

Psychology of the Family

Class Lecture Notes

By Donald Ratcliff, Ph.D.

Why this class?

- Family is central unit of society. Need this class to build stronger families.
- Need strong marriages to be effective (if you get married).
- Need to supplement sociological perspectives (which are valuable and I will include some) with psychological insights (need all the help we can get):
 - Subsection of social psychology
 - More related to personality, individuals, less on race, gender, and class (some things on roles)
 - Also will include biblical background, theology, and relationship of faith to family

Suggestions:

- Read daily from textbooks
- Stay open to God's leading as you read
- Sacred Marriage especially helpful in this regard (report on this reading in F.O.A. assignments).
- Regularly pause to pray and apply ideas personally
- Reflect on class activities--review notes before and immediately after class

What is a family?

Difficult to define

Varies cross-culturally

Varies historically

Under dispute in USA at present

Biological?

But adopted kids are family.

Define family as part and kids? But some cultures include extended family (grandparents, uncles, etc.) Some groups have no real family (Shakers had separate buildings for men, women, eventually ended for obvious reasons!)

Most common American definition = nuclear family (husband, wife, kids). But this is changing due to:

Divorce

Homosexuals lobbying for redefinition. "Domestic partners" legislation.

Other ambiguities

Secular M. & F. texts include living together as family.

Dorm as big family? But shall we extend to dorm residents all the family benefits (and higher taxes?).

Ideal family of 1950's = one wage earner, both parents, children of those parents.

Today this ideal is only 8% of families!

Modernity [S. D. Gaede]

4 dimensions [still very predominant, in spite of postmodernity]:

1. Fragmentation of consciousness
2. Complex communication
3. Disintegration of community
4. Dominance of commodities

Effects of these 4 areas on the family:

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.

Possible answers to these 4 influences:

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.

Textbook:

[Almost always good to read Foreword and Preface of texts--give you an idea of where the authors are coming from; basic perspectives.]

Importance of intimacy

Aspects of intimacy & belonging

Cross-Cultural Variations

Monogamy

Polygamy

Polygamy and the Bible:

Monogamy is norm of O.T. & N.T. (Mark 10:6-9)

Changes due to contacts with other cultures:

Polygamy – Gen. 4:19=first account, long after creation.

Concubines – e.g. Sarah's handmaiden in Gen. 16:1-4 (they had rights much like a bride)

But generally polygamy & concubinage are rare in Bible – usually kings (to maintain alliances between countries).

Residence Patterns

Kinship

Bible: Early Beena-marriage = husband moves to wife's village and offspring considered part of her tribe (Jacob, Leah & Rachel).

Rules of Descent

Intercultural Variations

Rearing Children in Cross-Cultural Contexts

Prospective missionaries sometimes worry about kids not raised in U.S.A.

Fear they won't fit new culture or original culture--not feel at home anywhere. "Third-culture kids" (Dave Pollock, FOF mag April 24&25, 1989). They have more in common with other m.k.'s than people in either culture. Perhaps even maladjusted.

Ted Ward--easy to exaggerate problem. Recent research with a number of mission groups shows this is no major problem for most. Can be advantage--exceptional cross-cultural sensitivity and ability by some.

It is advantage for specific group of m.k.'s--those who have healthy family life AND parents have definite sense of calling (JP&T 1999).

Boarding school problems?

C&MA apologized publicly for boarding school abuse (CT July 1999)--physical and sexual abuse occurred in 1950's and 60's. Stated administrative changes made abuse less likely.

But does separation of kids and parents cause problems?

No simple answer. Depends on:

*specific child--personality, some more sensitive than others, also related to parental reactions

*age--teens less likely to be adversely affected

*amt of contact with parents--nearby, see each other every few days or weeks, less problem

*specifics of situation--school, teachers, dorm parents, missionary situation

(example of latter--woman whose parents were in constant life-threatening danger, told to stop crying because that would hurt parents' ministry. Tremendous turmoil for many years afterward. Probably better to be in danger than to worry about parents.)

*alternatives: quite a few (see McDonald text)

Need to ask: Is making kids good Americans ultimate goal? Should schools be set up to make them fit in to U.S.A.?

Perhaps we should all be more like "third-culture kids"--not too much at home with our culture ("this world is not our home"), flexible to move across cultures and across subcultures, rather than comfortable.

Some research shows m.k.'s more influenced by parents than peers than normal--this can be a good thing: perhaps American kids are too peer conscious; powerful peer pressure among same-

age peers (can lead to drinking, drugs, idolizing of people and fashions that are materialistic and even immoral).

Ted Ward: "If the family is strong and the family members are committed to one another and not overly protective or compulsively domineering, the children will make the best of whatever schooling is available and will gain far more in social adaptability, creative and improvisational skills, interpersonal sensitivity, and self-acceptance than their cousins back in North America."

A real concern in cross-cultural work (both for kids and adults)--health concerns & concerns about terrorism or kidnapping. Now best health care is available via airplane (but how close is airport?).

Ted Ward's conclusions: (1989)

1. multicultural experience of missionary family is usually a good experience for kids. Culture confusion and rootlessness is rare.
2. tendency to attribute normal child-rearing problems to culture differences (scapegoating).
3. missionaries need strong support networks (especially with sending agency) and counseling if needed
4. literature and parent-child workshops needed.

Need to work on making strong families spiritually, emotionally, communicatively.

But don't let the scare of hurting your kids keep you from obeying a clear call from God--need a clear calling to make missions a career, not just "there's a need, so that's the calling."

But everyone ought to go on a missions trip--try to make it several weeks, not just a week or two. It probably will change your life. And it gives the Lord a way to speak to your heart about missions--either as a life calling, or as an active concern we all should have.

Other influences:

Attachment style

Personality

Self-concept and self-esteem

Human nature

- Adaptation
- Parenting
- Sin nature
- Image of God

Process of interaction

Sex differences & Gender differences

[Videos]

Ten Trends

Myths

Functions of the family

Family in the Bible

Purposes of Family in Scripture

- 1) Companionship, working together – Gen. 2:18
- 2) Procreation – Gen. 3:20

Husband and wife are central unit, children are secondary unit, and grandparents, cousins, etc. are third unit.

Family could include servants and maids. Sometimes used interchangeably with clan. “Brother” could be anyone in a tribe.

Five key ideas from Proverbs [Longman]

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.

Six basic principles from the Pentateuch:

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.
- 6.

I’ll add a seventh, implied throughout as a top priority:

Ezekiel used husband/wife as allegory to God and Israel (Ezek. 16)

God doesn’t force us into narrow role – many possible roles).

Hosea & Gomer – unfaithful wife yet he loved her & took her back. (But there is a limit – Jer. 3:8 & Is. 51:1 talks about divorce because of sin. God divorces Israel.

Bible seems to presume a progression in marriage often termed "Family Development Theory" today.

Basic idea: Families change in phases

Psalm 127 & 128

- 1) Ps. 127:1 Unless the Lord builds the house
Building, initiating
Beginning newlyweds (good verse for marriage and for life: broader than just family.
- 2) Ps. 127:3 "Sons are a heritage...children a reward"

Child bearing years

- 3) Ps. 127:5 Kids help you contend with enemies
Enlist kids in battle against Satan. Goal = kids as co-warriors (Francis Schaeffer – teach kids to rebel against society – and values it represents that are non-Christian)
Phase of life with older kids (probably midlife)

Ps. 128 seems to continue progression.

Ps. 128:1-3 seems to be late midlife, possibly after kids leave home

Eating fruit of labor (more money, more time)

- 4) Ps. 128:3 Wife fruitful – not just having kids, but fruit of her interests and possibly occupation (can pursue it more fully or kids are gone)
- 5) Ps. 128:5 All the days of life
Long term perspective, probably in elder years.
Ps. 128:6 Definitely older here. Grandchildren (family centered even in elder years)

Thus family development theory is implicit (as it is throughout Bible).

Family Development theory is linked with life-span developmental psychology (adult development)

Good sources: Worthington & Wright's books on Marriage Counseling.

Wright's Seasons of a Marriage (both of these by Christians)

Basic idea – family goes through stages, and many characteristics of each stage are predictable.
The tasks & tensions of stages are central.

Especially difficult when there are teens in family--marriage satisfaction is at lowest--as well as more problems in other areas of family life.

Need more than S.S. (although that's a start). Need face to face groups of parents with teen.

Overall conclusion – church needs marriage enrichment at all levels & ages.

Minimum: top notch SS class with outings, special speakers.

Better: the above plus growth groups with parents of same age kids. Support Groups

Focus on stage specific problems & issues for that phase – solutions & insights in support group, more marital & multi-stage orientation in larger group setting.

New Testament – probably similar to O.T. among Jews. Romanization caused break down in extended family & clan structure.

Family used as metaphor for relationship with God, such as “Our Father”. Extended to church = family. Many parent/child metaphors – inheritance, adoption, illegitimacy, etc.

Early churches met in homes – in Rome, households could include extended family, slaves, even travelers (see Derek Tidball, Social Content of N. T.)

May be poor relationship or no relationship with Dad – so God is father you always needed.

In Gospels Jesus strengthened the importance of the family emphasizing:

[Westfall]

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.
- 6.
- 7.

But Jesus also _____ the family:

Theology of Marriage and Family

Marriage is a covenant (Jer. 31:31-32)

Theological basis of marriage:

Covenant is central – similar to God/Israel

Involves interdependence and cooperation (bonding)

Unconditional love, even in conflict and hardship (vows)

Yet we fall short in covenantal relationship due to our fallenness.

F. Schaeffer – True Spirituality - (knowing truly, but not exhaustively).

Requires grace via forgiveness

Four Aspects

- 1) Commitment vs. legal contract

Must be unconditional without restrictions, much as with a child (no matter what happens).

Contrast with contractual marriage – open marriage, as long as it meets my needs.

Conditional (many marriages today, not really Christian).

2) Grace vs. law

Unmerited favor, responsible love, considering of other. Forgiving of other. Patterns & guidelines that provide security & enhance one another.

Contrast with law – must measure up to the ideal, perfectionistic. Absolute rules that limit and repress, no flexibility.

3) Empowering vs. possessive power

Opposite of control and exercising power. Not trying to be the boss. See their strengths and potential and encouraging their use and development. Being a servant (Campolo – mutual servanthood)

Contrast with exercising own power, or fostering dependence of spouse on self.

4) Intimacy vs. distance

Intimacy in communication makes humans distinct from animals “Naked and unashamed” being self, no pretense.

Must listen, accept differences, value uniqueness*. Must give up own needs and desires. Requires trust to communicate freely. Keeping confidence. Confession & forgiveness, admit mistakes & admit being offended. Verbal communication of affection.

Contrast with – shame due to fear of intimacy, deceptive roles and masks, self-centered, not saying “I love you.”

*Value Uniqueness: Not “why can’t a woman be more like a man” (weird) – From “My Fair Lady” More whole person by respecting differences with spouse and attempting to grow to appreciate & even adopt some of differences – move toward one another.

GROWTH

These 4 aspects of covenantal marriage are ongoing and simultaneous, not sequential.

Begin before marriage on limited scale.

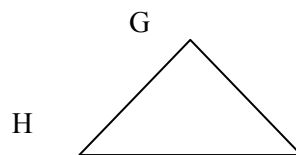
Something missing from this theology of marriage –God

(Odd they would leave out the theo from theology)

God is central in Christian marriage

Covenant with him is above the covenant with spouse. It is a triangular relationship.

As move toward God, should move closer to another (but don’t confuse church activities religious busy-ness with God. one or



Plato’s triangle (says Campolo)

If have covenant with spouse and God is excluded (not a believer) or if God is ignored or just not central in life, then something has taken God's place. Problem of idolatry exists – either spouse is idol or self is idol. Old rock & roll songs: “You are everything” etc. Need God as central.

Covenant

In covenant, had to split and walk between parts of the sacrifice to seal covenant.

Friendship

See Em Griffin's Making Friends (actually quite similar to our secular text in many respects)

Chapter titles:

1. The rules of the game
2. Self-concept
3. Motivation
4. Perception
5. Listening to language
6. Nonverbal communication
7. Interpersonal attraction
8. Trust and transparency
9. Accountability and forgiveness [latter is incredibly important]
10. The friendship mandate

Attributes of friendship

Rules of friendship

How friendships change across the life cycle

- Infancy
- Childhood
- Extraordinary relationships (imaginary friends, pets, and God)
- Adolescence
- Young Adulthood
- Midlife
- Older Years

Gender differences in same-sex friendships

Individual differences in friendships

Just friends or get married?

Staying Single

A real option today. Paul speaks positively of it (I Cor. 7)

Should not get married because of social expectation. May have real advantages in ministry (as Paul said, nothing to turn you away from main task (I Cor. 7:33).

Paul hints it is a gift (I Cor. 7:7)

But if problems with lust, need to marry (7:9)

Prejudice against singles : I was considered less mature by mission until married.

Some boards don't let single men be full time missionaries (powerful temptation, especially in permissive cultures)

Characteristics of Friendship crucial to many attributes of healthy families. Make sure the person you marry is your friend first!

Healthy Family Research by Nick Stinnett (studied 3000 healthy families and found 6 commonalities:

1. Commitment to family
 2. Time together
 3. Good communication
 4. Express appreciation
 5. Spiritual commitment
 6. Solve problems in crisis
- (We'll cover these in course of this semester, not in order)

Timberlawn Studies (1975) Another major studies of healthy families

Actually videotaped families interacting: planning an activity and discussing family topics.

Later did it on In-depth analysis to distinguish optimal from average families.

Ten Characteristics (in order)

1. affiliative not oppositional
2. respect for uniqueness of other's experience and views
3. open & direct communication (clarity)
4. firm parental coalition (not parent/child coalition against other parent)
5. understanding complexity & variety of motivation (not rigid & controlling)
6. spontaneous interaction (not repetitive)
7. members are responsive, creative, unique (not bland)
8. fathers focus on interpersonal vocational satisfaction

9. husbands more supportive emotionally of wives
10. wives far more satisfied with family and marriage (wives from “adequate” families have even more problems than wives from homes with troubled kids – great disappointment & frustration with roles, more obese, psychophysiological problems)

Need to have marriage enrichment

Work toward optimal, not just correct problems. Goal = optimal, not average (Minirth)

Dating and Courtship -- Mate Selection

Eph. 1:11 chosen by God

Eph. 1:13 giving a ring = identified

Eph. 1:14 guarantee = engaged; bride price = death

Even if not dating, or if already married, will need premarriage material in future – to help others and to help your kids. People will ask you for advice and counsel, need to know what to say.

Mate selection is one of most romanticized aspects of youth, but not always enjoyable.

Societies usually have rules for who is acceptable to marry.

Usually groups similar to person preferred (race, income, etc.)

Yet close relatives not allowed (sometimes first cousins ok – ancient Hebrews)

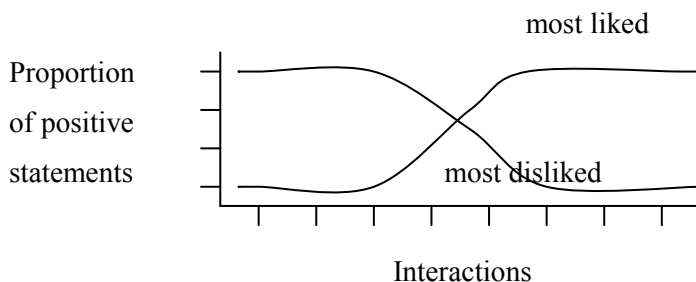
Often determined by parents – marriage links family, not just individuals. But then tends to change with modernization.

Do you marry a person similar to you? Generally yes – race, location, education, religion, ethnic background, occupation. Also similar interests and physical appearance.

Don't opposites attract? Sometimes opposites in personality attract (to complement self)

Gain-Loss Theory

Maximum liking if rewards are gradually increased (e.g. trying to please them with expensive dates, etc.)



Their liking you is also increased if they do you a favor.

Occasional blunder increases liking (perfect person is unapproachable).

Relationships are also based on comparisons (applies to dating and friendships).

*Realize God has a better view of alternatives (not stuck with own limited opinion). If married, you have God's best (assuming you sought His will & His blessing). If not married, seek His will.

	Hope for Christians*	better than alternatives	worse than alternatives
Present	See note above		
relationship	better than	very firm and happy	satisfying, yet unstable -
seen as:	past	relationship	will possibly end
	worse than	fairly strong – will	very weak – will soon
	past	probably continue but	end
		unsatisfying	

Key Point: We decide how relationship compares with past & present – it is my decision and judgement.

Before marriage: Don't talk yourself into thinking it is better than others in past & present.

After marriage: Realize that marriage is God's will – so it is better than past or present alternatives.

Before: Don't assume it's God's will; After: do assume it God's will.

A Four Stage Model:

1. Sampling – via appearance, location, etc.
2. Bargaining – determine rewards and costs of relationship (exchange theory). Do they have same values/interests etc.? Complement each other in personality?
3. Commitment – only one partner
 - a. steady/ring? (going together)
 - b. engagement/ring
4. Formal ceremony – marriage

Need to see stages – develop each stage fully. Many don't see they have moved in stages. Must move in stages due to relational change, not society's expectations.

Biblical view of mate selection.

God's will –is there one person God has picked for you? Frieson (Decision-Making and Will of God) says no – might be several good partners within God's will. Dobson agrees – Emotions p. 62 “God is not in the match making business.”

Balswick – discern God's will (ok/not ok, not idea of one perfect choice) via:

1. personally - prayer, Bible study, meditation
Must be still to hear from God. Yet still have choice “choose you this day whom you will serve.” Perhaps specific direction for some but not others?
2. family & friends – get their wisdom & insight
3. others in fellowship. Include premarital and pastoral counseling here.
These act as checks against one another, use all 3, not just 1 of 3. (#3 = shepherd movement, #2 = let others do your thinking, #1 = forget anyone else's ideas).

Can use assessment devices as well.

My Prov. 31 checklist

Far better to be lonely than marry wrong person!

Betrothal in the Bible

What verse about marriage is repeated in Scripture more than any other and should be central to our view of marriage and family? (Gen. 2:24)

Betrothal

Love was rarely basis for marriage – usually arranged by parents.

Betrothal after exile was by money, contract, or cohabitation (latter involved declaring to witness their intention of marriage, then couple going into a chamber). Cohabitation betrothal later considered immoral. – equal to marriage.

Marriage deed "kotuba" – A written obligation prior to marriage – obligations of husband to wife. Included bride price – husband "paid for" wife (called Mohar)

Not always money – could be unusual accomplishment. Considered compensation to father & insurance if widowed.

Also a bit like prenuptial agreement. (if divorced, wife got part of husband's estate).

Betrothal involved husband giving a coin to bride (or valuable object) and saying, "Be thou consecrated to me." (In Middle Ages the money was replaced by a ring – engagement ring).

If couple of opposite sex were together for extended time, sexual activity was assumed.

Premarital Sex

Interesting data

Not much change in number of people feeling premarital sex is always wrong.

But major change in number of people saying it's not wrong at all.

Probably the number of uncertain people before are moving to thinking it is not wrong.

Influence of media strongest for those that are uncertain.

Center for Disease Control – 1991

57% of teens have had sex

1 in 7 GA teens had sex by age 13!

28% of 9th grade boys in GA have had at least 5 sexual partners

Gallup Poll (1989)

69% of college students say nothing wrong with premarital sex.

Gallup also studied students who said they were evangelicals (almost all single)

52% said premarital sex is wrong

28% said they had sex regularly or occasionally

30% said they had more than one sex partner

Josh McDowell/Barna study of churched teens 1987 data

1994 Update: Right From Wrong

Heavy Fr. Kissing = down to 53%

Fondling Breasts = down to 34%

Fondling Genitals = down to 26%

Sex. Intercourse = down to 16%

Also FRC indicates 4% decline in births to teenagers and decrease of abortions for teens since 1991.

Why the downturn?

Could be statistical artifact – normal variation (can't tell from report) or could be turn toward morality (programs successful), perhaps due to fear of AIDS

Hard to retreat once couple begins having sex. Charlie Shedd says they don't retreat unless break up. Both need to establish limits, not just girl, and need to go by more stringent limits of the two partners.

A key problem with premarital sex is that the relationship becomes sex oriented – less likely to get to know partner in other ways. Also likely to develop premature ejaculation (fear of discovery) – carries over to marriage.

Kirk Kendal study in 70's:

Sex before marriage less satisfying. Why?

Attitude change toward partner (less respect)

Realize likelihood of others previously (less trust) and more likely to be unfaithful.

Possibility of pregnancy/VD

I have never had someone who stayed abstinent say they wish they had had sex before marriage – but had a number that regretted having sex before marriage the rest of their lives.

AIDS and VD

A lot of information is biased = condoms aren't "safe sex"

How common is AIDS/being HIV positive?

Very difficult to get accurate figures (most people don't get tested unless have symptoms – may not have symptoms for 10 years after infection)

1995 stat – AIDS is #1 killer of Americans 25-44.

How common is HIV (HIV thought to cause AIDS)

Texas University = 1 in 100 students

Other estimates as low as 1 in 20

It is an epidemic of HIV – epidemic of AIDS maybe a few years off. Like Russian roulette.

Condoms = Planned Parenthood cites 15.7 % failure rate, other estimates = 26% or more
(effectiveness at preventing pregnancy)

Effectiveness against AIDS? AIDS virus is smaller than smallest detectable hole in latex – found holes in surgical gloves that AIDS virus can pass through. Probably condoms do little or no good.

Study of married couples using condoms – 17% got AIDS from infected partner in 1.5 years.

ABSTINANCE until marriage and marrying non-HIV positive spouse is only the safe approach.

Must have 1 test every 3 months for year to be totally sure (hospital policy).

Even if don't get AIDS, hundreds of other STD's, a number are untreatable. 20 are rampant among young people. Painful, sometimes kill.

Is sex the only way that AIDS is spread? NO!

Needles of HIV positives (nurses do get it, usually by recapping needles)

NIMH booklet also states it is passed via:

Anal or oral intercourse

Open mouthed kissing

Contact with blood or other body fluids

Shared razors, toothbrushes (can be contaminated with blood)

Saliva and tears contain HIV virus, but no evidence at present virus can be spread that way.

What makes for a happy marriage? Marital Bonding, Don Joy says.

Stages of Bonding:

1.	7.
2.	8.

3.	9.
4.	10.
5.	11.
6.	12.

Key point--must spend an adequate amount of time at each step to be adequately bonded. Lack of bonding produces short-term relationships (if get married, may see divorce as stronger option).

Bonding recapitulation in relationship with child.

4 suggestions for poorly bonded married people (but always easier to prevent than solve problems in marriage)

1.

2.

3.

4.

Textbook

Rewards as basis of attraction

Influence of proximity

Distance is costly

Familiarity does NOT breed contempt [at least not by itself]

Influence of attractiveness

How to determine beauty

Culture and beauty

Costs and benefits of beauty

“Matching” -- similar levels of beauty

Reciprocity--we like those who like us

Influence of similarity [and what kinds of similarity]

Do opposites attract?

Time is needed to find similarities

Similarity perceived vs. real

Avoiding dissimilar people

Liking those we cannot have

Social Cognition

--relates to the perception of a relationship and judgments by which we make sense of our experiences. Attributions. Influenced by:

First impressions

Earliest information received

Stereotypes

We tend to . . .

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.

Example: what does a hug mean?

Text details:

Impression management

Idealizing the partner “positive illusions”

Self-serving biases

Romantic beliefs

Expectations

How well do we know our partners?

Family Systems Theory I.Cor. 12:12

Not just look at actions of individuals, but interactions – the total is more than just sum of all actions. (I Cor. 12:12, Eph. 4:16)

No self-contained actions – “No man is an island” – John Donne

Difficult for Americans because we emphasize individual, not groups. Holistic.

Basic Concepts:

1. Boundaries

Open (input & output to those outside family)

Closed (barriers to outsiders)

2. Roles – a position in system, gives identity. Birth order, gender, worker vs. player, etc.

Roles can change, but often similar in same group (change if change groups)

3. Subsystems

Parental

Sibling

4. Hierarchy – usually both parents over kids, and one kid over another. (Must control, but can't eliminate)

Not just cause and effect (behavioral, mechanistic). Some value in this, but more complex.

Feedback (Balswick's Theory)

Four kinds of feedback within system:

1. Simple exchange

Behavior consequences

Aquila & Priscilla Gal. 6:1 Someone caught in sin

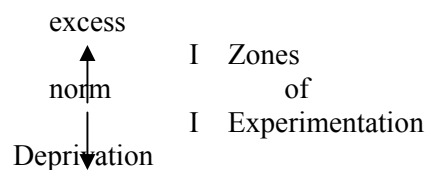
Gal. 5:15 Don't bite & devour

Withhold positives or deliver negatives to attempt change. Good ideas – Norm Wright. E.g. Go to church & get good meal (my family).

2. Cybernetic control

Output from system is monitored and produces correction

Built in self-controls



If zones are too narrow, always correcting. Family as a whole does correcting, not just one person.

e.g. go to church – norm. Skip Wed. night or Sun. night or Sunday School.

If skip more than 1, family creates feeling of shame

(excessive amount of time for self)

If must go every night of revival, family makes parent feel bitter & angry (deprivation of their time)

System works as a whole to bring a balance (homeostasis) – keeping of norm.

Norms can change but continual deviation one way or other – gradually go to church more or less often. To avoid change, may use third approach.

3. Morphogenetic – family system creates new ways of responding to achieve goals of family.

If cybernetic does not work, or if

New situation

(Requires flexibility)

Family needs flexibility, but not chaos:

Capable of dealing with deviation (cybernetic) and

Capable of new responses (morphogenetic)

But must have rules & boundaries (norms)

No cohesiveness without norms

4. Reorientation – change whole goal.

Whole system develops new way of thinking. Quite rare.

e.g. Go to church everyday because so exciting. Forget church – all disenchanted.

Could happen with divorce – completely different goals & purposes. Probably more common in divorce to either be cybernetic – same norms – or morphogenetic, new norms but not different goals. But more likely reorientation at divorce.

Perhaps death of parent of child could cause reorientation.

5 Styles of Marriage Adjustment--all associated with people who have never considered divorce.
[but plenty of people in some of them who do get divorced]

1.

2.

3.

4.

5.

Interdependency and Exchange Theory

Psalm 126:5-6

Exchange Theory – Matt. 16:26

Relates to conflicts & power, as well as communication

Based on behavioral psychology

Some good ideas, but limited. Classical economics (rewards only concern)

Good Summary: Swenson's Interpersonal Relationships

Basic formula in Profit = rewards-costs

Good relationship maximizes rewards, minimizes costs

Need to find rewards for spouse (e.g. Norm Wright's idea of writing what makes you happy)

We assign value of reward (not inherent)

Satiation possible—using reward often decreases its effect

Also need to see costs:

Alternatives given up for relationship (and value assigned to them.)

Punishments from relationship

Fatigue

Ambivalence

Conflicts

Foxx – May be married years and still not know what is really enjoyed by spouse

Need more than physical – what's left that is fun and interesting after physical is satiated

Pleasing spouse is important in marriage: I Cor. 7:33-34

Density of reinforcement is low in poor marriages – need to increase it, as it was during dating (must give to receive – reaping & sowing)

Marriage Counseling

Often a testing of limits in marriage (as with kids)

Test them to discover them, find rules and see how to play game. (Theology explicated via response to heresy)

Back to basic exchange theory...

4 types of dyadic interaction:

1. Pseudo contingency – 2 topics (like kids), not really interacting



2. Assymetrical contingency – one talks, other listens (1st does not respond to 2nd)



Example:

A speaks, when B responds A is thinking or response, not listening.

3. Reactive contingency – both react to other without reflecting (no thought of consequences). Often in panic situations. Say what you feel.
4. Mutual contingency
Each contributes, each listens, reflects, each reacts.

Understanding Power in Relationships:

Depends upon ability to change rewards and punishments.

To increase power: (works in job too)

1. increase own alternatives – can go elsewhere
2. minimize rewards from other person
3. minimize effects of punishments from other (don't react to hurtful statement)
4. emphasize hurt from other
5. make other feel guilty
6. build value of own behavior ("others think I did well")
7. increase attempts to gain favor
8. emphasize better alternatives in past

Good to see how power is being used, yet not forget Christian ideal is surrender power. Matt. 23:11 Eph. 5:21 Luke 22:24-26

Other factors in social exchange

- 1) Norms – small regularities (e.g. who reads newspaper first). Norms give security, lowers costs with more norms, more cohesiveness (if both agree)
- 2) Justice – balance of profit for both (but costs and rewards may vary) if give a lot, we expect a lot back. If receive a lot more than we give, tend to experience guilt, if give more than receive = feel cheated. Balance produces stability. "To whom much is given, much is required" Luke 12:48
Friends will continue even if costly if highly rewarding.

Weaknesses of exchange theory:

Tends to overlook feelings, just observable behavior

Profit motive. Christians need to emphasize giving.

Yet we are influenced by what we get out of relationship.

Self-centered. But can be good if put other person in center, instead of self.

Value of exchange theory:

See manipulation methods in counseling others

Emphasize rewards in own marriage

Understand communication a bit better (a different perspective)

Analyze methods of control, occurs in dating & marriage

Textbook

Principle of lesser interest (Willard Waller)

Comparison levels

Sex differences in evaluating relational rewards

Change of rewards and costs with time

Equality vs. inequity

Commitment and its consequences

Communication

Eph. 4:25-27, 29, 31-32

Good family communication (Stinnett's 3rd characteristic of strong, healthy families)

Stinnett says this refers to talking a lot – not always deep or profound

Good listeners (most are 25% efficient)

This does not rule out fighting. Strong families quarrel, they even yell, but it is out in the open.

Former boss who yelled at me, but then it was over & done (never remembered again) vs. back stabbers or gossips

Keep conflict on the issue, not on each other (not tearing each other down, put downs)

Able to admit when wrong

By time children are in school, husbands have higher satisfaction with communication, which continues through rest of married life.

When first married wife more satisfied with communication, then decreases for rest of married life.

Problems that inhibit communication

- 1) power struggle – who wins takes priority over what is best
- 2) emotions overwhelm intellect – need to express feelings, yet control them. May need to pause & identify feelings to be able to think clearly. Strong families express feelings equally.
- 3) being judgmental – need to critically evaluate (positive thinking extreme at CBC)
Not being a Pollyanna, but not condemning or jumping to conclusions.
- 4) sympathy – condescending. Need empathy – feel as they feel
- 5) intellectualization – no feeling (a defense mechanism) spiritualizing
- 6) reaching no conclusion – by bringing up old beefs (stamp saving) changing topics. Need to focus on topic & solution
- 7) group think – giving in too quickly before all aspects are addressed. Not unchristian to have argument.
- 8) “I told you so” (getting even)
- 9) Guessing games – need honesty & clarity (often assume the other person understands how we feel – need to tell it). Also communication games (“games people play”)
- 10) Unpredictable moods – vacillating from kindness to grouchy. Need consistency, not wondering who the mate (or parent) will be today.
- 11) Incongruent communications – feelings, words, & body language needs to be consistent (pathology associated with discrepancies in these). Swenson

Communication does not come easily in strong families – must work at it. (Swihart)

Nonverbal – ability here is related to satisfaction in marriage. Observation trusted over content of words. Tone of voice, body language, silence, slammed door, dirty looks, etc.
Sarcasm – tone negates content.

Neurolinguistic programming – matching language of eyes (Norm Wright's Communications book)

Males often overlook nonverbals – so misunderstanding results.

Shared meanings needed – do the words mean the same to spouse as do to me?

Young children very literal (need to tailor language to developmental level) God drove Adam & Eve out of garden

Suggestions for churches that want to help families communicate

- 1) need classes & training in churches over time, not weekend. Long range effect minimal for weekend enrichment seminar; if over 5 weeks more effective. Even 10 or 12 weeks better (SS quarter)
- 2) involve whole family – parents learn & then teach kids, or all family learning together (difficult with small kids). Degree of intimacy can be estimated by amount of fun family has, time together.
- 3) realize feelings & own them “I feel”
pounding on table yelling “I never get angry”
- 4) Rehearsal in family sessions – one person enacts or expresses, others only observe & later give feedback (Ungame – excellent)
- 5) realize differences in communicators – mostly non-verbal vs. highly verbal
cultural
men often struggle with verbal communication of feelings

Express Appreciation (Stinnett's 4th characteristic)

Many sincere complements (many “look for the dirt & overlook the diamonds”)

Strong families are diamond hunters

Appreciation is deepest craving in human nature (Wm. James – author of 1st general psychology text)

Words tend to produce what they praise (reinforcing, & self-fulfilling)

Transmits inclusiveness & cohesiveness

How to express appreciation” (Collins)

Talking (mealtimes are good time) “Blessing” the kids/adults

Writing (notes in the lunch, suitcase)

Men may be able to write feelings better than say them

Touch (depending upon family)

Giving time & space

Gentle confrontation

If they have changed but can't tell how, then say "Have you lost some weight?"

Blake Neff (former head of Toccoa Falls College Communication dept.) speaks on communication in marriage & emphasized:

Need to separate the vital from the urgent. Urgent makes the evening news, but it may not be important 20 years from now – or even a month from now. Reading kids a story at night may have lasting impact for generations, watching TV just wastes time. Communicating vital to whole family, not just the urgent things – deadlines for class projects (take 5 years for degree)

Influence of television – makes us expect quick solutions. Get divorce if can't work it out in a few weeks – on TV constantly – see 30 minute & 60-minute solutions. Two-hour movie solves almost any problem, a huge problem takes a miniseries! Makes us expect quick solutions in marriage. Might not be quick or perfect solutions the way TV indicates.

Problem of parental bondage. Bible repeats many times – need to leave family and cleave to wife. Many still in bondage to parents as adults & in marriage.

Bible says children obey parents (not adults)

Bibles says honor parents, but not always obey. Honor parents by listening respectfully, carefully & thoroughly considering advice, but obeying God, not parents. Jesus said he came to turn people against parents (bringing division) (Luke 12:51-53). Parents not to take place of God.

Taxonomy of Games

Norm Wright videos

Textbook

Interpersonal Gap

Nonverbal communication

- provide information
- regulate interaction
- define the relationship

Aspects of nonverbal communication

1. Facial expression
2. Gazing behavior
3. Body language
4. Touch
5. Interpersonal distance
6. Paralanguage
7. combining the components

Nonverbal sensitivity needed, but often lacking

Sex differences in nonverbal communication

Verbal communication

Self-Disclosure

Social penetration

Gradual or can it be sudden?

Satisfaction and self-disclosure

Gender differences:

Topics

Styles

Self-Disclosure

Instrumental vs. Expressive

Dysfunctional communication

Miscommunications:

*
*
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*
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*

Saying what we mean

Active listening

Polite yet staying cool

Respect

Validation

LOVE

Greater Love has no man than he lay down his life for his friends. John 15:12-13; Rom. 12:9-10

The Story of John & Mary

(adapted from The Adjusted American – Putney)

Romantic love elevated by movies/books/music. [Sleepless in Seattle]

Most people emphasize combination of romantic love and genuine understanding of person as basis for marriage.

Youths with poor ego strength tend to fall in love the most (Campolo)

Research: Love increases if parents oppose relationship! (Shows love is related to pretty shallow factors)

Americans too concerned with whether love is real instead of if marriage will be sound. (In some cultures, marrying for love is considered similar to marrying while drunk)

James Michael Lee (Religious Education theorist):

7 characteristics of genuine love?

1. behavior (not feeling)
2. learned (not inherent)
3. interpersonal (can only like objects)
4. seeks union (separation is contrary to love)
tend to idealize when separated
5. self-giving (I Cor. 13) (opposite selfishness – if see separation as best for other) John 12:9-10
6. accepts other person as he/she is, not constantly demanding changes (conditional)
7. marked by personal freedom
must be able to let go (basis of Dobson's book Love Must Be Tough)
must be mixture of attachment /separation (a separate person, yet completed by other,
like the body analogy in Bible – unity, diversity)
extension of toddler identity (Jerome Berryman)

Another view of love (Jack & Judy Balswich)

1. Commitment (most likely in parent-arranged marriages)
2. Intimacy-friendship (spouse as best friends)
3. Passion (dominant idea in West, quickly burns out) Need to balance the 3 areas before and after marriage).

Love & romance can be separated, yet is there a place for romance in Christian marriage? A Christian may choose romance, but not base relationship on it.

Some Christians have a very positive view of romance:

Charles Williams (an Oxford Christian with C. S. Lewis)

Love is seeing glory in a person that resides in all people. Must be checked by intellect. Marriage is contest for experimenting with how to better love spouse. (Can be harder to have romantic feelings about spouse – see them at both best and worst)

C.S. Lewis – said romantic feelings on earth are only dim reflection of heaven (like candle compared with blazing sun). Heaven = deeply in love with everyone 24 hours/day. (A bit like Moslem view of heaven)

How to Fall Out of Love

Rollo May

Erich Fromm

M. Scott Peck

Favorite love songs? What do they say? [Curtis Steigers]

Genuine Love	Immature/Sick Imitation
1.	1.
2.	2.
3.	3.
4.	4.
5.	5

Males tend to:

Females tend to:

Expressing love

Best marriages marked by spouses that express love equally. Usually husband is less expressive. Need to say the words “I love you” at least once a day – reminder of vows, reminder of worth. Consistent with Christ – asked Peter if he loved him. Must remind spouse. Must be verbal as well as actions.

What if don’t feel love? Need to act to love – love involves action, not just feeling. Feeling tends to follow action (self-consistency principle). “Return to first love” = “do first things”

Rev. 2:4-5

Campolo – in counseling tells spouses to treat each other as if felt love for one month. Usually restores the love.

Love is the action! (feeling is secondary).

A spouse can make a good friend & even a great love, but they always make crummy gods.

In modern society, feelings of romantic love replace ecstasy from relationship with God (yet humans can never fulfill the need for God).

M.Scott Peck – love for anything is an attempt to replace hunger for God.

Need to combine love & rationality in mate selection.

Why Get Married? (And stay married)

Socrates: “By all means, marry. If you get a good wife, you’ll become happy. If you get a bad one, you’ll become a philosopher.”

Pros and Cons of Marriage [I Cor. 7]

Seen as the ideal in O. T. separation in Gen. 2:20-23 = people “need a helper”

So, Gen. 2:24 – leave parents & be united to wife.

Yet N. T. Says marriage isn’t for everyone – being single is a gift (I Cor. 7:7) and Paul advocates it.

Yet 7:12 says “I, not the Lord” and

7:25 “I have no command from the Lord” – not a universal command, but 7:26 “because of the present crisis”

Eunuchs for Christ – Matt 19:10-12

But Bible seems to imply it’s generally expected behavior (I Cor. 7:1&2), especially if strong sex drive (I Cor. 7:9)

Pray about it – seek God’s will regarding singlehood.

But also consider the advantages of marriage...

(Most of this is from Norval Glenn’s work – wrote scathing critique of most M & F texts: said they emphasized problems of marriage & overlooked advantages, and texts give too much space to variant sexuality & lifestyles (Amish highlighted, Baptists ignored).

Metaphor of pruning – better person, more spiritual fruit because pruned.

Prov. 27:17 sharpening each other

Positive qualities of spouse helps you sharpen in those areas and you help them sharpen in their weaknesses.

Functions of Marriage

1. Sexuality – encourages the bearing of children and defines who can have sex with others; defines legitimate & moral sex.
2. A means of caring for kids, and socializing children into security – helps them become ready for adult world.

3. A means of close emotional ties with other – enduring relationships (fellowship) – “It is not good to be alone” God says. Gen. 2:18
4. Gives us a place in society – “married” is a social status
5. We can pass on the faith – one of strongest predictors of adult faith is faith of parents. Can evangelize own kids early.
6. Can grow spiritually – conflict often required for growth.
7. Presence of kids tends to stabilize a marriage – at least while they are younger (Landis p. 232) but if child is born before marriage it decreases stability of marriage – and teens tend to destabilize marriage.
8. Helping each other (Ecl. 4:9-12) stronger together, can overcome temptations because it’s not just you (“Where 2 or more are gathered”) – more settled.
9. Better decisions when work together – brings more than person’s experiences.

Both men & women report higher levels of personal happiness after marriage. 3/5 report marriage is very happy . Much better physical health if married – several studies show. See David Larson (Nat’l Inst. For Health care Research)

Better emotional health if married – more depression and other problems among singles – clearly related to intimacy.

Live longer if married, and so will your kids (40% greater risk of premature death if divorced).

More satisfied with life in general if married.

Not just because people with these characteristics get married, says Glenn.

Married people have sex more often and report greater sexual satisfaction – both men and women.

Married people less stressed and lonely.

(Cohabitation does not have these effects, at least to same extent as marriage & often cohabitation produces significant problems, even if later married.)

Marriage:

Encourages monogamy (and less sexual disease)

90% of married men & women say they’ve remained faithful to spouse for entire marriage.

80% of married people say they’d marry same person again.

¾ say their spouse is their best friend.

4/5 reject idea that kids take fun out of marriage.

Half say the fun does not go out of marriage over time.

77% say the spouse is kind and gentle.

64% say spouse makes them feel important.

Maginnis Family Research Council

Married women at least 4 times less likely to be victim of violence than never married women, and 30 times less likely than separated women.

Marriage also reduces violence against men. Single men are also much more likely to commit violent crimes.

Health benefits of living in a family

Statistical advantages of marriage

Marriage in Bible

In early Israel, expected to marry within the clan – ideal was to marry first cousin. (Jacob goes to Laban to get Rachel & Leah)

Actual wedding was a week long celebration (Fiddler on the roof) – bride taken to groom's house.

Procreation was basic to marriage – no children was lamented; concubine or second wife usually because of barrenness (lack of kids assumed to be woman's fault).

Women tended to get married between 13 & 18. (at or before puberty – Koteskey)

Marriage of virgins on Wednesday – if no evidence of virginity, husband goes to court on Thursday. Widows married on Thursday.

During Rabbinical period early marriage was encouraged, one said man had to sin if not married by age 20! (Koteskey) Marriage generally required by age 18 unless especially anxious to be educated (almost impossible to marry and study at same time due to expense, they said). Some stayed single until 30 or 40 to study. Minimum age for marriage set at 12 for girls, 13 for boys by Rabbis. Parents usually arranged marriage but some men married without parental permission.

[See Jewish Wedding in Bible times article manuscript]

Predictors of a lasting marriage:

1. Best age for marriage? Fewer divorces for middle class men age 25-35, younger for women & lower classes. Teens statistically much higher (2 times the rate). Why? Things can be associated without 1 causing the other.

1. Society tells them they are immature & shouldn't settle down.
 2. Parents less likely to support teens that marry
 3. Might have married to escape home (always bad motivation)
 4. Often pressured via pregnancy or bad home life (not pregnant = better success rate at marriage)
 5. Disproportionate number of poor, without job, etc.
- Could teen marriages work? Yes, with advantages – Koteskey

2. Good parental models & approval (if parents divorced, more likely to divorce)

1. Patience & willing to communicate
2. Similar personality (except assertive/passive)
3. Agreement on roles, willing to change & adapt

4. Location? Rural, more stable than urban, east more stable than west US.
5. Higher income/social class similar
6. More education [until graduate level]
7. Sufficient courtship & not many conflicts before marriage
 - Engaged 6 months plus
 - Know them 2 years prior to marriage
8. Agreement on money
 - Cash or credit
 - Savings, insurance
 - Who pays bills
 - How much for car, home, furniture, food, clothes, luxuries
11. Popularity/number of friends
12. Similar age (5 years or less difference)
13. Few conflicts with parents
14. Mentally healthy
15. Religious belief & similarity of faith

“Consider calling off the wedding if . . .

Why get married?

Poor reasons:

- *
- *
- *
- *
- *
- *
- *
- *
- *

Good reasons:

- *
- *
- *
- *

[and many others already covered earlier]

“Life as a lover” by S. D. Gaede

Make a marriage contract related to:

Finances, children, career, residence [buy, rent, how expensive], friends, household tasks, faith, name change, inlaws, former spouse and kids (if any), sex, vacations, privacy, educational goals, how often to change or renew contract.

Getting Married

“He who finds a wife finds what is good and receives favor from the Lord.” Pr. 18:22

Trend towards more men than women of marriageable age, thus marriage becoming more popular
(multiple partners more common if more women than men)

Isa. 61:10 – getting dressed for marriage (prepared)

Degrees of Marriage:

1. Common law marriage – stable union without ritual or legality. Sometimes given legal standing. “Palimony” suits are initial recognition of common law.
Why used? Culture may socially require expensive wedding.
Solution at our school in W. I. = big wedding for graduating seniors getting married (at least pastors became married)
Doesn’t require 7 years, just a public recognition that person is a spouse. Recognized in 11 states (if live in one of those it is recognized in other states)
Only one week living together in one court case.
2. Legal marriage – contract aspects, financial obligations, etc.
3. Sacred marriage – before pastor/priest/rabbi, religious ceremony

4. Christian marriage – seek God’s will

5. Covenant marriage

Honeymoon is related to lasting marriages. Bible support (military to stay home one year – Leviticus)

Support from parents and relatives is important for successful marriage. But support must be combined with differentiation.

Differentiation = separate identity, not still part first family (don’t live with parents when married)

Key task of adolescence. “Leave & cleave” Bible says numerous times.

If need financial or emotional help continually, son or daughter has not differentiated.

If support comes with “strings” – conditions and obligations – parents have not differentiated.

Differentiation is prerequisite for marriage in our culture. (Opposite of differentiation is enmeshed or disengaged (no connectedness).

They need differentiation and support.

A reason many teen marriages fail – lack of differentiation or support from family (Koteskey, CT)

Marriage Adjustments

Flexibility is crucial concern – marriage is always an adjustment. Areas of adjustment:

1. New social roles

Tend to bring parental concepts of roles (even if reject them, still tend to fall back on them)

But parents of each spouse tend to have different roles.

Unity of Diversity Eph. 4:1-3, I Cor. 12:4-7

Role conflict

Due to different expectations

Due to changes during marriage (birth of child, read a Maribel Morgan book) (roles are dynamic – constant change – often trying out new aspects)

Often due to expectation of mind reading “everyone knows that” – unspoken expectations. (Need to talk about this before marriage).

Husband/Wife roles – Gen. 1:27 = people created as male & female (each baby created male & female; begin to differentiate about 7 – 9 weeks.)

Easy to read our expectations and wishes into Bible – need to realize it doesn’t nail down everything: who does dishes? Not stated (share it)

Bible sometimes confronts our assumptions about marriage roles: Prov. 31 has wife dealing in real estate & business enterprise (not traditional role).

Eph. 5:21-33 Mutual submission

Wife subject to husband (I Pet. 3:1-7) – yet love of husband is like Christ loved church (wash feet, gave life for sins).

I Cor. 11:3-12--any relevance for roles of husbands and wives?

Gender Roles Rom. 12:4-6a

Traditional Roles:

Instrumental – traditionally husband.

Focus is on outside world – most of time at work. Provider (wife's earnings are “extra money”)

Brings outside world & family together

Self-control = “be brave young man” in dentist office

Control of family (including wife) – true for most of history

Control vs. logic (without feeling) and sheer power (physical force, loud voice, threatened loss of support)

Relaxed control of difficult situations (so take out aggressions in rush hour traffic!)

Status from work – increases over time

Expressive – traditionally wife (Women staying at home developed only about 100-150 years ago!)

Focus is on relationships within family

Full time housewife role only about 100 years old. (Balswick)

More adept at interpersonal relationship

Control via manipulation (covert) and emotional display (but outwardly submissive)

Child oriented. Any job is secondary to family (not considered real work by some)

Often taken to extreme – perfect hostess, housekeeper (TV commercials), child rearer & perfect wife (with perfect sex). Impossible role.

Status from husband – decreases over time (linked with beauty)

These are still predominate in US, but power levels have changed – more equality in power. Status differences have been main target of attack, not just role differences. (Some assume the two are related).

Education used by men to compete for a job, used by a woman to compete for a husband. (Henslin)

Major increase in number of women in workforce

67% of mothers with kids under 18 are part of workforce, 50% of women with kids under 1 year are working, 57% of ??????. But this is a bit misleading: includes part-time employment & seasonal employment (e.g. only at Christmas). 25% of married mothers work full time year around. Dobson program 3-21-90 (Washington Post)

But there has been a dramatic increase in employed mothers in last 50 years, only 9% of mothers with kids under 18 were part of workforce in 1940.

Parent absence greater, yet less likely to be near extended family.

Less support

More use of agencies for kids

While some fundamentalists emphasize husband as boss, & wife as just going along, more & more emphasis on “In Christ there is no bond or free, male or female.” Gal. 3:26-29

Equality in power is probably most common practice among evangelicals – work together to make decisions, not husband decide & wife go along.

Interesting – often talk about leadership of husband & submission by wife, but practice equality or power. (Pat McNamara research)

Bible also says “submit yourselves one to another” Eph. 5:21

Mutual submission to Christ, not wife always giving in to husband.

New trend of women leaving work force to be full time mothers. (More common with baby busters than boomers) A Healthy Trend

Husband as protective covering for wife. Num. 30:10-15 I Pet. 13:1

Can read Bible 2 different ways on roles of husband/wife. – good Bible Scholars on both sides. Need to ask what God wants in your marriage & what works best. Both are ideals that can work.

9. Husband as head of family.

Not a tyrant or boss, but place of final authority. If he is loving – as Christ loved church & willing to give life for it – this can work if not using that authority for personal gain (power hungry)

10. Mutual Submission

Both submit to Christ. But who wins when head to head confrontation?

Sometimes neither is feasible: single parent families, unbelieving spouse, or abusive situation.

Just a word about women ministry in the church.

Interesting trend toward co-pastoring. Pastor’s role shared by husband & wife. E.g. Priscilla & Aquilla.

Many women frustrated by lack of opportunity to minister in churches. Not a liberal/conservative issue.

Wesleyan & holiness groups – very conservative – have long encouraged women in ministry.

We need women's gifts in church!

If one holds that women should not be able to minister to men (good scholars on both sides) and If that position ends up being wrong, Then

Those who have forbidden or discouraged women from ministering will be held accountable for the lost souls and lack of spiritual growth that results.

2 Other areas of adjustment – finances, freedom, friends, everyday norms. (roll or squish toothpaste, toilet seat up or down)

Now an alarm buzzer for husbands!

Need empathy – how does spouse view it – not just his/her opinion, but why he/she sees it that way (parent's roles? broader philosophy of marriage?)

Do we deify marriage? (Herwaldt, CT April 9, 1982)

May be reason for high divorce – expect too much

Christians may see it as ultimate, not really adult till married (contrary to Paul's writing – value of singleness in I Cor. 7)

Marriage is human institution (given by God, but worked out by humans), this flawed.

Temporary – not in heaven.

Purpose – a bit like a class, growth is purpose.

Marriage is not totally fulfilling – must not expect spouse to fulfill needs

Marriage is not for everyone. (singles are not secondary)

Stronger Family via Commitment

The Lord is my strength.

Ex. 15:2, II Sam. 22:33, Ps. 18:2, 28:7, 118:14, Isa. 12:2, Ps. 46:1, 81:1

Strength in trouble. Ps. 37:39

My strength is made perfect in weakness. II Cor. 12:9

Strengthen things that remain. Rev. 3:2

Do all things in Christ which strengthen me. Phil. 4:13

Stinnett's first characteristic of healthy families – Commitment.

Commitment to

Marriage (as a social form)

One another (personal)

Each person in family knows others are 100% for them

Social trends reflect lack of commitment. (Nicholi)

Increased divorce

Little time together as couple

Little time with kids

(father with preschoolers = 37)

Sec. in USA, 2-3 hrs. a day in Russia

Lack of contentment generally – church, CD clubs

Neglect of family pervasive – little concern for parenting in universities (except in education – institutional settings).

“Risky Business” by William Willimon (CT Feb. 19, 1988)

Commitment requires maturity, but adolescence is extended into 20's)

Problems with commitment generally: “try it for awhile” relates to job, marriage, etc.

Youth think there should be no sacrifice of individuality. 2 can't become 1 without personal sacrifice. “I've gotta be me.”

People feel must be able to love without risk. (contrary to vow “for better, for worse.”)

Cannot love without risk. risk = commitment.

Recommends: we need level with people that “open, caring” relationships without commitment will hurt people in long run.

“Reconcilable difference” – Robert and Elizabeth Roberts (CT June 12, 1987)

3 Levels of Commitment:

- 1) Self-realization – fulfillment and happiness is purpose of marriage. Being loved and affirmed. Even Christians are influenced by this model. Cannot be self-realized by pleasing self-realization. “Deny yourself” – I Cor. 13, “I must decrease” contradicts with “until death do us part.”

Vacation in same place, but doing different things. Separate vacations?

- 2) Contract – still committed even if spouse blocks personal growth. More than business contract (not just partners for what can get out of contract). But it is a contract —Vows. “Marital duties”

We want a deeper bond, but afraid to promise unconditionally “What if it doesn’t work out?”
Without commitment, marriage lacks power to fulfill.

Compromise on vacation, doing things together (even if don’t like some of them)

- 3) One flesh – beyond just contract, companionship. A deeper understanding. Not just a covenant and stick it out to end. A new communion. If really bonded, the promise “to death do us part” is superfluous.

Much like parent-child bond – if child is sick, parent feels the sickness; feels child’s joys more than our joy. If get divorced – each is incomplete if really bonded.

Unity & diversity, rarely seen. “Mutual toleration” more likely. Eph.4, I Cor. 12

Sharing activities, each partner tries to get into activities spouse enjoys, trying to enter his or her world and see their perspective. (Fabric stores vs. Radio Shack)

Becoming one flesh is calling of Christian – a challenge and goal. See marital bond as part of larger bond of kingdom of God. Learn from one another, honor desires of spouse, humility

Danger of addictive relationship (Balswick)

One becoming extension of other spouse

Priscilla Presley = all wrapped up in Elvis, and he was all wrapped up in self. One flesh – his flesh.

But biblical “one flesh” is not his or hers but a distinctive marital self – not like before. Both giving completely, sacrificing both selves to build marital self.

Does Faith Make a Difference? (Not should it, or could it, but does it?)

Impact of Religious Faith on Families

Faith is component of strong healthy families (Stinnett research – to be considered shortly or next time). Personal yet practical faith – makes genuine difference, says Stinnett.

Greater satisfaction with marriage if believe in God (Larson in Rikers book) “All things work together for the good to those that love God”

Lower divorce rate (Larson, also see Greeley)

No religious faith – divorce = about 20%

Same faith – divorce – 4-14%

Interfaith marriage = higher

Protestant & any other faith = 12% above average divorce rate

Be not unequally yoked together (II Cor. 6:14)

Marriage to unbeliever – very high too

Other influences that discourage divorce:

1. Pray together a lot
2. Read Bible, attend church, religious practices.
3. If attend church regularly, more satisfied with marriage. Most likely predictor of

happiness in marriage. “Forsake not the assembly together.”

4. Also if go on regular religious retreats – more satisfied with marriage. 5. More satisfied if pray regularly together (satisfaction not as clearly related to separate prayer) “Where 2 or more are gathered in my name, there am I with them.”

6. Greeley also shows view of spouse is clearly related to view of God – warm worship of God related to warm relationship with spouse. Also related to sexual satisfaction.

7. Family rituals help families.

Sept. 94 Focus on the Family magazine cites a forthcoming book by David Larson & Mary Ann Mayo that summarizes many of those influences of faith on marriage.

Tentatively titled Behind Closed Doors (not yet published)

Also see handout “Guess What...God Knows Best” Evidence for:

Abstinence before marriage

Physical & emotional advantages of marriage

Complete family is best for rearing kids

Single parent because of death is better for kids than divorce (but don’t kill your spouse!)

Sexuality

I Cor. 6:18-20 Flee sexual immorality (not see how close you can get).

Eph. 5:3

As a culture we are obsessed with sex.

Sell products with it

Many books on topic

Many TV shows/movies emphasize

History

Actually Puritans had healthy view of sex. (if in marriage)

Many blame Victorians for many taboos.

Some truth here, but see “Those Sexy Victorians” – PT

Eventually female sexual desire considered pathological, extremes of modesty (coving table legs!)

Double standard: males have sex before marriage, girls not desired for marriage if not virgins.
(Some felt women should not be interested in sex – may cause problems responding in marriage.)

Sex in Marriage

Need to talk about sex even before marriage – one of biggest problems after marriage is not being able to talk about sex openly. (also easier to talk with kids if natural to talk with each other).
Need to talk about what feels good during sex (not just after).

Prepare for sex prior to marriage:

Exam by doctor of woman to be sure she's physically ready for sex.

Common for newlyweds to have bladder infections – due to introduction of new bacteria. Body soon adjusts to bacteria, medication can help build antibodies.

Need to prepare for sex before starting sex:

Clean (smell of car oil not a turn on), look good.

Jim Darris: prayer before sex is great turn on (gives new meaning to “Sweet Hour of Prayer”)

Need playful attitude, not performance centered. Focus on fun, not techniques or evaluating, yet do need feedback (don't be dominated by sex manual)

Avoid distraction: Lock on door if have kids (double lock if smart kids). Unplug phone

Birth control (less worry if use it, so enjoy sex more)

Problems in sex:

Being spiritual doesn't solve sex problems

1) Male potency – failure to obtain or maintain erection. Very common, virtually universal at some time in marriage. Patience needed, focus on pleasure not orgasm. Very normal problem.
Viagra

2) Non-orgasmic female/premature ejaculation in male:

Male: 3-5 minutes, Female: 20-30 minutes

*Slow down male arousal – techniques to avoid ejaculation in good marriage manual.

*Increase female arousal via techniques in manual.

Need to realize orgasm is not always ecstatic fireworks. Not all women feel a need for orgasm. Mutual orgasm is not equal to good sex.

As time goes by, male cycle lengthens & female cycle shortens (usually).

3) Differences in sexual desire. “Don't deprive each other except for prayer & fasting.”
Compromise needed. Avg. – 1 time per week. Some suggest masturbation for spouse with more desire, but likely to produce lust. Better for spouse to stimulate than self.

Sometimes refusal is manipulation – rewards & punishment. Yet, if angry, need to resolve before having sex (woman especially links sex with good relationship, man tends to isolate them) Wives = don't use sex to get your way. Husbands = don't use wife as sex object (focus on her pleasure). Girl – emotionally involved.

Conclusions

Don't be dictated by sex manual – variations don't always make better sex. OK to experiment, but don't overemphasize technique.

Any taboos?

None stated in Bible. Must not violate own conscience or spouse's – must be mutually satisfying.

One taboo (I think) – pornography (porn decreases arousal to normal stimuli, requires greater & greater extremes)

Affection is not always preliminary to sex – because of lust.

Balwick says don't be spectator. Probably means don't overemphasize technique.

Dearborn hotel: mirrors OK

Sex problems due to Christianity? NO!

Plenty of problems in non-Christian tribal societies – circumcision of female so little response.

Healing sex problems takes time & may take counseling. Often must back up & learn pre-intercourse skills.

Alpha Marriage

Parenting

Pros and Cons of Having Kids [brainstorm]

Positives:

Negatives:

Stages of Parenting:

1.

2.

3.

4.

5.

Children and the Bible

1. First command:

2. Parental responsibility:

Key ideas in Proverbs about children [Longman]

Campolo on rituals

In Bible:

Breast fed until 3 or 4 years; boys considered adult at 13 years. (bar mitzvah) and girls at first menses. Father had responsibility of educating kids, including religious education.

N. T. era – synagogue developed and thus boys were educated there. Jesus welcomed children – in contrast to a lot of people – even said must be like child to enter heaven in Matt. 18:10 . Welcoming a child is welcoming Christ. Matt. 18:5

O. T. sounds rough, but it is positive contrast to surrounding culture.

Killing children common sacrifice to gods (Molech) Ray VanderLaan Videos

Sexual abuse widespread among Canaanites, Romans

O. T. emphasis on discipline is one aspect, balance with N. T. emphasis on not embittering children or exasperating them (Eph. 6:4, Col. 3:21).

Even O. T. says children are a blessing. (Ps. 127:3)

Great Book: Precious in His Sight by Roy Zuck (childhood in Bible)

Need to wait before having kids

To work out marriage roles (before adding parental roles)

How long? 2-5 years before first child

Don't have kids until you have a strong marriage – children add stress, they don't "hold a marriage together."

Contraception

How many kids?

National average is 1.9 per family

Some Christians say Christians should have more than 2 children. (C. Donald Cole is one)

O. T. = Children are gift, good to have many of them

Influence society, children of Christians a good way to pass on faith

Tax code discourages having kids

Spacing?

No perfect spacing. In our survey – 2 year spacing seemed best (close enough to be playmates, but separate enough so only 1 in diapers). Some research agrees.

But 2 years isn't perfect. One survey says seven-year spacing so each is center of attention for several years.

Child Development

Stage theories prominent

Symbolic interaction theory (a sociology theory)

Development takes place via interaction.

Acquire culture via language

Three stages (G.H. Mead)

- 1) preparatory to language (1-2 years)
 - a. learns gestures
 - b. words accompany gestures, see meaning from context
(separating self from parents – Freud)
- 2) play age (2-5 years)
 - a. play out roles with others – see other perspectives
 - b. from the others' perspectives begins to look back on self (late in the stage) but limited to doing this with only 1 person at a time
(decline in egocentrism – Piaget) self = what that one person thinks of me.
- 3) game age (5 years +)
 - a. take on roles of several others simultaneously
hide or seek = seeks & hides

baseball = can play & understand all positions
 - b. develop view of self from others in general (not just one other)
self = what several people see me as being

Later: self becomes what peers think, what I decide, what society thinks. (as adults – professional groups)

Symbolic interaction emphasizes construction of self, and construction of our mental worlds .

Choice is part of constructing (very Christian).

Contrast with some psychological theories that overlook choice.

We are made to live in community (self is constructed via interacting).

Very biblical concept

Dr. John Boucom [notes from video]

Family Traditions

Crucial to make family a top priority in life. Even for pastors and missionaries?

--2/3 of pastors have children under age 18

--yet George Barna's research of pastors found 1 in 10 admit their families suffer greatly because of their ministry. 4 of 10 say it is somewhat more difficult for family because of ministry. Easy to let ministry take the place of strong family life. Seems spiritual -- God's work first. But we forget family is God's work before church.

I Tim. 3:4 & 3:12 qualification for church leadership = managing own family; implies involvement with family on regular basis, not just boss.

Example of putting church before family -- my grandfather, who neglected his family while pastoring. Even put money for baby's milk into the offering. Rarely at home, when at home he was harsh and demanding; very legalistic. Result -- two sons left the faith, brilliant men but antagonistic to faith. Others in family with emotional problems.

Sounds spiritual to put church first, but easy to forget I Tim. 5:8 = If don't provide for own family, and especially immediate family, worse than an unbeliever.

Paul Meier talks about pastors (and others) who become workaholics to impress other people, not to please God. Need to be an example by being involved in family, even if it means saying "no" to church sometimes. More likely to change people by example than great sermons (I Tim. 4:12) -- Paul talked a good bit about how he was an example, but also commented on his poor speaking

ability! It isn't easy, when church people are constantly asking for more, but many pastors burn out quickly (often just three or four years before changing to another profession) because they try to do too much. [need to let church members do more, but that's another conference]

Providing for family (I Tim. 5:8) -- what does this mean? Just finances? Paul Meier says it is much more, need to provide spiritual influence. Clearly in scripture: a central passage for family life is Deut. 6:6-9 [it is obviously central because it is only portion of scripture where it says to write it on the doorframes of house, tie it to your hands, and hang it on your forehead (6:8)-- orthodox Jews literally do this]. Very important! = Talk about God's commands when sitting at home, walking on road, lying down, and rising in morning. Basic idea -- faith is central to everyday life with family, not something done on Sunday. Kids more likely to adopt your faith if it is part of everyday life; it gives focus of meaning for all of life.

How can we emphasize our faith in everyday family life? Used to emphasize family altar -- a wonderful idea in theory, but can be counterproductive. Example -- when I was kid, I was youngest and seemed like forever before I got my turn praying. The Bible reading was boring; didn't understand some of it, didn't see how the rest applied to me. Boring kids (and spouse) does not instill a love for faith.

But Old Testament approach was anything but boring. They emphasized traditions and rituals. Pastors can set example -- if it works for you, then can occasionally include others in congregation from time to time in your family traditions, or talk about them in church, or even do some of the traditions and rituals in church -- especially Old Testament holidays (more on this later). Traditions and rituals can accomplish all that the old idea of family altar intended; in fact creative ways of having a family altar are creating traditions and rituals. Dolores Curran asked 500 teachers, pastors, counselors, and other professionals what made for a healthy family life. Found 15 traits of healthy families, and wrote a book about them: *Traits of a Healthy Family*. Many of the traits imply time with the family. Two especially stand out for our purposes: enjoying traditions and sharing religious faith. Perhaps a worthy goal for pastor's families is to combine these -- share our religious faith as a family by enjoying traditions. This follows the Old Testament pattern (and probably assumed in N.T. as well because many New Testament Christians followed Jewish heritage) -- following the traditions is one way to teach the faith. We need to look back at how the Jewish people used traditions--

EXCERPT FROM FIDDLER ON THE ROOF

Not all of the current Jewish customs reflect our faith (or theirs), but in Old Testament the traditions are usually a way to teach and practice faith in God.

What are rituals and traditions? They are "Repeated actions that confers respect for something of ultimate value." Churches often have rituals and traditions, such as

-communion

- holding hands for prayer
- kneeling in prayer
- altar call for everyone at end
- songs before sermon

SMALL GROUPS: Will break up into small groups and discuss church rituals and traditions. Appoint a note-taker to report to whole group afterward. Key question: WHAT ARE SOME RITUALS AND TRADITIONS AT YOUR CHURCH? WHAT EFFECT DO THEY HAVE ON GROUP AS A WHOLE; WHAT GOOD DO THEY DO?

[List some of the traditions.] What is the effect of these traditions? Dr. Stan Gaede, a Christian sociologist, emphasizes that church traditions make people feel a part of something bigger, they feel like they belong. They symbolize the group. They also reinforce the values of the group. They put clothes on values; you can really see them in action, not just abstract. They also bring a predictability to life. Tony Campolo says that one reason Jews continue to have a strong Jewish identity, even if they leave their faith, is because of their traditions and rituals. But it is not just the traditions and rituals at the synagogue that unites them, but the practice of traditions and rituals at home in Jewish families.

So we need traditions and rituals in our homes as well. Why?

- To give a sense of family; our family is unique and special
- To give a sense of belonging to the family; I'm a part
- To reinforce the values of the family (including faith); need to talk about meaning of rituals and traditions so they don't become dead
- To bring predictability to family ("everything else may be haywire, but we'll always have our evening meal" or prayers at bedtime or ...)

Stan Gaede, in his book *Belonging*, talks about rituals and traditions in family and church. Says we often undermine any possibility of community in church and family because so caught up with relevance -- what does our faith say about current events. Instead of always trying to be relevant, need to reach back to our heritage, including our biblical heritage, to find the meaning of life in general. For about six months I spent time concentrating on the four books of the Bible I usually skimmed -- Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, and Deuteronomy. They were more interesting when I read Deuteronomy first, then went backwards. Main idea that came through -- traditions and rituals are very important to God. Why spend so much time with so many details? Seems God wasted a lot of valuable space in Bible. No, God knew that traditions and rituals would help draw together the Israelites into a nation, make them feel a part of the broader community. Rituals and traditions can do the same for our families too. Traditions help us feel like we belong and give meaning; reaching beyond the here and now (relevance) to what is ultimate in life. Traditions puts flesh on our theology and values.

Most close knit families have traditions. For example:

- Sunday afternoon walk (or picture albums)
- open Christmas presents on Christmas eve (or C. morning)
- Christmas cookies
- birthday parties, or favorite food on birthday
- story at bedtime
- new clothes on Easter or dyeing Easter eggs or egg hunt
- stories told about extended family members (even black sheep) [Curran emphasizes importance of preserving family legends; they are central to preserving the distinctiveness of the family; even the black sheep of family show the importance of what is not valued by family]
- Wednesday is leftover night
- Homemade pancakes on Saturday morning (my Dad made them)
- take down Christmas tree on New Years/ put up tree on Thanksgiving
- pretend to hate Mom's goodnight kiss
- going to grandma's house for Christmas

Lots of others possible.

SMALL GROUPS--WHAT WERE THE RITUALS AND TRADITIONS OF YOUR FAMILY OF ORIGIN? WHY WERE THEY IMPORTANT? ANY SPECIAL MEMORIES OF THOSE TRADITIONS STAND OUT? WHY? [Share a few in large group] One of things we want to accomplish during conference is to show how Old Testament holidays and rituals can help draw family together. Return to Deut. 6 -- result of infusing faith into everyday family life is kids are more likely to adopt faith (Deut. 6:2).

Can create a vibrant, creative family altar by rediscovering the Old Testament special days. Not legalistically -- we are under grace, not law; that's why so many Christians have left them behind. So we can skip them occasionally; not bound to them. But they can still achieve much of their original purpose -- draw family (and perhaps even the church body) together, make us feel we belong, and point us to the most important things in life; our faith and our Christian values. Tremendous spiritual truths to Old Testament holidays, feasts and festivals have fuller meaning in light of New Testament. For example, the progression of the festivals & feasts is historically interesting: (see Leviticus 23)

- Passover is first (Christ's final week was during passover, last supper was actually a passover meal)
- Second festival = unleavened bread (day of Christ's crucifixion) --Third festival = firstfruits, which was Sunday after unleavened bread; they day Jesus rose from dead (he is the firstfruits N.T. says) --Fourth festival = feast of weeks -- Pentecost literally took place on this day

--Fifth festival = feast of trumpets (second coming in New Testament announced with blowing of trumpet)

--Sixth festival = Day of atonement; biggest celebration of the year, Jews say that the book of life is opened on that day (Revelation speak of the last judgement when books are opened)

--Seventh festival = Feast of tabernacles -- living with God for eternity There you have it -- all of church history in a nutshell, and all in proper order in Leviticus, over a thousand years before church history began!

Celebrating these Old Testament holidays can be a way of introducing rich traditions and rituals into your family life, a richness that is both ancient and yet fresh and new to most Christians.

Brenda did a great deal of research on these holidays, using both the Bible and many Jewish sources. Especially interesting is how messianic Jews (Jews who have become Christians) see Jesus in the holidays. Most of notebook is collection of handouts on the meaning of each holiday and ways your family can celebrate them. But the central holiday, or "Holy Day," the one even included in the Ten Commandments, is the sabbath. Brenda will be spending the next session on some ideas of how to celebrate the sabbath in your family.

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Children and Religion (Spiritual Development)

Very important area, most people don't know of research in this area.

Great need for church to minister here:

- Large majority of Christians come to Christ before end of teen years.

- Kids reach parents better than the church.

- Average age teens report being saved = 10 (Barna)

- We put 90% of funds into reaching adults, but 90% of responders are kids & teens.

- Growing, healthy churches have strong children's program. But usually unconventional "organized chaos" -- let them be kids, not little adults (Barna)

- Baby boomers coming back to church because of kids. (Lack of good program = no returns)

We will emphasize: 1) research of characteristics and 2) what to do.

Before Birth

Pleasant, healthy pregnancy. Minimize trauma to mother. Give child a good start. Pray, church classes, reading books.

Infants & Toddlers

Faith is undifferentiated -- not "faith in God" but faith in parents & environment generally. Faith builds on object permanence -- Piaget. (Things exist even if not immediately present). Bible says faith is "evidence of things not seen."

Faith builds on trust (Erickson) – need a trustworthy environment. Need consistent caregivers – mother & father, not all day baby sitter. Parents that take care of needs – trust in God (later) related to trust in parents now.

Initially parents seen as divine-omnipotent, seem omniscient, etc. Can last into toddlerhood & preschool years.

Affect (feeling) is primary with baby because lacks language. Robert McDonald (Christian psychiatrist) says affective memories developed in infancy (and even before birth) affect psychological development later. Also influences spiritually – need memory healing of non-linguistic memories (difficult).

Mary Ann Fowlkes

Interaction games (peek-a-boo, pat-a-cake, tickle-hug, I gotcha) are foundations for community interaction – develops mutual bond & involves mutuality/synchrony.

They are also basic to community ritual-saying prayers together (Our Father), saying cried or responsive reading, choral singing in church. Changing diapers & feeding rituals – do we make them pleasant for child, or make them feel guilty & disgusting?

What to do?

Provide healthy home & church environment, without a lot of yelling & conflicts, caregivers must focus on child's needs.

Make child feel worthwhile, positive self esteem, lots of attention, affirming (view of God taken from parent)

Pray with child. Dobson = first prayer of child = “I love you, Daddy.” Beth's first prayer, “(gibberish) Jesus, Bible.” (with eyes tightly shut – a little over 2 years).

Good TV shows:(Gerbert, children's praise videos), good music, singing to kids

Preschoolers

Keep in mind – concept of God is created by a child, not a Xerox copy. Find sometimes startling adaptations of truths that you try to teach. Gently help them toward more accurate views of God. No instant changes.

Concept of God

Very literal view, emphasis on providing for my needs (God exists to serve child's needs – egocentric). God concept closely related to concept of parents (both mother & father). God is very human – has physical limits, even in distant place called heaven.

If reared in non-Christian home, more gloomy & frightening concept of God.

Augustine “God vacuum” – empty part of self needing God.

Near end of preschool years beginning to see God without limits – 1/3 of 5 year olds affirm omnipotence of God. God as creator is dominant theme.

Riding with John, says “God made ____” as passed it (about age 5 or 6)

Denomination

Relates to being Catholic or Protestant to God, nothing more.

Prayer

Vaguely understood, often recited as formulas ("now I lay me") but sometimes spontaneous – real picture of child's thinking.

At age 6 beginning to realize God doesn't always give us what is asked for.

Death

Not seen as permanent = Jesus rising from dead no big deal.

What should be done?

Tell Bible stories that are least likely to be distorted. Keep it concrete, not abstract.

Pray with child – parent be good model of concern for others. Make it short, help child see need for forgiveness (salvation possible, but don't push it until school aged).

Don't lie to kids – Santa Claus, tooth fairy, etc. May come to doubt ideas about God if you lie. ("Just pretend" affirms fantasy but recognizes it)

Avoid stories of violence & witches/goblins – instills fear

Be active in church with top-notch program for kids

Handbook of Preschool Religious Ed.

School Aged Ages 6 - 10/11

Concept of God

God associated with strength and goodness. Visualizes God in terms of outward appearance (white robe, long beard, etc) God is powerful, unpredictable & doesn't love everyone. God sees people as all good or all bad (no mixture). He judges by concrete rewards & punishments (death, fire, blood).

Eph. 5:1

90% sense God as near (only 55% of teens). God regularly bypasses natural processes to accomplish His will (adults see God using natural process).

Prayer

Prayer is magical – say it the right way & you'll get what you want. Immediate answers expected. (As child I prayed for a tree to move, disappointed when it didn't). Requests central.

Church

Defined as the building God lives in, believes adults attend out of habit, for rewards, or for protection. (Adults = church defined by activity = worship – not place).

Denomination

Distinguished from nationality, associated with rituals and other actions that occur. Adults = denomination linked with beliefs.

Baptism

Seen as very literal action, hard to see symbolism of death & resurrection

Conversion/Membership

Seen as something you do, not a commitment made.

As a child I repeatedly went forward – wanted to know what more I needed to do.

About age 5, I asked why preachers made altar calls. Father said they received spiritual blessings for it. I thought preachers got money from someone for each soul saved! (shows distortion of ideas)

Bible

Stories seen as just stating actions, not abstract truths. Very literal, often overlook central ideas.

By age 9 or 10 make concrete applications of analogies & parables if very well known area. (seed & sower – if very knowledgeable of farming).

Fisher of men – if know fishing well.

Poor teaching of Bible related to decrease in interest in religion – poor teaching may be worse than none at all.

Suggestions

- 1) regular devotions (Bible study & prayer) preferably with family or parent, brief!
Make it rewarding, stay ups for devotions
- 2) discuss need for Christ – many 6 year olds can genuinely repent & be saved
- 3) encourage Bible memorization (rewards good), as long as they can understand.
- 4) encourage conscience development, taking sins to God for forgiveness, saying “I’m sorry”.
Spanking
- 5) Christain camps & VBS & Jr. Church are good

Teens

Gallup (Jan 1992)

96% of teens under 16 believe in God

88% of 16 & 17 year olds

86% of teens believe Jesus is divine

More adult view of faith:

Human traits attributed to God are analogies

God can say “no” to prayers

Major clash between faith & scientific worldviews – begin to doubt miracles. Church attendance declines – peak of decline is 13 –15 years. True in many cultures. Still strong interest in religion – need to reach teens outside church setting. Exceptions to trend away from religion: Pentecostals, holiness, Mennonites & conservative churches

More separated from society

75% of teens pray at least sometime

44% of teens read Bible in private

Symbolism of Bible best understood about age 13 or 14 (Moses stood on holy ground – younger kids say ground had holes!)

Race

White fellows attend more than black guys,
black girls more than white gals.

Conversion more likely among adolescents?

Possibly if given right kind of appeal, part of identity quest. May also reject faith as part of identity. Age & interest relevant appeals needed.

Parents influence church attendance most, peers influence youth group attendance most (need to work with teens that are leaders).

What to do

- 1) Maximize parental influence by
 - a. consistency in belief & behavior
 - b. strong support and control (intimacy, not harshness)
 - c. religious practices in home
 - d. happily married
 - e. parents agree on beliefs
 - f. younger parents
 - g. good relationship with child

Mother influences religious commitment and experience most, father influences religious behavior most.

- 2) Good youth program & topnotch youth director
- 3) Do Christian schools influence?
 - a. little or none if family is not religious
 - b. most likely if religious teachers are approachable, sincere & certain in beliefs. (vs. some Catholic schools)
 - c. must have 1 hour/day of instruction in religion over 5 years to have significant influence.
 - d. Actively religious family maximizes influence of schools.
- 4) Does church make a difference?
(or do people go to church that already have lower likelihood of these?)

It's a researchable question.

Youth Ministries Major

Children's Ministry Minor

Family & Children's Major

Child-Rearing

Do parents share childcare? Most say they want to, but only a small number take an equal role to the mother.

Problem: people take little time for their kids ("marginalized")

Latch key kids also – little contact with either parent – church could help provide care)

Need parents with kids! Job may need to take second place ("The Daddy Truck" – CT June 16, 1986)

Spending Time Together Stinnett's second characteristic of healthy families

Everyday activities. Best memories not always expensive or complicated.

Common goal & working together toward it

Making things happen, going places & doing things

Anderson paper July 30, 1992 study: 70% of Americans have dinner with kids at least 5 days per week (more likely with younger kids)

No time with kids due to low priority of family.

What takes the time from family?

- 1) Workaholicism – definitely takes time from family. Goal is to impress others. Pride. Need to do less outside, more in family (Dobson, Meier both had this happen)
UGA doctoral program, changed to Ed.S.
- 2) False guilt – learn to say "no" to other commitments
- 3) Potential hostility – if refuse others. Dr. Payton – some people bleed you dry, then spit you out when used up & look for someone else. If people reject you due to priority on family, they aren't worth having as friend.
- 4) Painful insights – if slow down, may see things in self I don't like.

Schedule time for family – quantity, not just quality.

Guidelines:

- 1) make it fun for everyone
- 2) time with each child alone (date) once/month
- 3) date your spouse once/week
- 4) develop & include extended family
nuclear family too fragile, extended family took up slack in past. Now if grandparents nearby, tend to be wrapped up in own concerns. Often family is far distant.

Church takes up role of extended family?

Other families helping each other out.

Extended community arrangements (committed to members). Shared child care.

Contexts for family time (church can provide):

- 1) Parenting classes (with other parents & spouse)
- 2) Activities without age segregation, camps (interaction, not just listening). Singles with marrieds and with kids. Place for age segregation.
- 3) Family night at home
- 4) Retreats, festivals for day or weekend (not just marrieds again)
- 5) Older pals (adults) for kids
Priority for single parent families
- 6) also play time for couples: tickle fights, wives thing
humor is good with kids

One of things that cuts down on family time is daycare:

Infant and Preschool Child Daycare

(2/3 of small kids in it, in 5 years will be $\frac{3}{4}$)

Real source of concern

Good for some single parents, not if avoiding parenting

Part of reason for more childcare is due to more women in work force.

What are problems with day care for kids?

Many serious diseases (Family Policy May 89)

Children in daycare (especially infants) more likely to:

Avoid parent when reunited (several studies show)

Cry more at separation

More temper tantrums, physical aggression, arguing, threatening (a number of studies show this).

Less compliant, less persistent, withdrawal.

Other problems with childcare agencies:

Low pay, thus high turnover. Lack of consistent caregivers result in more aimless wandering by kids.

Also less interactions with other kids & harder to learn words. (need to avoid centers with high turnover, poverty wages for staff)

Conflict in values/rules between center & home

Excessive peer dependence

Especially dangerous (and especially valued by some) are “fast track” preschools & daycare centers

Also evidence of judging self by achievements later, later learning problems, fatigue, illness due to stress.

Churches need to give daycare, but also warn of dangers. All day = most dangerous (full time working parent). One half day may not be bad if mom isn't worn out the other half.

Four General Styles of Parenting:

1) Authoritarian

Set expectations, absolute standards that can never be questioned. No explanations for rules. Very rigid approach.

Danger of cruelty

2) Indifference

Undemanding, unresponsive, minimal involvement with kids. Very common today – TV and school raised kids, parents at work or preoccupied with selves. Only do parenting tasks if convenient (usually isn't)

Danger of neglect

3) Permissive

No standards, may try to reason with child but no force, allowed to regulate self. Used to be very popular with psychologists & society in general, but many psychologists have moved from 3 to 4 (many parents from 3 go 2)

Danger of indulgence

4) Authoritative

Definite rules & guidelines, but explanations given, discussion oriented, flexible parents, but parents willing to enforce expectations. Individuality of child encouraged.

Danger of overprotection

Which is Best?

#4 children are more independent and responsible. Kids need expectations, yet also need good communication & flexibility.

Control & support encourage acceptance of faith.

#3 children tend towards dependency. Boys more likely to be hostile (even sociopathic), girls withdraw & have low goals. Can't tolerate frustration.

#2 produces aggressive, demanding children (possibly sociopathic at extreme), at least in early childhood.

#1 parents tend to produce kids that are dependent and withdraw, sons are more hostile while girls have low goals. Kids more likely to develop externalized religion, not internalized.

Discipline of Children

Dobson emphasizes a basic characteristic of kids = willful defiance. Not listed in development tests. Basic to child's nature (linked to inborn sin/depravity, carnal nature – likely reason it isn't in secular texts).

“I know what you want, but won’t do it, and what you gonna do?”

Who’s toughest really matters to kids – insults on playground, fighting to see who’s dominant (peck order of girls at Danae’s slumber party). Kids should be allowed to say anything if said respectfully. Willful defiance very different from childish immaturity (not capable or just irresponsible, not rebelling & defiant).

Respond differently:

Willful defiance – show them who’s boss. If they’re looking for a fight, don’t disappoint them.

Spanking (best between 2 & 10 years, begin some at 15 months)

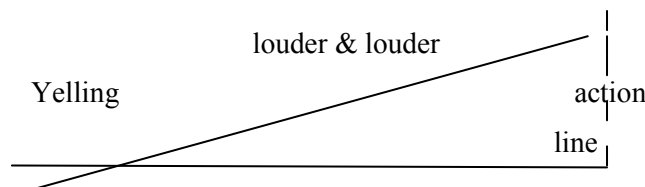
Neck muscle

Irresponsible behavior – make it a game (count to 25 in bedroom if forget napkin at meal)

Dobson definitely against child abuse, but spanking isn’t abuse.

Dobson also emphasizes that yelling does not affect behavior. Real authority can be accomplished without emotion: policeman quietly comes up to car door & asks for license (he doesn’t scream & yell, “why don’t you drive right? I’m gonna lose my mind if you people don’t…)

Don’t have to stay angry to motivate kids, says Dobson. In fact, parent getting angry may even reinforce misbehavior. Need action line prior to anger – the point at which parents take action. Many parents get angry & then have action line – seen in use of child’s middle name, staccato voice, red face, loud voice, etc. Even good parents can become screamers.



Need to move action line – set buzzer on clock for bedtime, then act if child is not in bed at buzzer – not act with threat, but with punishment. Need to link behavior & consequences.

Dobson’s example of how to get daughter to get up on time & practice piano:

Out of bed by 6:30 (no credit if 6:31)

7:10 – have had breakfast, brushed teeth, dressed and sitting at piano (allow 40 min. for 10-min. job)

At end of day – go to bed 30 min. early for each point missing.

Goal of discipline is to work self out of job – more self-control by child as get older. Gradual change, not sudden change when leave home (kids from very conservative homes can’t take major change to college – go wild even at conservative school!)

Specific Methods: (need variety of methods – too many parents get stuck with one or two)

- 1) Spanking – use sparingly, don’t leave bruises on child. Not appropriate for babies or teens. Talk about it afterward, give affection if they want it. Must hurt.

Doesn't work for some, especially neglected and abused kids.

- 2) Deprivation – be careful you don't actually reward ("if don't finish homework can't go to school tomorrow"). Be sure they will miss the object or activity.
- 3) Isolation/"time out" – standing in corner, sitting on stool, going to room, grounded. Again, be sure it is unpleasant, not rewarding.
- 4) Ignoring improper behavior – only works if attention is reward.
- 5) Reinforcing other behavior. Attention to positive activity can make undesired actions less profitable. Ideal – reward incompatible behavior.
- 6) Shame – dangerous, but occasional use of mild forms ok. ("I don't want to be with you when you do that"). Reestablish love shortly. Produces guilt feelings (appropriate). Most effective with toddlers. Shame-oriented discipline tends to produce more religious kids, but not denigration.
- 7) Reproof/scolding/explanation – effective with some kids, but easily overused (loses its effect). Don't need to raise voice and back up threats with action. "It hurts my feeling when"
- 8) Token system (or charts) with rewards & taking away rewards is useful. Shaping good. Exchange for rewards.
- 9) Model what you want – Bandura research. Maximized by encouraging imitation. Enactment, mentoring, apprenticeship.
- 10) Family council can help, especially with teens. Adults have final say. Nurturance & democratic control related to commitment to religion.

Negotiating & contracting (especially good with teens)-Paul Meier. Blend of #8 & #10. Helps avoid nagging and other negative communication.

- a. Teen asked to draw up list of rules & chores on left side, punishments on right side. If reasonable, ok – if not, parents makes them more strict or lenient.
- b. Parents & teen sign & date it – a contract.
No nagging – consequence follows automatically.
- c. Discuss progress in weekly meetings. Compliment progress.
- d. Re-negotiate at 2 month intervals:
More freedom if held to rules/chores (more freedom when responsible)
Stricter if teen has not been responsible

- 11) Dreikers – natural consequences (useful principle up to a point) Ezek. 23:35

What is natural and logical consequence? If spill food, must clean it up.

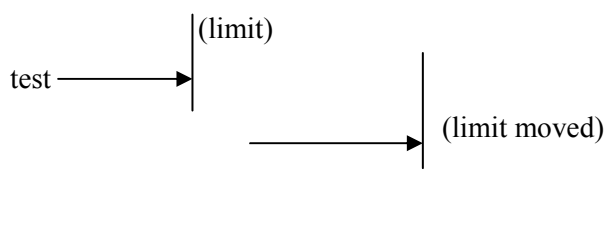
Builds responsibility

Logical consequences teach cause & effect ("reap what you sow")

Teaches self-correction and self-discipline (if kids will do it, but what if don't – then need punishment as backup)

Kids need limits for security

Test limits to see if they are genuine





Not really a limit at all. Inconsistent.

Not good at setting own limits until older & have had practice keeping limits.

12) Restitution – Discipline (positive & negative) must follow swiftly & surely – inconsistency leads to confused kids. (laughing one time, punishing next). Explain why before & after.

Punishment from parent who is usually close & loving is more effective than punishment from distant parent. COMMUNICATION IS CRUCIAL. Be sure you reward child more than punish! (Don't have to be material rewards – praise – but don't overuse praise).

Parents shouldn't get all the blame – choice.

Discipline is not just punishment, also encourages responsibility.

Adolescence

A vague stage because it doesn't physically exist

Only about 100 years old – in most non-western cultures doesn't exist today, and never existed before 1890's.

End point extremely vague – end at age or driving? Voting age? Legal drinking age? Marriage? Leave home?

Adolescence itself is vague – so teens try to define it via extremes in behavior (music, hair, etc) (Like boy without fathers who go to macho extreme)

Power, Stress, and Problem Solving

Sources of Power

Types of Resources

The Process of Power

- Language
- Nonverbal behavior
- Styles of power

Outcomes of Power

How Does Power Relate to Personality?

Power and Understanding

Stereotypes

Campolo on Love and Power

Christian Men Who Hate Women--important book for everyone to read!!!

7 Ways to Increase Power in a Relationship

[not recommended, but helps you understand relationships better]

Violence

Gender differences

Power and control wheel

What correlates with violence in a relationship?

Why don't they leave?

Violence prior to marriage

Family Stress

Stress in families is not just accumulation of difficult events (assumption of certain stress tests). They involve:

1. event – less stressful if predictable, they accumulate and lower ability to cope.
2. resources of family – income, maturity, health, adaptability, cohesiveness
3. perception of event – more likely to be seen as problem if immediate (not in distant future) and denial more likely if family lacks confidence in solving problems. Least likely to act if stress is very low or very high. Also more likely to act if see problem as to be corrected rather than improving present (counseling – frame it in negative, not positive terms to get action). Power of negative thinking!

What are major stresses in marriage? Olsen & McCubbin (1983) research by stage:

1. Newly married
Financial & work related strains (7 of 10 top stresses). Illness also high.
2. Young children
Pregnancy and childbearing (need SS classes!) Illness also high. “Increase in chores not done” is one of top 10 stresses at all stages, in top 3 for stages 2-4. “Increase in outside activities for kids” – one of top 5 stresses at stages 2-5, #1 stress in stages 3 and 4.
3. School-aged kids
Conflicts among kids (siblings, friends). Also chores not done, outside activities (#1).
4. Adolescent kids
Finances again (6 of 10 top stresses related to this). Also chores not done, outside activities (#1).
5. Launching stage (some kids leaving)
Transition strains, outside activities, illness
6. Empty nest (all kids gone)
More marital strains between spouses, illness (of elderly parents), loss through death
7. Retirement
Retirement strains, illness (greatly increases with age), death

Need SS classes geared by age to specific strains at each stage.

How do families cope with these stresses?

Most common = reframing – redefine stressor as a challenge to be overcome. In later stages begin to use passive appraisal a bit more (especially wives in #4 and husbands in #7):

“It will take care of itself” (Don’t worry, be happy)

While reframing is most used by all stages of adults, teens use passive appraisal more.

Spiritual supports used more in stages 3-7.

Social support very important for wives at stage 3, 6 & 7.

Problem Solving (6th of Stinnett's characteristics of strong, healthy families)

Able to solve problems in a crises

Family is a support system

Can see positive in bad situation, says Stinnett

Family acts as a rehabilitator. Rehearse frustrations and hope to get understanding.

Effective crises management most likely if:

1. realistic perceptions of event
2. know what resources family has to meet the crises
Good external support structure – either via extended family, neighborhood, or church. E.g. provide babysitting.
3. can tolerate tension
4. postpone pleasure (delayed gratification)
5. hope/anticipation of future (Christianity provides these)
6. traditional and complementary roles that are specified
7. traditional values and philosophy of life

Wilson cites Stinnett on methods of problem solving by strong families:

8. worked together to solve problem – via discussion or participation
9. religion is vital (or phil.)
prayer, faith in God (Stinnett says)
10. Need to take action – so feel like something can be done (perception of control over outside influences – a key difference between chronically poor and rest of population). e.g. pay off credit cards, if it takes several months, but don't pay minimum. For charge of \$2000 if pay minimum at 1.5%/month interest, it will take over 30 years to pay it off

Conflicts in Marriage

Sources of conflict:

1. limited resource
 - a) finances
 - b) time
 - c) reasoning ability
2. differences in values
different goals or different ways of reaching goals
3. stress (more on this later)
4. past experiences
learned to be aggressive/submissive

Tend to avoid conflicts. There is a time to retreat, but also must avoid bottling up & “big shot” – blow up & say worst possible thing about spouse.

****Conflict is needed – means of growth**

12 Different ways of reacting to conflicts in 3 categories

I. AVOIDANCE STRATEGIES

1. Total Avoidance – lowest level, not being honest & accepting conflict. We avoid conflict in fear of losing more than you’ll win. Denial. Not dealing with problems is likely to make problems resurface. Ever a place for denial? The self-deception aspect makes it wrong, but realistically it will happen. We all tell ourselves occasionally that nothing is wrong when there obviously is something wrong. Key is to admit it, confess it, ask forgiveness of God & spouse, and forgive self. If never see own denial, it’s a good sign denial is a big problem – the person least sensitive to it is probably the biggest user of it. Need transparency with spouse, God, and self.
2. Procrastination – instead of meeting conflict, we put it off. You are then able to get reasons together for better argument, problem may go away. Very useful sometimes (Some problems go away just by waiting – they resolve themselves but not usually a good approach)
3. Co-existence – live with conflict, live with problems. Stale and stagnant relationship – can backfire later. Not optimal level of living. Agreeing to disagree.

The previous are basic avoidance strategies. However there are others, based on one being the loser and the other the winner. The loser often wants to start another argument so he can win.

II. WIN/LOSE STRATEGIES

1. Arguing (not physical fighting). Fight in front of kids? Model “fair fighting”. Best adjusted kids after divorce are those where parents fought openly – divorce wasn’t a surprise. Verbal sparring strategy learned.
2. Arbitration – seems like a more civilized way. But both must agree as to who is the winner and who is loser. Outsider is arbitrator. Mediator. Elders in N. T.
3. Vote – with only 2 people, it probably won’t work. (1 for, 1 against). But with family, this may work – better feeling among family members often results. Problem: power resides with children.

4. Compromise – problem here is that one may be able to talk faster & think quicker, therefore compromise might not be as fair as one might be led to think initially (at spur of moment)
5. Take turns deciding (in family)
6. Husband is head of family – usually works best if used on rare occasion & when no other approach works. [?? But is it Christ-like??]

III. WIN/WIN STRATEGIES (Everyone wins something)

1. Consensus – talk till you agree. Both believe differences can be examined. Both feel committed to relationship. If this is rushed or manipulated by one of members, it may be superficial. Takes time. (Look at pros & cons, make decision together).
2. Third alternative strategy – the problem isn't what it looks like on the surface--more hidden, covert, unconscious--e.g. man wants to, woman doesn't--may not be frequency of sex but relationship. Neither option is good – get a third.
3. Synergy – sum of both produces better decisions than each individually – both are enhanced yet both are individual. Both have input/contribution. Prov. 27:17 1+1=3. Competition is very strong, but both enjoy the competition. Stimulating, (idealistic?) Produces many options, not just a third option (#2) & then combine with another method (compromise, etc.). System theory related.

Regardless of which of the 12 is used, need to pray about it – to seek a specific answer from God. He can give that answer (or general guidance) unexpectedly via Bible, friends, situations that come up, or some other way.

Guidelines for dealing with conflict (Balswick & own)

1. Fight Fair
 - A. One beef at a time. Stick to issue – easy to get sidetracked. Don't bring up old complaints & hurts. More likely to solve immediate problems.
 - B. Avoid ridicule/sarcasm/labeling
 - C. Anger is OK, but don't be abusive. Avoid manipulation. "Be angry & sin not."
 - D. Avoid passive aggression – indirect expression of anger.
 - E. "A soft answer turns away wrath" (No yelling).
2. Reflect & Clarify – be sure message is correctly understood
 - A. One person talks for 1-2 min. (no interruptions)
 - B. Second summarizes in own words
 - C. First corrects misunderstanding
 - D. Continue until both agree on what was said
 - E. Reverse roles & repeat
Verbalize the non verbal messages received
3. Use Appropriate Strategy (from the 12) Ecc. 3
Don't get locked into using one or two.

18 Rules for Fair Fighting

Indications of Misogyny

Textbook Material:

What is conflict?

How often do people have conflicts?

Topics and issues that produce conflicts

Attributions and conflicts

How happy and unhappy couples are different

Escalation

Threats

Entrapment

Demand/Withdraw Pattern

Negotiation

Accommodation

Four types of couples in relation to dealing with conflict.

Terminating conflict--methods

Can conflict be a good for the relationship?

Divorce, Remarriage, Single Parenting And Counseling

How common?

1987 Harris poll – about 1 of 8 marriages.

2% of marriages break up each year

Yet 1 out of 8 may also be misleading – higher rates of recent marriages offset by stability of older marriages.

May be fewer people satisfied with mediocre marriages rather than more bad marriages.

Most likely during first 5 years of marriage

Divorce peaks during 4th year, rate does not increase during midlife or after kids leave home.

Among poor, desertion more common due to high cost of divorce (Avg \$15,000 for all legal costs in Cal.)

High costs after divorce:

Divorced women – 73% decline in standard of living during year after divorce.

Divorced men – 42% rise in standard of living.

High emotional costs:

Higher admission rate to mental hospitals (especially males – 10x higher, females – 5x higher)

Surprising since admissions are generally higher for females

“No Fault” Divorce

The reason divorce increased – the legal system changed.

Why so strongly endorsed? Because past system was adversary system – required one to bring charges against other. Required court battle, resulting in fighting (even if they had been civil before). Good example: movie “Kramer vs. Kramer”. Money and custody of children become pawns in battle.

Also many tried to get around stiff laws in one state by going to another.

California began “no fault” divorce in 1970:

Equal division of property

Mutual agreement (not one accusing other)

Support based upon ability to pay

Custody decided in interests of child

Family court – emphasis upon “cooling off” and marriage counseling.

All or nearly all now have some form of no fault alternative.

McKenna says past court system is wrong, but new system isn't biblical either.

Concludes that "no fault" is inevitable, but need to step in and help restore those considering divorce (via counseling).

Preventive counseling

Causes of Divorce

Less divorce if couple has traditional, planned ceremony. Those who elope often are trying to escape parents (poor factor in marriage success)

Honeymoon also lessens chances of divorce – relaxing without pressure.

Many are just too busy to work on marriage.

Lack of investment = lack of reason to stay with it.

A key factor – change in reason for marriage:

During last century the economic and family priority:

Raise family, and help around farm.

Centered on permanence and responsibility to family.

Currently – happiness centered (with big dose of romanticism)

Self-centered (individualism)

Expression of feelings may be blocked – getting feelings out into open is healthier than suppressing – but express without unhealthy extremes. Too many Christians don't express negative feelings (think it's sin). Better to get it out in open then forget it.

Other reasons: adultery, abandonment, abuse, selfishness, loss of love, lots of other reasons.

Marriage & Family become less valued as other institutions take on its roles (schools, clubs, etc.)

More specialized, limited role of family.

Don't even eat together often

Unrealistic expectations may result in divorce.

A few divorces are due to neurotic difficulties, often resulting in serial divorce.

Research has found 21 factors that tend to contribute to the likelihood of divorce:

1

2

3

- 4
- 5
- 6
- 7
- 8
- 9
- 10
- 11
- 12
- 13
- 14
- 15
- 16
- 17
- 18
- 19
- 20
- 21

Six aspects of divorce “Six Divorces of Every Divorce”

- 1
- 2
- 3
- 4
- 5
- 6

Christian view

Standard evangelical view is 2 exceptions to rule against divorce.

1. sexual unfaithfulness (Deut. 24:1, Matt. 19:9)
2. Desertion (I Cor. 7)

But not automatic: Hosea in O. T. had unfaithful wife but told by God to take her back repeatedly.

Some suggest Jesus was strongly against divorce because only way to support self for woman after divorce was prostitution.

G.K. Chesterton said divorce is a superstition – a marriage that can be dissolved is no marriage at all. Felt easy divorce was really another name for promiscuity. Others call it “serial polygamy”

Balswicks emphasize ideal of no divorce, but grace & forgiveness rather than legalism.

Need marriage mediation (C. Donald Cole, MBI)

Role of elders in N. T.

Christian legal society is trying to get more couples to get help in churches before getting divorce. Team approach – pastor, layman & attorney.

Seven Christian Views of Divorce (with five additional variants)

- 1
- 2
 - A
 - B
- 3
 - A
 - B
- 4
 - A
 - B
- 5
 - A
 - B
- 6
 - A
 - B
- 7

Other Verses on Divorce:

Children of the Divorced

Loss of contact with noncustodial father

50% of kids haven't seen father in past year. (CT)

Only 16% see their fathers regularly.

1/3 of divorced fathers over 50 have lost all contact with their adult kids (Anderson, IN, Aug.19, 1991)

Key study – Judith Wallerstein Second Chances (1989)

Studied effects on kids for 10 years after divorce.

Divorce hurts kids far more than the parents, and longer too.

Daughters often select wrong spouses because afraid of being abandoned, so pick men they don't mind losing or those they're sure of not losing. Afraid to risk commitment.

Sons constricted emotionally (bury feelings from parent's divorce). Lonely, tend not to date much, extremely vulnerable to rejection.

(both more likely to be divorced)

How common are problems with kids of divorced? (10 years after)

37% consciously & intensely unhappy with past divorce situation. Even feel abandoned if parent remarries.

Very angry toward father, often refuse contact with father.

29% middle ground = depressed but coping. Some progress, but still unhappy at times due to divorce.

34% resilient and coping well, but many of these still feel unhappy & lonely at times about the divorce.

Update (Konner book) most recent evidence indicates that much of the problems of these kids come from the conflicts present before divorce, but the divorce also apparently adds some stresses too (more the pre-divorce conflict than the divorce).

How they learn about divorce is crucial – almost always it is a shock, rarely feel relief or see it as a solution. Often as much conflict after divorce. Sudden divorce causes greatest stress. (must also ask if contrived conflict is more than divorce)

Percent of psychological problems in child: Parent-Child Relationship

		GOOD		POOR	
Relationship	Marriage	GOOD	5%	25%	
	POOR	40%	90%		

Friends and grandparents don't fill void of lost parent.

Immediately after divorce – often psychological problems such as regression, sleep disturbance and somatic complaints, guilt, anger & withdrawal, blame self (especially with school age)

Help them cope via:

- 1) promote healthy mourning – saying goodbye to family as it used to be. Help child work out feelings. Elementary aged especially grieve deeply (preschool too)
- 2) assure child that he/she is loved & will be cared for (often fears abandonment)
- 3) correct misconceptions – if blames self, or if feels he must take the place of missing parent
- 4) help him/her see it is final – can't get parents together again regardless (often try to manipulate)
- 5) help adjustment to new family – it's ok to love both parents, don't have to choose. Parents that fight via kids cause severe problems
- 6) help them develop relationships with other adults, youth pastor especially helpful – parents have little energy to give child attention during divorce.
- 7) if emotional & behavioral problem, needs counseling – refer to professional for short term counseling. Books can help too.

One of the most dangerous ideas people have – “hold the marriage together by having kids.” NO!! Kids add stress – and stress added to a shaky or unstable marriage spells disaster – divorce abuse, etc. Don't have kids until you have a strong marriage!

Remarriage

80% of people that are divorced get remarried

2nd marriage more likely to fail statistically (almost twice as high, about same % as first marriage if both are middle class).

Remarriage more likely if poorly educated female or well-educated male.

Remarriage more likely if young at time of divorce or woman with several kids.

Heth at Dallas Theo. Sem. cites Deut. 24:4 to conclude that if divorced and remarried, you cannot go back to first spouse. If remarried, you need to stay in that situation, he says. Believes divorce is required if spouse is openly & regularly adulterous but no remarriage.

Stepparent needs to allow child to develop relationship, not insist on becoming an instant parent.

Less problem adopting to new parent if child is under 5 at time of remarriage.

Should not remarry just to give child a parent, but loss of father does tend to relate to certain problems (especially with boys)

1. lower school achievement
2. lower adjustment in school
3. less advanced moral judgement
4. more feminine (but probably not gay unless mother hates him)
less likely if shorter time without father figure.

5. dependence on external cues to act (passive)

Problems with girls more likely later during adolescence:

Extremely shy with boys or overeager (both to inappropriate extreme) more likely seeking attention if parents divorced, more likely shy if mother is widowed

Most influence if lose father earlier in life.

Custody of kids – in general, best adjustment if:

Girls placed with mother

Boys placed with father

If above does not occur, more likely to benefit from remarriage.

If problems with stepparent, usually it is with stepfather (but one study showed kids with stepfather as well adjusted as those with biological father). Often unrealistic expectations of stepparent (over idealize biological father). Must not try to replace actual father.

Single parenting

Major increase

Dec. 1991: 40% of all 1st births are to singles!

Less stigma to it

Higher divorce

Later marriage (don't want biological clock to run out – about 40 for most women)

Marriage postponed due to career, education.

Average first marriage:

24 for women

26 for men

Single parenting varies by race

AA = 40%

Hispanics = 23%

Caucasians = 13%

Need more ministries to single parents!

Single parenting – major issue today due to:

Divorce

Unwed mothers – 1995 update (FRC) 4 % decline in births to teenage mothers since 1991.

July, 1993 stat: 24% of babies born to single mothers

Dec. 1991 stat: 40% of first births conceived by singles.

Church needs to give care for single parents – via special SS classes, include singles in family activities, etc.

Fathering needed in church (Meier in preschool SS class)

Advantages to Two parent family over single parent family:

Teens tend to have more misbehavior and take more risks in single parent families. (Also less likely to have experienced an orderly life)

Child abuse and neglect more common in single parent families.

[many other problems--see Barbara Whitehead and others]

Nicholi report (Family Research Council)

Emotional illness related to absent parent.

Absence of father related to: (due to divorce, at job all the time, etc.)

Low achievement motivation

Less deferring of immediate gratification

Low self esteem

Higher group influence (herd mentality) and more juvenile delinquency

Need to develop singles ministries, not leave them out.

Discussion groups for kids as well as adults

“Big brother” relationships needed.

Textbook--ch. 13

Rate of divorce

Additional predictors of divorce

Process of moving towards divorce/separation

1

2

3

4

5

After the Divorce:

Adjustments

Relationships

Chores

Economic

Relationship with former spouse

Effects on children

Textbook: chapter 15

11 Relational Maintenance Strategies

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Premarital counseling programs

Marriage enrichment programs

Effectiveness of these programs

Rogerian approaches

Psychodynamic perspectives

Systems approaches

Behavioral approaches

Cognitive approaches

Degree of success of various approaches