

THE FAMILY MISSION ORGANIZATION

How Christian families can most effectively organize to fulfill the Great Commission

By Marc Jantomaso • Forest, Virginia • January 2007

INTRODUCTION

How can Christian families most effectively organize to fulfill the Great Commission? I believe answering this question with a Biblical answer is of paramount importance, considering the state of the Church today. Many studies have concluded that young people are leaving the Church in record numbers. One study by the 2002 Southern Baptist Council on Family Life reported that 88% of the children in evangelical homes leave the Church by age 18.¹ George Barna predicts that if this trend continues, by 2015 church attendance will be half the size it is today.² In the wake of Barna's extensive research of the local church, he says, "If the local church is the hope of the world, then the world has no hope."³ In the Church's attempt to fulfill the Great Commission of "discipling the nations", the discipleship of those within the believer's home has been neglected or delegated to others. If we neglect the very foundation of humanity, the family, nothing but disaster can be expected.

My aim in this writing is to consider: the Biblical model for disciple-making; the Biblical picture of disciple-making, as seen in the life of Jesus Christ; the divinely ordained purpose of the family; the father as head mission director; the enemy's desire for the division of the mission organization; and the family unit as God's instrument to "disciple the nations."

THE BIBLICAL MODEL FOR DISCIPLE-MAKING

Parents have been given the divine responsibility of discipling their children. "Therefore you shall lay up these words of mine in your heart and in your soul, and bind them as a sign on your hand, and they shall be as frontlets between your eyes. You shall teach them to your children, speaking of them when you sit in your house, when you walk by the way, when you lie down, and when you rise up. And you shall write them on the doorposts of your house and on your gates, that your days and the days of your children may be multiplied in the land of which the LORD swore to your fathers to give them, like the days of the heavens above the earth."⁴ This spiritual teaching and training is to be done daily, and throughout the day.

Steve Farrar, in *Finishing Strong*, echoes this truth. "I don't care if you are an accountant, a truck driver, a computer programmer, a pastor, or an architect. If you have a family (or even if you don't), it is your job to fulfill the Great Commission. And the heart of the Great Commission is to make disciples. And that,

friend, starts in our own homes."⁵

Dennis Rainey, in *Ministering to 21st Century Christians*, states: "The church exists for many reasons. Near the top of the list is "equipping of the saints for the work of ministry" (Ephesians 4:12). That "ministry" occurs most naturally, frequently, and powerfully in the round-the-clock relationships of the family: first husband-wife, and then, parent-child."⁶ Walk-along, talk-along discipleship takes time...a long time. This is one reason I believe God puts us in families...so we will have the time. A father who takes the time, day after day, to read the Word of God to his family, will shape and form the hearts and minds of his family.

In 1847, J.W. Alexander wrote: "The daily reading of God's holy word, by a parent before his children, is one of the most powerful agencies of a Christian life. We are prone to under value this cause. It is a constant dropping, but it wears its mark into the rock. A family thus trained cannot be ignorant of the Word."⁷ The apostle Paul drives this point home as he instructs Timothy, his spiritual son. "You therefore, my son, be strong in the grace that is in Christ Jesus. And the things you have heard from me among many witnesses, commit these to faithful men who will be able to teach others also."⁸ And isn't this what discipleship is all about? "Making disciples of all the nation" begins with those closest to us. Jesus makes this truth clear when He instructs the apostles: "But you shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be witnesses to Me in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth."⁹ We are to begin the discipleship multiplication process with those under our own roofs, then move out from there, together with our disciples.

In the beginning God created man and women and gave them the mandate to: "be fruitful and multiply."¹⁰ God was telling the first couple to have children and establish a family. God did not have to create families. He could have just as easily created individuals, with no biological connection to one another. However, He chose to mediate His mission through families. God chose the family of Abraham to bless, and promised to make a great nation from his family. God told Abraham: ". . . in you all the families of the earth shall be blessed."¹¹ All through Scripture we see that God mediated His divine mission and covenant through families.

If families are so important to fulfilling God's mission, the question may be asked: "Why didn't Jesus come to earth, get married, have children, and give us the perfect model for the Christian family to follow?" God's Word does not answer this question...directly.

THE BIBLICAL MODEL FOR DISCIPLE-MAKING *as Seen in the Life of Jesus Christ*

Jesus did not have biological sons or daughters, yet in the following verses He gives us a glimpse of whom He considered his closest relatives. "While He was still talking to the multitudes, behold, His mother and brothers stood outside, seeking to speak with Him. Then one said to Him, "Look, Your mother and Your brothers are standing outside, seeking to speak with You." But He answered and said to the one who told Him, "Who is My mother and who are My brothers?" And He stretched out His hand toward His disciples and said, "Here are My mother and My brothers! For whoever does the will of My Father in heaven is My brother and sister and mother."¹² Jesus is saying that the ones who followed Him and obeyed Him were the ones closest to Him. In another passage Jesus refers to Himself as "the head of the house." "A student is not above his teacher, nor a servant above his master. It is enough for the student to be like his teacher, and the servant like his master. If the head of the house has been called Beelzebub, how much more the members of his household!"¹³ Jesus is the head of the house, just as a father is given this same responsibility.¹⁴ Just as Jesus disciplined His disciples, so a father is to disciple his disciples, his wife and children."¹⁵ From these Scriptures we can see that Jesus is giving us a picture, through the pages of Scripture, of how an earthly father is to teach, train, exhort, encourage, and disciple his children.

In what ways did Jesus train His disciples? Through a study of the gospels, the father (or the head of the household, if a father is not present), can learn how to train the disciples in his household.¹⁶ Jesus often called His disciples together to teach them. He would bring them with Him on "mission trips" of healing, teaching, and miracle performing. Jesus was on a specific mission of training and preparing his disciples to take His message to the world and transform it. Fathers must be just as purposeful, with the limited amount of time entrusted to them, during the formative years of their children. Jesus knew He had a three-year window of opportunity to train his disciples. Moses' parents knew they had a three to five year window of opportunity to impart God's truth into the heart of their son, before he

would be taken from them and placed under the indoctrination of Pharaoh's palace. The apostles turned the world upside down with the truth. Moses turned his back on the prestige, pleasures, and wealth due him as the prince of Egypt, to lead a bunch of rag-tag slaves through the desert. Why? How? Moses and the apostles had something in common. They had teachers who day after day after day, imparted God's truth to them. Fathers and mothers must do the same . . . if they desire to impact the Kingdom and multiply the glory of Jesus Christ.

Not only can we learn about Biblical discipleship from the life and interaction of Jesus with His disciples, we can also learn from the relationship of Jesus with His Father.

In the Gospel of John, chapter five, we read the story of Jesus healing a man on the Sabbath. And because of this "the Jews persecuted Jesus, and sought to kill Him, because He had done these things on the Sabbath. But Jesus answered them, 'My Father has been working until now, and I have been working.' Therefore the Jews sought all the more to kill Him, because He not only broke the Sabbath, but also said that God was His Father, making Himself equal with God. Then Jesus answered and said to them, 'Most assuredly, I say to you, the

Most assuredly, I say to you, the Son can do nothing of Himself, but what He sees the Father do; for whatever He does, the Son also does in like manner.

John 5:19

Son can do nothing of Himself, but what He sees the Father do; for whatever He does, the Son also does in like manner. For the Father loves the Son, and shows Him all things that He Himself does; and He will show Him greater works than these, that you may marvel.'"¹⁷ Jesus, the Son, only did what He saw His Father doing. The Father displayed His love, for His Son, by showing Him all the things that He did. The mission projects that Jesus embarked upon were only the ones revealed to Him by His Father. This is to be the mission model of an earthly father with his family. The father gathers the family together and imparts the "family mission project" to the family. They discuss, interact, pray. They embark on the mission project together.

Much can be learned about fulfilling the Great Commission of discipling the nations as we consider the life of Jesus Christ and how He fulfilled His mission as He spent enormous amounts of focused time with His disciples and with His Father.

THE DIVINELY ORDAINED PURPOSE OF THE FAMILY

Psalm 78 declares this purpose: "For He (God) established a testimony in Jacob, and appointed a law in Israel, which He commanded our fathers, that they should make them known to their children; that the generation to come might know them, the children who

would be born, that they may arise and declare them to their children, that they may set their hope in God, and not forget the works of God, but keep His commandments . . .”¹⁸ God’s purpose for the family is to pass the faith to the next generation and the next and the next.

As stated earlier, parents have been given the responsibility, and the ministry, of discipling their children.¹⁹ The process of making disciples, multiplying disciples, and passing the hope and faith to the next generation, must begin in the home. If we bypass the home as the primary disciple-making vehicle, we are driving down the wrong road.

In the name of progress or the belief of a better way, the Church has been deceived into replacing the primary means of Biblical disciple-making with many other “creative” and “more effective” means. C.S. Lewis comments on “progress”: “We all want progress. But progress means getting nearer to the place where you want to be. And if you have taken a wrong turn, then to go forward does not get you any nearer. If you are on the wrong road,

progress means doing an about-turn and walking back to the right road; and in that case the man who turns back soonest is the most progressive . . . [and] going back is the quickest way on.”²⁰ If the

Church is to progress in the process of making disciples and multiplying disciples, we must return to the ancient paths, for this is the quickest way on to fulfilling the Great Commission.²¹

This ancient path is a life-long, time consuming, energy draining, painstaking path of discipleship. But worth every minute and every ounce of energy invested. Eternity hangs in the balance. This disciple-making process does not happen overnight, or even in a 12-week discipleship class. The apostle Paul knew about this type of parental sacrifice as he writes to the Galatian church: “My little children, for whom I labor in birth again until Christ is formed in you.”²² Christ formed in the disciple is to be the mark and aim of every discipler.

God’s purpose for the family, of passing the faith to the next generation, is a lot of hard work and sacrifice for the parents. However, what is the alternative? The alternative is to neglect, or delegate to others, this God-given responsibility, and then miss out on the blessing of walking with your children down the road of joy. “I have no greater joy than to hear that my children walk in truth.”²³

The Father as Head Mission Director

All mission organizations have someone at the helm, steering the ship. God has ordained the father in the home for this position of headship.²⁴ Unfortunately, the

majority of Christian men have abandoned ship. Shipwrecks in Christian homes are commonplace. What else could be expected with the head of the ship not on board?

Henry Blackaby, in his book, *Spiritual Leadership*, writes about the grave importance of leadership as he quotes George Barna: “The American church is dying due to a lack of strong leadership. In this time of unprecedented opportunity and plentiful resources, the church is actually losing influence. The primary reason is lack of leadership. Nothing is more important than leadership.”²⁵ Leadership in the church begins in the leadership training center of the home. The father is to be the spiritual leader in the home, teaching and training his disciples the Word of God. The father may not be an expert theologian, however, he is the resident theologian. A father may not have started into parenthood with the knowledge and conviction of his Biblical role, but, with God’s grace, beginning late, and being honest with his children about the changes he desires to

make, a positive impact can still be made.

Henry Blackaby gives a succinct definition of spiritual leadership. He says, “Spiritual Leadership is moving people on to God’s agenda.”²⁶

With all the different personalities, ages, and agendas in a family, this is a challenge for a father. But, never an impossible challenge, as God promises to give us everything we need for life and godliness, through his divine power.²⁷

The father is to be the head of the family, to lead his family, to be ahead of them. Phil Lancaster says, “A father initiates action and sustains it toward a goal. He makes things happen; he is the leader of the family.”²⁸ Earlier in his book he makes the statement, “The home rules the nation.” He goes on to say, “Our national crisis is a consequence of the crisis of the home, and the crisis of the home is a crisis of male leadership. Men have abandoned their calling to be the spiritual leaders of families, to be the builders of Christian character, the teachers of Christian doctrine, and the models of Christ-like faith and virtue. They have abdicated their responsibility to be the guardians of that wellspring of Christian civilization: the Christian family. Because men have forsaken their families, we are losing a civilization . . . If it is true that the home rules the nation—that the welfare of the church, state, and larger society are determined by the welfare of the family—then national renewal can only begin with the family renewal. And family renewal must begin with a restoration of family government, the recovery of the role of spiritual leadership by men in their homes.”²⁹

Scott Brown writes about the enormous leverage the father has as leader in the home. “The Baptist Press

For though you might have ten thousand instructors in Christ, yet you do not have many fathers . . .

1 Corinthians 4:15

reported that if a child is the first person in the household to become a Christian, there is a 3.5% probability everyone in the household will follow. If the mother is first, there is a 17% chance everyone in the household will follow. If the father is first, there is a 93% probability that everyone in the household will follow.³⁰

In his work, *Thoughts on Family Worship*, J.W. Alexander writes about the importance of fathers not forgetting their divine calling. “In the shop, the market, the field, the highway, the office, the exchange, and even the pulpit, the father may forget that he is a father: he cannot forget it when the curtain is dropped, when the circle draws more closely around the hearth, when the wife of his youth welcomes him to prayer, and when the eyes of his little ones are fixed on him, the minister of God to their souls.”³¹ A great value of regular family worship is that a father is reminded daily of the life-shaping responsibility he has been entrusted with.

In the typical local church there are many good teachers. The Apostle Paul concurs, “For though you might have ten thousand instructors in Christ, yet you do not have many fathers; for in Christ Jesus I have begotten you through the gospel. Therefore I urge you, imitate me.”³² Ten thousand instructors in Christ...but there are not many fathers who are willing to deny self, sacrifice, and pour their lives into another soul. A father in the home and life of a child has this opportunity. And because the father is present, and out front leading, the child has the opportunity to see, follow, imitate, and grow to spiritual maturity. There is something divine about the father/child relationship. Proverbs 17:6 echoes this divine mystery. “The glory of children is their father.” There is something uniquely divine that the Father in heaven has placed into the hearts of children, which causes them to yearn for their father’s love, attention, affection, and acceptance. If a father does not fulfill this special place in a child’s heart, the child will go looking elsewhere, to their destruction.

The importance of the father manning his station at the helm of the ship cannot be underestimated. If the mission director of the family is absent, the mission of God will not be accomplished.

The Enemy's Desire for the Division of the Mission Organization

One tactic the enemy of God uses to divide families, or split up the mission organization, is to remove the head from the body. This tactic was outlined in the previous section. Satan will use whatever means possible to split up and scatter the family and render them powerless. If the enemy can split up the army, he has a greater

chance of victory. If he can scatter the logs and embers, the burning fire will quickly die. Jesus spoke this truth when he said, “Every kingdom divided against itself is brought to desolation, and every city or house divided against itself will not stand.”³³

Satan will use all kinds of division tactics. He may divide the mother and father. He may attempt to divide brothers and sisters, or divide parents from their children. These divisions could be physical divisions or heart divisions. King Solomon recognized the “heart division” tactic when he wrote: “My son, give me your heart, and let your eyes observe my ways.”³⁴ If fathers have their child’s heart, then they will have their wills. This is why Jesus said the greatest commandment of all is “to love the Lord your God with all your heart.”³⁵ God could have told us “the greatest command is to obey Me.” Yet, He divinely knew that if we loved Him with all our heart, then obedience would follow. May all Christian families pray the prayer of David: “Teach me Your way, O Lord, and I will walk in Your truth;

give me an undivided heart that I may fear Your name.”³⁶

Physical division is another primary means for the fall of the family. Pastor Joseph Cammilleri calculated the amount of time a child who attends church and

school is physically away from home, and separated from the protection and direction of parents. He estimates that a child from age 5 to age 18 is away from the godly influence and guidance of parents for a total of 25, 754 hours!³⁷

In the book of Ezekiel, God deals directly with shepherds who allow division in the sheepfold. The sheep have become scattered because of the shepherd’s negligence and personal indulgence. “Son of man, prophesy against the shepherds of Israel, prophesy and say to them, ‘Thus says the Lord GOD to the shepherds: “Woe to the shepherds of Israel who feed themselves! Should not the shepherds feed the flocks? You eat the fat and clothe yourselves with the wool; you slaughter the fatlings, but you do not feed the flock. The weak you have not strengthened, nor have you healed those who were sick, nor bound up the broken, nor brought back what was driven away, nor sought what was lost; but with force and cruelty you have ruled them. So they were scattered because there was no shepherd; and they became food for all the beasts of the field when they were scattered. My sheep wandered through all the mountains, and on every high hill; yes, My flock was scattered over the whole face of the earth, and no one was seeking or searching for them.” “Therefore, you shepherds, hear the word of the LORD: “As I live,” says the Lord GOD, “surely because My flock became a prey, and My flock became food for every

Every kingdom divided against itself is brought to desolation, and every city or house divided against itself will not stand.

—Jesus/Matthew 12:25

beast of the field, because there was no shepherd, nor did My shepherds search for My flock, but the shepherds fed themselves and did not feed My flock”³⁸ When the shepherds of God’s flock abandon their God-given job of shepherding, the sheep become scattered and become food for every beast of the field. Sounds like enemy tactics. “Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil walks about like a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour.”³⁹

The family mission organization must stay close and connected, so that they will not become scattered and devoured.

The Family Unit as God’s

Instrument to “Disciple the Nations”

How then can Christian families most effectively organize to fulfill the Great Commission of “discipling the nations”? By walking into their living room, sitting down on the couch, gathering together as a family, each day, to listen to the teaching and instruction of the one God has commissioned as the head director of their mission organization.⁴⁰ Scott Brown says it succinctly in his article: *The Greatest Untapped Evangelistic Opportunity Before the Modern Church*.

“I believe that we are involved in the greatest evangelistic opportunity before the church today. I am talking about the salvation of millions of children under the evangelistic and discipleship ministry of fathers and mothers in the home. This is not the only mission field, but it is perhaps the most neglected mission field before the church in our day. If a father engages his children in gospel teaching six days a week for eighteen years, there will be 5,616 opportunities to speak of the goodness of God. If he sends his child to Sunday school for eighteen years, there will be 936 opportunities for him to hear of the goodness of God. If they go to Sunday school for a lifetime (to age 70) they will only have 3,640 opportunities. This means that God would have a father give his child more teaching by age eighteen, than he will get in the modern church in a lifetime.”⁴¹

The values of Christian families

gathering daily to worship together

- Secure God’s blessings for obedience.⁴²
- Faith is increased . . . “So then faith comes from hearing, and hearing by the word of God.”⁴³
- Synergy. “Two are better than one, because they have a good reward for their labor. For if they fall, one will lift up his companion. But woe to him who is alone when he falls, for he has no one to help him up. Again, if two lie down together, they will keep warm; but how

can one keep warm alone? Though one may be overpowered by another, two can withstand him. And a threefold cord is not quickly broken.”⁴⁴

William Bennett shares this synergistic truth as he discusses healthy marriages. “In healthy marriages, men and women seek to perfect themselves for the sake of the other. Day in and day out, they offer and draw moral strength, sharing compassion, courage, honesty, self-discipline, and a host of other virtues. The whole of the union becomes stronger than the sum of the parts.”⁴⁵

Billy Graham also recognized the tremendous potential of people working together as a team. Harold Myra and Marshall Shelley, in their book, *The Leadership Secrets of Billy Graham*, write: “The remarkable math of teamwork challenges our usual calculations. ‘One shall chase a thousand,’ says the Bible, ‘and two shall chase ten thousand.’⁴⁶ G.K. Chesterton picked up on this in his novel *The Man Who Was Thursday*. A policeman confronting evil discovers an ally who tells him, ‘Two is

not twice one; two is two thousand times one.’ Whether leading a large enterprise or a small entity, teamwork multiplies effectiveness. When members of a team are rightly positioned and fully engaged, ‘mountains can be moved.’”⁴⁷

Thus says the Lord: “Stand in the ways and see, ask for the old paths, where the good way is, and walk in it; then you will find rest for your souls.”

Jeremiah 6:16

- Equipped for the spiritual battles encountered in the spiritual world we live in. “Take . . . the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God.”⁴⁸ I believe it is no accident or coincidence that God commands us in Ephesians 6 to “put on the whole armor of God”, immediately after he commands husbands and fathers to teach their wife and children the word of God.⁴⁹ I believe God is telling us that the teaching, and the washing through the word, is the spiritual preparation for being “strong in the Lord and in the power of His might.”⁵⁰
- Prayers become powerful and effective, “The prayer of a righteous man is powerful and effective.”⁵¹
- Direction and redirection for the mission: “Your word is a lamp to my feet and a light to my path.”⁵²

These are just a few of the many benefits and blessings incurred as a family regularly meets together to seek God’s heart for the divine and unique mission for which He has created and called them.

In *Uniting Church and Home*, Eric Wallace describes the glory of God’s plan for “discipling the nations.” “God’s method of discipleship is a beautiful process to observe in action. It is, simply put: applying God’s powerful and living truths in close relationships.”⁵³ What greater opportunity, in the whole world, or in the whole of our lives, do we have to live in close relationship, than in the family? Even the secular world recog-

nizes this and longs for the closeness of family. “A USA Today 1998 survey of Americans between the ages of 18-34 found that their “highest priority in life” was a “close-knit” family.”⁵⁴ The Church has the opportunity, and responsibility, to model the close, intimate, heart-level relationships that the world is desperately seeking.

In an enlightening article by Mike Aquilina, *Salt of the Empire: The Role of the Christian Family in Evangelization*, he quotes from an interview with Dr. Randy Stark, author of *The Rise of Christianity*. “What Stark found in his study of the first Christian centuries was an astonishing growth rate of 40 percent per decade.”⁵⁵ He attributed this phenomenal growth solely to the sacrificial charity of Christian families. From his historical research of the early church, Aquilina draws out six lessons the ancient Christian families can teach modern families.⁵⁶

1. “Come to see your home as a domestic church.”
2. “Make your domestic church a haven of charity.”
3. “Make your domestic church a place of prayer.”
4. “Know that, as a domestic church, you are ‘on mission.’”
5. “Cultivate the virtue of hope.”
6. “Live by the teachings of the Church.”

As apostles of charity, Aquilina reminds Christian families that they are to be “on mission.” “Like the Universal Church, you are sent by Christ to bring the gospel to the world. You are sent outward from your home. “Sent” is the root meaning of the word apostolate, and you and I and all our children are called to share in the Church’s apostolate, to be apostles to the world.”⁵⁷ Just as Jesus disciplined the apostles and sent them out, so parents are to disciple their children and send them out to “disciple the nations.”

A Personal Story of My Family Mission Organization

As a young boy I was privileged to be a part of numerous mission opportunities to which God called our family. During the years growing up in my home, my father, the head family mission director, was a business owner and also Chaplain to the Boston Red Sox professional baseball team. He continually gathered us together to inform us and guide us in the next “mission opportunity.” Together, as a family, we would pray for my dad’s business customers, and pray for the baseball players and their families. My dad constantly involved us in the mission. In our home, all of life was a mission of sharing and living the Good News of Jesus Christ. Countless times I sat next to my father as he shared the gospel with neighbors, customers, business associates, baseball players, waitresses, and whomever else God led us to on “the mission.” Our home was a revolving door for lost people to come in, hear and experience God’s incomparable love, and then grow in their faith at the Bible study my father led in our home each week.

The heart of our Father, for those growing up in Christian homes, or those growing up in the streets, is that “none should perish.” “The Lord is . . . not willing that any should perish but that all should come to repentance.”⁵⁸

The Lord has divinely ordained the family to be an effective instrument, in His hands, to accomplish His mission. As Mother Theresa has said, “I am simply a pencil in God’s hand.”

CONCLUSION

In the book, *Seven Habits of Highly Effective Families*, the author expresses his high regard for the indispensable value of the family. “I firmly believe that the family is the building block of society and that our greatest fulfillment lies there. I also believe the most important work we will ever do is at home. Former First Lady Barbara Bush said it beautifully to the graduating students at Wellesley College: ‘As important as your obligations as a doctor, lawyer, or business leader will be, you are a human being first, and those human connections—with spouses, with children, with friends—are the most important investments you will ever make. At the end of your life, you will never regret not having passed one more test, not winning one more verdict, or not closing one more deal. You will regret time not spent with a husband, a child, a friend, or a parent . . . Our success as a society depends not on what happens in the White House but on what happens inside your house.’ I am convinced that if we as a society work diligently in every other area of life and neglect the family, it would be analogous to straightening deck chairs on the Titanic.”⁵⁹

I believe the Church is beginning to seek the ancient paths, and reformation is just around the corner. This is seen in the response of men in the Promise Keeper movement, as fathers are turning their hearts toward their children.⁶⁰ The “ancient path” is visible in the Home Education movement, as parents return to the Hebraic model of teaching and discipling, as they walk and talk alongside their children. The “path” is seen once again as churches return to the Biblical model of whole families worshipping together, united . . . not divided.

As families and churches return to the ancient paths, and reorganize, according to God’s plan, the Great Commission will become the Great Fulfillment. However, we must turn the corner toward Biblical reformation of the church and family.

“During the era of Roman Papal domination of the Western church, family worship and spiritual leadership by the head of household virtually disappeared from the historical record. Both of these Biblical distinctives of the Christian family reappeared in the prelude to the Reformation.”⁶¹ May the day soon be upon us when Christian families and churches are

singing the song of Biblical reformation, to the glory of the King and the salvation of the world!

*Our Father which art in heaven,
Hallowed be Thy name.
Thy Kingdom come.
Thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven.
For Thine is the kingdom,
and the power, and the glory, for ever.
Amen.⁶²*

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* Unless noted, all Scriptures taken from the New King James Version of the Holy Bible

FOOTNOTES

1 2002 Southern Baptist Council on Family Life (Quoted in article by Scott Brown: The Greatest Untapped Evangelistic Opportunity Before the Modern Church).

2 George Barna, Revolution; (Quoted in article by Scott Brown: The Greatest Untapped Evangelistic Opportunity Before the Modern Church).

3 George Barna, Revolution (Wheaton: Tyndale House Publishers, 2005), 36.

4 Deuteronomy 11:18-21

5 Stever Farrar, Finishing Strong (Sisters, Multnomah Books, 1995), 41

6 Dennis Rainey, Ministering to 21st Century Families.

7 J.W. Alexander, Thoughts on Family Worship, pp. 62-63 (1847); as quoted in Family Worship, by Kerry Ptacek, p.60

8 2 Timothy 2:1-2

9 Acts 1:8

10 Genesis 1:28

11 Genesis 12:3

12 Matthew 12:46-50

13 Matthew 10:24 NIV

14 1 Corinthians 11:3; Ephesians 5:23

15 John 3:2; Ephesians 6:4

16 Luke 9:1-3, 10, 18-20; Luke 6:12-16; Matthew 10:1-5

17 John 5:16-20

18 Psalm 78:5-7

19 Deuteronomy 6:6-9; Ephesians 4:12

20 William J. Bennett, *The Broken Hearth* (New York: Doubleday, 2001), 6.
21 Jeremiah 6:16 NIV
22 Galatians 4:19
23 3 John 4
24 Ephesians 5:23
25 George Barna, *Leaders on Leadership* (Ventura: Ventura Books, 1997), 18.
26 Henry Blackaby (Nashville: Broadman and Holman, 2001), 20-21.
27 2 Peter 1:3
28 Phil Lancaster (San Antonio: The Vision Forum, 2003), 100.
29 Phil Lancaster (San Antonio: The Vision Forum, 2003), 16-17.
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32 1 Corinthians 4:15-16
33 Matthew 12:25
34 Proverbs 23:26
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36 Psalm 86:11
37 Joseph Cammilleri, *A Generation which knew not the Lord* (self-published, 2001), 41.
38 Ezekiel 34:2-8
39 1 Peter 5:8
40 Ephesians 5:23;6:4
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42 Deuteronomy 28
43 Romans 10:17
44 Ecclesiastes 4:12
45 William J. Bennett, *The Broken Hearth* (New York: Doubleday, 2001), 6
46 Deuteronomy 32:30
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48 Ephesians 6:17
49 Ephesians 5:26; 6:4
50 Ephesians 6:10
51 James 5:16 NIV
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56 Mike Aquilina, *Salt of the Empire* (Touchstone magazine, May, 2004), 41-42.
57 Mike Aquilina, *Salt of the Empire* (Touchstone magazine, May, 2004), 42.

58 2 Peter 3:9
59 Stephen Covey, *Seven Habits of Highly Effective Families*, p.2
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62 Matthew 6:9,10,13

ONLINE RESOURCES

wwwSimplyDevoted.com
(copies of this paper available under "resources")
www.UnitingChurchandHome.org
www.ScottBrownOnline.com
www.VisionForumMinistries.org

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