Congress Convening Committee. He is Professor of Psychology and Counseling at Southwestern Baptist Seminary in Fort Worth, Texas and Director of the Baptist Marriage and Family Counseling Center. He has written nineteen books and co-authored three others. He is a licensed psychologist, a clinical member of the American Association of Marriage and Family Counselors and a Clinical Supervisor in the field of Clinical Pastoral Education.



Robina Drakeford, along with her husband John, leads the Action Seminar, "Strengthening the Pastor's Family Counseling Skills" (Wednesday II and Thursday II). She was born in Scotland and has traveled extensively with her husband conducting youth and family-life conferences.



Rev. Robert Dulin is presiding for the day on Wednesday and presenting his Personal Perspective: Trends in the Family on Thursday. He is the Associate Pastor of the Metropolitan Church of God in Detroit, Michigan, and Chairman of the Committee on Ministries with Black Families of the National Council of Churches.



Rev. Jerry Dunn is the leader of the Action Seminar, "Ministering to the Alcoholic's Family" (Tuesday II and Wednesday I). He is the Executive Director of The People's City Mission in Lincoln, Nebraska and is the immediate past President of The International Union of Gospel Missions. Out of his personal experience as an alcoholic, Jerry Dunn has written his book, *God Is for the Alcoholic*, and presents his weekly TV program, "Plain Talk."



Dr. Wildering Edwards leads the Action Seminar on "Community Influences on the Family" (Monday II and Tuesday II). She is Associate Professor of Home and Family Life at Texas Tech University in Lubbock, Texas and is Visiting Professor at San Diego State College and Indiana University of Pennsylvania.



Colleen Townsend Evans, along with her husband Louis, is the leader of the Action Seminar, "Spiritual Gifts Versus Prescribed Roles in Marriage" (Monday I and Tuesday I). She is the author of *A New Joy* and *Love Is an Everyday Thing*. A former actress with Twentieth Century Fox, she now serves on the boards of Wooster College in Ohio and Union Theological Seminary in Richmond.



Dr. Louis H. Evans, Jr., along with his wife Colleen, is the leader of the Action Seminar, "Spiritual Gifts Versus Prescribed Roles in Marriage" (Monday I and Tuesday I) and serves on the Congress Convening Committee. He is presiding for the day on Tuesday. He is the Pastor of the National Presbyterian Church of Washington, D.C. and a board member of San Francisco Theological Seminary.



Judy Fink is the co-leader of the Action Seminar, "Developing Alternatives to Abortion" (Wednesday I and II). She is the Vice President of American Citizens Concerned for Life, Inc. in Minneapolis, Minnesota.



Rina Florence is leading the Action Seminar on "The Church, The Retarded, and Today's Institutions" (Monday I and II). She teaches mentally handicapped children in the Carrol County Schools in Kentucky.



Dr. Anthony Florio leads an Action Seminar on "Premarital Counseling: Its Importance and Effective Use" (Monday II and Tuesday II) and serves on the Congress Convening Committee. He is a member of the psychiatric staff of St. Joseph's Hospital in Ridgewood, New Jersey and has a private practice as a pre-marriage, marriage, and family counselor. He is the founder of Christian Singles Fellowship and has written the book for pre-marrieds, *Two to Get Ready*.



Dr. Leighton Ford presents the concluding address to the Congress on Friday afternoon, "The Family - Foundation for Evangelism." He is Vice President and Associate Evangelist with the Billy Graham Evangelistic Association.



Dr. C. Ray Fowler presents his Personal Perspective: Trends in the Family on Tuesday. He is the Executive Director of the American Association of Marriage and Family Counselors.



Victor Glavach is co-leader of the Action Seminar, "How the Church Splits the Family" (Monday II and Tuesday II). He is a Legislative Aide to Senator Mark O. Hatfield of Oregon and is the Director of the *Campus Life* Department of Youth for Christ, International, U.S.A.



Julie Gorman leads the Action Seminar on "Family Enrichment Through the Local Church" (Monday I). She is Educational Associate in the Children-Family area for Lake Avenue Congregational Church of Pasadena, California and has written for Scripture Press and Gospel Light publications.



Dr. Lars Granberg is the leader of the Action Seminar, "Divorce and Remarriage: A Fresh Practical View" (Monday II and Tuesday II) and serves on the Congress Convening Committee. He is Dean for the Social Sciences and Professor of Psychology, Hope College, in Holland, Michigan.



Rev. Bill Gwinn leads the Action Seminar on "Leisure, Vacations, and the Family" (Thursday I and II). He is the Executive Director of Mount Hermon Christian Conference Grounds in California.



Nancy Hardesty is the co-leader of the Action Seminar, "Developing an Adult Single Lifestyle" (Wednesday I and Thursday I). She is a free-lance writer working toward a doctorate at the University of Chicago Divinity School. She has been Assistant Professor of English at Trinity College in Deerfield, Illinois, Assistant Editor of *Eternity* magazine, and is co-author of the book, *All We're Meant To Be*.



Honorable Mark O. Hatfield is the Honorary Chairman of the Congress and U.S. Senator from Oregon. He is speaking at the Opening Convocation, Monday morning.



Dr. Howard Hendricks, along with his wife Jeanne, addresses the Congress Tuesday evening on "The Christian Worker's Marriage and Family." He also serves on the Congress Executive Committee and is leading an Action Seminar on "The Practical Process of Pre-marital Counseling" (Monday I and Tuesday I). He is Professor of Christian Education at Dallas Theological Seminary in Dallas, Texas. Among his books are *Say It with Love* and *Heaven Help the Home*.



Jeanne Hendricks, along with her husband Howard, addresses the Congress Tuesday evening on "The Christian Worker's Marriage and Family."



Dr. Lyle Hillegas is the co-leader of the Action Seminar, "Developing an Adult Single Lifestyle" (Wednesday I and Thursday I). He is the President of Westmont College in Santa Barbara, California.



Dr. Oswald Hoffmann addresses the Congress on Thursday evening on "The Dynamics of Family Unity." He has been the speaker on the Lutheran Hour radio program since 1955. Among his books is *Hurry Home Where You Belong*.



Dr. Harry N. Hollis, Jr. presents a plenary paper, "A Christian Model for Sexual Understanding and Behavior." He is the Director of Family and Special Moral Concerns for the Christian Life Commission of the Southern Baptist Convention



Gladys Hunt leads the Action Seminar, "A New Look at Christian Wives" (Monday II and Tuesday II) and serves on the Congress Convening Committee. She works with InterVarsity in Ann Arbor, Michigan. Among her books are *MS Means Myself* and *Honey for a Child's Heart*.



O. Quentin Hyder, M.D. leads an Action Seminar on "Developing Family Emotional Maturity" (Thursday I). He maintains a private practice of psychiatry in New York City and is the Medical Director of the Christian Counseling and Psychotherapy Center in Mid-town Manhattan. He is involved in clinical research in depression at the Columbia Presbyterian Medical Center. He is an author of two books, including *A Christian Handbook of Psychiatry*.



Basil Jackson, M.D. is the leader of the Action Seminar on "Adolescents, Drugs, and Delinquents" (Monday II and Tuesday II). He is a Professor at Trinity Evangelical Divinity School, and Chairman of the Department of Psychiatry, Lutheran Hospital, Milwaukee, Wisconsin.



Rev. Coleman W. Kerry leads the Action Seminar on "A Theology of Marriage and the Family" (Tuesday I and Wednesday I). He is the pastor of Friendship Baptist Church in Charlotte, North Carolina. He serves on the Boards of Directors of the NAACP, The National Conference of Christians and Jews, the Boy Scouts of America and the YMCA.



Dr. Jay Kesler leads the Action Seminar on "Integrating Teens Into Family Life" (Monday I and Tuesday I) and serves on the Congress Convening Committee. He is the President of Youth For Christ International, U.S.A. and is Pastor of the First Baptist Church of Geneva, Illinois.



Dr. Dennis Kinlaw is the leader of the Action Seminar, "A Biblical View of Homosexuality" (Wednesday I and Thursday I). He is President of Asbury College in Wilmore, Kentucky.



Bettye Lechner presents her Personal Perspective: Trends in the Family on Friday. She is the Executive Director of the Christian Family Movement in Chicago, Illinois.



Dr. Mark W. Lee presents a plenary paper, "The Church and the Unmarried," serves on the Congress Convening Committee, and leads an Action Seminar on "Verbal and Non-verbal Communication in the Home" (Thursday I). He is President of Simpson College in San Francisco, California. Among his books is *Our Children: Our Best Friends*.



Linda LeSourd is one of three leaders of the Action Seminar, "The Single Woman and the Church" (Wednesday I and Thursday I). She serves on the staff of Cornerstone, a discipleship and training center near the University of Maryland, which is affiliated with the Fellowship Foundation.



Virginia McIver is one of three leaders of the Action Seminar, "The Single Woman and the Church" (Wednesday I and Thursday I). She is a music teacher in Houston, Texas.



Dr. David L. McKenna leads the Action Seminar on "Christian Higher Education and Family Development" (Wednesday I and Thursday I). He is the President of Seattle Pacific College, Seattle, Washington. He serves on the Council on Higher Education for the State of Washington and the Executive Committee of the Christian College Consortium. He is President of Independent Colleges of Washington, Inc. and the Director of the Association of American Colleges.



Marjory Mecklenberg is the co-leader of the Action Seminar, "Developing Alternatives to Abortion" (Wednesday I and II). She is the President of Americans Concerned for Life, Inc. and Vice-Chairman of Americans United for Life.



Dr. David Moberg leads the Action Seminar on "The Aged Family Member and the Church" (Tuesday I and II) and serves on the Congress Convening Committee. He is Chairman of the Sociology and Anthropology Department at Marquette University in Milwaukee, Wisconsin.



The Murk Family Musicales performs Monday evening. The performance features vocal and instrumental music by Jim and Donna Murk of Wheaton, Illinois and their five children, Barb, Beverly, Bill, Becky and Brenda.

Barbara Musto is the Musical Accompanist for the Congress.



Steve Musto is the Congress Music Director. He is a vocalist with Word Records. He travels frequently with evangelists.



Dr. S. Bruce Narramore presents a plenary paper, "Christian Parenthood in a Modern World" and serves on the Congress Convening Committee. He is Academic Dean and Associate Professor of Psychology at the Rosemead Graduate School of Psychology in Rosemead, California. He is the author of *Help! I'm a Parent* and *A Guide to Child Rearing*.



Philip Ney, M.D. is the co-leader of an Action Seminar on "Abortion" (Wednesday I and Thursday I). He is an Associate Clinical Professor at the University of British Columbia and Head of the Department of Psychiatry at Royal Jubilee Hospital in Victoria, British Columbia.



Dr. Lloyd J. Ogilvie presents a plenary paper, "Marriage as It Was Meant to Be: The Dynamics of Authentic Relationships" and serves on the Congress Convening Committee. He is the Pastor of the First Presbyterian Church of Hollywood, California.



Doug Oldham takes part in the Congress Opening Celebration: The Family Together on Sunday night. Gospel singer, recording artist, he appears on television as the soloist for the Old Time Gospel Hours of the Thomas Road Baptist Church of Lynchburg, Virginia.



J. Allan Petersen is the Executive Director of the Congress and is presenting the keynote address on Monday evening. He is the founder and Director of Family Concern, Inc. of Omaha, Nebraska. Among his books is *The Marriage Affair*.



Dr. Robert Pinder leads an Action Seminar on "The One-Parent Family" (Tuesday I and Wednesday I). He is Associate Professor of Family Relations in the Home and Family Life Department of Texas Tech University. A former pastor, he serves as a counselor for the pastors and other church staff members in the Baptist General Convention of Texas.



Rev. Matt Prince is the leader of the Action Seminar on "Friendship Evangelism" (Wednesday II and Thursday II). He is the founder and director of New Life, Inc. in Knoxville, Tennessee. He has been a lawyer and Assistant to the Executive Director of Young Life.



The Re'Generation shares in the Sunday night Opening Celebration: The Family Together and on Wednesday evening presents selections from "I Promise to Love" and other parts of their repertoire. "I Promise to Love" is a new musical written and composed by Derric Johnson and orchestrated by Don Marsh. The Re'Generation is a touring musical group of ten young people now in their sixth year together.

Dr. Larry Richards presents the plenary paper, "How the Church Can Help the Family Face the Future" and serves on the Congress Convening Committee. He is a member of the Step 2 team, a Chicago-based church renewal organization. An author living in Phoenix, Arizona, among his books are *New Face for the Church* and *You the Parent*.



Wayne Rickerson leads the Action Seminar, "Developing Creative Home Teaching" (Monday I and Wednesday I). A free lance writer, he has been a high school teacher, pastor and Christian education minister. He conducts Creative Home Teaching Seminars.



Rev. Denny Rydberg is the leader of the Action Seminar, "Integrating Teens Into the Local Church" (Tuesday I and Wednesday I). He is the Vice-President of Youth Specialties, Inc. and editor of the *Wittenburg Door* magazine.



Dr. Adrian Rogers presides for the day on Friday. He is the Pastor of Bellevue Baptist Church in Memphis, Tennessee, and President of the Pastors' Fellowship of the Southern Baptist Convention.



Dr. James Rue presents his Personal Perspective: Trends in the Family on Wednesday. He is the President and National Director of the National Alliance for Family Life.



Rev. George Sanchez is the leader of the Action Seminar on "Biblical Guidelines for Handling Family Conflict" (Tuesday I and Thursday I). He is Special Assistant to the President of The Navigators. His work with college students at Northern Colorado University and with couples in Denver has grown into a nationwide network of Scriptural Home Seminars.



Dr. John Scanzoni presents a plenary paper, along with his wife Letha, "A Christian View of Men's and Women's Roles in a Changing World."



He is leading an Action Seminar on "Alternate Styles of Marriage" (Wednesday I) and serves on the Congress Convening Committee. He is Professor of sociology at Indiana University in Bloomington, Indiana. Among his books are *The Black Family in Modern Society* and *Opportunity and the Family*. He is the associate editor of *Christian Scholar's Review* and on the Board of Directors of the Institute for Advanced Christian Studies.

Letha Scanzoni presents a plenary paper, along with her husband John, "A Christian View of Men's and Women's Roles in a Changing World."



She is leading an Action Seminar on "Sex Education in the Home" (Wednesday II) and serves on the Congress Convening Committee. She is a professional writer and conducts retreats on subjects related to marriage, sex, and family. Among her books are *All We're Meant To Be*, *Sex Is a Parent Affair* and *Sex and the Single Eye*.

Edith Schaeffer presents the plenary paper, "What Is a Family?" An author and lecturer, she is the wife of Dr. Francis Schaeffer of L'Abri Fellowship in Switzerland. Among her writings is the book *Hidden Art*.



Dr. David Seamands is the leader of the Action Seminar, "Sex Inside and Outside of Marriage" (Wednesday II and Thursday II) and serves on the Congress Convening Committee. He is the Pastor of the Wilmore United Methodist Church, host church to Asbury College and Theological Seminary, and an active leader in the Marriage Enrichment program.



Dr. Morris Sheats is the leader of the Action Seminar on "Developing a Church Family Learning Center" (Thursday I and II). He is the Pastor of Trinity Church in Lubbock, Texas and has a radio and television program called RAP, Reaching Another Person.



Virginia Law Shell is presiding for the day on Monday and serves on the Congress Executive Committee. She is the originator of the Marriage Enrichment Program for the Board of Discipleship of the United Methodist Church. Living in Potomac, Maryland, she speaks at conferences, seminars, and retreats on marriage and family life and has written *Appointment Congo* and *As Far As I Can Step*.



Dr. Dwight Hervey Small leads the Action Seminar, "Divorce and Remarriage: A Fresh, Biblical View" (Monday I and Tuesday I) and serves on the Congress Convening Committee. A former pastor, he is Associate Professor of Sociology at Westmont College in Santa Barbara, California. The newest of his books on marriage is *The Right to Remarry*.



Barbara Sroka is the co-leader of the Action Seminar, "Collegiate Singles and the Church" (Wednesday I and Thursday I). She is the Assistant Editor of *HIS Magazine*, the official publication of InterVarsity Christian Fellowship U.S.A. and Canada.



Dr. Ray Stedman is the Congress Bible Teacher and serves on the Congress Convening Committee. He is the Pastor of the Peninsula Bible Church in Palo Alto, California. Among his books are *Body Life*, *What More Can God Say?* and *Birth of the Body*.



C. P. (Tark) Tarkington, along with his wife Alma, is leading the Action Seminar on "Counseling Military Families" (Thursday II). He is the Acting Director for Overseas Christian Servicemen's Centers. He has served with Christian Servicemen's Centers in Spain, Okinawa, and the Philippines.



Alma Tarkington, along with her husband "Tark," is leading the Action Seminar on "Counseling Military Families" (Thursday II).



Dr. Donald Tweedie, Jr. leads the Action Seminar, "Models of Marriage Counseling" (Monday II and Tuesday II) and serves on the Congress Convening Committee. He is Professor of Psychology at the Fuller Theological Seminary in Pasadena, California and has been in private practice in psychotherapeutic counseling since 1958. He is a member of the Board of Directors for the Western Association for Christians in Behavioral Sciences.



Rev. Delbert J. Vander Haar, along with his wife Trudy, is leading the Action Seminar on "Family Cluster Education" (Wednesday II and Thursday II). The Secretary for Western Regional Services and Family Life of the General Program Council of the Reformed Church in America, he is an author and leader of Marriage Enrichment Seminars, Family Cluster Experiences, Pastor and Wives Seminars, and Parent-Child Seminars.



Trudy Vander Haar, along with her husband Del, is leading the Action Seminar on "Family Cluster Education" (Wednesday II and Thursday II). A mother of four, she works with her husband facilitating family seminars. She has been a church Youth Director and a teacher and has written for *The Church Herald* and *Spectrum*.



Dr. Mary Stewart Van Leewen leads the Action Seminar on "Femininity Today" (Wednesday II and Thursday II). She is Assistant Professor of Psychology at Calvin College in Grand Rapids, Michigan. A professional writer in the field of Social and Cross-Cultural Psychology, she has recently returned from a teaching and research assignment in Africa.



Dr. Norman Wakefield

is leading the Action Seminar, "Training Christian Couples for Marriage Counseling" (Monday I and Tuesday I) and serves on the Congress Convening Committee. He is Associate Professor of Christian Education at Talbot Theological Seminary in La Mirada, California. He is also Co-director of Christian Marriage Enrichment Seminars and Co-editor of Marriage and Family Resource Newsletter.

**Dr. Paul Walker**

leads the Action Seminar on "Professional Family Counseling and the Church" (Wednesday II and Thursday II). He has been Pastor of the Mount Paran Church of God in Atlanta, Georgia for 15 years and is on the staff of the Atlanta Counseling Center. He has written *The Ministry of Church and Pastor* and *Counseling Youth*.

**Dr. Ted Ward**

presents the plenary paper, "Secular Society and the Christian Family - Two Way Influences." He is Professor of Curriculum Research at the Institute for International Studies and Co-director of the Values Development Education Program of Michigan State University in East Lansing, Michigan.

**Dr. Waldo J. Werning**

leads the Action Seminar on "Family Financial Counseling" (Monday I and Tuesday I). A former pastor and school teacher, he is the Executive Secretary of Stewardship of the South Wisconsin District of the Lutheran Church - Missouri Synod.

**Ed Wheat, M.D.**

leads the Action Seminar, "Christian Sex Counseling" (Wednesday II and Thursday II). A family physician for 23 years, he presents Christian Home Seminars and Bible Conferences. He is the founder of Bible Believers Cassettes, Inc. and the author of the counseling cassettes *Sex Problems and Sex Technique in Marriage*.

**Rev. Britton Wood**

presents the plenary paper, "The Formerly Married - The Church's New Frontier." He is the Single Adult Minister of the Park Cities Baptist Church in Dallas, Texas.

**H. Norman Wright**

is the leader of the Action Seminar, "Marriage Enrichment Through the Church" (Monday I and Tuesday II) and serves on the Congress Convening Committee. He is Associate Professor of Psychology at Biola College in La Mirada, California and a licensed Marriage, Child, and Family Counselor. Among his books are *Communication: Key to Your Marriage* and *The Living Marriage*.



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... your Family
as yourself

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General Information

Congress Information Desk

The Congress information desk is located in the Lido room, adjacent to the Regency Foyer. Congress participants should inquire there for information and assistance. This is the place to inquire about such things as late registration and lost and found. The volunteer Congress stewards are also available for the assistance of Congress participants.

Day guests are welcome for the morning plenary sessions and the evening programs as space allows. They should obtain passes at the Congress information desk.

The phone number for the Continental Congress on the Family at the Chase-Park Plaza is 314-367-9826.

Messages

Messages for Congress participants are posted on a kiosk in the Regency Foyer outside the Lido Room. Since messages are not announced in Congress sessions, Congress participants are encouraged to check for messages several times each day. Messages that have been received should be removed.

Hotel Accommodation

Although Congress participants are housed in a number of hotels in St. Louis, all sessions of the CONTINENTAL CONGRESS ON THE FAMILY are held in the Chase-Park Plaza. The Congress registration fee (\$75 individual - \$90 couple) includes only participation in Congress sessions. It does not include any housing or meals. Congress participants are responsible to make payment for all lodging, meals, and other hotel services before they leave. The Congress will not be responsible for any of these charges.



Admission and Identification Badges

Congress participants must wear their Congress identification badges at all times in the Chase-Park Plaza. The Congress identification badge is the pass to all Congress sessions. Lost badges should be reported immediately to the Congress information desk in the Lido Room. In addition to name, badges designate the following:

Participant	Speaker
Staff	Press
Executive Committee	Guest

Congress Materials

Except for official press coverage, Congress participants are prohibited from tape recording or taking photographs during Congress sessions. Professional quality tapes and photographs will be available.

Arrangements have been made through Word, Inc. for the publication of Congress materials and tapes of Congress sessions. Information presented at the Congress will be published by Word, Inc. early in 1976. Professional photographers are taking pictures of Congress activities. Make special requests with the Congress Information desk. An order form for Congress materials, tapes, and photos is in the registration packet. Bring completed order forms to the Congress information desk of the Family Concern booth.

Parking

A self-park garage and valet parking are available at the Chase-Park Plaza for Congress participants with cars. The garage is located on Maryland Avenue. It may be reached through the Park Plaza lobby.

Shuttle Busses

Complementary shuttle busses transport Congress participants between the Chase-Park Plaza and outlying hotels. Congress identification badges must be worn to board busses. Busses will make pick-ups and deliveries at the main entrances of the Rodeway Inn and the Downtowner Motor Inn. Congress participants staying at the Holiday Inn, Downtown, catch the bus at the Rodeway.

Busses leave Rodeway and Downtowner main entrances:

7:30 and 8:00 AM (8:00 and 8:30 AM on Monday)

1:30 and 2:00 PM

6:30 and 7:00 PM

Busses leave Chase-Park Plaza main entrance:

12:30 and 1:00 PM (1:00 and 1:30 PM on Friday)

4:45 and 5:15 PM

9:45 and 10:15 PM (9:15, 9:45, 11:00, and 11:30 PM on Thursday)

Travel Arrangements

A travel representative will be available in the Lido Room throughout the week to assist Congress participants in making travel arrangements.

Prayer Room

Congress participants are encouraged to pray for the Congress and our families individually, as couples, and in small groups. The Regency Room will be open at 7:00 AM for morning prayer for Congress participants.

Medical Assistance

The Chase Park-Plaza has a medical doctor on its staff. Congress participants needing medical assistance may call the hotel switchboard.

Meals in the Chase-Park Plaza

Congress participants may eat in the restaurants of the Chase-Park Plaza or in other local restaurants. Approximate price ranges (without appetizer or dessert) for the Chase-Park Plaza restaurants are listed below. Also a sandwich buffet lunch is available for approximately \$3.25 in the Steeplechase and Sea Chase.

Tenderloin Room

Lunch	\$2.90 to \$5.95
Dinner	\$5.50 to \$10.00

Sea Chase

Dinner	\$4.95 to \$9.25
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Hunt Room

Breakfast	\$1.45 to \$5.05
Lunch	\$1.75 to \$3.65
Dinner	\$4.50 and up

Tack Room

Breakfast	\$1.40 to \$3.60
Lunch	\$1.30 to \$3.95
Dinner	\$1.30 to \$3.95

Meals in Local Restaurants

Congress participants may eat in local restaurants or in those of the Chase-Park Plaza. Approximate price ranges and locations for several restaurants are listed below:

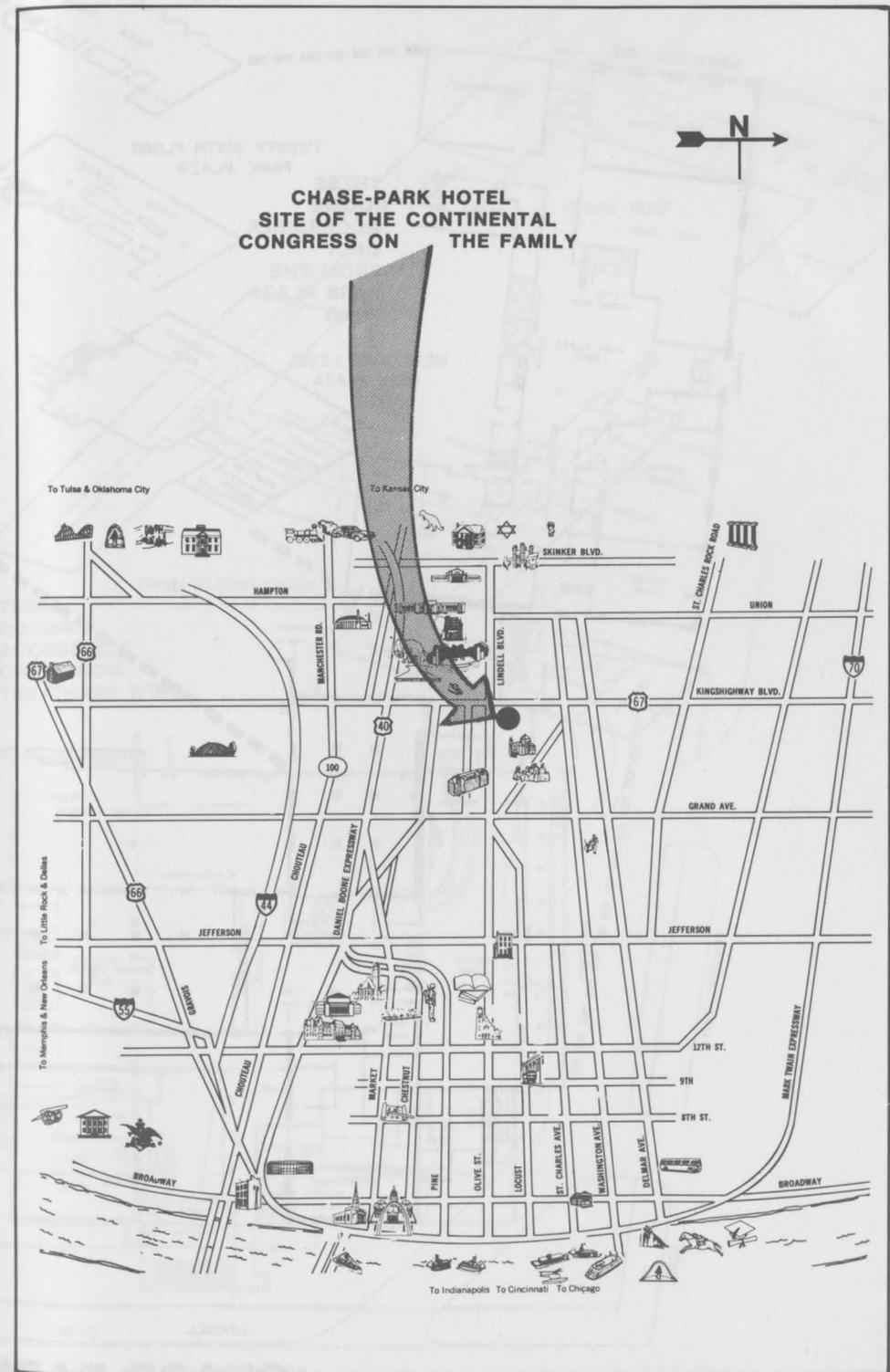
Balaban's Restaurant, 405 North Euclid St., \$5.00 and up.

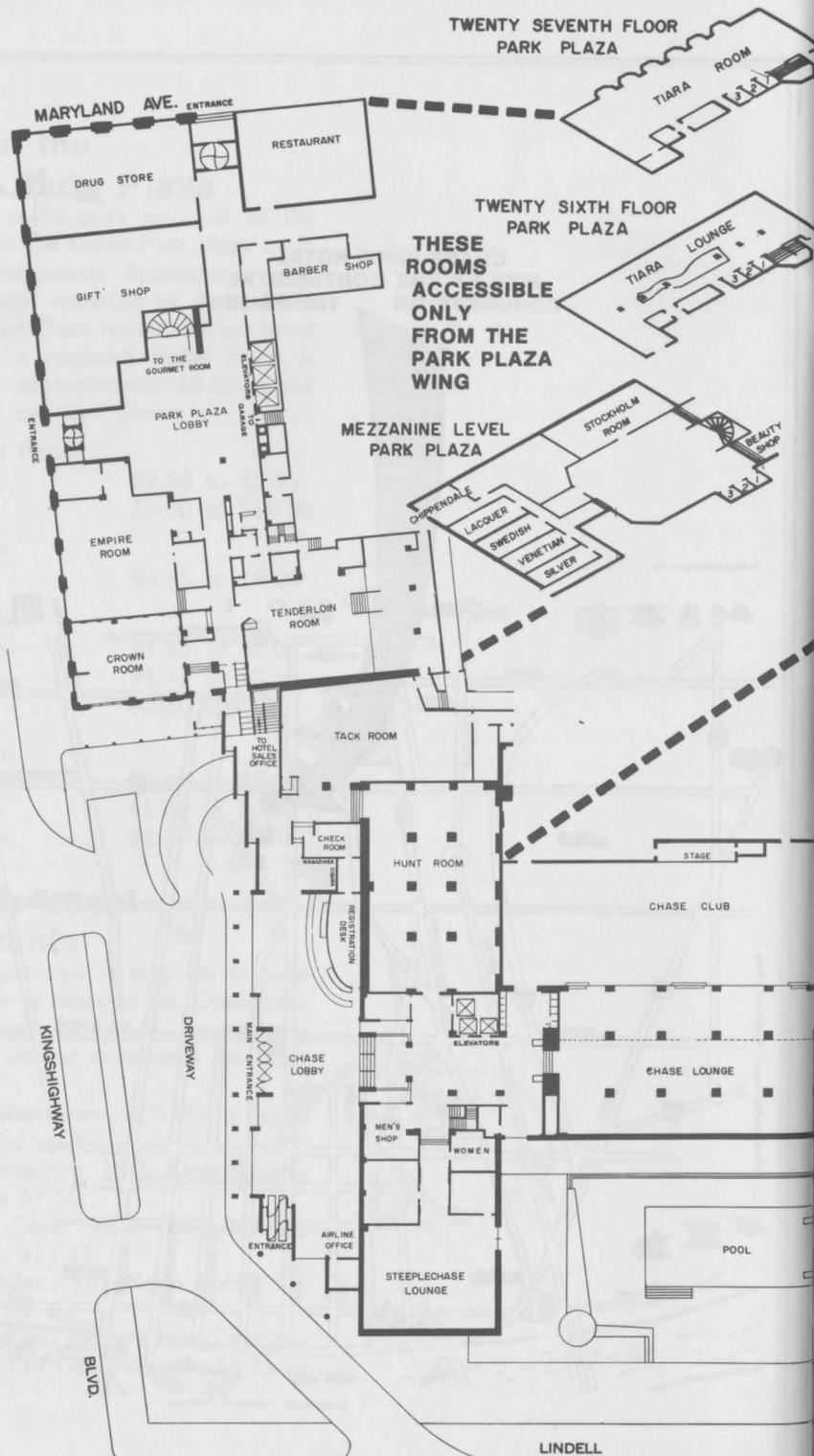
Mikado Restaurant, 18 S. Kingshighway St., \$4.75 to \$7.50.

Nantucket Cove, 40 N. Kingshighway St., \$4.75 to \$11.15.

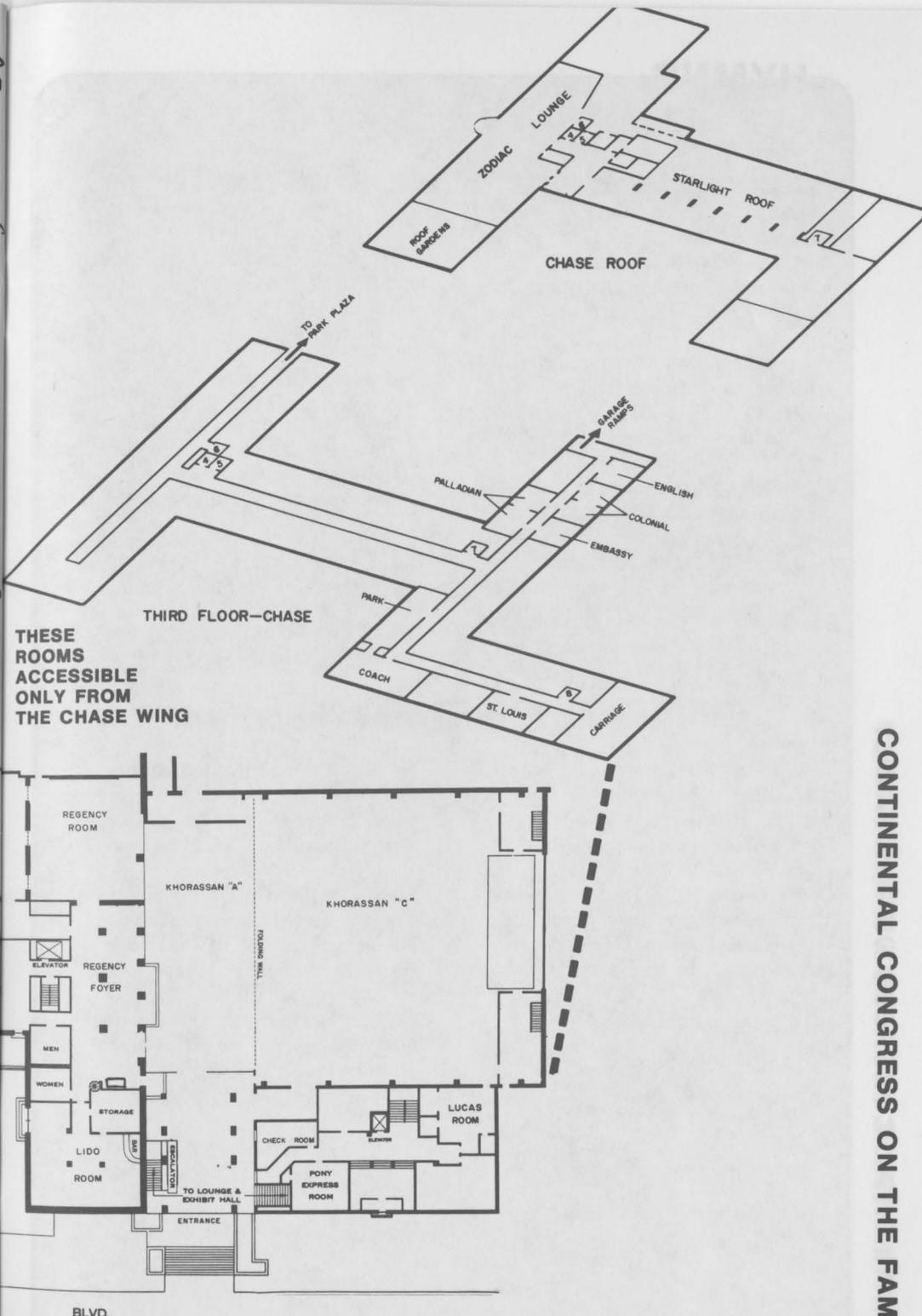
Red Brick, Inc., 101 North Euclid St., \$7.00 to \$9.00.

Stan Musial and Biggie's World Famous Restaurant, 5130 Oakland Ave., \$5.25 to \$9.75.





CHASE-PARK PLAZA HOTEL



HYMNS

Happy the Home when God Is There

Happy the home when God is there,
And love fills every breast;
When one their wish, and one their prayer,
And one their heavenly rest.

Happy the home where Jesus' name
Is sweet to every ear;
Where children early lisp His fame,
And parents hold Him dear.

Happy the home where prayer is heard,
And praise is wont to rise;
Where parents love the sacred Word
And all its wisdom prize.

Lord, let us in our homes agree
This blessed peace to gain;
Unite our hearts in love to Thee,
And love to all will reign. A-men.

Children of the Heavenly Father

Children of the heavenly Father
Safely in His bosom gather;
Nestling bird nor star in heaven
Such a refuge e'er was given.

God His own doth tend and nourish;
In His holy courts they flourish,
From all evil things He spares them,
In His mighty arms He bears them.

Neither life nor death shall ever
From the Lord His children sever;
Unto them His grace He showeth,
And their sorrows all He knoweth.

Praise the Lord in joyful numbers;
Your Protector never slumbers.
At the will of your Defender
Every foe - man must surrender.

Though He giveth or He taketh,
God His children ne'er forsaketh;
His the loving purpose solely
To preserve them pure and holy.

God, Give Us Christian Homes!

God, give us Christian homes!
Homes where the Bible is loved and taught,
Homes where the Master's will is sought,
Homes crowned with beauty Thy love hath wrought;
God, give us Christian homes;
God, give us Christian homes!

God, give us Christian homes!
Homes where the father is true and stong.
Homes that are free from the blight of wrong,
Homes that are joyous with love and song;
God, give us Christian homes;
God, give us Christian homes!

God, give us Christian homes!
Homes where the mother, in queenly quest,
Strives to show others Thy way is best,
Homes where the Lord is an honored guest;
God, give us Christian homes;
God, give us Christian homes!

God, give us Christian homes!
Homes where the children are led to know
Christ in His beauty Who loves them so,
Homes where the altar fires burn and glow;
God, give us Christian homes;
God, give us Christian homes!

Faith of Our Fathers

Faith of our fathers! living still
In spite of dungeon, fire and sword:
O how our hearts beat high with joy
Whene'er we hear that glorious word!
Faith of our fathers! holy faith!
We will be true to thee till death!

Our fathers, chained in prisons dark,
Were still in heart and conscience free:
How sweet would be their children's fate,
If they, like them, could die for thee!
Faith of our fathers! holy faith!
We will be true to thee till death!

Faith of our fathers, we still strive
To win all nations unto thee!
And thro' the truth that comes from God
Mankind shall then indeed be free:
Faith of our fathers! holy faith!
We will be true to thee till death!

Faith of our fathers! we will love
Both friend and foe in all our strife,
And preach thee, too, as love knows how,
By kindly words and virtuous life:
Faith of our fathers! holy faith!
We will be true to thee till death!

There Is Beauty all Around

There is beauty all around, When there's love at home;
There is joy in every sound, When there's love at home.
Peace and plenty here abide, Smiling sweet on every side,
Time doth softly, sweetly glide, When there's love at home.

In the cottage there is joy, When there's love at home'
Hate and envy ne'er annoy, When there's love at home.
Roses blossom 'neath our feet, All the earth's a garden sweet,
Making life a bliss complete, When there's love at home.

Kindly heaven smiles above, When there's love at home;
All the earth is filled with love, When there's love at home.
Sweeter sings the brooklet by, Brighter beams the asure sky;
O there's One who smiles on high, When there's love at home.

Jesus, make me wholly Thine, Then there's love at home;
May Thy sacrifice be mine, Then there's love at home.
Safely from all harm I'll rest, With no sinful care distressed.
Through Thy tender mercy blessed; Then there's love at home.

O Happy Home where Thou Art Loved

O happy home where Thou art loved the dearest,
Thou loving friend, and Saviour of our race,
And where among the guests there never cometh
One who can hold such high and honored place.

O happy home where each one serves Thee, lowly,
Whatever his appointed work may be,
Till every common task seems great and holy,
When it is done, O Lord, as unto Thee.

O happy home where Thou art not forgotten
When joy is overflowing, full, and free;
O happy home where every wounded spirit
Is brought, Physician, Comforter, to Thee.

Until at last, when earthly work is ended,
All meet Thee in the blessed home above
From whence Thou camest, where Thou hast ascended,
Thy everlasting home of peace and love. A-men.

O God, Who to a Loyal Home

O God who to a loyal home Didst trust Thy Son divine,
Where faithful love and patient work Made daily life benign;
With contrite shame Thy grace we claim, And lift to Thee our prayer;
Redeem our oft unworthy homes Till all is Christ-like there.

Deliver us from sins which harm Our homes, and mar their peace.
May selfless and devoted love Make strife and discord cease.
With anxious zeal, for mankind's weal And world-wide peace we pray,
But all in vain, if wayward homes Cause childhood's steps to stray.

Thou art our Father, and from Thee All faithful families spring;
To homes where love and honor dwell Thou dost Thy blessing bring.
O God of love, send from above Thy succor, swift and strong,
That from such homes stout souls may come To triumph over wrong.

We pray that childhood's latent pow'rs May grow to bless mankind;
That we may guide aright young lives, For unguessed good designed.
O Father God, whose Son has trod Such lowly paths as we,
Help us to build on earth true homes, Till we come home to thee.

God of Our Fathers, whose Almighty Hand

God of our fathers, whose almighty hand
Leads forth in beauty all the starry band
Of shining worlds in splendor through the skies,
Our grateful songs before Thy throne arise.

Thy love divine hath led us in the past;
In this free land by Thee our lot is cast;
Be Thou our Ruler, Guardian, Guide, and Stay,
Thy Word our law, Thy paths our chosen way.

From war's alarms, from deadly pestilence,
Be Thy strong arm our ever sure defense;
Thy true religion in our hearts increase,
Thy bounteous goodness nourish us in peace.

Refresh Thy people on their toilsome way;
Lead us from night to never-ending day;
Fill all our lives with love and grace divine;
And glory, laud, and praise be ever Thine.

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY
	The Marriage	The Family	The Man and the Woman	The Single Person	The Church/World
	Presiding for the day: Virginia Law Shell	Presiding for the day: Louis Evans	Presiding for the day: Robert Dulin	Presiding for the day: Pat Boone	Presiding for the day: Adrian Rogers
	9:00 am Opening Convocation Mark O. Hatfield	8:30 am Worship and Bible Ray Stedman	Study		
		9:00 am Personal Perspective C. Ray Fowler	Trends in the Family James J. Rue	Robert Dulin	Bettye Lechner
		9:30 am Plenary Session	John and Letha Scanzoni Harry N. Hollis, Jr.	Mark W. Lee Britton Wood	Ted Ward Larry Richards
	10:00 am Plenary Session Lloyd Ogilvie	Edith Schaeffer S. Bruce Narramore			
	10:30 am Coffee Break and Exhibits				
	11:15 am Interaction Groups				11:15 am to 1:00 pm Closing Session Leighton Ford
	12:15 pm Lunch and Discussion				
2:00 pm Registration	2:30 to 3:20 pm Action Seminars I				
	3:40 to 4:30 pm Action Seminars II				
	4:30 pm Dinner and Relaxation				
7:30 pm Opening Celebration: <i>The Family Together</i> Doug Oldham <i>The Re'Generation</i>	7:30 pm Evening Program J. Allan Petersen Murk Family Musicale	Howard and Jeanne Hendricks Film: "The First Days of Life."	Derric Johnson's <i>The Re'Generation</i>	7:00 pm Oswald Hoffmann Pat Boone 9:00 pm <i>"I Love America"</i> <i>Bicentennial</i> <i>Cavalcade</i>	



CONTINENTAL CONGRESS ON THE FAMILY

