



Christian Family Life—PRM 150
3 Credit Hours
Terry Thulien MEd., Ph D. (Biblical Counselling)
Mini-Semester, January 2013

I. Course Description

A clear understanding of God's Word concerning marriage will be sought. Some of the issues that will be addressed are: authority, marriage relationship, communication, conflict, expectations, development, identity, personality and individual diversity, parenting, family planning, and other issues that may arise through class interaction. This course is meant to be very practical and open discussion will be encouraged.

II. Learning Outcomes

A. Primary Outcome

To know the truths in Scripture as they apply to marriage and family.

Students will search the Scriptures to gain an understanding of the objective principles that God has given mankind concerning marriage and the family. The purposes of marriage and the intent of authority in marriage will be examined. The function of the family will be explored. Students will recognize differences in the secular approaches to marriage and the possible outcomes of non-biblical purposes in marriage and family life.

B. Learning Objectives

1. To build character and a passion to glorify God in our everyday life.

Students gain an understanding of themselves from a Biblical worldview. Students examine present and future participation in their Christian families. Our goal is to recognize the ways that God is glorified when we as believers live a life of faith in the everyday context of the Christian family.

2. To learn the skills required to build a healthy Christian family, with God honoring relationships.

Students will gain an understanding of beneficial ways of interaction within the family. Biblical principles will be applied in a practical way to everyday situations. Subjects such as relationship, development, gender and personality differences, communication, and parenting processes will be explored. Students will be introduced to the research processes of the social sciences. Students will gain skills in confronting issues such as marital and family conflict, divorce, and child rebellion.

3. To pursue a family lifestyle based upon God's Biblical truths and to be prepared to bring new skills into the context of ministry.

Students will be encouraged to move forward positively in their own walk of faith as members of their Christian families. They will also be equipped and prepared to share the Biblical truths and the life skills that they have learned.

III. Required Textbooks

- (1) *Family Vocation: God's Calling in Marriage, Parenting, and Childhood*. Crossway. 2012. Gene Edward Veith Jr. And Mary J. Moerbe.
- (2) *Communication: Key To Your Marriage*. Regal Books. 2000. H. Norman Wright.

IV. Course Evaluation

1. **Reading:**

Family Vocation: God's Calling in Marriage, Parenting, and Childhood.

Percentage of grade: 5%

Communication: Key To Your Marriage.

Percentage of grade: 5%

Due date: A signed acknowledgement of reading will be attached to your final assignment.

2. **Writing assignment:** Write a 2-4 page paper that explores your family of origin and, if it applies, your family by marriage union. The following points will be pursued. How have family members matched expected roles in your family? What roles have you played? Apply Ephesians 5:15- 6:4 to your family situations. How has your family exemplified these Scriptures? In what ways do you see that it has failed to apply these Scriptures? How have you and your family benefited from following these principles? Have you observed negative outcomes that you believe may have resulted from not knowing, not applying, or not fully understanding these verses? Be prepared to share select portions of your writing with the class.

Percentage of grade: 10%

Due date: Second day of class, January 8.

3. **Daily assignments and discussion:** Written assignments and discussion undertaken in class.

Percentage of grade: 10%

Due date: As assigned.

4. **Writing assignments:**

Review the books *Communication: Key To Your Marriage*, by H. Norman Wright (Regal, 2000) and *Family Vocation: God's Calling in Marriage, Parenting, and Childhood*.

Write **two** 2-3 page papers on the major ideas (points of view) presented by the authors and your evaluation (critique) of these ideas.

Percentage of grade: 10% for each paper.

Due date: January 11.

5. **Writing assignment:**

Write a 7-8 page scholarly paper on an aspect of family and marriage. Use any of the following sources: the two texts for this course, Scripture, professional journal articles, and books by other authors. If possible use all these sources. Follow the college academic guidelines for writing.

Percentage of grade: 25%

Due date: January 15.

6. **Final Exam:** The exam will be short essay format, with questions drawn from the required texts and the lectures.

Percentage of grade: 25%

Date: January 11.

V. Tentative Schedule

1. Monday: The Biblical Worldview and Marriage
 - a. The Biblical worldview
 - b. The Biblical worldview of God
 - c. God's design and purpose for marriage
 - d. Dating revisited
 - e. Introduction to the social sciences

2. Tuesday: Your identity and diversity
 - a. The Biblical worldview of the nature of mankind
 - b. What is your identity as a believer?
 - c. Personality and gender differences
 - d. Your family of origin
 - e. Discussion of written assignments
 - f. Your present and your future

3. Wednesday: Family
 - a. Perspectives of family
 - b. Know your family—moving through developmental phases
 - c. Parenting
 - d. Challenges in the family

4. Thursday: Love and Marriage...Marriage and family dysfunction
 - a. Romance and Procreation
 - b. Divorce perspectives
 - c. Outcomes of divorce
 - d. Challenges in Marriage

5. Friday: Communication
 - a. Communication
 - b. Conflict intervention
 - c. Open topic
 - d. Exam

VI. Bibliography

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- Bloesch, Donald G. 1995. *God The Almighty: Power, Wisdom, Holiness, Love*. Downers Grove, IL: IVP Academic.
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- *Nash, Ronald H. 1992. *Worldviews in Conflict: Choosing Christianity in a World of Ideas*. Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan Publishing House.
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- *Nee, Watchman. 1970. *Sit, Walk, Stand*. London: Victory Press.
- Paludi, Michele (ed.). 2004. *Praeger Guide to the Psychology of Gender*. Westport, CT:

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Sadler, T. W. *Langman's Medical Embryology*. 8th ed. Philadelphia, PA: Lippincott Williams & Wilkins.

*Sander, Ken and Tom Raabe. 2002. *Peacemaking for Families: A Biblical Guide to Managing Conflict in Your Home*. Carol Stream, IL: Tyndale House Publishers, Inc.

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*Tripp, Paul David. 2001. *Age of Opportunity: A Biblical Guide to Parenting Teens*. Phillipsburg, NJ: Presbyterian and Reformed Publishing Company.

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*Wright, Norman H. 2000. *Communication Key to Your Marriage: A Practical Guide to Creating a Happy, Fulfilling Relationship*. Ventura, CA: Regal.

(*Recommended books)

