

Spheres of Societal Transformation

FAMILY



Family

Rationale/Background

The family is the basic building block of society. The Lord God established family as the foundation on which human society is built. Healthy relationships built upon the fear of God and love within the family is the bond that holds church, society and nations together.

However, post modern individualistic societies guided by secular humanistic thinking increasingly see institutions of marriage and family as redundant. The Church has not given adequate importance to the upholding biblical family values and has failed to demonstrate Christian families as a model and witness to the outside world.

The family is God's chosen institution for bringing children into the world and for nurturing and training them. It is the fiber from which all godly human institutions are woven, and the fabric of both Church and society will disintegrate if it's very fiber is torn.

Today the family is being torn apart by many societal pressures. Many individuals outside the Church, and even some inside it, have come to accept divorce for any and every reason. Careerism and materialism have become respectable idols, replacing living for God and his purposes for family life for many fathers and mothers, needlessly forcing many mothers out of the home and into the labor market, while genuine economic pressures force many more there of necessity because of lack of charity and justice from others.

Some important parental rights and responsibilities have been eroded by the law, the courts, and some forces in public school education, and by governmental policies that deprive the family of many of its traditional Biblical functions. As a result, many families suffer from aimlessness and disarray.

Purpose and Responsibilities

A family is simply a man, woman, children who are related by marriage, blood, or adoption. The ideal marriage has a man and woman who covenant together to fulfill God's desire for them to be fruitful and bless the world. Both parents are to fulfill the purpose and responsibilities. In this context fathers (in general, but not exclusively) lead in society, while mothers raise the next generations. (Gen. 2:18, 22-24, 3:16)

1. DOMINION AND PROCREATION (Gen. 1:28, 1 Tim. 5:10,14) Be fruitful and multiply, subdue the earth.
2. EDUCATION (Deut. 6:6-7)
3. HEALTH AND WELFARE: Practice hospitality (Rom. 12:13), especially for those of your own household.

Vision

We see a Church consisting of godly families living in harmony and love with one another testifying to the truthfulness and power of God in building godly relationships that bring about transformation within communities.

Working Vocational Mission Statement (Ot Template)

The purpose of family is to provide a safe, nurturing environment for growth, values, and development of the next generation.

Mission

The mission of the family focus group is to identify core areas that need to be addressed in the family and engage the local churches, missions and the society at large to work together to build families based on sound biblical values.

Principles

1. God established the family when he joined Adam and Eve in marriage and instituted their relationship as a life-long covenant and commitment to God and to each other (Gen. 2:22-24; Isa. 49:15). Marriage and other family relationships can fulfill their complete intended potential only as each member is individually reconciled to God and sanctified through the work and Lordship of Jesus Christ; and that God ordained the family as a social institution designed to reflect his image on the earth, to bring the earth into submission to his plan, and to be fruitful and multiply (Eph. 5:22,23; Gen. 1:27,28).
2. The biblical definition of family is the nuclear family of a heterosexual married couple with its natural and adopted children, together with family branches consisting of all nuclear families descended from common ancestors.
3. God intends each Christian family to work wholeheartedly for the advancement of his Kingdom; that this purpose is accomplished by a oneness between husband and wife, through having and raising children as Christians, home-based evangelism, hospitality and other home-based mercy ministries, and training Christian leaders as godly heads of households as a prerequisite to their holding church offices (Gen. 1:27, 28; Matt. 28:18-20; Deut. 6:7, 11:19; 1 Tim. 2:15-3:13; 1 Cor. 7:21; Ps. 127, 128).
4. Each family, being different in circumstances, individuals, and gifts, has unique purpose and meaning in God's plan (Phil. 1:27, 28; 1 Cor. 12:12-27).
5. God designed the beautiful blessing and spiritual union of sexual relations to be reserved exclusively for a man and a woman within marriage (Heb. 13:4; 1 Cor. 7:1-9; Prov. 5:15; Rom. 1:27; Gal. 5:20, 21; 1 Tim. 4:1-3).
6. Celibate singleness may be God's purpose for an adult, providing for effective service or ministry; that such a calling is always marked with God's grace so that sexual purity can be maintained and that such single persons are whole persons in God's creative order (Matt. 19:10,11; 1 Cor. 7:7, 8, 25-27, 32).
7. A Christian man, as head of his family, nurtures its members spiritually and morally; that he should protect his family, pray diligently for their protection, and seek regularly the Lord's blessing for them (1 Tim. 2:8; 1 Thes. 5:17; 1 Peter 3:7). He should educate his children spiritually and lead them in the way of godliness by direct and constant instruction, leading in worship, remaining accessible and lovingly involved with them, and mirroring Jesus Christ by his example (Deut. 6:7, 11:19; Eph. 6:4; Ps. 34:11, 78:5, 6; Eph. 5:21-25; Phil. 2:5-11; Matt. 20:28; Col. 3:18,19; 1 Tim. 3:11,12; 1 Cor. 11:3, 14:34, 35; 1 Peter 3:7).

8. Children are a blessing from God of worth beyond human capacity to measure, and should be welcomed joyously into the family as precious gifts from him. Children belong to God alone, with the parents being their God-ordained stewards and God gives parents the primary responsibility and authority for the education and physical, social, emotional, and spiritual well-being of children (Gen. 33:5; Ps. 78:1-8, 127:3-5; Prov. 17:6; 1 Tim. 2:15; Eph. 6:1-4; Deut. 4:9, 6:1-9).

9. Parents mirror the righteousness, justice, mercy, and love of God in discipline, training, and nurturing their minor children (Prov. 22:6, 29:15; 1 Sam. 3:13, Ps. 78:1-8, 2 Tim. 1:5, 3:15; 2 Cor. 12:14; Eph. 6:1-4).

10. Children honor their parents and minor children obey them in the Lord. Scripture gives parents the right and responsibility to enforce obedience through discipline, including corporal punishment (Deut. 5:16; 2 Sam. 7:14, cf. Prov. 3:11,12, 13:24, 22:15, 23)

Conclusion/ Summary

The importance of upholding biblical values of marriage and family in a fast changing world is not in question. The country needs a church that gives direction in biblical teaching and models of families that are strong and stable. The church alone has the resource to undertake such a vital task. This is both a great challenge and a wonderful opportunity for witness and leadership.

To be continued...

Taken from Transform World Manual

Transform World Connections

A call to transformation: transformational streams are becoming one fast-flowing river for the healing of the nations.

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