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EQUIPPING FATHERS AT PARKRIDGE BAPTIST CHURCH
IN CORAL SPRINGS, FLORIDA, TO LEAD IN THE
DISCIPLESHIP OF THEIR CHILDREN

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APPROVAL SHEET

EQUIPPING FATHERS AT PARKRIDGE BAPTIST CHURCH
IN CORAL SPRINGS, FLORIDA, TO LEAD IN THE
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To my loving wife, Stacey,

thank you for your unconditional love and support for thirty-three years.

To our children and grandchildren, I pray that my dedication to the Lord Jesus Christ and my devotion to family will always reflect God's grace and be an encouragement that will continue to strengthen your faith walk.

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PREFACE

I will ever be thankful to Christ and His provision for salvation “who has strengthened me, because He considered me faithful, putting me into service . . .” (1 Tim 1:12) I am grateful that my mother and father, Peggy and Luther “Luke” Boyette, faithfully took me to church as a boy so I could hear the glorious gospel preached. I am thankful to the late Reverend Doyle Lamb, a church planter with the Home Mission Board, now known as the North American Mission Board. He planted South Main Baptist Church in Rockford, Illinois, in the mid-1960s, and it was in that church, under his preaching, I confessed Jesus as my Lord and Savior.

I am also thankful for the Administrative Leadership Team and the staff of Parkridge Baptist Church in Coral Springs, Florida, for their support throughout my academic pursuit. Because of their trust in me as a pastor and their faithfulness to the Lord, I had this opportunity to implement this project. I would be remiss if I did not say a heartfelt thank you to my friend, my confidant, and my pastor, Eddie Bevill. He was a great encouragement to me as I began to think about stepping into academia after many years. His advice to me was instrumental in my decision to attend The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary.

I am certainly grateful for the faculty and staff of The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary. A great staff that has a great vision and passion for Christian leadership is assembled by a great leader. Dr R. Albert Mohler is such a leader, and I am thankful for his inspirational courage. I am thankful for Dr. Michael Wilder in the Professional Doctoral Studies Office for the vision and leadership he brings to the doctoral program at Southern. I remember receiving a call from Dr. Wilder when I was considering enrolling in the doctoral program. His insight proved to be invaluable and

aided me in my decision-making process. I owe a debt of gratitude to Dr. John David Trentham, who served as my supervising professor, for his guidance and direction as this project progressed. He shares the same heart as I do to see fathers lead out in the discipleship of their children and for those children to learn to defend their faith as they grow older. To Dr. Shane Parker, I appreciate the times of encouragement as I forged my way through the course work and the process of completing this degree.

As for my high school sweetheart, who has been my loving wife for thirty-three years, I want to say that I could not have achieved this degree if it were not for her support. So often while I stayed busy writing, meeting deadlines, and studying for this degree, she was quietly in the background making sure that nothing lacked in our children's ministry at church. I can never express how truly blessed I am to be the husband of Stacey Lynell Boyette.

To our five children, my hope and prayer is that the gospel will continue to grow them into the likeness of Christ. This project was borne out of the memories of our mornings around the dining room table, with sleep in our eyes, beginning our day with a devotional time with God. I will always cherish those times around our breakfast table.

My hope is that this project will encourage other fathers to experience the same blessing as I did sharing prayer and Scriptures around our family altar.

Brad Boyette

Coral Springs, Florida

December 2017

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

It is difficult to imagine any relationship as strong as the relationship between a parent and a child. It is natural for parents to desire to give what is best to their children. In Matthew 7:9-11, Jesus posed a series of questions that demonstrate the love a father has for his children:

Or what man is there among you who, when his son asks for a loaf, will give him a stone? Or if he asks for a fish, he will not give him a snake, will he? If you then, being evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your Father who is in heaven give what is good to those who ask Him!¹

Christian fathers have a great opportunity to give their children what is the very best—the gospel of Jesus Christ and the encouragement to walk in accordance to Scripture (Prov 22:6). The church has a great opportunity to join in the mission of supporting and equipping fathers to be the lead disciple-makers in their families.

Sadly, despite the biblical mandate found in Deuteronomy 6:2; 4-9, Psalm 78:1-8, and Ephesians 6:4, many Christian fathers abdicate their God-given role as the principle disciple-makers in their families. In today's busy world it is easy for fathers to allow the church's educational strategy to be the primary source in the discipleship of their children. Many churches choose to place children in classes based on the age of the student. These age-segmented discipleship strategies serve to teach the truths of Scripture in a way that can be understood at the level of which the child learns. The Sunday morning programming can serve to support parents who desire to incorporate discipleship of their children within the home. Ministers need to be careful that the content and methodology of the Sunday school does not usurp this vital role parents can

¹All Scripture references are the New American Standard Bible, unless otherwise noted.

play in the process of discipleship. Nelson and Jones suggest the process of training children is most effective within a “community of sisters and brothers.”² Effective discipleship needs to happen at home and parents need to be equipped to lead in this process. According to Steenburg, this type of family-equipping ministry “makes certain that every aspect of ministry with children and youth trains, involves, or equips parents as primary disciple-makers in their children’s lives.”³ The church can supply the biblical evidence and enlighten fathers as to why they should take up this mantle and provide the support to help fathers build their confidence level as they take on the challenging task of discipling their children. Michelle Anthony and Kit Rae note the church can serve as a “greenhouse in the nurturing and preserving of spiritual formation. . . . The church must call on parents to be awakened to their God-given roles as the spiritual nurtures of their children.”⁴

Context

The ministry project took place within the context of Parkridge Baptist Church (PBC) in Coral Springs, Florida. PBC was planted in 1992, as a mission church of Sheridan Hills Baptist Church in Hollywood, Florida, with an emphasis in reaching the families of the bedroom communities of Parkland and Coral Springs, Florida. The hope and prayer of the founding pastor, Eddie Bevill, was that God would send men, along with their families, to help grow the ministry. Bevill desired for PBC to be a ministry

²Bryan Nelson and Timothy Paul Jones, “Introduction: The Problem with Family Ministry,” in *Trained in the Fear of God: Family Ministry in Theological, Historical, and Practical Perspective*, ed. Randy Stinson and Timothy Paul Jones (Grand Rapids: Kregel, 2011), 15.

³Timothy Paul Jones and W. Ryan Steenburg, “Family-Equipping Transition 4: Synchronize,” in *Family Ministry Field Guide: How Your Church Can Equip Parents to Make Disciples* (Indianapolis: Wesleyan Publishing House, 2011), 180. The authors introduce the TIE test: Train parents, Involve parents, and Equip parents.

⁴Michelle D. Anthony and Kit Rae, “Children’s Ministry in the Context of the Family for Spiritual Formation,” in *A Theology for Family Ministries*, ed. Michael Anthony and Michelle Anthony (Nashville: B & H, 2011), 222.

where families were equipped through discipleship, resulting in members of the church growing in their walk with God. Rick Warren's *Purpose Driven Church*, which focuses on the "concentric rings" of a healthy church, inspired PBC's ministry strategy. Warren's rings embodied PBC's vision in the areas of evangelism, discipleship, fellowship, ministry, and worship. The hope was that families would be encouraged to celebrate God's presence, demonstrate God's love, communicate God's Word, incorporate into God's family, and be educated in God's Word.⁵

The senior pastor of PBC began his tenure in 1992, and as one might expect, this long tenure has provided consistency to the original vision of the church to reach families. For the last twenty-five years PBC has remained focused on discipleship through Sunday morning programming and Wednesday nights as a strategy for the spiritual growth of its members. PBC has attempted to strengthen this strategy by resourcing three staff positions: a discipleship pastor, a youth and college pastor, and a children and families pastor—the latter being my position. These positions help in programming and the ministry needs at the church, but simply having these staff positions does not guarantee that parents will be influenced to lead out in the discipleship of their children in the home.

This project was timely because PBC had experienced a spike in attendance, comprised mostly of young married couples with families. Many families are seeking help with their families' needs in the area of parenting, finances, and their marriages. It was imperative that the church continue to meet the needs of these new members by providing such classes. PBC provides these classes as electives and typically are not considered to be a part of the Sunday school curriculum. It should be noted that small groups at PBC are age-segmented and meet on Sunday mornings and Wednesday

⁵"Discovering Church Membership Class 101," created by Parkridge Baptist Church, was adapted from Rick Warren, *The Purpose Driven Church: Every Church Is Big in God's Eyes* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1995). This strategy is covered in PBC's membership documents and presented to all prospective members during membership class. These classes are provided to potential members four times per year.

evenings. PBC resists calling the discipleship programming on Sunday mornings “Sunday school” because of the concern that this label might be confused as something that is intended for children only. The children’s programming on Sunday morning is simply called Ridge Kids City (RKC) and is divided by age and grade. RKC offers a traditional approach for children from birth through fifth grade.

PBC faced a dilemma in that only about 50 percent of adults who attended worship on Sunday morning attended a small group. The reasons may vary from the perception that the groups have nothing of importance to offer, some do not want to stay on the campus multiple hours, and others may not have attended a small group before, so in essence they do not know what they are missing. The lack of participation in small groups posed a problem for a church such as PBC that places so much emphasis on discipleship through small groups. Fifty percent of the adult membership attending a small group created difficulties for the church that desired to change the cultural belief that only professional ministers are equipped to disciple children. PBC needed to review the content and timing of these classes in order to attract more interest in these groups. It was the aim of this project that a series of classes could be offered to fathers that would be in addition to the existing small group structure in order to equip fathers to take the lead role in the discipleship of their children.

Another contextual dynamic was the church’s approach and philosophy to ministry itself. PBC’s philosophy in ministering to families was classified as a “Family-Based” ministry. Timothy Paul Jones points out that churches who take this approach maintain the various segmented ministries such as youth, children, adults, and singles, but provide additional “intergenerational curriculum, activities, or events.”⁶ PBC has always been known in the local community for providing family events, such as Trunk-or-Treat

⁶Timothy Paul Jones, “Foundations for Family Ministry,” in *Perspectives on Family Ministry: 3 Views*, ed. Timothy Paul Jones (Nashville: B & H, 2009), 43. The book contributors give credit to Mark DeVries for pioneering this approach in *Family-Based Youth Ministry*.

(an alternative to Halloween), Easter Carnival, Family Movie Nights, and Back to School events that are designed to give families an opportunity to simply spend time together, time that is often taken by sports and school activities.⁷ One major flaw in this approach is that parents tend to rely heavily on the church to provide activities and curriculum for the discipleship of their children instead of assuming the responsibility themselves. In addition to the family events, the church leadership determined the programming should include family-based classes. These classes include instruction on parenting skills, marriage enrichment, and financial management. The classes, or electives as PBC refers to them, are typically taught on Wednesday nights and not considered part of the overall small group strategy. Typically, small groups meet on Sundays and have no specific ending date. The classes provided on Wednesday evenings have a definite start and ending date. Therefore, PBC is hesitant to call the Wednesday night classes “groups” and simply refers to them as electives.

In addition to family-based events and classes, the church has tried to engage men and fathers in other ways. A group of men meets on Saturday mornings and provides opportunities to do book studies and video-driven series. The goal of this group is to inspire men to improve in the area of Christian formation with the hope that the men would be better husbands and better fathers in their homes. The attendance in these Saturday morning classes is sparse and is not focused on equipping fathers to be the lead disciple-makers in their homes. PBC also sponsors extended conferences once or twice per year on Saturday mornings. Although there is a time of worship and usually one or two guest speakers, it seems the main draw is the breakfast and fellowship. These events draw many men from inside and outside of the church, but fall short in getting the majority

⁷Jones, *Family Ministry Field Guide*, 101. Jones lists two reasons for which discipleship is not happening at home: lack of training of parents and parents not taking the time. Two-thirds of the parents surveyed in Jones’s Family Discipleship Perceptions and Practices Survey admitted that worship time and devotions at home were not a priority. PBC seeks to provide events that will bring parents together and be on purpose about spending time together.

of PBC men to participate. Although these conferences have significance in the lives of the men, the goal has not focused on long-term change within the family as it pertains to fathers discipling their children. It is worth mentioning that the pulpit ministry at PBC was not geared toward family equipping. The preaching and teaching that takes place in the regular church service is comprised of expositional teaching and typically focuses on one book of the Bible at a time. Although the teaching is theologically sound, there is little effort put forth in order to bridge the message and encourage parents in how they could lead their children at home utilizing the message as a foundation. As a part of this project it was the hope that pastor could begin to incorporate methods and tools to encourage fathers to lead in the disciple-making of their children.

Finally, counseling for couples who are struggling in their marriages is an attempt to provide the tools to promote healthy relationships. The basic premise of offering marriage counseling is the hope that if the marriage is healthy then parents will be in a better position to effectively model, lead, and disciple their children. It stands to reason that if the marriage is not intact it becomes difficult for parents to effectively lead their children as prescribed in Scripture. Timothy Paul Jones writes, “What you do for God beyond your home will typically never be greater than what you practice with God within your home.”⁸ Although PBC was doing an effective job by providing these family-based classes, events, and counseling, the church could have done more in moving toward a family-equipping model so that fathers would have the confidence to lead in the discipleship of their families, hence the rationale of this project.

Rationale

Considering the increase in attendance of young families with small children and the downward trend in the attendance of small groups on Sunday mornings, the time was right for the introduction of a new approach and the creation of an atmosphere,

⁸Nelson and Jones, “Introduction,” 14.

through training, that would encourage fathers to be the lead disciple-makers in their homes. The future vision for family ministry at PBC needed to address the issue of fathers discipling their children at home as the family-based ministry strategy shifted its focus and moved toward a true family-equipping strategy.⁹

PBC has worked hard to provide the very best training through small groups and family-based electives; however, there needed to be an emphasis placed on parents, namely fathers, to be involved in the discipleship of their children at home. The biblical mandate for parents to lead in the discipleship of their children in Deuteronomy 6:4-9 is clear. The concern is in light of Ephesians 6:4 many Christian fathers do not have a plan to carry out their God-given role. Children's pastors, youth pastors, school teachers, and coaches are filling vital roles that fathers should have. Equipping fathers with the vital tools is necessary for the current paradigm to shift. Fathers needed to have the biblical understanding of their roles and then be equipped to transfer the beliefs, practices, and traditions of their faith to their children. If fathers begin to incorporate this biblical mandate, then what becomes of the hired professionals of the church? The seminary-trained professionals had to begin viewing themselves differently and reorient themselves as they move from being considered the lead equippers to being the lead support in resourcing parents who desired to follow this important biblical mandate. There will always be parents who feel that they do not have the time or who feel ill-equipped for such a task. For these situations, the church needs to continue to provide quality biblical teaching and discipleship to ensure the continuance of Christian formation for all children.

PBC adjusted the aim and vision of small groups and electives. Each of these forms of discipleship needed to be evaluated while PBC moved toward a formal family-equipping ministry model. This type of equipping ministry is an approach that allows for "age-organized" or "age-segmented" ministries to stay intact—for the most part. It was

⁹Jones, *Family Ministry Field Guide*, 26. Jones coined the phrase "family-equipping ministry model" to describe the framework for the process of reorienting existing ministries to partner with parents.

my hope that this shift would not do away with the existing small group programs, although the overall strategy shifted as the future goals were put in place. The implementation of a strategy that includes a family-equipping model is smoother to implement and easier to be embraced by the church since the members do not sense that the church is eliminating the existing traditional structure. It was the hope that an intentional focus on equipping fathers through small groups and electives that were already offered would be a blessing to those who desire to follow God's command to lead in the discipleship of their children.

This type of shift required that ministry leaders stopped focusing on what the church must do to keep families occupied and, as Jones suggests, begin to “champion the place of parents as primary disciple-makers in their children’s lives, always asking, ‘What is best for families?’”¹⁰ Strother recounts when the shift happened in his ministry:

The family-equipping model allowed us to restructure existing age-organized ministries to champion the parent’s role. By saying yes to this model, we intentionally say no to all other trends and agendas that might distract us from partnering with parents to raise a generation that loves God and loves others.¹¹

Clearly, what is best for families is for fathers to provide discipleship to their children in the home. What is even clearer is that PBC needed to partner with parents in the endeavor. The dedicated six-week curriculum that was developed as a part of this project focused on fathers who desired to lead their children in discipleship at home. The church helped fathers in this area by providing them with the proper tools that empowered them, under the Holy Spirit, to lead their families. PBC leadership was poised and ready to review the effectiveness of its family ministry and then make the move toward a family ministry that truly promoted the idea of fathers leading in the discipleship of their children. The pulpit ministry needed to align with this strategy as well. PBC needed to seek out

¹⁰Jones, *Family Ministry Field Guide*, 101.

¹¹Jay Strother, “Family-Equipping Ministry: Church and Home as Cochampions,” in *Perspectives on Family Ministry*, 167.

ways for the message preached on Sunday mornings to be discussed in small groups and also develop teaching outlines, in the future, to help parents reinforce the message that was preached in the family devotion time at home.

Jones suggests that most Christian parents do not fight spiritually for their children; he points out that, with few exceptions, “Parents in our churches have disengaged from the battle.”¹² When surveyed, 56 percent of parents said they did not engage in any sort of family devotion time and 23 percent reported only engaging in such activities occasionally.¹³ I feared that the statistics Jones cites in the survey are even worse at PBC. As a part of this project, a survey was done with the fathers who attended a six-week course to discover how PBC fathers compare against Jones’ data in the areas of devotional time and prayer time with their families. The results are recorded in chapter 5.

There were three benefits of implementing a family-equipping model at PBC. The first was that parents, especially fathers, were equipped with the tools to disciple their children in accordance with God’s commands. Second, the discipleship strategy at PBC changed as the focus became equipping parents instead of parents relying on the church to do most of the discipleship of their children. In pointing out programmatic roadblocks, Strother writes, “The purpose of family-equipping ministry is to change the way parents perceive parenting and to transform the entire discipleship process.”¹⁴ Finally, the perception that parents had of the vocational pastors at PBC changed, and the pastors are now viewed, by parents, as partners in the discipleship process of children and youth, not the sole providers.

¹²Jones, *Family Ministry Field Guide*, 29.

¹³For further results, see FamilyLife, *Family Needs Survey: National Database: August 2008* (Little Rock, AR: FamilyLife Church and Pastor Relations Office, 2008). Jones, *Family Ministry Field Guide*, 27-28.

¹⁴Strother, “Family-Equipping Ministry,” 165.

God continues to bless PBC with new members, some come from strong Christian backgrounds while some are new to the faith. During this time of growth PBC should not miss a great opportunity for discipleship. Providing the tools, the context in which discipleship occurs, and partnering with parents will help fathers to be the leader in the discipleship of their children with the hopes to truly make a difference in preparing children to be equipped to be on mission. That mission is to live out the gospel and have homes where fathers are equipped and engaged in family discipleship so that the home can be an outpost for God's mission in the world.¹⁵

Purpose

The purpose of this project was to equip fathers at Parkridge Baptist Church in Coral Springs, Florida, to lead in the discipleship of their children.

Goals

The success of this project included the development and completion of four goals.

1. The first goal was to assess the perceptions and practices fathers have in the area of biblical discipleship.
2. The second goal was to develop a six-week curriculum that would encourage and equip fathers to take the lead role in the discipleship of their children.
3. The third goal was to implement a curriculum in order to equip fathers to provide biblical discipleship to their children, and hold them accountable for the implementation of a devotional time at home.
4. The fourth goal was to develop a three-to-five year strategic plan outline which sought to incorporate the curriculum and implement an ongoing effort that seeks to encourage and equip parents in the discipleship of their children.

¹⁵Jones, *Family Ministry Field Guide*, 59.

Research Methodology

The research methodology for this project included a pre-series survey, a post-series survey, and an evaluation rubric.¹⁶ Three of the four goals determined the effectiveness of the project. The fourth goal was to develop a strategic plan moving forward after the completion of this project.

The first goal of this project was to assess the perceptions and practices fathers had in the area of biblical discipleship and how confident they were in training their children. This goal was measured by administering a Basics of Biblical Discipleship Inventory (BBDI) to eleven fathers.¹⁷ The participants in the group needed to consist of a minimum of ten fathers. In order to be included in this initial group the participant had to (1) be a father, (2) agree to attend all sessions, and (3) be a professing Christian. The inventory was sent out via e-mail before the first training session and contained questions concerning the comprehension of a father's role in leading their family and other questions that focused on biblical understanding, personal discipleship, and prayer. This goal was successfully met when the eleven fathers who participated completed the BBDI. In addition, the inventory had to be analyzed in order to obtain a clearer picture of the father's understanding of their biblical role and the level of training the participants were doing in their home prior to the course. This information was compare with the post-survey results in order to ensure that learning occurred.

The second goal was to develop a six-week curriculum which encouraged and equipped fathers to take the lead role in the discipleship of their children. This goal utilized key Scriptures that illustrated the God-given role for fathers in the area of discipling their children. Another aspect of the series was to provide material for fathers

¹⁶See appendix 1 for the pre-series survey and the post-series survey (BBDI). See appendix 2 for the evaluation rubric. All of the research instruments used in this project were performed in compliance with and approved by the Southern Baptist Theological Seminary Research Ethics Committee prior to use in the ministry project.

¹⁷See appendix 1.

to lead devotions at home. The curriculum included a time of role-play and modeling so that fathers felt empowered with a level of comfort as they implemented this type of training in their homes. The curriculum for the series was submitted and evaluated by an expert panel made up of three individuals; the Senior Pastor of PBC; a retired Navy Chaplain and Academic Dean at Broward College; and a former International Mission Board Missionary, church planter, pastor, and the current Director of Mission for the Gulfstream Baptist Association in Broward County, Florida.¹⁸ The panel utilized a rubric to evaluate the biblical faithfulness, teaching methodology, scope, and applicability of the curriculum.¹⁹ This goal was considered successfully met when the minimum of 90 percent of the evaluation criteria met or exceeded the “sufficient” level according to the rubric. In the case that the curriculum did not meet the “sufficient” standards as expressed by the expert panel the curriculum would be rewritten and resubmitted to the panel for review using the rubric. There was no need for resubmissions as each lesson plan met the 90 percent “sufficient” on the first evaluation from the panel. Comments were collected and the final curriculum reflects the suggestions made by the panel.

The third goal was to implement a curriculum in order to equip fathers to provide biblical discipleship to their children, and hold them accountable for the implementation of a devotional time at home. This devotional time includes a time of devotions, prayer, and worship in their homes with their families. A weekly curriculum, along with other sources, was facilitated at PBC. This goal was measured by administering a pre-series survey (BBDI) that measured the fathers’ perceptions and practices in leading their family in training at home.²⁰ It was helpful to document the level of knowledge gained by the fathers after the course was completed through a post-series survey. This

¹⁸This panel checked the rubric for the effectiveness and clarity of the training.

¹⁹See appendix 2.

²⁰See appendix 1.

goal was considered successfully met when a t-test for dependent samples demonstrated a positive statistically significant difference in the pre- and post-survey scores. Neil Salkind explains that a t-test for dependent samples “involves a comparison of the means from each group of scores and focuses on the differences between the scores.”²¹ Since this project involved a single group of the same subjects being surveyed under two conditions, a t-test of dependent samples was the appropriate test statistic.²² Additionally, this goal was considered successful when five or more men, who had completed the course, began to integrate a weekly family discipleship time in their homes. To strive for accountability and ensure the fathers continued to have a time of discipleship at home, the fathers received a follow-up contact from me one week after the course was finished encouraging the ongoing commitment for discipleship in their homes. Verbal feedback was also collected at this time.

The fourth goal was to develop a three-to-five year strategic plan outline that would incorporate the curriculum and implement an ongoing effort that sought to encourage and equip parents to disciple their children. This goal was measured by developing a strategic plan outline and presenting it to the senior pastor and the discipleship pastor in order to gain their support to begin the three-to-five year implementation. This goal was considered successfully met when approval to proceed with the implementation of the strategic plan outline was given by the pastoral staff and the leadership team at PBC.

Definitions and Limitations/Delimitations

The following terms used within this project and relate specifically to the project at PBC.

²¹Neil J. Salkind, *Statistics for People Who (Think They) Hate Statistics*, 6th ed. (Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage, 2017), 232.

²²*Ibid.*, 230.

Family ministry. For this project, Timothy Paul Jones's definition for *family ministry* is:

The process of intentionally and persistently coordinating a ministry's proclamation and practices so that parents are acknowledged, trained, and held accountable as primary disciple-makers in their children's lives. . . . This form of family ministry is not any particular program or curriculum. It's about a process of equipping parents to engage actively in the discipleship of their children.²³

Family. The term *family* is defined as "any adult over the age of eighteen who has at least one child, under the age of eighteen, living in the home."²⁴ For the purpose of this project, the definition assumes the father is living at home with the child.

Discipleship. Jones's definition for *discipleship* is:

A personal and intentional process in which one or more Christians guide unbelievers or less mature believers to embrace and apply the gospel in every part of their lives. Discipleship is a process that includes personal profession of faith in Jesus Christ, as he has been revealed to us in Scripture. Discipleship involves developing perspectives and practices that reflect the mind of Christ.²⁵

Mark Dever adds to the definition of *discipleship*: "Discipleship is both an individual and a corporate activity as we follow Christ and help each other along the way."²⁶

Family discipleship. The term *family discipleship* is defined as the process in which the parents lead their children in discipleship as defined in the context of "community."²⁷ For the purpose of this project, the context of community is the home.

Family-based. The term *family-based* is defined with the assistance of Jones as church programming that provides various age-segmented ministries such as youth, children, adults and singles, and incorporates "intergenerational curriculum, activities, or

²³Jones, *Family Ministry Field Guide*, 33-34.

²⁴Tad Dale Thompson, "The Development of a Family Discipleship Model at Harvard Avenue Baptist Church, Siloam Spring, Arkansas" (D.Min. project, The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, 2009), 11.

²⁵Jones, *Family Ministry Field Guide*, 17.

²⁶Mark Dever, *Nine Marks of a Healthy Church*, 3rd ed. (Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2013), 169.

²⁷Jones, *Family Ministry Field Guide*, 17.

events.”²⁸ Shields distinguishes family-based models by adding “family-based churches intentionally include intergenerational and family-focused events in each ministry.”²⁹

Family-equipping. The term *family-equipping* is defined by Jones as the framework and the “process of reorienting existing ministries to partner with parents . . . it isn’t about a curriculum or event.”³⁰ In this model, families and churches see a great need to form a long-term partnership with active engagement for the discipleship of their children. Nelson and Jones explain, “Family-equipping churches cultivate a congregational culture that coordinates every ministry to champion the role of the parents as primary faith-trainers in their children’s lives.”³¹

Curriculum. The term *curriculum* is defined as “the planned and guided learning experiences and intended outcomes, formulated through the systematic reconstruction of knowledge and experiences under the auspices of the school, for the learners’ continuous and willful growth in personal competence.”³²

Strategic plan. Aubrey Malphurs defines the term *strategic plan* is defined as “the envisioning process that a point leader uses with a team of leaders on a regular basis

²⁸Jones, *Perspectives on Family Ministry*, 43.

²⁹Brandon Shields, “Family-Based Ministry: Separated Contexts, Shared Focus,” in *Perspectives on Family Ministry*, 100.

³⁰Jones, *Family Ministry Field Guide*, 26.

³¹Nelson and Jones, “Introduction,” 27. *Family-equipping* is a term Timothy Paul Jones coined for a ministry strategy that he and Randy Stinson developed for the School of Church Ministries at The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary. Early practitioners include Jay Strother at Brentwood Baptist Church in Tennessee, Brian Haynes at Kingsland Baptist Church in Texas, and Steve Wright at Providence Baptist Church in North Carolina. See also, Jones, *Family Ministry Field Guide*, 26.

³²Danies Tanner and Laurel N. Tanner, *Curriculum Development: Theory into Practice* (New York: Macmillan, 1980), 13. This definition was inspired by Choonghyun Lee, “Equipping Parents at Eunhye Korean Presbyterian Church, Indianapolis, Indiana, to be the Primary Disciple Makers of their Children” (D.Min. project, The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, 2015), 6.

to think and act so as to design and redesign a specific ministry model that accomplishes the Great Commission in their unique ministry context.”³³

There were three limitations that applied to this project. The first limitation was the accuracy of the pre- and post-series surveys (BBDI). These surveys were dependent upon the willingness of the respondents to be honest about their leadership practices in their homes and their overall growth throughout the learning experience. To mitigate this limitation, the respondents’ anonymity was ensured. Second, the effectiveness of the implementation was directly affected by attendance. Participants who were unable to attend the teaching lessons were strongly encouraged to make up the work by watching the lesson on video. It was determined that only those who attended or watched all lessons received a post-series survey (BBDI). Finally, the project included family discipleship in the home. Because family discipleship, trained by the father, was facilitated in the home, it was difficult to ensure that the father was actually implementing the model.

Two delimitations were identified in this project. First, this project needed to be completed within seventeen weeks, which included the development and implementation of the curriculum, and conducting the pre- and post-project surveys (BBDI). Second, fathers who participated in the training were all members of PBC and had marriages that were considered to be in-tact.

Conclusion

God’s Word is clear that parents are to lead in the discipleship of their children. Scripture also places a great amount of responsibility on the father to ensure a plan for discipleship occurs. God’s Word also equips parents with the disciplines necessary for transference of faith to occur. The church can serve as a partner to parents

³³Aubrey Malphurs, *Advanced Strategic Planning: A New Model for Church and Ministry Leaders*, 2nd ed. (Grand Rapids: Baker, 2005), 26.

who, empowered by the Holy Spirit, desire to lead in the area of discipleship to their children. Chapter 2 focuses on the biblical and theological resources confirming the father's God-given mandate to lead his family. Chapter 3 identifies precedent literature in support of the theoretical, practical, and historical issues relating to this topic. Chapter 4 covers the details of the project, and finally, this project is evaluated in chapter 5.

CHAPTER 2

BIBLICAL AND THEOLOGICAL SUPPORT

Introduction

The Bible teaches that a Christian father is called and can be equipped by the Scriptures to disciple his children in the home. This chapter addresses the biblical and theological support for fathers taking the lead role in the discipleship process of their children. Both the Old Testament and the New Testament make it clear that not only are fathers to lead in discipleship, along with their wives, they are to be the ones to actually engage with their children. Scripture is the authoritative source on the role of the disciple-maker; therefore, this chapter will examine Deuteronomy 6:4-9, Psalm 78:1-8, and Ephesians 6:1-9 as proof texts to equip fathers to teach and transfer the faith, which is God's redemptive story, to the next generation. Although the scope of this project focuses on fathers as the lead disciple-maker, it should be noted that this study in no way diminishes or takes away the influence a mother has in the training of children. Husbands are one flesh with their spouse, according to the Bible, thus the husband is wise to include his wife in the process of training up a child in the way he should go (Gen 2:24; Prov 22:6).

Focusing on fathers as the lead disciple-makers at home in no way discounts the importance of the church and its role in partnering with parents. For this biblical model to be effective, two key dynamics are involved: "family-as-church and church-as-family."¹ Jones writes that the goal of the church-as-family is to "help God's people

¹Timothy Paul Jones, introduction to *Practical Family Ministry: A Collection of Ideas for Your Church*, by Timothy Paul Jones and John David Trentham (Nashville: Randall House, 2015), 11. For historical exploration of "church as family," see Joseph Hellerman, *The Ancient Church as Family* (Minneapolis: Augsburg Fortress, 2001). Jones credits Chap Clark as the first time he heard this term.

relate to one another more like a family.”² The goal of the family-as-church model is to “equip parents to disciple their children in the context of daily lives together.”³ Jonathan Edwards described the home as “a little church” and claimed it to be more effective in the Christian formation of the child than the ministers in the congregation.⁴ This chapter demonstrates what the Scriptures say regarding the role of the father as he implements family-as-church.

Biblical Support in the Old Testament

Scripture clearly states the importance of parents leading in the discipleship of their children.⁵ An exegesis of Deuteronomy 6:4-9 and Psalm 78:1-8 supports the thesis of this project by showing God’s design for fathers in the home, that is, to teach their children to obey God, that God is the one true God, and to love God with all of their heart, soul, and strength. As it pertains to training children, a father’s work is never done. A repetitive formula is seen in Deuteronomy 6:4-9 and encourages the parent to teach and talk to their children when they are sitting, walking, lying down, and rising up—in short, all the time.

Deuteronomy 6:4-9

Hear, O Israel! The LORD is our God, the LORD is one! You shall love the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your might. These words, which I am commanding you today, shall be on your heart. You shall teach them diligently to your sons and shall talk of them when you sit in your house and when you walk by the way and when you lie down and when you rise up. You shall bind them as a sign on your hand and they shall be as frontals on your forehead. You shall write them on the doorposts of your house and on your gates.

²Jones, introduction to *Practical Family Ministry*, 12.

³Ibid., 11.

⁴Jonathan Edwards, “Living to Christ,” in *Sermons and Discourses, 1720-1723*, vol. 10 of *The Words of Jonathon Edwards*, ed. W. H. Kimmach (New Haven, CT: Yale University, 1992), 577.

⁵Jones, introduction to *Practical Family Ministry*, 11. See Exod 12:25-28; Deut 6:6-7; 11:19-22; Ps 78:1-7; Eph 6:4.

Deuteronomy 6:4-9 is known in the Jewish tradition as the *Shema* after the imperative verb in the fourth verse שמע, which means *to hear*.⁶ According to Craigie, the *Shema* is “the fundamental truth of Israel’s religion and the fundamental duty founded upon it.”⁷ The fundamental truth has to do with God declaring that He is the one true God and that the fundamental duty of his people is to hear and obey. The phrase that announces the importance of this section is the same as is found in the opening of the chapter containing the Decalogue (Deut 5:1), “Hear, O Israel,” which can be translated as “listen” or “obey.”⁸ Merrill observes that this command, to hear, in the Hebrew lexicon is given in the second person singular form and goes on to say “to hear from God without putting into effect the command is not to hear him at all.”⁹ The *Shema* was an important daily confession of faith and typically was recited twice per day in the home,¹⁰ as well as a benediction in the synagogue.¹¹

This section of Scripture is marked by its “creedal-catechistic nature.”¹² It has two components designed to encourage parents: the monotheistic nature of God, and the importance of teaching diligently that very point to children. Weinfeld points out that this great homily (6:4-11:32) starts with a “declaration of faith (6:4-5) and continues with

⁶Eugene H. Merrill, *Deuteronomy*, The New American Commentary, vol. 4 (Nashville: Broadman & Holman, 1994), 162.

⁷Peter C. Craigie, *The Book of Deuteronomy*, New International Commentary on the Old Testament (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1976), 168.

⁸David Prince, “The Pastor’s Home as Paradigm for the Church’s Family Ministry,” in *Trained in the Fear of God: Family Ministry in Theological, Historical, and Practical Perspective*, ed. Randy Stinson and Timothy P. Jones (Grand Rapids: Kregel, 2011), 174.

⁹Merrill, *Deuteronomy*, 162.

¹⁰*Ibid.*, 163.

¹¹J. Julius Scott, Jr., *Jewish Backgrounds of the New Testament* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1995), 141.

¹²Moshe Weinfeld, *Deuteronomy 1-11*, The Anchor Bible, vol. 5 (New York: Doubleday, 1991), 328.

a didactic passage—the injunction to educate the children through the monotheistic creed.”¹³ This portion of Deuteronomy then goes on to command the memorization of Scripture, the very words of Yahweh by utilizing phylacteries and inscriptions on the door posts and the gates (6:8, 9). This command was for parents not only to teach and transfer the great deeds of God, recorded in Exodus, to their children, but also includes the command that subsequent generations should be taught to observe the commands and laws (6:20-25). Weinfeld notes, “These two edifying pericopes, 6:7-9 and 6:20-25, serve in fact as the frame for the homily in Deuteronomy 6:10-19, which contains references to the Decalogue (6:12-15) and is dedicated to the topic of complete devotion to God.”¹⁴

Assuming that parents understood the first line in the *Shema* was to hear and obey, Moses now states in verse 4, “The Lord is our God, the Lord is one.” It is possible to understand this in several ways. One way to render this verse would be “The Lord our God is one Lord,” or paraphrased “Yahweh our God is the one and only Yahweh.”¹⁵ This rendering takes the noun “one” (אֶחָד) and stresses “unique” or “solitary,” which is clearly a declaration on an “unmistakable basis for monotheistic faith.”¹⁶ Craigie suggests that it is possible for the name of God to simply mean “one” and goes on to say that since the verb *hear* means to listen and obey, the phrase could be translated as “Obey, Israel, Yahweh. Yahweh our God is the Unique.”¹⁷ Not only is this first verse about God, but it is a summons to commit ones faith to the one true God.¹⁸ The entire *Shema* is centered

¹³Weinfeld, *Deuteronomy 1-11*, 328.

¹⁴*Ibid.*

¹⁵Merrill, *Deuteronomy*, 163.

¹⁶*Ibid.*

¹⁷Craigie, *The Book of Deuteronomy*, 168.

¹⁸Christopher Wright, *Deuteronomy*, New International Biblical Commentary (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 1996), 95.

on one concept: obey God. Wright notes that the “uniqueness and incomparability of Yahweh are a major affirmation of the context.”¹⁹ According to Wright, one reason that the *oneness* of Yahweh is so important could be to delineate God as “wholly different from the multitude of gods that surround Israel, perhaps especially from the multiple manifestations and forms of Baal in the Canaanite cults.”²⁰ Yahweh is not only the God of Israel, but He is the one God with emphasis on His singularity and uniqueness. Craigie notes that the Israelites knew the importance of declaring a one and true God as they celebrated the Exodus song: “Who is like you, O LORD, among the gods?” (Exod 15:11). This rhetorical question invites a negative response: of course there is no god like Yahweh.²¹ Another aspect of this oneness is that God is consistent, faithful, and true. There is only one God and his name is Yahweh, and he is “unchangeable.”²² Regarding this notion of oneness, Wright points out that of all the Old Testament passages, only Zechariah captures the eschatological and monotheistic theme in Deuteronomy 6:4: “The LORD will be king over the whole earth. On that day there will be one LORD and his name the only name.”²³

In verse 4 God is *one God*, and in verse 5 the reader is encouraged to *love* the *Lord*. Wright points out, “The command to love God is one of Deuteronomy’s favorite ways of expressing the response God expects from the people.”²⁴ Often the command to love is synonymous with obedience. The language used here is what Craigie refers to as treaty language. This type of language was common in the Near East and also as it

¹⁹Wright, *Deuteronomy*, 95. See Deut 3:24; 4:35, 39; cf. 32:39; Exod 15:11; Ps 18:31.

²⁰Ibid., 96.

²¹Craigie, *The Book of Deuteronomy*, 169.

²²Wright, *Deuteronomy*, 96.

²³Ibid., 97.

²⁴Ibid., 98. See Deut 10:12; 11:1, 13, 22; 13:3; 19:9; 30:6, 16, and 20.

related to the father/son relationship. This treaty language that establishes the love between Yahweh and His people is appropriately used for the relationship between the father and son.²⁵

First, the commitment to obey was to be a total commitment, with all one's heart and with all one's soul and with all one's strength. The words *heart*, *soul*, and *strength* emphasize the whole person. Just as love is characteristic throughout Deuteronomy, so is the "heart and soul."²⁶ Craigie points out that the word for *heart* (לֵב) has less to do with emotions and feelings than it does with the inner person and one's understanding—the "seat of the intellect, will, and intention."²⁷ Wright explains, "You think in your heart, and your heart shapes your character, choices, and decisions. It is also the center of the human being as a moral agent."²⁸ The word *soul*, according to Craigie, used here means the life of an individual, in order to love with all one's heart and all one's soul means with "your whole self, including your rationality, mental capacity, moral choices, and will, inner feelings, and desires, and the deepest roots of your life."²⁹ The word *strength* (or *might*) used here represents the physical part of one's being. Merrill states that this word (כֹּחַ) only appears twice, in Deuteronomy and in 2 Kings 23:25, and basically means "muchness."³⁰ Weinfeld points out that the word *strength* was the way the Septuagint (LXX) chose to translate the original Hebrew; Aramaic versions have it translated as "property," "with all your money"; and the Syriac version

²⁵Craigie, *The Book of Deuteronomy*, 170.

²⁶Ibid. See Deut 4:29, 10:12; 11:13; 13:3; 26:16; 30:2, 6, and 10.

²⁷Ibid., 99.

²⁸Ibid.

²⁹Ibid.

³⁰Merrill, *Deuteronomy*, 164.

renders this as “wealth.”³¹ Wright explains that it is possible that the third word here could be intensifying the other two (heart and soul): “Love the Lord your God with total commitment (heart), with your total self (soul), to total excess!”³² It cannot be overstated, believers must love God with all of their expressions and capabilities—with everything they have.

Jesus expressed the importance of the *Shema* in all three synoptic Gospels³³ and declared it as “the great and foremost greatest commandment” (Matt 22:38) and “the foremost” (Mark 12:29), and he told the lawyer that if he followed this commandment he would live (Luke 10:28). Merrill rightly points out, “This affirmation of the uniqueness and exclusiveness of Yahweh as Israel’s Sovereign and Savior finds full endorsement and explication in the *Shema*.”³⁴ Jesus’s public ministry and His message were built upon “Jewish religious thought,”³⁵ and in citing the *Shema*, Jesus demonstrated the correlation between the *Shema* and the Decalogue, and the law itself (Luke 10:26). To love God with all one’s heart, mind, and strength is the “heart and core of the Old Testament law, [which] was designed, as Paul said, to be ‘put in charge to lead us to Christ that we might be justified by faith’ (Gal 3:24).”³⁶

Parents receive a special command in verses 6 and 7: the words Yahweh has commanded need to be transferred to their offspring (נִצַּח). Moses asserts that the commands of God should be on the parents’ heart. That is, parents need to internalize the commands and allow the words to change them internally, in every way, before they can

³¹Weinfeld, *Deuteronomy 1-11*, 332.

³²Wright, *Deuteronomy*, 99.

³³See Matt 22:37-38; Mark 12:29-30; Luke 10:27.

³⁴Merrill, *Deuteronomy*, 164.

³⁵*Ibid.*, 165.

³⁶*Ibid.*

teach their children diligently. To “be on the heart” is to be in one’s constant conscious reflection. In verse 6, “these commands” refer to the “full corpus of the covenant text as communicated by Moses.”³⁷ Hamilton notes that the word used for “you” in Hebrew has a feminine and a masculine form, and here the masculine is used so that “as Moses addressed the nation of Israel, he directed the responsibility to teach the ‘sons’ toward the fathers.”³⁸ Daniel Block contends that the style of the first two words in the *Shema* and throughout Deuteronomy indicate “a vocative addressing Israel (cf. 4:1; 5:1; 9:1; 27:9).”³⁹ This vocative address gives historical weight that the instructions listed in the *Shema* is achieved in the confines of family and community. Block rightly sums up that the interpretation of the *Shema* “is confirmed in verses 5-8, in which Moses declares that within the context of covenant relationships, Israel’s love for YHWH is to be absolute, total, internal, communal, public, and transmitted from generation to generation.”⁴⁰ As parents strive to pass the love of God to the next generation it is clear that they have been given a mandate from God to take the lead role in teaching their sons and daughters. This mandate includes repeating “the theological confession that the Lord alone is God (v. 4). They were to love him (v. 5), know his Word so they could obey (v.6), and they were to repeat God’s words to their sons [offspring].”⁴¹ The instructions as to how and where disciple-makers are to repeat God’s words can be found in verses 7, 8, and 9.

³⁷Merrill, *Deuteronomy*, 167.

³⁸James M. Hamilton, Jr., “That the Coming Generation Might Praise the Lord: Family Discipleship in the Old Testament,” in *Trained in the Fear of God*, 37. In citing this I am in no way conveying the exclusion of daughters.

³⁹Daniel I. Block, *How I Love Your Torah, O LORD: Studies in the Book of Deuteronomy* (Eugene, OR: Cascade, 2011), 76.

⁴⁰*Ibid.*, 97.

⁴¹Hamilton, “That the Coming Generation Might Praise the Lord,” 37.

The sequence of verbs used by Moses demonstrates the importance and frequency of what is to be taught by parents. Wright highlights *talk about them* (the commandments), *tie them . . . bind them . . . write them*: “The law of God is thus to be applied to the *individual* (your hands and your foreheads), the *family* (your houses), and public, civic *society* (your gates, the place of public business, courts, markets, etc.).”⁴² Parents are to instill in their children what the command to love God with all their heart, soul, and strength looks like in all three areas: individually, in the family (home), and in society.

The content of the curriculum is so important that it must be repeated constantly; whether sitting at home or walking by the way, lying down to sleep, or waking up and rising each and every day. Merrill explains that the father as teacher and the son as the pupil “must be preoccupied with covenant concerns and their faithful transmission.”⁴³ It may be tempting for a Christian father to read verses 8 and 9 and dismiss the use of phylacteries on the hands, frontals⁴⁴ attached to the foreheads, and Scripture hanging from the doorposts as unnecessary Hebrew traditions. This practice of phylacteries and frontals is not to be understood literally,⁴⁵ but metaphorically and figuratively.⁴⁶ Although some in the Jewish faith place phylacteries on the forehead and hands to this day, for the Christian educator this is to be symbolic of how important God’s teaching is

⁴²Wright, *Deuteronomy*, 100.

⁴³Merrill, *Deuteronomy*, 167.

⁴⁴In Jewish tradition, phylacteries and frontals were inscribed scrolls placed in a small box. These boxes would have been attached to the hands and worn above the eyebrows. Christians today can utilize this concept to instill in children the importance of hands working for God, as well as having the Word of God being in front of believers’ eyes and influencing their minds.

⁴⁵Wright, *Deuteronomy*, 100. The question for Christian fathers is whether they are any more serious or successful in flavoring the whole of life with conscious attention to the law of God (v. 7, which is not at all “symbolic”) as personal, familial, and social strategy for living out a commitment to loving God totally.

⁴⁶Merrill, *Deuteronomy*, 168.

to everyday life. That is, how Christians use their hands for God's glory, what dominates a Christian's thinking (head), what are the priorities within the home, and finally how do Christians impact society.

The command to teach their children within the household typically does not come easily or automatically for fathers. Hamilton notes that obedience would not have come naturally or automatically and calls for a cultural shift for fathers. The cultural shift that needed to occur, for fathers, would have found its roots in Deuteronomy 17:18-20:⁴⁷

Now it shall come about when he sits on the throne of his kingdom, he shall write for himself a copy of this law on a scroll in the presence of the Levitical priests. It shall be with him and he shall read it all the days of his life, that he may learn to fear the LORD his God, by carefully observing all the words of this law and these statutes, that his heart may not be lifted up above his countrymen and that he may not turn aside from the commandment, to the right or the left, so that he and his sons may continue long in his kingdom in the midst of Israel.

The passage explains how the king should handle the Word of God. The king is to undertake "three tasks with a single purpose"⁴⁸: (1) the king was to write for himself a personal copy of the scroll; (2) he was to keep it with him all the time; and (3) he was to read it all the days of his life. The result of these three tasks is "that he may learn to fear the LORD his God." The results of learning the fear of the Lord are that the king's heart will not be full of pride and he would not turn from the Torah. If the king adhered to these instructions, his sons and generations to follow would enjoy long lives in the midst of Israel's blessings. Hamilton notes significant similarities between Deuteronomy 6:4-9 and 17:18-20: "The verb used to describe the fathers' repeating of the words in Deuteronomy 6:7 is from the same root as the noun used to describe 'copy' of the Torah that the king is to make according to Deuteronomy 17:18."⁴⁹ The king was like the father

⁴⁷Hamilton, "That the Coming Generation Might Praise the Lord," 39. The comparison to the king's instructions and how it relates to the fathers' duties to teach children were helpful to identify that this standard holds true for leaders of nations and leaders of the household.

⁴⁸Ibid.

⁴⁹Ibid., 40.

of the nation, and each individual father was to follow his example. If the king is to make a personal copy of the Torah and read it daily, then fathers are to follow in step with the king and read God's Word daily so that it will affect the heart. Then the father, like the king, should transfer the love of God with all his heart, mind, and strength to his children, so that generations to come can enjoy the richness of God's blessings and promises (vv. 10, 11).

Deuteronomy 6:4-9 states that Yahweh is the LORD alone. Believers are to obey him and love him with their heart, soul, and strength. Parents are to teach and talk "all the time,"⁵⁰ which will lead the generations to praise God for his wonderful deeds.

Psalm 78:1-8

Listen, O my people, to my instruction; Incline your ears to the words of my mouth. I will open my mouth in a parable; I will utter dark sayings of old, Which we have heard and known, And our fathers have told us. We will not conceal them from their children, But tell to the generation to come the praises of the LORD, And His strength and His wondrous works that He has done. For He established a testimony in Jacob And appointed a law in Israel, Which He commanded our fathers That they should teach them to their children, That the generation to come might know, even the children yet to be born, That they may arise and tell them to their children, That they should put their confidence in God And not forget the works of God, But keep His commandments, And not be like their fathers, A stubborn and rebellious generation, A generation that did not prepare its heart And whose spirit was not faithful to God.

Dahood observes that Psalm 78 is a didactic psalm intended to teach God's people to pass on the history of God to children and to the next generation.⁵¹ Verse 1 begins with "listen," and sets the tone for the importance subject matter. Deuteronomy 6:4 and Psalm 49 parallel with a similar opening. The *Shema* begins with "hear," and Psalm 49 calls for the listener to "give ear." According to Tate, the speaker urges the audience to pay attention to the "teaching" (תּוֹרָה) and uses the same word that is also

⁵⁰Hamilton, "That the Coming Generation Might Praise the Lord," 39.

⁵¹Mitchell S. J. Dahood, *Psalms*, The Anchor Bible, vol. 2 (Garden City, NY: Doubleday & Company, 1966), 238.

used in verse 5 to emphasize the “law” that is to be handed down.⁵² What is about to be shared in this passage is so important that one should lean in to hear what is commanded. Goldingay explains that this psalm recalls Deuteronomy 6 and its exhortation to pass the story of Yahweh’s deeds from one generation to another: “the ‘rebellious and defiant’ generation of verse 8 recalls the ‘rebellious and defiant son’ of Deuteronomy 21:18.”⁵³

Not only is this psalm a didactic psalm, but Kidner points out that this psalm is of the style of the “Wisdom writings; for example the word for parable (*māšāl*) gives the book of Proverbs its title.”⁵⁴ This Psalm is a wise saying that is worth leaning in and listening to. Briggs and Briggs point out that this psalm uses “ancient history of Israel from the crossing of the Red Sea to the erection of the temple, as a lesson to the people.”⁵⁵ That lesson given to fathers is to be handed down to children so that they “may not be as their fathers, rebellious and unreliable.”⁵⁶ This psalm offers a combination of a teaching psalm, a historical psalm, and wisdom literature; however, this is not merely a retelling of Israel’s history for posterity’s sake—it is structured in such a way that causes one to meditate on it and ensure it is transferred to the next generation.⁵⁷

Israel has come to know Yahweh in two ways.⁵⁸ The first is through His Word, or the Law, and the second is through His divine action. His action preceded His covenant.

⁵²Marvin Tate, *Psalms 51-100*, Word Biblical Commentary, vol. 20 (Dallas: Word, 1990), 288.

⁵³John Goldingay, *Psalms 42-89*, Baker Commentary on the Old Testament (Grand Rapids: Baker, 2006), 482.

⁵⁴Derek Kidner, *Psalms 73-150*, Tyndale Old Testament Commentaries, vol. 16 (Downers Grove, IL: IVP, 2009), 311.

⁵⁵Charles Augustus Briggs and Emilie Grace Briggs, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Book of Psalms*, International Critical Commentary, vol. 1 (Edinburgh: T & T Clark, 1907), 178.

⁵⁶*Ibid.*

⁵⁷Tate, *Psalms 51-100*, 284.

⁵⁸*Ibid.*, 288.

In verse 2, the speaker urges the audience to pay attention as he is about to “utter dark sayings of old,” which refers to “riddles,” which are not immediately accessible. The speaker is “opening his mouth,” which is synonymous to a prayer or the method a prophet would herald the listener.⁵⁹ Tate explains, “The riddle is not explicitly stated, but apparently its solution lies in telling the story to those yet to come, a story of Yahweh’s wonderful deeds and Israel’s failure.”⁶⁰ Spurgeon points out that verse 2 seems to hint that there is “hidden meaning, which only the thoughtful will be able to perceive.”⁶¹

The father’s mandate is clear in this passage and the warning is unmistakable; fathers do not conceal God’s wonderful deeds⁶² from the children, but to tell them to the generation to come. Fathers are to teach their children and grandchildren (and those yet unborn, v. 6) the praises of God, His strength, and the wonderful works he has done (vv. 4, 5). The wonderful works of God are presented by the psalmist in two ways: “the testimony of Jacob and appointed a law in Israel” (v. 5). The confidence in God is the promise that He keeps His commandments.

The Torah, according to Tate, is a “combination of story and commandments: the commandments are understood in the context of the story and story is incomplete without the commandments.”⁶³ His divine action, which is found in his love and mercy, is found in his Word. These deeds and works are what fathers are commanded to pass along to their children. In Deuteronomy 6:20-21, the wonderful works are linked with the subject matter of the father’s teaching:

⁵⁹Goldingay, *Psalms 42-89*, 486-87. The exhortations parallel those of a prophet or of Yahweh through a prophet (e.g., Isa 3:12; 5:13; 10:2).

⁶⁰Tate, *Psalms 51-100*, 288.

⁶¹Charles Spurgeon, *Psalms*, The Crossway Classic Commentaries, vol. 1 (Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 1993), 328.

⁶²Or, wonderful works.

⁶³Tate, *Psalms 51-100*, 289.

When your son asks you in time to come, saying, “What do the testimonies and the statutes and the judgments mean which the LORD our God commanded your?” then you shall say to your son, “We were slaves to Pharaoh in Egypt, and the LORD brought us from Egypt with a mighty hand.

Fathers have a personal decision to make when they are asked, in the future, by their children and grandchildren regarding God’s Word and actions. The inference is that the father has already internalized the *Shema* (believes in a monotheistic God and loves Him with all of his heart, soul, and strength) and is already in a practice of orally teaching his children the statutes and judgments found in God’s Word. It is this fatherly act of teaching that prompts a child to ask the meaning of what is being transmitted. A father who is silent on matters of God is, in a sense, concealing God’s Word (v. 4). As the father teaches the next generation, the goal is for his children to remember God’s actions and His Word, then to position them to put their trust in God, and not be like their forefathers (vv. 4-8).⁶⁴

Psalm 78:8 describes, in detail, the disobedience and unfaithfulness of their forefathers. The hope of the teaching is that children will not forget the negative results the past generations experienced, which should cause the future generations reason to incline their ears. Broyles writes,

In spite of this, the people responded by being stubborn and rebellious (vv. 8, 12, 40, 56); they forgot (v. 11) and did not remember God’s deeds (v. 42); they did not believe or trust him (vv. 22, 32). They did not keep his covenant (vv. 10, 56). And so they continued to sin (vv. 17, 32) and put God to the test (vv. 18, 41, 56). There were not loyal (lit. “fixed” or “resolved”) or faithful (vv. 8, 37). In response, God became very angry (vv. 21, 31, 58, 59, 62) and slew them (vv. 31, 34) and gave them over to destruction (v. 62, cf. vv. 61, 64).⁶⁵

In summary, God commands fathers to transfer the works and actions of God to their children so that they may place their faith in God, and in turn pass that faith to the next generation. Spurgeon warns regarding the condition of the heart and the decline of the

⁶⁴Craig C. Broyles, *Psalms*, Understanding the Bible Commentary Series (Grand Rapids: Baker, 2012), 319-20.

⁶⁵*Ibid.*, 320.

future generations to come unless fathers take up the mantle of discipleship of their children: “How blessed would it be if each age improved upon its predecessor; but alas, it is to be feared that decline is more general than progress, and too often the hearts of true saints are far more rebellious than even the fathers were in the unregeneracy.”⁶⁶

By remembering Israel’s failure to follow God’s statutes, future generations can learn from past mistakes and not do what their forefathers did. Fathers do well to remind children that it will go well with them when they keep God’s commands and live in obedience to Him.

Biblical Support in the New Testament

The New Testament provides support for the commands found in Deuteronomy 6:4-9 and Psalm 78:1-8. The Great Commission, found in Matthew 28:18-20, is an encouragement to all believers to make disciples. Jesus gave this universal commission to the church, which includes parents who desire to train their children in the instruction of the Lord. Fathers have the responsibility to be intentional and to have a plan as they make disciples of their children.⁶⁷ The Great Commission encourages Christians to teach what Jesus commanded. Parents are included in this commission as they lead their children to a relationship with Christ, obeying His commands, and eventually leading to baptism in the name of the father, son, and Holy Spirit. Plummer notes that the New Testament points toward an assumption that believers would be “eager and able to spread the good news of Jesus.”⁶⁸ Parents need to be eager and able to disciple their children.

⁶⁶Spurgeon, *Psalms*, 330.

⁶⁷Michael S. Wilder, “Building and Equipping Missional Families,” in *Trained in the Fear of God*, 247. Wilder identifies four aspects of missional families in the Great Commission: (1) intentionality, (2) biblical community, (3) passion for teaching truth, and (4) joyous abandonment that comes from the promise that Jesus will be with us until the end of the age.

⁶⁸Robert L. Plummer, “Bring Them Up in the Discipline and Instruction of the Lord,” in *Trained in the Fear of God*, 51. See Matt 28:18-20; Eph 6:15-17; Phil 2:16; Col 4:6; 1 Thess 4:12; 1 Pet 2:9-12.

To help fathers be intentional in the process of discipleship, it is not only important to keep Old Testament passages in mind, but to identify what the New Testament has to say on the subject. Ephesians 6:1-4 and the parallel verses in Colossians 3:20-21 are directed toward fathers as they strive to be the example of Christ to their wives and to be the lead disciple-makers of their children.

Ephesians 6:1-9

Children, obey your parents in the Lord, for this is right. Honor your father and mother (which is the first commandment with a promise), so that it may be well with you, and that you may live long on the earth. Fathers, do not provoke your children to anger, but bring them up in the discipline and instruction of the Lord. Slaves, be obedient to those who are your masters according to the flesh, with fear and trembling, in the sincerity of your heart, as to Christ; not by way of eye service, as men-pleasers, but as slaves of Christ, doing the will of God from the heart. With good will render service, as to the Lord, and not to men, knowing that whatever good thing each one does, this he will receive back from the Lord, whether slave or free. And masters, do the same things to them, and give up threatening, knowing that both their Master and yours is in heaven, and there is no partiality with Him.

Having addressed wives and husbands in the “house codes,”⁶⁹ Paul continues by focusing on children and parents, with a special emphasis on fathers (v. 4). The overall structure of this passage is separated fourfold: children (v. 1), fathers (v. 4), slaves (v. 5), and masters (v. 9). The first two and the last two are pairs which are linked to the second member of that pair—children are linked to fathers and slaves are linked to masters.⁷⁰ For the purposes of identifying the father’s role in the discipleship of their children, this section covers the first pair—children and fathers. The directions in Ephesians 6:1-4 and Colossians 3:20-21 are closely related and share in the instructions Paul gives to children and parents. In the first section (6:1-3), Paul exhorts children in two imperative verbs: “obey and “honor.” The verb “obey” (ὁπακούω) is often used by Paul to infer a

⁶⁹Harry Uprichard, *A Study Commentary on Ephesians* (Auburn, MA: Evangelical Press, 2004), 324.

⁷⁰Clinton Arnold, *Ephesians*, Exegetical Commentary on the New Testament (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2010), 413.

submission to Christ, the gospel, and the apostolic teachings.⁷¹ The verb “honor”(τιμάω) implies children are to value their parents greater than themselves. The reason given to obey is that “it is right,” and the explanation for the second verb finds its roots in the “first commandment of the Sinai code with a promise connected to it,”⁷² and carries a two-fold promise: “So that it may go well with you” and “you may live a long time on earth.” The second section (6:4) is structured similarly to the first with two imperative verbs that are contrasting exhortations and “marked off with the negative followed by the strong adversative.”⁷³ Paul writes, “Do not make your children angry,” and then follows up with the antithesis of the negative: “Bring them up in the training and instruction of the Lord.”

Arnold sums up these two sections: (v. 1a) Children obey your parents in the Lord (exhortation); (v. 1b) for this is right (basis); (v. 2a) Honor your father and mother⁷⁴ (exhortation); (v. 2b) which is the first commandment with a promise (explanation); so that it might be well with you (purpose); and that you might live long upon the earth (purpose); Fathers, do not provoke your children to wrath (negative exhortation); but bring them up in the instruction and admonition of the Lord (adversative exhortation).⁷⁵ The purpose of the second set of exhortations to fathers is directly connected to the Old Testament exhortations found in Deuteronomy 6:4-9 and Psalm 78:1-8.

Children are to obey their parents “in the Lord.” Experts debate whether or not the phrase, “in the Lord,” was in the original script or added to compliment Colossians

⁷¹Uprichard, *A Study Commentary on Ephesians*, 327. See Rom 6:17; 10:16; Phil 2:12; 2 Thess 1:8; 3:14).

⁷²Arnold, *Ephesians*, 413.

⁷³Ibid.

⁷⁴See Exod 20:12; Deut 5:16.

⁷⁵Arnold, *Ephesians*, 414.

3:20. Although the authenticity of “in the Lord” may be doubtful, it is clear that Christian children are being told to obey their (possibly non-Christian) parents. F. F. Bruce notes, “Except where such obedience would conflict with their duty ‘in the Lord.’”⁷⁶ Some early church fathers, such as Marcion, Clement, and Tertullian, omit the phrase “in the Lord,” some believe the shorter reading is the original.⁷⁷ Ephesians 6:1 instructs children to obey the parents “in the Lord,” whereas Colossians 3:20 exhorts the child to “be obedient to your parents in all things for this is well pleasing to the Lord.” Whether or not “in the Lord” was included in the original text two things are clear. Both Ephesians 6:1 and Colossians 3:20 carry the essence of the children’s duties and the father’s responsibility toward their children.

Verses 2 and 3 offer two reasons for children to honor the parents: “For it is right” and “you may live a long time on earth.” Arnold adds that obedience was an “expected and appropriate standard in society as a whole, for Paul it is right because obedience is what the Lord expects.”⁷⁸ The exhortation to “honor your father and mother” is the “first commandment with a promise.” Bruce asserts that this promise is “undergirded by the quotation of the fifth commandment of the Decalogue in Deuteronomy 5:16, rather than Exodus 20:12, from which ‘so that it may go well with you’ is absent.”⁷⁹ Opinions abound about why Paul writes that this is the first commandment with a promise. Bruce claims this is a promise of “prosperity and long life; no such promise is attached to any of the four preceding commandments.”⁸⁰ The “long life” promised in both Exodus 20:12 and

⁷⁶F. F. Bruce, *The Epistles of the Colossians, to Philemon, and to the Ephesians*, The New International Commentary on the New Testament, vol. 9 (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans, 1984), 397.

⁷⁷Andrew T. Lincoln, *Ephesians*, Word Biblical Commentary, vol. 42 (Dallas: Word, 1990). 395.

⁷⁸Arnold, *Ephesians*, 416.

⁷⁹Bruce, *The Epistles of the Colossians, to Philemon, and to the Ephesians*, 398.

⁸⁰*Ibid.*

Deuteronomy 5:16 is a long life to be enjoyed “in the land which the LORD your God gives you, that is the land of Israel.” This “limitation” would not have resonated in a Gentile-Christian context, thus the reason why the latter portion spelling out the location was omitted in Ephesians.⁸¹ Ernest Best has described the “first” in the sense of significance and contends that it means “a pre-eminent commandment, one of great importance because it is included in the Decalogue and has a promise.”⁸² Arnold points out that this “pre-eminence” is difficult to sustain because “first” could then be ascribed to any of the Ten Commandments: “This injunction surely does not have precedence over the prohibition of idolatry or the warning not to give allegiance to any other gods.”⁸³ The most compelling explanation is that this is the “first commandment” that appears in the Decalogue with a promise attached to it. Lincoln adds that the second commandment in Exodus 20:4-6 includes a so-called “promise” that God will show his steadfast love to those who love him and keep his commandments. Lincoln continues that, in light of this promise, “some suggest that the writer must view the fifth commandment as the first after the four chief commandments which deal with a person’s relationship with God”⁸⁴ Uprichard observes that Paul may not have been writing this exhortation with just the Ten Commandments in view, “but is including the whole body of law in the following context, in which promises do indeed occur.”⁸⁵ The main point for a Christian who lived in the Roman Empire was that the fifth commandment to obey and honor parents was the

⁸¹Bruce, *The Epistles of the Colossians, to Philemon, and to the Ephesians*, 398. The “land” was replaced by “long time on earth.”

⁸²Ernest Best, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on Ephesians*, International Critical Commentary (Edinburgh: T & T Clark, 1998), 567.

⁸³Arnold, *Ephesians*, 417.

⁸⁴Lincoln, *Ephesians*, 404.

⁸⁵Uprichard, *A Study Commentary on Ephesians*, 329.

“right” thing to do because it is “enjoined in the law of God.”⁸⁶ Children who obey and honor their parents are promised a great reward.

Ephesians 6:4 exhorts fathers not to cause their children to become angry, but to train them in the “instruction of the Lord.” Best points out that verse 4 begins with a negative exhortation, but ends positively: “If fathers enraged their children, this would produce the opposite effect to what they were seeking, for anger is sinful (Eph 4:26) and enraged children would then sin.”⁸⁷ This type of training and instruction (“of the Lord”) involves following Christ’s example with regard to His “meekness and gentleness” (2 Cor 10:1), as well as putting into practice His precepts.⁸⁸ Children are far more apt to learn to follow Christ’s example when they witness their father following the “instruction of the Lord.” Bruce identifies only one other occurrence in 2 Timothy 3:16 where the word “training” is used to indicate that the training of inspired scripture is “profitable (among other things) for training in righteousness.”⁸⁹ Colossians 3:20 omits the concept of training and instructing, but clearly states that fathers should not exasperate their children. It is hard to think of anything more exasperating to a son than growing into adulthood and feeling that his father did not adequately prepare him to face a hostile world in which his faith is tested.

The exhortation to fathers to “bring them up in the discipline and instruction of the Lord” could be interpreted as “with the Lord in view,” or “in light of the Lord.”⁹⁰ This

⁸⁶Bruce, *The Epistles of the Colossians, to Philemon, and to the Ephesians*, 398.

⁸⁷Best, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on Ephesians*, 568.

⁸⁸Bruce, *The Epistles of the Colossians, to Philemon, and to the Ephesians*, 398.

⁸⁹Ibid., 399. In Heb 12:5-11, *training* appears four times in the sense of *discipline*, or even *chastisement*. The word *instruction* is also used in relation to OT Scripture—in 1 Cor 10:11, where the record of Israel’s rebellion in the wilderness is said to have been “written for our instruction.” It carries with it the sense of admonition and sometimes of warning, as in Titus 3:10.

⁹⁰Best, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on Ephesians*, 569.

attitude which the believing father was to have toward his children would have been somewhat radical for the time. In contemporary Roman society, the Roman *patria potestas* gave the father, as the head of the household, full authority and “unlimited power over his children, and this law exercised a considerable degree of influence in the Hellenistic culture generally.”⁹¹ Uprichard notes that the Roman family, under *potestas paterfamilias*, gave the head of the family “absolute power over children, even to the point of life and death.”⁹² In the Hellenistic culture, that father would have had a heavy handed approach and often would have doled out severe punishment for disobedient children. This was the cultural context in which Paul wrote to children and fathers and under this backdrop one can understand what a truly “radical and unique” exhortation this was.⁹³ O’Brien points out that the *patria potestas* does not imply that fathers did not have a tender loving relationship for their children, but this concept of *in the Lord* was a new concept in the household.⁹⁴ Fathers are told nothing about their power and authority over their children other than their duties that fall “in light of the Lord.” Whether Paul is addressing the relationship a husband should have with his wife, or the relationship the father has with his children, he relates it to a spirit-filled relationship with Christ as Lord first—*in the Lord*.

The “children” (τέκνα) that Paul addresses assumes the child is still in the home and under the direction of the parents.⁹⁵ Fathers (and mothers) are still in the process of bringing them up and giving them training and instructions in the home. Most likely this

⁹¹Peter T. O’Brien, *The Letter to the Ephesians*, The Pillar New Testament Commentary (Grand Rapids: W. B. Eerdmans, 1999), 445.

⁹²Uprichard, *A Study Commentary on Ephesians*, 325.

⁹³Ibid.

⁹⁴Uprichard, *A Study Commentary on Ephesians*, 325.

⁹⁵Arnold, *Ephesians*, 415.

places the ages of the children from early elementary to the late teens, possibly early twenties who have not gotten married and left home (Eph 5:31).⁹⁶ However this exhortation does not stop at the children in the home. There was a longstanding Jewish tradition for adult children who were grown as well: they too were to honor the parents—in their old age. Arnold writes,

The importance of this injunction was deeply rooted in Jewish tradition at the time of Jesus. Sirach advised, “With all your heart honor your father, and do not forget the fifth pangs of your mother (Sir 7:27), and “Honor you father by word and deed that his blessing may come upon you” (Sir 3:8). For younger children still in the parental home, honoring their parents would involve obeying the rules and instruction. For adult children who have left the home (who are married and still part of the larger household), it would entail showing respect and taking care of the parents in their old age.⁹⁷

In Ephesians 6:1-3, Paul addresses children directly, not just parents, which is significant in two ways. First, this passage implies that families are together during the time of worship and congregate together to hear God’s Word being read in the service (Eph 1:1). Second, it implies that the children are old enough to receive instruction.⁹⁸ Ephesians 6:1-3 serves as evidence in the New Testament that parents and children should be together during the time of teaching.

What about daughters and wives? Paul uses the Greek noun (τέκνα), which is gender neutral and simply means offspring. In short, fathers and mothers are one flesh and share in the responsibility in discipleship of their children. The exegesis of the Scriptures in no way is intended to say that daughters and wives are excluded or treated as second class citizens in the home. Hamilton points out, “Wives whose husbands obeyed these commandments would constantly hear God’s word repeated and

⁹⁶Arnold, *Ephesians*, 415. Paul states that a man shall leave his father and mother. The implication is when a man leaves his home he is not under the training and instruction of his parents any longer.

⁹⁷Ibid., 416.

⁹⁸Uprichard, *A Study Commentary on Ephesians*, 326.

discussed.”⁹⁹ Daughters, who were blessed to have fathers who had an intimate understanding of the *Shema* and Psalm 78 would be included and hear their fathers’ instructions as he taught God’s Word to the entire family. As fathers repeat and discuss the Word of God with their children, they are ensuring that the generations to come will love God with all their heart, mind, and strength, and in turn the sons will love their future wives as Christ loves the church.

In summary, Paul gives the order of things within the relationship of family. He first instructs the husband to love his wife as Christ loves the church and to sanctify her with the Word (Eph 5:25, 26). When Paul writes about the relationship the father should have with his children, he does not say love them as Christ loved the church, he says do not provoke them to anger, but bring them up in the discipline and instruction of the Lord. A father who loves his children enough to raise them under the instruction of the Lord is a father that will not do so heavy handedly, but as someone who teaches empowered by the Holy Spirit.

Conclusion

This chapter has given special consideration to the biblical and theological support for fathers leading in the discipleship of their children in the home. Since the purpose of this project is to develop and implement a series to equip fathers to lead in the discipleship of their children, it is imperative to note what the Scriptures say on the matter. I chose to review Deuteronomy 6:4-9; 17:18-20, Psalm 78:1-8, and Ephesians 6:1-4, as well as its parallel verse Colossians 3:20-21 as anchor verses that encourage fathers to train their children in the things of God. When considering what the Old Testament and New Testament say about this important duty, the following conclusions can be made:

First, Deuteronomy 6:4-9 gives fathers a clear mandate to lead their children in the discipleship of their homes. Fathers are to take every opportunity to teach their

⁹⁹Hamilton, “That the Coming Generation Might Praise the Lord,” 38.

children and talk to them about the things of a monotheistic God while they sit at home, walk by the way, when they lie down, and when they rise up in the morning. The father, as the head of the household, is not only to keep the Word of God on the doorposts of his house, he is to post them on the gate. His children should be taught that the faith they are taught at home should have an impact in society. The command found in the *Shema* to love God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your might was affirmed by Jesus in the New Testament and clearly established this as the foremost command for a father who desires to lead his children in the love and obedience of God.

Second, Psalm 78:1-8 exhorts fathers to transfer the faith to their children and future generations. Fathers are not to conceal the truths from their children but to declare the testimony that was established in Jacob. Fathers should remind their children to remember God's mighty works lest they forget and become a stubborn and rebellious generation.

Third, in Ephesians 6:1-4, Paul encourages the children to honor and obey their parents because it is the first command with a promise to live a full life on the Earth, and he adds that it is simply the right thing to do in God's eyes. As for fathers, they are not to provoke children to anger, and similarly in Colossians 3:20, fathers are told not to exasperate children, lest their children will lose heart. The culture in Jewish society and in the Roman laws would have allowed the father to rule his home with a harsh and heavy hand. Despite this culture, fathers need to shift their focus from a heavy handedness to training their children in the discipline and instruction of the Lord. The encouragement to display an attitude that is "of the Lord" paints a picture of grace, mercy, and patience. This shift in leading the home can only be attained if the father has placed his faith in Christ and is willing to be an imitator of God, and walk in love. Fathers can follow the ultimate example which is Christ's love and his sacrifice as He gave his life for anyone who believes (Eph 5:1-2).

Finally, Jesus affirmed the Deuteronomic covenant when he cited the *Shema* in his public ministry. He gave all believers the Great Commission to teach His commands, make disciples, and baptize in the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. When a father is found intentionally teaching his children to obey the Word and deeds of God, he is being obedient to Jesus himself and fulfilling the role God gave him to be the lead disciple-maker in the home.

CHAPTER 3

PRACTICAL AND HISTORICAL SUPPORT

Introduction

Fathers who desire to fulfill the biblical mandate of being the lead disciplers in their families need to realize that they cannot be a discipler unless they first make a commitment to be a disciple. A father not only needs to know his biblical role but also have a clear process in family discipleship. Defining the role and laying out the process will give fathers, who desire to see their children brought up in the way of Lord, a clear plan for leading his family in discipleship.

The term *discipleship* can be described as a process that causes someone to come to know Jesus as their savior and then to begin to think and act as Jesus. Jones defines *Discipleship* as

a personal and intentional process in which one or more Christians guide unbelievers or less mature believers to embrace and apply the gospel in every part of their lives. Discipleship is a process that includes personal profession of faith in Jesus Christ, as he has been revealed to us in Scripture. Discipleship involves developing perspectives and practices that reflect the mind of Christ.¹

Fathers should take the concept of discipleship and apply it to the family. *Family discipleship* can be defined as the process in which the parents lead their children in discipleship as defined in the context of community.² Other than the community of the church (church-as-family), there is no more important community than the family (family-as-church). The discipleship process involves cooperation between the church and the home.

¹Timothy Paul Jones, *Family Ministry Field Guide: How Your Church Can Equip Parents to Make Disciples* (Indianapolis: Wesleyan Publishing House, 2011), 17.

²Ibid.

Effective discipleship begins in the home and parents need to be equipped for the task. The church should not leave fathers and mothers alone in a vacuum as they seek to disciple their children. The Bible clearly teaches that God equips pastors and teachers to assist in equipping the saints for the work of service, so that the body of Christ can be built up and come to the full knowledge of faith in Christ (Eph 4:11-13). In keeping with Ephesians 4:11-13, pastors and parents can partner together to disciple children. John Ellis Steen asserts,

The best plan parents can have to help develop their children spiritually is to realize the distinctiveness of their role and the church's role, respectively. Spiritual growth and learning necessitates a shared effort put forth within a community . . . but home will always tend to have the greater impact.³

The church-as-family, in community, should partner with families in order to help fathers take up the mantle of family discipleship. James K. A. Smith calls the church our “first family,”⁴ which cooperates with parents within the worship liturgy and the sacraments of the church to assist parents in the spiritual formation of their children. Smith continues, “If the church is our first family, then our second homes should be defined by it.”⁵ Clearly parents need to rely on the church-as-family and the authority God has given them in order to effectively implement the plan for discipleship at home.

The father must also understand that the role he plays as a husband and how he leads his wife are key factors in the process of leading his children. Chapter 2 demonstrated the importance Scripture places on fathers to disciple their children. This chapter addresses practical and historical information in order to help fathers implement this crucial process.

³John Ellis Steen, “Family: A Context for Discipleship,” in *Practical Family Ministry: A Collection of Ideas for Your Church*, by Timothy Paul Jones and John David Trentham (Nashville: Randall House, 2015), 41.

⁴James K. A. Smith, *You Are What You Love: The Spiritual Power of Habit* (Grand Rapids: Brazos, 2016), 116-17.

⁵Ibid., 118.

First explored is the importance of marriage and the role a husband needs to assume in order to lead his family well. Next, this chapter addresses a recommended process of teaching their children sound doctrine. Finally, the plan that gives fathers clear direction in how to implement the process of family discipleship is developed.

The Role of the Husband

In order for a man to lead in the discipleship of his children, he must acknowledge that God gave him a wife first and without her he would not have the privilege to wear the title of father. In a sense, husbands are stewards of their wives. A steward is someone who manages and leads what is not his own. According to Albert Mohler in *The Conviction to Lead*, “We are the stewards of human lives and their welfare . . . entrusted with those God made in his own image—people whose lives are precious to God.”⁶ Wives are precious to God, and the manner in which a husband leads his wife is crucial and foundational to the success of family discipleship. Baucham adds, “A strong marriage is the foundation upon which a strong family is built. And having a strong marriage requires a biblical understanding of the purposes for which God gave us the institution.”⁷ The two principle roles of a husband are to *lead* and to *love* his wife.

The Husband Is to Lead

An old question asks whether leaders are born or made. Whether the answer is yes, no, or a little of both, the Bible makes it clear for the husband: “But I want you to understand that Christ is the head of every man, and the man is the head of a woman, and God is the head of Christ” (1 Cor 11:3). Simply put, he is to lead his wife. According to Stuart Scott, “Whether you are a leader of a household or not, you must first determine

⁶R. Albert Mohler, Jr., *The Conviction to Lead: 25 Principles for Leadership that Matters* (Bloomington, MN: Bethany House, 2012), 135-37.

⁷Voddie Baucham, Jr., *Family Shepherds: Calling and Equipping Men to Lead Their Homes*. (Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2011), 83.

your personal and spiritual goals before you can lead others.”⁸ Piper puts a finer point to this principle of spiritual leadership: “I think there will be no successful spiritual leadership without extended seasons of prayer and meditation on the Scriptures.”⁹ To have a good understanding of what leading his wife means, the husband has a firm grasp of Scripture and the biblical role of a husband as a leader.

A husband is called to be a shepherd to his wife and help her in key areas in his wife’s life. Scott insists that according to Scripture, such support is a must.¹⁰ A word of warning, a husband should never take a verse or two from the Bible and attempt to take advantage of his wife. Men need to remember that God gave wives to be helpers and husbands are one with their wives (Gen 2:18; 24). Therefore, husbands need to be self-controlled when leading because the Bible also says it is not good to be alone (Gen 2:18), which is the predicament a man may find himself in if he attempts to rule his wife with a heavy hand.

There are several areas to lead as it pertains to the well-being of wives. The first is her *spiritual welfare*:

Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ also loved the church and gave Himself up for her, so that He might sanctify her, having cleansed her by the washing of water with the word, that He might present to Himself the church in all her glory, having no spot or wrinkle or any such thing: but she would be holy and blameless. (Eph 5:25-27)

Prayer is a key factor in how a husband can lead his wife. Husbands are encouraged to pray for her and pray with her. Men who lead their families well ensure their wife is in church community. Scott also points out that men should not attempt to

⁸Stuart Scott, *Biblical Manhood: Masculinity, Leadership and Decision Making* (Bemidji, MN: Focus, 2011), 47.

⁹John Piper, “The Marks of a Spiritual Leader,” *Desiring God*, January 1, 1995, accessed July 15, 2015, <http://www.desiringgod.org/resource-library/articles/the-marks-of-a-spiritual-leader>.

¹⁰Scott, *Biblical Manhood*, 48.

take the place of the Holy Spirit in their admonition or try to change wives' hearts.¹¹

Finally, Ephesians 5:26 reminds a husband to wash his wife in the Word; a husband and wife should read the Bible together—they should find a study they can do together and he should be willing to listen to her insight.

The next area of leading is helping a wife make *good decisions*. A husband does well to remember Colossians 1:9-10 as he supports his wife in the day-to-day decisions. All Christians should pray that they would have spiritual wisdom and understanding, so that they can walk in a manner worthy of the Lord. Scott goes on to say that husbands should help wives in glorifying God and teach her to avoid the “two biggest pitfalls” of good decision-making: selfishness and subjectivity.¹² When making decisions, one should not follow one's feelings and one's own judgment. Seeking the Bible in decision-making and helping her prioritize the time spent in all that life may throw at her is an effective way to help her deal with God, husband, children, home, and the local church.¹³

Helping to ensure *her relationships* and how she relates to others are God-honoring is the next area a husband should lead his wife. Titus 2:3-5 says,

Older women likewise are to be reverent in their behavior not malicious gossips nor enslaved to much wine, teaching what is good, so that they may encourage the young women to love their husbands, to love their children, to be sensible, pure, workers at home, kind, being subject to their own husbands, so that the word of God will not be dishonored.

The most important relationship outside of God is the relationship a husband and wife share with each other. The relationship should be God-honoring by instilling that both are one flesh and always remembering the husband is to be companion. Husbands should be willing to allow their wives to be a helper, yet not forget that the wife should be

¹¹Scott, *Biblical Manhood*, 48.

¹²Ibid., 49.

¹³Ibid.

submissive and respectful to the husband's leadership. Finally, the husband should do all that it takes to help his wife avoid "sinful or evil relationships."¹⁴

If the approach is one of mutual respect, most wives will welcome leadership in the area of *her ministries*. Scripture encourages every believer to exercise his or her spiritual gifts: "As each one has received a special gift, employ it in serving one another as good stewards of the manifold grace of God" (1 Pet 4:10). Husbands who lead their wives well ensure that their spouses do not get overextended and ensure they appropriate the time to activities in and outside the church body evenly.¹⁵

The final area to show leadership is in her *physical well-being*. Ephesians 5:28-29 says, "So husbands ought also to love their own wives as their own bodies. He who loves his own wife loves himself; for no one ever hated his own flesh, but nourishes and cherishes it, just as Christ also does the church." Health issues are not something to avoid when leading one's wife. The husband should show concern for her health and provide the proper medical attention when needed; encouraging her to take proper care of herself and see that she has the basics of food, rest, safety, and exercise.¹⁶

The husband should lead out of a heart of compassion and love. The apostle Paul wrote, "Be imitators of me, just as I am of Christ" (1 Cor 11:1). Scott defines this concept in *The Exemplary Husband*: "To serve as an improving copy of our perfect pattern, Jesus Christ, by deliberately focusing on and practicing His likeness."¹⁷ The husband's role can be summed up simply by showing his wife Christ-likeness in the marriage. Scott continues, "It's through his role that the husband exemplifies Christ to

¹⁴Scott, *Biblical Manhood*, 49-50.

¹⁵*Ibid.*, 50.

¹⁶*Ibid.*, 51.

¹⁷Stuart Scott, *The Exemplary Husband: A Biblical Perspective*, rev. ed. (Bemidji, MN: Focus, 2002), 9.

his wife, his family, and the world.”¹⁸ When husbands focus on emulating the likeness of Christ to their wives, then husbands can love with a Christ like love.

The Husband Is to Love

A wife should be the husband’s first priority, humanly speaking, second only to the biblical command of placing God in the position of first place spiritually (Exod 20:3; Deut 5:7). Scott reminds husband of this core truth: “The most important commitment for the Christian husband is to have a heart of worship toward God alone.”¹⁹ Jesus gave the greatest commandment in Matthew 22:37-39, where He encouraged men and women with the depth and breadth of the love they should have for God and for others. When a husband loves God with all of his heart, soul, and mind, he will necessarily desire to transmit that love to his wife; who happens to be his closest neighbor.

The last section presented the passage in Ephesians 5:25; 28-29—“husbands love your wives.” The command for husbands to love their wives is repeated several times in Scripture and is a “major aspect of the husband’s role.”²⁰ Scott presents three ways that a husband can demonstrate love to his wife: actively, according to knowledge, and sacrificially.

A husband must show his wife love in tangible ways (actively). Actions speak louder than words; his love should be more than saying “I love you,” and his love should include loving care and meaningful deeds.²¹ Loving actively is an ongoing process and a daily display. The apostle Paul wrote,

Love is patient, love is kind and is not jealous; love does not brag and is not arrogant, does not act unbecomingly; it does not seek its own, is not provoked, does not take into account a wrong suffered, does not rejoice in unrighteousness, but

¹⁸Scott, *The Exemplary Husband*, 75.

¹⁹Ibid., 87.

²⁰Ibid., 81.

²¹Ibid.

rejoices with the truth; bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things. Love never fails. (1 Cor 13:4-8)

Husbands should love their wives and it should show in the ways they interact; sometimes a marriage can experience rejoicing and sometimes the husband is encouraged by Scripture to bear all things and endure all things. The call for a husband who desires to love his wife is to actively love her even in situations when his wife's interests do not match with his own. In these moments, it will take understanding to extend a gracious attitude.

Scott states that is important for men to understand his wife and to seek to understand her circumstances (according to knowledge). First Peter 3:7 says, "You husbands in the same way live with your wives in an understanding way." The byproduct of a man understanding his wife and treating her with the respect that God requires for his daughter is that the husband's prayers will not be hindered, and in verse 8, the husband stands to inherit a blessing. A husband can love his wife by studying her and applying God's love to her according the knowledge he gleans from observing her interests. Scott warns husbands,

It is a lack of love for God and one's wife that causes a husband to say, "I don't like to read," "It's just not me to study," . . . if a man were offered a million dollars to study God's principles of marriage or to attend a marriage conference, he would make a great effort to make it happen.²²

By actively loving her and living with her in an understanding way husbands learn to love as Christ loved the church—sacrificially.

The third way a husband loves his wife is by modeling the love that Jesus has for His church (sacrificially). Scott contends that husbands who love sacrificially are willing to "put his wife before himself and serve her, even if it means a personal sacrifice on his part."²³ A man who loves his wife with a sacrificial love demonstrated by Christ will yield a life-long partnership and enjoy his wife's faithfulness in following his

²²Scott, *The Exemplary Husband*, 82.

²³Ibid.

leadership within the home (Eph 5:24). Both the husband and wife have a role to play to reflect the picture of Christ and His church. Baucham writes,

I know that God designed the marriage covenant to sanctify both me and my wife, to paint a picture on earth of the relationship between Christ and his church and to bring forth a generation of kingdom citizens who will know and follow hard after God, then my perspective is altered completely.²⁴

So, the husband has the responsibility to “sanctify her, having cleansed her by the washing of water with the word (Eph 5:26). That God-sized responsibility calls for a God-sized process and plan.

The Process of Family Discipleship

In order to for a father to lead his children in discipleship, he must have a clear process. One such process that is effective for teaching doctrine involves a word that has faded from most Christians’ vocabulary. *Catechesis* (the process or form of what is taught) and *catechism* (the content of what is taught) are biblical words and serve as excellent tools for the process of discipleship.²⁵ Derived from the Greek verb *katēcheō*, Packer and Parrett point out that Galatians 6:6 is rendered literally as “one who is catechized must share all good things with the one who catechizes.”²⁶

Deuteronomy 6:4-9 (and in chap. 11) commands parents to instruct their children about God’s marvelous deeds and holy commands. The faithfulness of those who followed God’s holy Word was demonstrated by passing along God’s precepts to the next generation. Packer and Parrett argue for catechizing when they render the word “teach . . . diligently” in Deuteronomy 6:6-7 as the Hebrew word *shanan*, which means to “whet or sharpen.”²⁷ The idea is that the information transferred to the next generation

²⁴Baucham, *Family Shepherds*, 90.

²⁵Gary Parrett and J. I. Packer, *Grounded in the Gospel: Building Believers the Old-Fashioned Way* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 2010), 27. See all the various renderings and usages of *katēcheō*.

²⁶*Ibid.*, 33.

²⁷*Ibid.*, 34.

should have a deep impact on the learner and the learner should take what is learned “to heart” (v. 6).

The focus of the teaching for children and for all of Israel was the *torah*. Most may think of this word *torah* as “the law,” and that is an aspect of the word. However, this word has such a rich connotation and signifies “shooting” (as in shooting of an arrow) or “casting” (as in casting lots). In the context of catechism Packer and Parrett add, “The true connotation of *torah* is more ‘direction’ or ‘guidance’ or ‘instruction’ than legislation.”²⁸ If one chooses to keep the Law, it is constricting, but if one looks at the *torah* in the sense of instruction and a gift from God then the *torah* becomes a beautiful tool that illuminates the path of the next generation.

The term *katēcheō* appears many times in the New Testament and simply means to “teach” or “instruct.” In Acts 21:21 and 1 Corinthians 14:19, the use of the word *katēcheō* is to instruct in the faith. Packer and Parrett point out three examples in Scripture that would help this technical word for *instruction* become a process of catechesis in the centuries to come as the church sought to catechize (teach) sound doctrine.²⁹

The first is in Luke 1:3-4 as he writes to “most excellent Theophilus.” Luke encourages Theophilus and any believer to offer a “well-researched, orderly account, ‘that you may have certainty concerning the things you have been taught.’”³⁰ The second example also comes from Luke in Acts 18:25 as he introduces the readers to Apollos. Luke writes that Apollos was instructed (catechized) in the way of the Lord and he was fervent for the Lord and taught accurately about Jesus. Interestingly the way of the Lord is a key component in the catechisms that follow after the first century church. The third example

²⁸Parrett and Packer, *Grounded in the Gospel*, 35.

²⁹Ibid., 38-39. The historical Catechisms came out of these three examples and are explored in the next section.

³⁰Ibid.

is in Galatians 6:6. Earlier, this section gave the literal rendering according to Packer and Parrett. Here Paul says, “One who is taught the word must share all good things with the one who teaches.” Packer and Parrett argue that this New Testament passage is the clearest usage of the term *katēcheō* and forged the future use of catechism for the purpose of teaching sound doctrine and to instruct in the way of the Lord. As early as the end of the first century Clement wrote in 2 Clement 17:1, “Let us repent, therefore, with our whole heart, lest any of us should perish needlessly. For if we have orders that we should make it our business to tear men away from idols and to *instruct* them, how much more wrong is it that a soul that already knows God should perish?”³¹

Historical Survey of Catechisms

As previously noted, *katēcheō* is biblical (Gal 6:6) and the mandate to pass along God’s Word is a direct command to parents (Deut 6:4-9; Psalm 78:1-8). Teach the *torah* to the next generation is the call to all parents. It is one thing for parents to hear they should teach their children and it is another thing all together to know where to start and what to use. The task of discipling children can be so daunting for parents that they simply give up, or worse, may not even start. Well-meaning parents, who are believers, choose to do the best they can by insuring their child attends a Sunday school where at least the Bible will be taught. Is the sixty minutes a child in Sunday school the most effective plan for spiritual growth? In order for a child to become a Christian and continue to grow in “the Way,” it is vital that parents utilize the tools available to them and begin to disciple their child at home. Here, the church can provide the support and tools to parents in order to equip them for this task.

³¹Parrett and Packer, *Grounded in the Gospel*, 39, emphasis added. The authors quote Michael W. Holmes, ed. and trans., *The Apostolic Fathers*, 3rd ed. (Grand Rapids: Baker, 2007), 161.

Kevin DeYoung opens in *The Good News We Almost Forgot* with, “The only thing more difficult than finding the truth is not losing it.”³² In order to answer the questions of what process a parent should utilize, what to teach, and where to start, one should look no further than God’s Word and the vast catechisms that are available.

This section seeks to survey some of those catechisms in order to discover the doctrinal truths and themes that early church fathers spent so much time writing in order to transfer the faith to the next generation.

Calvin’s Catechism 1541

John Calvin first wrote his popular instruction of faith *Institutes of the Christian Religion*, in 1536 while in Geneva. He enlarged his work from 1536 and composed *The Geneva Catechism* in 1541. This work was published in French and later in Latin. T. F. Torrance writes, “The primary object was to . . . provide it [catechetical teaching] in a mode suitable for the instructing of children from ten to fifteen, and for directing the minds of all the faithful to one Christ.”³³ This catechism includes 373 questions and offers four main parts: (1) *Faith*, which includes a full exposition of the Apostles’ Creed, (2) *The Law*, including an exposition of the Ten Commandments, (3) *Prayer*, which gives an account the way of prayer according to the Lord’s pattern of prayer in the Lord’s Prayer, and (4) *The Word and Sacraments*, which includes the means by which one enters into heaven and worship God.³⁴

³²Kevin DeYoung, *The Good News We Almost Forgot: Rediscovering the Gospel in a 16th Century Catechism*, new ed. (Chicago: Moody, 2010), 13.

³³Thomas F. Torrance, *School of Faith* (London: James Clarke & Co., 1959), 3-4.

³⁴*Ibid.*, xiii. Torrance gives a detailed outline of all the major catechisms from the Reformation period in his extensive introduction and then expounds on each in each chapter. For the purposes of this survey I utilized the outlines in the introduction and attempted to bring out points of interest from the exposition that is done by the author of each Catechism in the subsequent chapters.

The Heidelberg Catechism 1563

This Heidelberg Catechism (HC) was commissioned in Germany by Elector Frederick III. The HC was a collaborative effort by Zacharias Ursinus and Casper Olevianus.³⁵ Bierma et al. write, “This cooperation between professor and preacher accounted for the blend of theological depth and pastoral warmth for which the HC became known for.”³⁶ Eventually the work was translated into Latin and later into English. The English version was commissioned by the king to be used for the church in Scotland in 1591, and another version in 1615, was used for the “use of the Kirk of Edinburgh.”³⁷ DeYoung points out,

Besides the Bible, John Bunyan’s *Pilgrim’s Progress*, and Thomas à Kempis’ *Imitation of Christ*, the Heidelberg Catechism is the most widely circulated book in the world . . . and is widely praised as the most devotional, most loved catechism of the Reformation.³⁸

This 129-question catechism can be divided into three parts: (1) *The Misery of Man*, which includes a treatment on sin, the fall, and the need for redemption, (2) *Redemption*, specifically the redemption that is in Christ the Mediator—also included are the Apostles’ Creed, the Word, and the Sacraments; and (3) *Thankfulness*, which is an exposition on the Ten Commandments and includes the Lord’s Prayer. The aim for the student is to express the proper gratitude for God’s redemption.³⁹

³⁵Lyle D. Bierma et al., *An Introduction to the Heidelberg Catechism: Sources, History, and Theology* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 2005), 52. Torrance, *School of Faith*, 66, also gives credit for co-authorship to Casper Olevianus.

³⁶Ibid., 52-71. Bierma et al., examine the scholarly question whether Olevianus was a co-author of the HC and offer strong evidence that he was.

³⁷Torrance, *School of Faith*, 66.

³⁸DeYoung, *The Good News We Almost Forgot*, 16.

³⁹Torrance, *School of Faith*, xiii.

Craig's Catechism 1581

John Craig was a Dominican theologian who was converted to the Reformed Faith through reading Calvin's original *Institutes of the Christian Religion*. From 1579 to 1594, Craig was chaplain to the king and minister of the church of Holyroodhouse. In *School of Faith*, Torrance writes that Craig encouraged that his catechism be read often in the homes for the purposes of instruction in how Christians should live and to teach the principle points of salvation.⁴⁰ This 897-question catechism is a bit more complicated in its division. Torrance separates as follows: (1) *The Three-fold State of Man*, his creation, his miserable fall and bondage under sin, his calling to repentance and restoration. (2) *The Four Parts of God's Honour*, faith, obedience, prayer, and thanksgiving. Torrance points out that the combination of doctrinal features is derived from the catechisms of Geneva and Heidelberg, but special attention is given to redemption and the Covenant of Grace.⁴¹

The New Catechism 1644

This 167-question catechism was published in London and had the shortest life span and was superseded by the Westminster Catechism. Included are four parts: (1) *The Belief*, an exposition of the Apostles' Creed; (2) *The Ten Commandments*, the importance of obedience to God and love of neighbor, followed by a section on the Word and the Spirit; (3) *Prayer*, which is, seeking God for needs and understanding that He provides all one needs; and (4) *The Sacraments*, remembrance of Christ and His sacrifice.⁴²

⁴⁰Torrance, *School of Faith*, 96. Torrance points out that the hope of Craig was expressed upfront in his preface. His desire was not to usurp fathers, but to give a resource for "the ignorant." Craig always recommended Calvin's *Institutes* for further confirmation of the biblical nature of his doctrines. Ibid., 98.

⁴¹Ibid., xiv.

⁴²Ibid.

The Westminster Larger Catechism 1648

This catechism, with 196 questions, was one of two catechisms adopted by the Westminster Assembly. The Larger was for the purposes of teaching Sunday by Sunday by the elders. Upon its adoption, it immediately became considered the supreme catechism and superseded all the previous catechisms. The Assembly in 1649 encouraged all households to have a copy of this catechism along with the *Shorter* version, the *Westminster Confession of Faith*, and the *Directory for Family Worship*.⁴³ After a brief introduction on man's chief end, the catechism is divided into two main parts: (1) *What Man ought to believe concerning God*, which includes the doctrines of God, the covenant of grace, the benefits of Christ's mediation, and (2) *The Duty of Man* (required by the Holy Scriptures), an exposition on the moral law and the means of grace outlined by looking at the Ten Commandments, the Word, the Sacraments, and Prayer.⁴⁴

An Orthodox Catechism 1680

Commonly referred to as OC, the 148-question Orthodox Catechism 1680 was an adaptation of the HC in 1680, by Hercules Collins, the third pastor of the oldest Particular Baptist congregation in Great Britain.⁴⁵ Collins recognized the importance of catechism and the role it could play in instructing sound doctrine to his congregants. Haykin and Weaver point out three purposes of Collins's catechism. First, "the catechism was to function as a tool for pastoral instruction, as a polemic against false teaching, and a plea for doctrinal unity."⁴⁶ The second purpose was clearly stated by Collins on the title page of the OC, "Published For Preventing the Canker and Poison of Heresy and

⁴³Torrance, *School of Faith*, 184.

⁴⁴*Ibid.*, xv.

⁴⁵Michael A. G. Haykin and G. Stephen Weaver, Jr., introduction to *An Orthodox Catechism: Being the Sum of Christian Religion Contained in the Law and Gospel*, ed. Michael A. G. Haykin and G. Stephen Weaver, Jr. (Palmdale, CA: RBAP, 2014), 9.

⁴⁶*Ibid.*, 19.

Error.”⁴⁷ The final reason the OC was published was to “identify himself and his fellow Particular Baptists as a part of the Reformed community throughout Europe.”⁴⁸ Although many of the questions describing the meaning of baptism remain consistent with the HC, Collins added a complete section to address paedobaptism and clarified the “mode and the proper subjects of baptism.”⁴⁹

Included in this work are ten chapters, divided into three parts: (1) *Of Man’s Misery*, which includes where to find the source of man’s misery—in the law of God, God’s requirements of believers, man’s sinful nature, and the need to be regenerated by the Holy Spirit, (2) *Of Man’s Redemption*, specifically the redemption through the “very man and perfectly just,” Christ the Mediator, also included are questions about the Apostles’ Creed, God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit, Baptism and The Lord’s Supper, (3) *Of Man’s Thankfulness*, which includes the cause of good works, living a life according to God’s will, an exposition on the Ten Commandments and the doctrine of prayer.

This is certainly not an exhaustive list of catechisms. If space allowed, a more in depth survey would show how many of these *Larger Catechisms* has a counterpart in the form of a *Shorter Catechism* for the purposes of teaching children. A proper survey of the entire history of catechism could start even earlier than the Reformation period, and expand into post-Reformation catechisms, including works such as *The Baptist Catechism*, known as *Keach’s Catechism* in 1693,⁵⁰ the *London Catechism*, 1742,⁵¹ *The*

⁴⁷Haykin and Weaver, introduction to *An Orthodox Catechism*, 20.

⁴⁸*Ibid.*, 21.

⁴⁹*Ibid.*, 31.

⁵⁰Nettles writes, “Perhaps more than all others combined, this catechism defined what it was to be a Baptist throughout the eighteenth century, and for some years into the nineteenth.” Tom J. Nettles, *Teaching Truth, Training Hearts: The Study of Catechisms in Baptist Life*. (Amityville, NY: Calvary Press, 1998), 47-58.

⁵¹The Reformed Reader, “Baptist Catechisms,” accessed August 4, 2015,

Baptist Catechism, printed by the Charleston Association in 1813,⁵² *The New City Catechism* in 2017,⁵³ and the work John Piper has done in his *Baptist Catechism* adapting the *London Catechism* with added commentary.⁵⁴

Contemporary Baptist catechisms of particular interest are the contributions of J. P. Boyce and John A. Broadus. In 1863, at the time of the founding of the Sunday School Board, Boyce's *A Catechism of Bible Doctrine* was published and ten thousand copies were distributed.⁵⁵ In 1892, The American Baptist Publication Society and the Southern Baptist Sunday School Board commissioned Broadus to develop a catechism for Sunday school use called *The Catechism of Biblical Teaching*.⁵⁶ Nettles asserts,

Today's Baptist community would benefit from a resurrection of the advice given in Cathcart's *The Baptist Encyclopedia* which encourages "parents to employ the Catechism in their own home" because "this neglected custom of the past should be revived in every Baptist family in the world."⁵⁷

No matter which catechism one reads, there are many similarities in content and some doctrinal differences to be sure. Most are filled with rich theology for their time and served the purpose of faith transference to the next generation. DeYoung writes, "I am

<http://www.reformedreader.org/cc/bcat.htm>.

⁵²Nettles, *Teaching Truth, Training Hearts*, 59-78.

⁵³The Gospel Coalition and Redeemer Presbyterian, *The New City Catechism: 52 Questions and Answers for Our Hearts and Minds* (Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2017).

⁵⁴John Piper, "A Baptist Catechism," *Desiring God*, accessed August 4, 2015, <http://www.desiringgod.org/articles/a-baptist-catechism>.

⁵⁵Nettles, *Teaching Truth, Training Hearts*, 26. J. P. Boyce and John Broadus were among the original founders of The Southern Baptist Seminary; Boyce was the first president and Broadus the second.

⁵⁶The Reformed Reader, "Baptist Catechisms." A. Ho. Newman called Broadus "perhaps the greatest man the Baptists have produced." Broadus was the most highly respected Baptist of his day and in scholarship was without peer. Even as early as 1859, J. P. Boyce recognized the strength of Broadus's influence and implied that his presence was needed for the successful founding of The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary. Broadus' *Catechism* includes fifteen lessons and a section of suggested biblical passages for memorization. Each lesson consists of two types of questions: the first set is for all students and the second is for advanced students. The Reformed Reader, "Baptist Catechisms."

⁵⁷Nettles, *Teaching Truth, Training Hearts*, 26.

saddened to think of how many Christians—Protestants, evangelical, and Reformed Christians in particular—are blissfully unaware of this treasure [HC] right under their noses.”⁵⁸ To those who might be skeptical of reviving catechism, DeYoung correctly concludes, “Come and see” what the early church fathers thought was so important for the church to transfer to the next generation.⁵⁹

Contemporary Model

The theological importance of *katēcheō* has been established and a brief historical survey of the Reformed catechisms has been explored. Next is an invaluable “memory aid” for the teaching of “faithful and fruitful” content.⁶⁰

This memory aid begins with a model of “5-4-3-2-1.” Each number corresponds to a category of teaching in descending order, each dovetailing with the category before it. First is the *five founts*, then the *four fixtures*, next is the *three facets*, followed by the *two fundamentals of the Way*, and finally, *one focus—proclaiming Christ*.

Five Founts

Packer and Parrett begin with the *Five Founts* and make the claim that these founts are the basis for all catechetical content: “From these we derive the substance of vital catechesis, and together they form an ever-present backdrop for all catechetical ministry.”⁶¹ The *Five Founts* include the Triune God, the Scriptures, the Story, the Gospel, and the Faith. First is The Triune God—the important doctrine here that is taught is the foundation of faith that God exists in three persons: God the Father, God the Son and God

⁵⁸DeYoung, *The Good News We Almost Forgot*, 18. DeYoung encourages the reader to take the truths in this Catechism and rediscover the hidden and perhaps even lost teaching tools that have been hiding in plain sight for centuries.

⁵⁹*Ibid.*, 14.

⁶⁰Packer and Parrett, *Grounded in the Gospel*, 77.

⁶¹*Ibid.*, 78.

the Holy Spirit. Second is The Holy Scriptures—at the core Paul wrote to Timothy that all Scripture is “God-breathed, and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting, and training in righteousness, that the man of God may be fully equipped for every good work” (2 Tim 3:16-17). God’s Word must be taught as infallible, inerrant and the ultimate authority. Simply put, this is the main source in how God speaks to His people today. Third is The Redemptive Story unfolding in Scripture—This grand story plays out on a cosmic level. In this story, God is redeemer and follows four acts: creation, fall, redemption, and culmination. To say it another way, God has acted and is acting and will continue to act through His son to reconcile all things to himself. Fourth is The Glorious Story of the Gospel—Packer and Parrett rightfully point out that the gospel can be expressed in three words: “God Saves Sinners.”⁶² This story is simple: the Triune God in His wisdom planned to send His Son to die for us on the cross. Only Jesus, because of his sinless life, could have paid the price for sins. The most important truth fathers can impart to their children is that Jesus is the Way, the Truth, and the Life, and no one comes to the Father except through Him. Finally, fifth is Faith—Packer and Parrett write that they believe the biblical use of the term *faith* “not only extends to what we believe or should believe, but also addresses how we are to live as well as teaching us where to find the power for such living.”⁶³

Four Fixtures

Almost every catechism provides instructions on the Creeds, the Ten Commandments (or the Ten Words), the Lord’s Prayer, and the sacraments (or ordinances). These catechetical components are referred to at times as the fourfold formulation. Luther

⁶²Packer and Parrett, *Grounded in the Gospel*, 79.

⁶³*Ibid.*, 83.

referred to these as the “three parts” (Commandments, Creed, and Lord’s Prayer).⁶⁴ The *Four Fixtures* are the Apostles’ Creed, the Decalogue, the Lord’s Prayer, and the Sacraments. This fourfold formulation can be found in Acts 2:42 where the early church was dedicated to the apostles’ teachings, the fellowship, the prayers, and the Lord’s Supper (breaking bread together). The *Five Founts* ending with instruction on Faith lead into the *Four Fixtures* nicely in that the fourfold formula is a way for the believer to demonstrate and live out “the Faith” until Christ returns or believers are united in heaven.

Three Facets of the Faith

The life received through faith can be expressed by the *Three Facets of the Faith*, which is made up of the Truth, the Life, and the Way (John 14:6). Packer and Parrett point out, “These were not three words randomly strung together by our Lord. Rather, they represent three critical strands of biblical teaching that are found in the Old and New Testaments.”⁶⁵ First is The Truth, according to Packer and Parrett, which has been revealed through Jesus Christ. The truth is shared daily by preaching, teaching, and living in the light of the gospel and sound doctrine.⁶⁶ Second is The Life and refers to the eternal relationship one has with God. Those who are in Christ experience the life first through a new birth and by the grace of God are made children of God. Third is The Way and is inseparable from the Truth and the Life. Christians are known as followers of the Way. Packer and Parrett reduce the Way to the simplest explanation: “We live in love of God and neighbor.”⁶⁷

⁶⁴Packer and Parrett, *Grounded in the Gospel*, 85. The authors mention that even though Luther referred to the “three,” he did include teachings about the sacraments in his catechism.

⁶⁵*Ibid.*, 89.

⁶⁶*Ibid.*, See Gal 2:5; Eph 1:13; 1 Tim 1:10.

⁶⁷*Ibid.*, 90. The Ten Commandments can be expressed in two forms as well: “Love God” and “love your neighbor.”

Two Fundamentals of the Way

The first line of the *Didache* is “there are two ways, the way of life and the way of death.”⁶⁸ In Psalm 1:6 is another comparison, the way of the righteous and the way of the wicked. Packer and Parrott comment that a “major goal of Christian catechesis is precisely this directive guidance in the Way.”⁶⁹ The letter of James and the book of Proverbs discuss wisdom as walking in the Way. Walking in the Way can be summed up in one word—Love. In Mark 12:29 and Luke 10:25-37, Jesus was asked by a not so loving crowd what the greatest command was. Jesus gave the classic double command to love God and love your neighbor. The *Two Fundamentals of the Way* is only accomplished with an understanding of the *Five Founts* that lead to Faith and the practicing the *Four Fixtures* that will eventually lead to the *Three Facets of Faith*—The Truth, Life, and the Way. Once a person has a firm grasp on the *Two Fundamentals of the Way*, loving God with all your heart, mind, soul, and strength, and your neighbor as yourself, then a believer will produce the number one focus in this model, a love so strong that it is uncontainable. The compelling love experienced by Christians leads them to share that love by proclaiming Christ.

One Focus—Proclaim Christ

The apostle Paul in Colossians 1:28 exhorts the reader that everyone should be mature in Christ. In Ephesians, the aim was to edify the saints for the work of the ministry. Experiencing a faithful and fruitful catechism leads the student to learn more about Christ and eventually to learn to proclaim Jesus as Lord to a lost a dying world. This last component in this model is the main focus of every Christian and where all catechetical content must eventually lead the learner. After all, the twofold command was to love God and love others. The best way to love others is to share the saving grace of Jesus to

⁶⁸Packer and Parrett, *Grounded in the Gospel*, 90.

⁶⁹Ibid.

a lost person. There is no greater love a father can show his children than to proclaim the saving grace of Jesus to them. The *Two Fundamentals of the Way* captures the “Great Commandment.” Here, the *One Focus to proclaim Christ* echoes the “Great Commission” in Matthew 28: 19, 20. At the end of this survey of the 5-4-3-2-1 model, Packer and Parrett sum this model up nicely:

There are *five founts, or frames*, for catechesis → the fifth element of which is the Faith → which has been traditionally communicated through the *four fixtures* of the catechism → which together bear witness to the *three facets of the Faith* → the third of which is *the Way* → which has *two fundamentals*: love of God and love of neighbor → which Jesus alone has fully obeyed, and whose grace alone enables us to begin to obey. Therefore Jesus Christ must ever be the one focus of all our ministries of catechesis.⁷⁰

Many Evangelicals have allowed the word catechism to fade off into a forgotten past. Many would regard this term leftover from a historical time that many feel is irrelevant for current culture and time. Some might even say, under their breath, “Isn’t that a Catholic thing, or a Presbyterian practice?” In a strange way, the one who says that would be right. Catechism has survived in certain denominations to this day. Evangelical fathers would do well to discover the doctrinal truths the early church fathers thought were so important to preserve and transfer to the learner. In doing so, fathers might just discover (again) the tools necessary, both in content and in processes, which will help parents plan a strategy as they lead out in the discipleship of their children.

The Plan for Family Discipleship

God has given clear indication throughout Scripture that fathers are to be the lead disciple-makers of the children. He also has established the marriage as a covenant relationship to be reflective of His love for His creation. He provided a wife to be a helper and a support to fathers as they lead their families into family discipleship and worship. God does not expect fathers to disciple his children without support. Steve

⁷⁰Packer and Parrett, *Grounded in the Gospel*, 94.

Wright says, “God’s design is for families to unite and partner with the local church for the mutual purpose of discipleship.”⁷¹

Write observes that in Genesis, God created the first institution—family. Then God created the second institution in the New Testament—the church.⁷² These institutions are not rivals and both should be united in the purpose of discipleship. This unified partnership is captured as “church-as-family and family-as-church.”⁷³

In chapter 2, I presented Deuteronomy 6 and showed that in verse 7 fathers are to teach God’s Word to his children. In the New Testament, in Ephesians 4:12, the church was given the task to “equip the saints.” Does the New Testament exhortation in Ephesians cancel the Old Testament command? The resounding answer is no. Ephesians 6: 4 makes it clear that fathers have not been released from this vital role of discipleship. Wright and Graves explain,

Families are to teach young people. Churches are to teach all people. . . . Families should no more drop their kids off at the church door to be discipled any more than they should avoid the church and try to go it alone. Family and church need each other to function like each is designed to function for the glory of God.⁷⁴

Fathers need to know they can achieve success in becoming the lead disciple-makers at home if they have the right process and plan. They also need to know that the church-as-family is there to help them succeed.

⁷¹Steve Wright and Chris Graves, *ApParent Privilege* (Royal Palm Beach, FL: InQuest Ministries, 2008), 57.

⁷²Ibid. For a more in-depth explanation of the institution of family and the institution of the church see chap. 3, “A Parent’s Understanding: A Theology of Family,” specifically *Foundation 7*, in *ApParent Privilege*. Earlier James K. A. Smith referred to the church as the first family, which is not to be confused with God establishing the institution of family first. Parents today can partner with the “church-as-family” for the effective discipleship within the home.

⁷³Jones, introduction to *Practical Family Ministry*, 11.

⁷⁴Wright and Graves, *ApParent Privilege*. 57-58.

The Family-Equipping Model

The term *family-equipping* is defined by Timothy Paul Jones as the framework and “process of reorienting existing ministries to partner with parents . . . it isn’t about a curriculum or event.”⁷⁵ In this model, families and churches see a great need to form a long-term partnership with active engagement for the discipleship of their children. Nelson and Jones conclude, “Family-equipping churches cultivate a congregational culture that coordinates every ministry to champion the role of the parents as primary faith-trainers in their children’s lives.”⁷⁶

Jones expresses his goal for family ministry as

a movement toward equipping Christian households to function as outposts of God’s mission in the world. Through family ministry, families become contexts where Christian Community is consistently practiced with the goal of sharing the good news of God’s victory far beyond our families. The gospel is rehearsed in families and reinforced at church so that God’s truth can be revealed to the world.⁷⁷

Family-equipping churches keep many of the age-segmented programs in place and represent a “middle route” between churches that focus on *family-based* programming and those *family-integrated* churches (churches that do not offer any age-segmented programming). Strother explains the distinction between the models: “Unlike proponents of family-integrated ministry, family equippers do not call for complete abolition of all age-organized ministries.”⁷⁸

⁷⁵Jones, *Family Ministry Field Guide*, 26.

⁷⁶Brian Nelson and Timothy Paul Jones, “Introduction: The Problem with Family Ministry,” in *Trained in the Fear of God: Family Ministry in Theological, Historical, and Practical Perspective*, ed. Randy Stinson and Timothy Paul Jones (Grand Rapids: Kregel, 2011), 27. *Family-equipping* is a term that Timothy Paul Jones coined for a ministry strategy that he and Randy Stinson developed for the School of Church Ministries at The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary. Early practitioners include Jay Strother at Brentwood Baptist Church in Tennessee, Brian Haynes at Kingsland Baptist Church in Texas, and Steve Wright at Providence Baptist Church in North Carolina. See also, Jones, *Family Ministry Field Guide*, 26.

⁷⁷Jones, *Family Ministry Field Guide*, 59.

⁷⁸Jay Strother, “Family-Equipping Ministry: Church and Home as Cochampions,” in *Perspectives on Family Ministry: 3 Views*, ed. Timothy Paul Jones (Nashville: B & H, 2009), 144.

In a church where family-equipping is the model, youth pastors and children's pastors are retained, but they take on a whole new role and their job descriptions are typically re-oriented, over time, to reflect a focus on equipping parents to be the lead disciple-makers of their children. Nelson and Jones explain, "Because parents are primary disciple-makers and vital partners in family-equipping ministry, every activity for children and youth must resource, train, or directly involve parents."⁷⁹

According to Jones, family-equipping churches equip parents in four areas: (1) faith talks, (2) faith walks, (3) faith processes in their homes, and (4) to become families in faith for spiritual orphans.⁸⁰

Family talks. Faith talks are defined by Jones as "designated times, at least once per week, for the household to gather for prayer and to study a biblical truth together . . . include not only parents and children but also other individuals who have been invited."⁸¹ In January 2016, Jim Hamilton and his family, along with Timothy Paul Jones and his family, modeled a family talk time in front of an Alumni gathering for The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary.⁸² This video source is an invaluable resource to review for fathers who might be overwhelmed by the thought of leading such a time. Faith talks focus on God's Word and prayer and help fathers to fulfill their God-given command to teach and instruct their children (Deut 6:7; Eph 6:4).

⁷⁹Nelson and Jones, "Introduction," 27.

⁸⁰Jones, *Family Ministry Field Guide*, 152.

⁸¹*Ibid.*, 154.

⁸²Derek Brown, "Jim Hamilton, Tom Nettles, and Timothy Paul Jones on Family Devotions," *Family Ministry Today: The Center for Christian Family Ministry at The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary*, January 13, 2016, accessed September 21, 2016, <http://www.sbts.edu/family/2014/01/13/jim-hamilton-tom-nettles-and-timothy-paul-jones-on-family-devotions/>.

Family walks. Faith walks builds on the faith talk in that it also helps the father fulfill the command that God gave through Moses to converse with his child as he walks by the way (Deut 6:7). According to Jones, a faith walk is defined as “a discussion in the course of daily life that turns a child’s attention toward the presence of the gospel and the providence of God in every part of life.”⁸³ The brilliant attribute to faith walks is that they do not require another slot on the calendar—no planning required. Faith walks are simply having spontaneous conversations with one’s child throughout the day and pointing out truths about God and his providence.⁸⁴

Faith processes in their homes. The next area for equipping is faith processes in the home and is defined as “a plan that involves parents in a child’s spiritual growth by partnering with parents to address the child’s particular needs at each stage.”⁸⁵ It can be difficult to teach each child at his or her level of understanding. Jones points out one central aim for the faith processes is to answer one simple question: “What needs to happen next in this child’s spiritual growth?”⁸⁶ A child’s stage of life can be a great opportunity for teaching.

Brian Haynes pioneered this approach of stages in what he calls “legacy milestones,” which is “a comprehensive partnership with parents to aim their child stage-by-stage toward Christian maturity.”⁸⁷ In *Legacy Path: Discovering Intentional Spiritual Parenting*, Haynes discusses the legacy path as “an intentional way to lead the next

⁸³Jones, *Family Ministry Field Guide*, 162.

⁸⁴*Ibid.*, 161-62. Jones points out that Brian Haynes refers to these times as “God moments” and “God sightings.”

⁸⁵*Ibid.*, 166.

⁸⁶*Ibid.*, 164.

⁸⁷*Ibid.*

generation to faith in Jesus in the way trodden by others.”⁸⁸ Each stage of the life of a child is marked by a legacy milestone that “brings a family and faith community together.”⁸⁹ Haynes presents seven milestones that can be celebrated by the family and utilized for teachable moments in the discipleship of a child. The first three are “faith destinations for children”⁹⁰ and include baby dedication, a commitment to faith in Jesus, and preparing for adolescence. The next four milestones help the parent focus on the “journey from adolescence to adulthood.”⁹¹ Milestones 4 to 7 include a commitment to purity, rite of passage to adulthood, high school graduation, and life in Christ. Celebrating these milestones as a part of the faith processes is another way that the church and parents can partner in the disciple-making process by taking advantage of these key stages.

Families in faith reaching spiritual orphans. The last area of equipping put forth by Jones is to become families in faith in order to reach spiritual orphans. As the family is involved in faith talks, faith walks, and the faith process the discipleship plan should lead toward reaching out to the spiritual orphans. Jones asserts,

Family-equipping must include the equipping of families in faith—mature believers who mentor spiritual orphans, who celebrate milestones with the children whose parents are not yet believers, and who seek opportunities to share the gospel with unbelieving parents.⁹²

It is apparent why the presented definition of family talks includes “others that are invited to the home.” It is the gospel that compels parents to teach their children and it is the same gospel that compels families to partner with the church to reach spiritual orphans.

⁸⁸Brian Haynes, *The Legacy Path: Discovering Intentional Spiritual Parenting* (Nashville: Randall House, 2011), 3.

⁸⁹Jones, *Family Ministry Field Guide*, 164.

⁹⁰Haynes, *Legacy Path*, 59. Haynes covers the seven milestones in depth in chaps. 5 and 6.

⁹¹*Ibid.*, 77.

⁹²Jones, *Family Ministry Field Guide*, 169.

Read, Pray, and Sing

Many fathers are intimidated by family talk times and simply do not know where to start. In *Family Worship*, Donald Whitney gives a practical approach that is easily integrated for family talk times (or as Whitney refers to it as family worship). The agenda for family talk is comprised of three simple words—*read, pray, and sing*. The time of day typically varies for each individual family, but the main thing to remember is the importance of taking fifteen or twenty minutes each day for the family to spend dedicated to the Lord.

First is simply reading the Bible. Baucham calls the Bible the “training manual” and gives three reasons why it is important to read: (1) the Bible is the source of wisdom, (2) the Bible is the source of righteousness, and (3) the Bible is the source of hope.⁹³ Fathers may choose to read chapter by chapter as they work their way through entire books of the Bible. Younger children may require a shorter version of the narrative. The Bible is the greatest curriculum and fathers cannot give a better or more useful gift than the Word of God.⁹⁴ Whitney writes, “Read enthusiastically and interpretively . . . don’t be one of those people who read the Bible as apathetically as if reading a phone directory out loud. . . . It is the Word of God—read it to the best of your ability.”⁹⁵ Steve Farrar puts a finer point to the importance of reading Scripture and leads into the next item on the agenda for family talk time—prayer: “There are two mistakes we can make . . . emphasize Scripture without prayer; emphasize prayer without Scripture.”⁹⁶

⁹³Voddie Baucham, Jr., *Family Driven Faith: Doing What It Takes to Raise Sons and Daughters Who Walk with God* (Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2007), 98-99.

⁹⁴Joel Beeke, *Parenting by God’s Promises: How to Raise Children in the Covenant of Grace* (York, PA: Maple, 2011), 82. As children acquire the ability, they should read and memorize Scripture. Commentaries and concordances, and dictionaries are helpful in explaining difficult passages.

⁹⁵Donald S. Whitney, *Family Worship* (Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2016), 45.

⁹⁶Steve Farrar, *Point Man: How a Man Can Lead His Family* (Sisters, OR: Multnomah, 2003), 129.

The second part of family talk time is Prayer. Often people may not know what to pray for. In those moments, it is a convenient technique to utilize the Scripture just covered in the family talk time and find something in that passage to help guide the prayer time. Whitney suggests keeping a family prayer list, and whether the father prays or another member of the family prays just be sure to pray.⁹⁷ Joel Beeke comments that it is important that children learn to pray aloud: “If children pray aloud in the company of other family members at early ages, they are less likely to feel awkward doing so when they grow older.”⁹⁸

The third area to focus a family talk time is singing. When families begin their family talk time with reading Scripture (including catechism for sound doctrine) and move into a family prayer time, the end result has to be a willingness to pour out praises in song. In many homes, fathers may not count themselves as musical. Be creative, use a songbook, and sing *a cappella* (no music) if needed; the Bible says to “make a joyful *noise* unto the Lord, all ye lands” (Ps 100:1 KJV). Utilize technology and play a praise song on a family member’s device and consider selecting a song that can serve as the family’s theme song for the rest of the week. Richard J. Foster’s words encourage fathers who embark upon the task of discipling his children: “Singing is meant to move us to praise. It provides a medium of expression of emotion. Through music we express joy, thanksgiving. No less than forty-one psalms command us to ‘sing unto the Lord.’”⁹⁹ In a hurried world, families can choose to sing together and in that moment the family is focused on one thing: praising God.

⁹⁷Whitney, *Family Worship*, 45.

⁹⁸Beeke, *Parenting by God’s Promises*, 84.

⁹⁹Richard J. Foster, *Celebration of Discipline: The Path to Spiritual Growth* (New York: HarperCollins, 1998), 169.

Conclusion

This chapter focused on equipping fathers to carry out the biblical mandate to be the lead disciple-makers of their children by providing historical, biblical, and practical information in order to help them with a process and a plan.

The first concept presented was the importance of the father's role as a husband. The best gift a father can give his children is a God-honoring relationship with their mother—one that reflects the love of Jesus. A husband needs to know how to lead and to love his wife. The main areas to lead include: her spiritual well-being, helping with good decision making, her relationships, her ministries, and her physical well-being. Husbands should love their wives as Christ loved the church. A loving husband's focus is to love his wife actively, in tangible ways, with understanding and respect. Finally, he needs to love sacrificially and serve her as Christ served other.

Once the priority of marriage has been established, the father can focus on the process and the plan. Baucham writes,

So many parents think they don't have enough Bible knowledge to teach their children. Nothing could be further from the truth. If you can read, you can teach your children God's Word. . . . You don't have to be a seminary-trained theologian to read the Bible and talk about what it means. Besides, God would not have given you the responsibility unless He knew you could handle it.¹⁰⁰

The process explored was utilizing a catechism in order to have a methodology to teach sound doctrine and God's Word. The father is called to "teach them [children] diligently." Along with the catechetical approach, I expounded on the content of the teaching and presented Packer and Parrett's memory tool ("5-4-3-2-1") that helps fathers to focus on the main points of faith that should be taught.

The *Five Founts*, which include the Triune God, Holy Scriptures, the Redemption story, the Gospel, and the Faith. The *Four Fixtures*, which include the Apostles' Creed, the Ten Commandments, the Lord's Prayer, and the Sacraments. The *Three Facets of Faith*, which include the Truth, the Life, and the Way, and lead to the

¹⁰⁰Baucham, *Family Driven Faith*, 95.

Two Fundamentals of the Way, which are the Way of Life and the Way of death. Finally, at the end of all of these one finds the *One Focus*—to Proclaim Christ, to make disciples of all nations.

Next was to provide a plan that fathers can use in order to begin a journey of discipleship with their children. The *family-equipping* model was covered in order to encourage parents and the church that they should partner with each other in the endeavor of discipling children. In order for families to be the “outposts of God’s mission to the world,” Jones gives fathers the practical plan as the father catechizes through God’s Word.

The first area where a father can implement a family disciple plan is *faith talks*. Whitney gives three tools to include during this daily time: *read, pray, and sing*. The next area for fathers to focus on is *faith walks*. This is a practical way to flesh out Deuteronomy 6:7 “when you walk by the way.” The third area for fathers to implement is *faith processes*, which seeks to celebrate the legacy milestones children go through from the time they are a babies until they reach adulthood. Jones also encourages families to become *families in faith for spiritual orphans* by reaching out to children who do not have a Christian parent in hopes that the child and the parent will come to know Jesus.

Outside of a man’s relationship with God, marriage is the most important relationship on this planet, so he needs to take of it—a man’s wife is a gift from God, so a husband need to take of her. Children, as imperfect and sinful as they can be, also are a precious gift from God. Martha Peace and Stuart Scott write, “We love them. We sacrifice for them. We rightly long for them to do well in life and to love the Lord with all their hearts. We desire for them to be wise and not foolish. We want them to fear God and submit to his authority.”¹⁰¹

Fathers are wise to submit to God’s authority in marriage and parenting as they adhere to God’s command to teach and instruct their children “in the Lord?” In doing so,

¹⁰¹Martha Peace and Stuart W. Scott. *The Faithful Parent: A Biblical Guide to Raising a Family* (Phillipsburg, NJ: P & R, 2010), 209.

they experience a blessing in directly partnering with God in what He is doing in these little lives. As fathers take up the mantle of disciple-making, it is right to remember to rely on the Holy Spirit as the Divine teacher and consider it a privilege to *read, pray, and sing* together as a family.

CHAPTER 4

THE DEVELOPMENT AND IMPLEMENTATION OF THE PROJECT CURRICULUM AND THE STRATEGIC PLAN

The purpose of this project was to equip fathers at Parkridge Baptist Church in Coral Springs, Florida, to lead in the discipleship of their children. The first goal of this project was to assess the perceptions and practices fathers have in the area of biblical discipleship utilizing a pre-survey to assess their basic understanding of biblical discipleship.¹ The second goal was to develop a six-week curriculum that would encourage and equip fathers to take the lead role in the discipleship of their children. The third goal was to implement a curriculum in order to equip fathers to provide biblical discipleship to their children, and hold them accountable for the implementation of a devotional time at home. A post-survey was also given to test if any progress was made in the area of biblical discipleship. Finally, the fourth goal was to develop a three-to-five year strategic plan outline which sought to incorporate an ongoing effort seeking to encourage and equip parents in the discipleship of their children.

D-6 Dads Curriculum Development and Approval

After the theological support was established in chapter 2 and some practical approaches were presented in chapter 3, the project implementation was carried out. The development and implementation of the *D-6 Dads* curriculum was conducted at

¹See appendix 1. The questions in the BBDI were compiled with the assistance of the work by Timothy Paul Jones, in *Family Ministry Field Guide: How Your Church Can Equip Parents to Make Disciples* (Indianapolis: Wesleyan, 2011), 202-3. All rights reserved, used by permission. All of the research instruments used in this project were performed in compliance with and approved by the Southern Baptist Theological Seminary Research Ethics Committee prior to use in the ministry project.

Parkridge Baptist Church in Coral Springs, Florida. The training series began on June 18, 2017, and was completed on July 30, 2017.

The initial step in the implementation of this project was to obtain the approval of the Ethics Committee of The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary. Upon receiving the approval to proceed for the use of human subjects, as required as a part of this project, the development of the six-week training series began. The curriculum for this series needed to be developed and approved by a panel of experts.

Evaluation of Curriculum

During the six-week developmental period, the curriculum for this series was submitted to an expert panel for evaluation. These men were personally recruited by me and approved by my supervisor. The first is the Senior Pastor of Parkridge Baptist Church, which he planted in 1992; he is a graduate of Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary, where he earned a Master of Divinity and he is currently working on a Doctor of Ministry in Applied Theology at The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary. He has experience in discipling men through leading groups and mentoring throughout his twenty-five year ministry. He was invaluable in his contributions to the outlines.

Next is a retired Navy Chaplain, holds a Doctor of Philosophy in Higher Educational Leadership from Florida Atlantic University, a Doctor of Ministry and a Master of Divinity from New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary, and a Master of Arts in History from Southeastern Louisiana University. He is the Academic Dean of Social, Behavioral Sciences and Human Services at Broward College. His knowledge of teaching adults in the formal setting of academia was helpful in formatting the lesson plans. During the evaluation of the lessons he commented that he was personally convicted to do a better job discipling his son at home, which I considered a strong endorsement of the material.

My third expert holds a Doctor of Ministry in Missiology and a Master of Divinity from Mid-America Baptist Theological Seminary. He and his late wife were

international representatives through the Southern Baptist International Mission Board from 1990 to 2004. During this phase of his ministry, he served in Portugal, Angola, Kenya, and Namibia in a variety of roles including church developer, academic dean, seminary professor, and strategist for reaching the Ngangela people group of Angola, Zambia, and Namibia. Prior to his time on the mission field, he planted Lake Forest Baptist Church (now known as The Church at Lake Forest) in Walls, Mississippi. He was the pastor at Wellborn Baptist Church in northern Florida for nine years prior to joining the Gulf Stream Baptist Association in Florida, as Director of Missions in 2014. His input was of great value in the theological viability of the lesson plans and formatting them in a way that a layperson could understand.

The panel utilized a rubric to evaluate the biblical faithfulness, teaching methodology, scope, and applicability of the curriculum.² In order to proceed in teaching the curriculum, each lesson plan had to receive a collective score from the panel of at least a 90 percent sufficient. All six lesson plans evaluated by the panel exceeded the 90 percent sufficient score. Upon receiving feedback from the panel, I submitted the six lesson plans to my supervisor for his final review and assessment. The approval to proceed toward training was granted with an encouragement to create lesson guides for the participants.³

The Weekly Developmental Process

The process from the beginning of implementation of the project to the sixth and final lesson took a total of seventeen weeks, including the recruitment of the panel, preparation of the curriculum, recruitment of the participants, actual teaching of the curriculum, and follow-up. Next is a week-by-week breakdown of the development and implementation process.

²See appendix 2.

³See appendix 4.

Week 1: Preparation

The panel of experts was contacted seeking assistance in evaluating the six-week curriculum for *D-6 Dads*.⁴ After securing their commitment to review and score each lesson plan, utilizing the rubric, the development of the curriculum began.

Week 2: Development of Lesson 1

Each lesson reinforced a common goal to equip fathers at Parkridge Baptist Church to lead in the discipleship of their children. The target group was made up of Christian men who are fathers at Parkridge Baptist Church. All fathers had multiple children and were members of PBC. The curriculum title I selected was “*D-6 Dads*.” The definition of a D-6 Dad used for this series was “a dad that desires to lead his family, particularly his children, in the discipleship at home according to Deuteronomy 6:4-9.”

The traits of a D-6 dad entail three things: (1) he must know his *role*, (2) he must have a *process*, and (3) he must have a *plan*. These three characteristics were the key foundational aspects throughout the curriculum. John Ellis Steen writes,

The best *plan* parents [dads] can have to help develop their children spiritually is to realize the distinctiveness of their [dads] *role* and the church’s role, respectively. Spiritual growth and learning necessitates a shared effort [*process*] put forth within a community . . . but home will always tend to have the greater impact (emphasis mine).⁵

Each lesson plan utilized Richards and Bredfeldt’s “Hook, Book, Look, and Took” method for consistency.⁶ The “hook” for lesson 1 posed the question: “What is going on in our families?” The answers presented came from the “Family Needs

⁴See appendix 5.

⁵John Ellis Steen, “Family: A Context for Discipleship,” in *Practical Family Ministry: A Collection of Ideas for Your Church*, ed. Timothy Paul Jones and John David Trentham (Nashville: Randall House, 2015), 41.

⁶Lawrence O. Richards and Gary J. Bredfeldt, *Creative Bible Teaching*, rev. and exp. (Chicago: Moody, 1998). The format of the lesson plans use the elements found on pp. 151-66. See table 14a, 14b. The Hook is the attention getter; the Book covers a breakdown of the text; the Look seeks to engage practically; and the Took seeks to apply the lesson aim in order to see a change in the learner.

Survey,”⁷ and showed that 56 percent of parents do not engage in family devotions and 23 percent engage in family devotions rarely. Eight out of 10 parents were not engaging in family devotions on a regular basis. What was the cause of this phenomenon? The overarching answers are time and tools.

Considering the anemic results, it was important to share with the fathers the definition of discipleship and the teachings in 1 Thessalonians 2:11-12 directed toward fathers regarding their children. Discipleship did not end in the New Testament era,⁸ it was also recommended in the *Didache* and the *Letter of Barnabas*: “You shall train [your son and your daughter] in the fear of God from their youth up.”⁹ Clement of Rome urged parents to embrace the privilege of sharing “the instruction that is in Christ.”¹⁰

This lesson concluded with a time to ensure that the men could fill out the pre-survey and a challenge from Nelson and Jones: “What you do for God beyond your home will typically never be greater than what you practice with God within your home.”¹¹

Week 3: Development of Lesson 2

Upon completion of the lesson plan for week 1, it was sent to the panel for review. One panel members appreciated the overall format of the lesson outline (“Hook,

⁷Jones, *Family Ministry Field Guide*, 27-28. For further results of nearly 40,000 parents, see FamilyLife, *Family Needs Survey: National Database: August 2008* (Little Rock, AR: FamilyLife Church and Pastor Relations Office, 2008).

⁸Timothy Paul Jones, “The Task Too Significant to Hire Someone Else to Do,” in *Perspectives on Family Ministry: 3 Views*, ed Timothy Paul Jones (Nashville: B & H, 2009), 19.

⁹Ibid. Jones cites the *Didache* 4:9 and the *Epistle of Barnabas* in *ibid.*, 19n10.

¹⁰Ibid. Clement of Rome, *First Epistle*, 21:6-8. Jones covers many early church fathers who reinforced the duty of parents in the discipleship of their children. Polycarp encouraged parents to “train their children in the fear of God” (Polycarp of Smyrna, *To the Philippians*, 4:2). John Chrysostom described the process as training children to be “athletes for Christ” (*De Inani*, 19; 39; 63; 90). Jones, “The Task Too Significant,” 19-20.

¹¹Bryan Nelson and Timothy Paul Jones, “Introduction: The Problem with Family Ministry,” in *Trained in the Fear of God: Family Ministry in Theological, Historical, and Practical Perspective*, ed. Randy Stinson and Timothy Paul Jones (Grand Rapids: Kregel, 2011), 14.

Book, Look, and Took” method). Another panel member noted that the lesson had a clear aim and appreciated the target group was expressed in the outline. The third panel member noted that the role, plan, and the process were clearly defined. All rubrics met the required 90 percent “sufficient” and no major changes were recommended. Lesson 2 focused on the theological support and reinforced the thesis that fathers are to lead in the discipleship of the children, particularly in the home.

The opening “hook” for this lesson encouraged the participant to take a mental journey and imagine that he calls his spouse and says, “It has been too long since your last date night.” He proceeds to tell her that he has hired a “professional dater” to take her out that evening. This story continues with the husband telling his wife, “That’s right, honey, a professional dater and he is much better than me at dating—he actually likes chick flicks.” The fathers were then asked to imagine what they thought the response would be from their wives. (If the wife is willing, a man may have bigger problems than discipling his children.)¹² The point was simple; there is no better person than a husband to take his wife out on a date night. Jones reminds fathers, “Some tasks are too significant to be surrendered to ‘professionals.’”¹³ This concept was applied to the lesson taught in session 1. Most Christian men agree that they should disciple their children, but they simply do not have the time or the tools. Parents often rely too much on professionals at church, schools, and even organized sports to do what the parent should be doing in the lives of their children. Ministers can help with the training and in the support and reinforcement of what should be happening at home, which was the thrust of lesson 2.

Three key verses were covered in this lesson: Deuteronomy 6:4-9, Psalm 78:1-8, and Ephesians 6:1-4. These verses were researched and an exegesis of each verse was

¹²Inspiration for this story comes from Jones, “The Task Too Significant,” 19.

¹³Ibid.

presented in chapter 2. In this lesson plan, each verse was explored and an overview was given.

Deuteronomy 6:4-9 is referred to as the *Shema*, or “to hear.” The foundational truth of this passage is that God is one and He is the true God. The foundational duty is that all Christian fathers should love Him, hear Him, and obey Him. Fathers are called to transfer the great deeds of God recorded in Exodus to their children and the generations that follow should be taught to observe the commands and the laws.

A repetitive formula is seen in this passage for fathers to teach and talk to their children when they are sitting, walking, lying down, and rising up. The indication is clear that parents ought to be teaching and talking to their children about the truths of God all the time. Before leaving this passage, it was important to note that Jesus expressed the importance of the *Shema* in all three synoptic Gospels (Matt 22:37-38; Mark 12:29-30; and Luke 10:27). When Jesus was asked what the greatest and foremost commandment was, he proceeded to quote directly from the *Shema*. Jesus’ response clearly expressed the importance of this section of Scripture and showed a clear correlation between the *Shema* and the Decalogue (Luke 10:26).

The next Scripture covered was Psalm 78:1-8. The word listen sets the tone much like the Deuteronomy passage used the word “hear” to get the reader’s attention. The reader is to pay attention; to meditate on the exhortation within the Psalm. The foundational duty of the father here is to pass along the history of God to his children and to the next generation. Not only are dads to pass along the history, but the “wondrous works” (vv. 4, 5); which is the testimony of Jacob and the appointment of the Law. The psalmist gives the reader a warning not to be rebellious and stubborn as their fathers had been before them.

Finally, in Ephesians 6:1-4 was covered. After Paul addressed wives and husbands as a part of the house codes, he turns his attention to children and fathers. This passage is often paired with Colossians 3:20-21, and the treatment can be found in

chapter 2. Children are given two imperative verbs: obey and to honor. Children are encouraged to obey in the Lord, for it is right and to show honor to parents with a twofold promise: (1) that it may be well with them, and (2) they may live a long life on earth.

Paul warns fathers not to cause their children to become angry, but to bring them up in the training and instruction of the Lord. This New Testament passage upholds the teaching in the Old Testament by making a direct connection with Deuteronomy 6 and Psalm 78:1-8. The training and instruction is to be “of the Lord,” which is Christlike, meek, gentle (2 Cor 10:1), and filled by the Holy Spirit.

Before this lesson was finished the fathers read Deuteronomy 17:18-20 and compared the king’s instructions and how it related to the father’s duties to teach children. In short, fathers are to internalize God’s Word and apply the Word to their daily lives. Unless a father is striving to be discipled it is difficult to imagine him discipling his children.

The lesson ended with fathers committing to pray that the text studied would begin to change the way they view the discipleship process of their children and the role they play as fathers. The next lesson focused on the role of the husband.

Week 4: Development of Lesson 3

Lesson 2 was sent to the panel for review. One of panel members encouraged me in the feedback that lesson 2 was theologically solid in the argument for the biblical mandate that fathers are to take the lead in the discipleship of their children. The other panel members returned the rubric with no suggested revisions. Lesson 2 met the required 90 percent “sufficient.”

The development of lesson 3 began. The “hook” for this lesson included a few statistics on the decline of marriage in society.¹⁴ Over the last forty years, the statistics

¹⁴Timothy Keller with Kathy Keller, *The Meaning of Marriage: Facing the Complexities of Commitment with the Wisdom of God* (New York: Riverhead, 2011), 14. The authors quote statistics from W. Bradford Wilcox, ed., *The State of Our Unions: Marriage in America*, 2009 (The National Marriage

indicating the health of marriages have been in a steady decline. In 1970, 77 percent of the marriages were intact compared to 61 percent in 2011. The divorce rate is nearly twice the rate it was in 1960. Also in 1960, 72 percent of American adults were married, but in 2008, that number was only 50 percent. Despite the negative numbers and the negative press that marriages receive, there is good news. Although 45 percent of marriages end in divorce, the vast majority of those marriages occurred before the age 18, and involves persons who dropped out of school and had a baby before marriage. Young adults who come from intact families, are religious, have a decent income, and marry after age 25 have a far better chance of staying married.

There is more good news for the children. Children who grow up in married, two-parent families have two to three times more positive life outcomes. The point is simple: being married and growing up with parents who are married are enormous boosts to overall well-being. Thus, husbands need to work hard to keep their marriages intact. The next section of lesson 3 highlights what the Bible has to say about the role of the husband.

Scripture clearly states that a man has a distinct role in the marriage. Christ is the head of every man and the man is the head of his wife. The first role of the husband is to lead his wife as God is the head of Christ (1 Cor 11:3). Stuart Scott identifies five areas in how the husband should lead his wife.¹⁵ The first area is in spiritual welfare and calls for the husband to lead his wife in prayer and to read the Bible together (Eph 5:25-27). The second is by helping her in decision making by avoiding the two pitfalls of selfishness and subjectivity (Col 1:9-10). Third is leading her in her relationships, recognizing that the most important relationship a husband has outside of God is the

Project, University of Virginia), and *The Marriage Index: A Proposal to Establish Leading Marriage Indicators* (Institute for American Values and the National Center on African American Marriages and Parenting, 2009).

¹⁵Stuart Scott, *Biblical Manhood: Masculinity, Leadership and Decision Making* (Bemidji, MN: Focus Publishing, 2001), 48. The list of ways to lead is provided in chap. 5, "Leadership Specifics in Marriage." Scott's work is detailed in chap. 3 and reviewed in this section.

relationship he has with his wife. A husband needs to help his wife foster God-honoring relationships with the friends she has (Titus 2:3-5). Fourth is to help her find her place of ministry (1 Pet 4:10). Finally, a husband needs to lead his wife in the area of her physical wellbeing. A husband should concern himself with his wife's basic needs, such as food and rest, and he also should be concerned about her general health issues and ensure his wife has the proper medical attention available to her.

The next role of the husband is to love his wife. Ephesians 5:25-27 emphasizes that the love husbands have for their wives should be reflective of how Christ loves the church and gave himself up for her. Scripture indicates sixteen characteristics of love (1 Cor 13:4-8). Husbands should strive to love their wives biblically. Three ways to show a wife love are presented in this lesson: (1) actively—show her love in tangible ways, (2) according to knowledge—understand her, her circumstances, and her interests, and (3) sacrificially—model the love of Jesus. A husband would do well to remember the encouragement in 1 Peter 3:7-8 that when he honors his wife, as an heir to the kingdom, his prayers will not be hindered.

In addition to loving her actively, according to knowledge, and sacrificially, a husband is encouraged to lead and love his wife out of a heart of compassion. Paul exhorts believers to “be imitators of me, just as I am of Christ” (1 Cor 11:1). Stuart Scott explains that to imitate Christ is to “serve as an improving copy of our perfect pattern, Jesus Christ, by deliberately focusing on and practicing His likeness.”¹⁶ Through this role, a husband exemplifies Christ to his wife, his family, and the world.¹⁷ A wife should be the husband's first priority, humanly speaking, second only to the biblical command of placing God in the position of first place (Exod 20:3; Deut 5:7).

¹⁶Stuart Scott, *The Exemplary Husband: A Biblical Perspective*, rev. ed. (Bemidji, MN: Focus Publishing, 2002), 9.

¹⁷*Ibid.*, 75.

This lesson concluded with the encouragement that each husband should pray about ways in which he can lead and love his wife. The men were to write those ways in an action plan and pray that God would give them the ability to lead and love their wives well.

As this lesson came to a close, each man was encouraged to plan a date night with his wife in order to discuss the key concepts learned. The husbands were also encouraged to let their wives know how important they are to them and be sensitive to areas that the husband (possibly) may not have led well in the past. It is important that men are willing to ask for forgiveness where and when it is needed. He also needs to build in a time of prayer with his wife as a part of this date night assignment. The husbands were reminded of the quote from Jones from the last lesson: “It is a task that is too significant to hire someone else to do.” The next lesson covers the process of family discipleship by looking at The Big Questions and an effective discipling tool referred to as “5-4-3-2-1.”

Week 5: Development of Lesson 4

Upon the completion of the outline for lesson 3, it was sent to the panel for review. One of the panel members affirmed the value in presenting the “goodness of marriage” and that being married and growing up with parents who are married are enormous boosts to overall well-being of the children. Lesson 3 met the required minimum of 90 percent “sufficient.”

Work began on lesson 4. The “hook” for this lesson began with asking the group to think about the word *catechism*. What comes to mind? After collecting various answers, the lesson plan called for a brief introduction of *katēcheō*. *Catechism* is the content of what is taught and is a biblical word always used in the context of instructing in the faith (Acts 21:21; 1 Cor 14:19). *Catechesis* is the process or form of what is taught and is an excellent tool for the process of discipleship. Parrett and Packer define *katēcheō*

as “to share a communication that one receives,” and “to teach.”¹⁸ For the purposes of this training, I refer to catechism as The Big Questions with the hope that it would be memorable to the participants and take the stigma off of the word. Another reason I called this section The Big Questions was to intentionally relieve the tension and confusion that might have existed in using the word *catechism* for the discipleship of children; many may think that by adopting catechism that churches are abandoning evangelical doctrine and are adopting the tools and techniques from other denominations such as the Presbyterians or Catholics. In actuality catechisms can be a great tool to teach orthodoxy and remains to be a great evangelical tool in teaching the gospel.

The next portion covered a brief historical survey including Calvin’s Catechism (1541), the Heidelberg Catechism (1563), Craig’s Catechism (1581), The New Catechism (1644), The Westminster Larger Catechism (1648), The Baptist Catechism (adapted by John Piper from The London Catechism, 1742), and The Catechism of Biblical Teaching, by John Broadus (1892). A brief overview of catechisms was included in the outline so that fathers could gain an understanding of catechisms and how they have been used from the time of the early church until today. By studying the long rich history of catechisms, it was my hope that fathers embrace this word in their future plans to teach their children doctrinal truth.

Catechisms share common doctrinal truths, including creation, fall, redemption, the Ten Commandments, the Lord’s Prayer, the Apostles’ Creed, the Word, and the sacraments. The catechetical content and doctrinal truth can be taught using the process called “5-4-3-2-1.”¹⁹

The “5” in this process is the *Five Founts*. The first of the founts is that there is a Triune God: God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit. The second of

¹⁸Gary Parrett and J. I. Packer, *Grounded in the Gospel: Building Believers the Old-Fashioned Way* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 2010), 27.

¹⁹*Ibid.*, 77-94. This process was detailed in chap. 3 as well.

the founts is the teaching on Scripture—the fact that the Word is God-breathed (2 Tim 3:16, 17) and is infallible, inerrant, and the ultimate authority. The third fount is the Story—creation, fall, redemption, and culmination. The fourth fount is the gospel. The catechetical teaching is simple: God saves sinners and Jesus is the Way, the Truth, and the Life. The fifth and last fount is Faith: it is through faith one is saved and faith impacts one's lifestyle.

The “4” in this process is the *Four Fixtures*. The first of the fixtures is the historic Apostles' Creed. The second is the Ten Commandments (Decalogue). The third fixture is Lord's Prayer and the fourth is the Sacraments or the Ordinances of the church and includes teaching on baptism and the Lord's Supper.

The “3” in this process is the *Three Facets of the Faith*. The first facet is Truth, which is manifested through preaching, teaching, and living a life according to the gospel and sound doctrine (Gal 2:5; Eph 1:13; and 1 Tim 1:10). The second facet is Life and focuses the learner on the eternal relationship available with God, through the redemption provided by Christ. This relationship starts through a new birth and then continues throughout life as the believer walks a path of sanctification through the grace of God. The third facet is the Way and is inseparable from the former two. The Way is summed up in the Ten Commandments that believers are to love God and love their neighbors,²⁰ which transitions into the next element of the “5-4-3-2-1” process.

The “2” in this process is the *Two Fundamentals of the Way*, and reinforces the last element of the *Three Facets* that believers are to love God with all of their heart, mind, soul, and strength (Matt 22:37; Mark 12:29; and Luke 10:25-37). The life believers live through Christ, who is the Way, the Truth, and the Life (John 14:16), compels Christians to transfer that love into a tangible love for their neighbors.

²⁰Packer and Parrett, *Grounded in the Gospel*, 90.

Finally, the “1” in this process is *One Focus—Proclaim Christ*. All who accept Christ are to learn all they can about Christ so that they can proclaim Him to a lost and dying world (Matt 28:19, 20). One could argue that the best way to love someone is to share the gospel with them. For fathers, there is no better way to love their children than to proclaim the saving grace of Jesus to them. Parrett and Packer sum up this discipleship process:

There are *five founts, or frames*, for catechesis → the fifth element of which is the Faith → which has been traditionally communicated through the *four fixtures* of the catechism → which together bear witness to the *three facets of the Faith* → the third of which is *the Way* → which has *two fundamentals*: love of God and love of neighbor → which Jesus alone has fully obeyed, and whose grace alone enables us to begin to obey. Therefore Jesus Christ must ever be the one focus of all our ministries of catechesis.²¹

The challenge to the fathers at the end of this lesson was not to allow the term *catechism* to stop them from *catechizing*. The lesson called for fathers, as a part of their homework, to invent their own term that fit their family, i.e., *Grounded and Growing*, *Faithful Formation*, *Mastering Maturity*, *Going for Growth*, or any other name that they feel comfortable with using. The men were challenged in this lesson to find a catechism that works best for them and they received a printed copy of Piper’s *A Baptist Catechism*.²²

At the end of the lesson, the fathers were encouraged to pray that God would give them the tools and the time to lead in the discipleship of their children. The next lesson moved into the plan of Family Equipping.

Week 6: Development of Lesson 5

Upon the completion of the outline for lesson 4, it was sent to the panel for their review. One of the panel members focused on the formatting of the outline and made suggestions that gave consistency to the overall structure and suggested further

²¹Packer and Parrett, *Grounded in the Gospel*, 94.

²²John Piper, “A Baptist Catechism,” *Desiring God*, accessed March 20, 2017, <http://www.desiringgod.org/articles/a-baptist-catechism>.

clarification on Parrett and Packer's rendering of catechism in Galatians 6:6, this was adjusted per his instructions. Another panel member made a comment in the notes as he returned the rubric,

This is quite an expansive section of material to be presenting to men. Isn't it overkill? Yes, you need to have researched it thoroughly and demonstrate your competence to present the concept, but don't the men need to learn HOW to do it rather than WHO has done it in the past? If you spend this much time on the history, won't you lose the average guy in the pew who needs to know how to use catechism and who really cares less about the history. Just a thought.

This comment proved to be prophetic. I elected not to adjust the lesson and after I taught this lesson I regretted not considering this panel members advice to focus on the "how" instead of the "who."

Work on lesson 5 began. The "hook" for this lesson began with the consideration given to the cost of having children. It is estimated that the cost of having and raising children is approximately \$289,000 per child.²³ It was the intent of this exercise to present the astronomical cost of raising children and the value God places on those children. Psalm 127:3-5 was taught in this lesson and drove home how fathers should perceive God's provision of children. The psalmist reveals that children are a heritage from the Lord, like arrows in the hand of a warrior, and blessed is the man who fills his quiver with them. This lesson equipped fathers with a plan that enabled them to disciple their children, who are a precious gift from God. The fathers explored a plan and process to disciple their children in this lesson. The F.O.C.U.S. plan, written by John Ellis Steen,²⁴ was presented along with the components of the Family Equipping model.

²³Steve Wright and Chris Graves, *ApParent Privilege* (Royal Palm Beach, FL: InQuest Ministries, 2008), 69. The authors quote from the article "Cost of Children? The Numbers Ain't Kidding" found at www.msnbc.msn.com/id/20203458/. At the time of this writing, this link was a dead link. The following link reflect the same numbers: "Cost of Children? The Numbers Ain't Kidding," August 9, 2007, accessed March 28, 2017, <http://www.today.com/money/cost-children-numbers-ain-t-kidding-wbna20203458>.

²⁴Steen, "Family: A Context for Discipleship," 45-47.

The acronym F.O.C.U.S. is a helpful tool that gives fathers a plan they can use in the discipleship of their children. The “F” stands for *First seek him* (Matt 6:33). Fathers are reminded to keep their personal life on track and to strive for Christlikeness. Fathers cannot lead their children where they have not gone, so they need to exercise spiritual discipline including daily prayer and reading Scripture. The “O” stands for *Opportunities come knocking—listen for them* (Eph 5:16). Fathers need to look for teachable moments, ask their children questions about God, about the Bible, or what they have recently learned in church. Other opportunities include celebrating milestones (The Big Events are covered in the next lesson). The “C” stands for *Color outside the lines*. Spiritual growth does not happen only while reading the Bible. A D-6 Dad finds creative ways to teach by taking walks, riding bikes, and going to the park, all the while looking for ways to talk about God’s creation and His goodness. The “U” stands for *Understand that you children do not always understand the things of God* (Isa 55:8, 9). Each disciple is on a spiritual journey and children learn at different stages. Fathers need to find ways to relate biblical truths, such as tithing, respect, and obedience, in ways the child can understand based on their age and stage of life. The “S” stands for *Simple teaching and activities are important* (Prov 22:6). Components of this element of F.O.C.U.S. remind fathers that it can be easy cooking breakfast and doing a short devotion, praying at bedtime, taking time to utilize the activity pages sent home from church. Another simple idea is allowing one of the children to lead in a time of devotion and prayer, especially as they grow older. Finally, a great way to bless a child is to leave a word of encouragement in their lunch box. Each element of the F.O.C.U.S. tool is designed to be a helpful tool for fathers to focus on the fact that their children are truly a blessing and a heritage from God.

The next section of lesson 5 taught the importance of the Family-Equipping Model. This process can be utilized by fathers in the discipleship process by partnering with the local church for assistance and support. Timothy Paul Jones defines Family-

equipping as a “process of reorienting existing ministries to partner with parents.”²⁵ Two key dynamics were presented: (1) family-as-church and (2) church-as-family. The goal of the family-as-church model is to “equip parents to disciple their children in the context of daily lives together.”²⁶ Jonathan Edwards described the home as a “little church” and claimed it to be more effective in the Christian formation of the child than the minister in the congregation.²⁷ The goal for church-as-family is to “help God’s people relate to one another more like a family.”²⁸ James K. A. Smith calls the church our “first family,”²⁹ which works in cooperation with parents in the worship liturgy, the sacraments, and assisting in the spiritual formation of the their children.

The components of family-equipping include faith talks, faith walks, faith processes in the home, and showing faith examples to spiritual orphans. Faith talks are designated times, at least once per week, when the family gathers for prayer and studying God’s Word. Jones defines a faith walk as a “discussion in the course of daily life that turns a child’s attention toward the presence of the gospel and the providence of God in every part of life.”³⁰ Faith walks work nicely for busy fathers because faith walks tend not to be another item on the calendar, they happen spontaneously with little to no planning required. Faith processes at home seek to create a plan that attends to the

²⁵Jones, *Family Ministry Field Guide*, 26.

²⁶*Ibid.*, 11.

²⁷*Ibid.* Jones quotes Jonathan Edwards, “Living to Christ,” in *Sermons and Discourses, 1720-172*, vol. 10 of *The Works of Jonathan Edwards*, ed. W. H. Kinnach (New Haven, CT: Yale University, 1992), 577.

²⁸Timothy Paul Jones, introduction to *Practical Family Ministry*, 11, 12. For historical exploration of “church as family,” see Joseph Hellerman, *The Ancient Church as Family* (Minneapolis: Augsburg Fortress, 2001).

²⁹James K. A. Smith, *You Are What You Love: The Spiritual Power of Habit* (Grand Rapids: Brazos, 2016), 116-17.

³⁰Jones, *Family Ministry Field Guide*. 162.

child's spiritual needs at his or her level. Celebrating milestones is a great way to naturally disciple based on what is already happening in the child's life (more on milestones is developed lesson 6). Finally, showing faith examples to spiritual orphans is a natural outflow from faith talks and faith walks. A family uses these practices at home will desire to reach out to others with the gospel. Fathers should be ever mindful to raise children who desire to share the gospel with spiritual orphans.

Next was a challenge for fathers to conduct a family talk during the week as homework. The *read, pray, and sing* technique developed by Donald S. Whitney was the format recommended to help fathers meet this goal.³¹ *Read*—the Bible is the training manual for life, one's source of wisdom, one's source of righteousness, and one's source of hope. Resources recommended to the men to help them with a family talk included *Old Story New: Ten-Minute Devotions to Draw Your Family to God*; *Long Story Short: Ten-Minute Devotions to Draw Your Family to God*, *The Bible's Big Story: Salvation History for Kids*.³² Second, *Pray*—Steve Farrar reminds fathers, “There are two mistakes we can make . . . emphasize Scripture without prayer; emphasize prayer without Scripture.”³³ Fathers do well to remember to teach their children to pray aloud and have them keep a prayer list. Finally, *Sing*—this can be accomplished by using a song book or simply by singing songs the family heard on Sunday. After all, the Bible encourages believers to make a joyful noise (Ps 100:1).

³¹Donald S. Whitney, *Family Worship* (Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2016), 45. Whitney refers to this as simply *family worship*. The three components are Read, Pray, and Sing.

³²Marty Machowski, *Old Story New: Ten-Minute Devotions to Draw Your Family to God* (Greensboro, NC: New Growth, 2012); Marty Machowski, *Long Story Short: Ten-Minute Devotions to Draw Your Family to God* (Greensboro, NC: New Growth, 2010); James M. Hamilton, Jr., *The Bible's Big Story: Salvation History for Kids* (Fearn, Scotland: Christian Focus, 2014).

³³Steve Farrar, *Point Man: How a Man Can Lead His Family* (Sisters, OR: Multnomah, 2003), 129.

Week 7: Development of Lesson 6

Upon the completion, the outline for lesson 5 was sent to the panel for their review. There were no major revisions suggested by any of the panel members and the lesson plan met the requirement 90 percent “sufficient.”

The development of lesson 6 began. The “hook” for this lesson began with asking the fathers to remember a big event from their childhood. The goal was to point out that certain memories pertaining to family, church, school, and relationships had a profound impact on their lives and stays with an individual for a lifetime. Brian Haynes writes, “Planning your journey is the difference between hoping your kids randomly end up loving God versus actually ‘training them up in the way they should go.’”³⁴ This lesson identified The Big Events and The Big Outcomes fathers should desire their children to experience as they disciple them.

A review time was included in this lesson to discuss the homework assignment to conduct a family talk time during the week. Discussion questions included, What went well? What study did you do? What hurdles did you have to overcome? Did you incorporate the *read*, *pray*, and *sing* tools? After the collection of the various responses, the fathers were encouraged to celebrate their accomplishment as a major “big event” and a “big outcome” for their families. The next section covers more “big events and “big outcomes.”

In lesson 4 I covered catechism as a teaching tool and called it “The Big Questions.” In lesson 6 I moved into developing The Big Events and The Big Outcomes. Brian Haynes discusses the Legacy Milestones which was I referred to here as The Big Events.³⁵ Seven milestones or big events can be celebrated by the family and used as teachable moments in the discipleship of children. The first big event is baby dedication,

³⁴Brian Haynes, *The Legacy Path: Discovering Intentional Spiritual Parenting* (Nashville: Randall House, 2011), 60-61.

³⁵*Ibid.*, 61-96.

or family dedication as Parkridge Baptist Church refers to it. Parents enter into a covenant with the church to help raise the child—church-as-family. The parents make a commitment to be the primary faith trainer. Since each milestone builds upon the other, it is important to record this with pictures and a certificate so the parent and child can reflect on this event as the child grows older. The second big event is when the child makes a faith commitment to follow Christ as Lord and Savior. The third is preparing for adolescence (between the ages of 9 and 12). Adjustments need to be made because the child is no longer childlike. During this time, parents begin to notice changes physically; parents should talk to their child about what changes are happening. Spiritually, the child begins to form his or her own opinions. Parents should reinforce the truths of God. Changes begin to happen emotionally; there is a keen sense of self-identity. Reinforcement that Christ defines the child is important during this stage. Children in this stage of life need to know their friends do not define them, and certainly, not the media. The fourth big event is making a commitment to purity. This is not an easy time, but with a relational connection and an attitude of having an open line of communication can help with this potentially awkward time. Fifth is the rite of passage and occurs during the middle and high school years. The child begins to receive increased trust and with that trust comes more freedom and these freedoms are not based on age, but are based on spiritual maturity. Somewhere between big event 4 and 5, apologetics, dating, marriage, and practical life skills need to be interjected. The sixth big event is high school graduation. Here, the parent reinforces the skill and knowledge that will be important as they move into the next phase of their life. Obedience to God needs to be reinforced along with their identity in Christ. Finally, the last big event is life in Christ. This milestone may be the end of the legacy path, but it is just the beginning of the journey of life. The parent becomes less of a teacher or guide on the journey and takes on the role of a wise counselor helping their young adult navigate through life. This transition can be

daunting and all parents need to do is simply remember the promises that God is sovereign and they can trust Him with the outcome (Jer 29:11).

Holly Allen did a qualitative study and surveyed parents asking them what they wanted to see from their children as a part of the community of believers. What do you want them to know? How do you want them to live? Who do you hope they will become?³⁶ For this project, I elected to refer to these as The Big Outcomes. The answers to Allen's questions can guide parents in knowing what the desired results are as they lead in the discipleship of their children. This list may not be exhaustive for all families, but still is quite valuable as a gauge to the effectiveness of the parent's discipling efforts. Allen discovered that parents desired their children to know God, believe God is love, receive Christ, love their neighbor (serve the poor, the hurting, and the broken), pray, know the Master story of creation, fall, redemption, and consummation, desire to worship God, share Jesus with other, grow in compassion, humility, love, and mercy, and have their identity in Christ.

Parents also reported that their children should begin an understanding of their place in the kingdom, the role of the Holy Spirit, the Trinity, the central importance of Scripture, the power of sin, the crucial role of the church, and the need for Christ to save them. As fathers consider their role, process, and plan, they need to remember The Big Questions, The Big Events, and The Big Outcomes.

Before the last lesson ended, there was time for the fathers to divide into groups of two and pray for each other's journey to disciple their families. For homework, the fathers were asked to conduct their second family talk time and to incorporate the *read, pray, and sing* model.

³⁶Holly Allen, "Curriculum and Children's Ministry," in *Mapping Out Curriculum in Your Church: Cartography for Christian Pilgrims*, ed. James Estep, Roger White, and Karen Estep (Nashville: B & H, 2012), 240. Allen displays a figure in her chapter called "Children's Learning Goals," which is based on a qualitative study done in a church revitalization program.

Week 8: Compiled Data from Panel

Feedback and scores were received from lesson 6. One of the panel members made helpful comments about the “hook” portion of the outline. His input was that he thought it was helpful to point out how childhood memories spent with parents are still easily recalled as an adult. The point made was that fathers have an opportunity to build memories with their children in the same way the fathers experienced growing up. The other panel members did not suggest any revisions. Over the span of six weeks, all six lesson plans were sent to the expert panel and the data from all eighteen rubrics were calculated. The final results were tallied from the rubrics and the lessons met more than the minimum requirement of 90 percent “sufficient.” All six lessons of the curriculum were reviewed by my supervisor and feedback and comments were received. It was suggested by my supervisor that a PowerPoint presentation should be developed and be the mode of delivery for each lesson. It was also suggested that a lesson guide needed to be developed for note taking purposed by the participants.

Week 9: Recruited the Participants

The participants in the group consisted of eleven fathers. In order to be invited to join the class, participants had to (1) be a father, (2) agree to attend or view all sessions, and (3) be a professing Christian. I recruited each father by sending an e-mail to each individual.³⁷ Later in the week I made a follow-up phone call to the potential participants who did not respond to the email and extended the offer to join the group. I invited fifteen men with the goal of at least ten who would participate; four men declined. The eleven who made the commitment to participate were very positive when they heard the theme of the curriculum. Many of the men appreciated the personal invitation to be included in this project.

³⁷See appendix 6.

Week 10: Pre-Series Survey Sent

One week prior to the first class I sent the BBDI via email requesting that the survey be filled out prior to coming to the first class.³⁸ The participants were instructed not to put their name on the survey; instead, they were asked to personalize their pre-survey with a four digit code so that their anonymity could be guaranteed. The thought process of having the pre-series survey filled out prior to the class was simply to save time so that the first class would not be elongated because of the time to fill out the survey.

Before the class could be taught, a lesson guide for the participants was developed.³⁹ This guide was created by adding fill-in-the-blank lines from the original lesson plan that was approved by the panel. Then, the information from the lesson plans was transferred to a PowerPoint presentation.

Training Overview

The six lessons were taught on the campus of Parkridge Baptist Church in Coral Springs, Florida. The training began on June 18, 2017, at 11:30 a.m. and each class was approximately one hour and fifteen minutes in length. Because of a commitment to travel to The Southern Baptist Seminary the week of July 17, the last lesson was taught on July 30, 2017.

Week 11: Lesson 1 Taught

The first class met with nine participants in attendance. Two men missed because of prior commitments. It is important to note that prior to being accepted to participate in this project, all the men agreed that they would make up any absence by viewing the lesson on video. Each lesson was made available via a closed link on YouTube. The men turned in the BBDI as they walked into class. After a brief time of

³⁸See appendix 1.

³⁹See appendix 4.

introductions, I presented the lesson goal, which was to equip fathers at Parkridge Baptist Church to lead in the discipleship of their children. The definition for a D-6 Dad was then presented. The traits of a D-6 Dad were reviewed in order to set the groundwork for the course: (1) he must know his *role*, (2) he must have a *process*, and (3) he must have a *plan*.

Next, the “hook” was introduced with the question, “What is going on in our families?” I opened the floor for discussion so that fathers could add what they thought families were facing today. I collected various responses from the fathers, including materialism, parents not engaged in their child’s life, technology being utilized as a babysitting tool, busyness of society causing families to be splintered, and simply too busy in general. I then presented the statistics regarding parents and family devotions. Once the fathers saw the staggering statistics that many families do not do any type of devotions I reinforced the importance of the role of the father to disciple his children.

The group picked out key words that call the fathers to action with the help of the definition of discipleship.⁴⁰ Words like “personal,” “intentional” and “process” came up in the discussion as the fathers began to think about their role as lead disciple-maker. The lesson ended with a brief encouragement to the men from 1 Thessalonians 2:11-12 that they should be involved with their children and then a passage from the *Didache* 4:9 and the *Epistle of Barnabas* 19:5 was covered to point out that this charge did not end in the New Testament era. As the session closed, the men were reminded of from Nelson and Jones, “What you do for God beyond you home will typically never be greater than what you practice with God within your home.”⁴¹

During week 11, I uploaded the video recording of the lesson so that the two who missed the live class could review the material. I also emailed the lesson guide for

⁴⁰See appendix 3.

⁴¹Nelson with Jones, “Introduction,” 14.

note taking purposes to each of the participants that were absent. The lesson guide for lesson 2 was developed along with the PowerPoint presentation.

Week 12: Lesson 2 Taught

This session began with ten men and a quick review of the lesson taught the previous week. The “hook” for this lesson was a scenario in which a husband proposed to hire a “professional dater.” When asked how wives would react to this proposition one participant said, “She would probably tell me to hire a professional divorce attorney.” The point was then made, thanks to Timothy Paul Jones, that there is a “task too significant to hire someone else to do.”⁴²

The next section of the class dealt with an examination of Deuteronomy 6:4-9, Psalm 78:1-8, and Ephesians 6:1-4. After the biblical mandate that fathers are responsible for the discipleship of their children was established, we moved into a Deuteronomy 17:18-20 and identified how the king in this Old Testament story reveals certain characteristics for fathers: (1) an individual responsibility—the king wrote a copy of Scripture for himself, (2) a devotion to the Word of God—he kept a copy of God’s Word with him at all times and he internalized the Word as he applied to his daily living. The session ended by asking the men to pray that the texts studied would begin to change the way they viewed their role in the discipleship of their children.

During week 12, I uploaded the video recording of the lesson so that the one person who missed the live class could review the material. Midweek I received an email from one of the participants who wanted to share with me that Joel 1:3 came up during his daily devotional written by Spurgeon. Joel 1:3 exhorts fathers to “tell your children and let your children tell their children, and their children to another generation.” The participant was impressed by how this scripture coincided with the other scriptures that were taught the previous week and he was very encouraged by this reinforcement. The

⁴²Jones, “The Task Too Significant,” 19.

email was forwarded to the other classmates as a word of encouragement. The lesson guide for lesson 3 was developed along with the PowerPoint presentation.

Week 13: Lesson 3 Taught

This session began with eight men as three of the men were away for a prior commitment. I reminded the men that a D-6 Dad knows his *role*, has a *process*, and has a *plan*. Lesson 2 covered the D-6 Dad's *role* as a father. Lesson 3 focused on his *role* as a husband. The "hook" for this session was a discussion on the decline of the statistics in marriage over the last thirty years. The first lesson asked, "What is going on in our families?" The "hook" question for this lesson dealt with, "What is going on in marriages?" The statistics were presented in order for the fathers to understand that a strong marriage is the foundation for a successful family.

The simple premise of the lesson presented was that husbands should lead and love their wives. I handed out the six Bible verses (1 Cor 11:3; Eph 5:25-27; Col 1:9-10; Titus 2:3-5; 1 Pet 4:10; and Eph 5:28-29) to six men and asked them to take turns reading aloud for the group. Each verse was then reviewed from a viewpoint of the importance of leading their wives. The next section dealt with husbands loving their wives. Two additional Bible verses (1 Pet 3:7-8; Eph 5: 24-26) were given to the other two men that had not had a chance to read aloud in the previous section of leading. These verses were reviewed to support that husbands need to love their wives.

A brief exercise was conducted with men utilizing the sixteen characteristics of love found in 1 Corinthians 13. The men were asked to find the components of love in 1 Corinthians 13 that included the word "not" and then as a group try to state the antithesis of that negative trait with a positive statement. The thoughts that surfaced from the group discussion were as follows: "Love is *not* jealous" could be viewed as someone who is happy when others succeed. "Love does *not* brag" could be a person who lifts others up. "Love is *not* arrogant" is a person who accepts others no matter their social stratum. "Love does *not* act unbecomingly" is a person that has a sweet spirit and is kind. "Love

does *not* seek its own” is a person that puts others first. “Love is *not* provoked” is a person who endures or is longsuffering. “Love does *not* take account of wrong sufferings” is a person that forgets past hurts. And finally, “Love does *not* rejoice in unrighteousness” is a person that celebrates spiritual victories in his family.

Before the session ended, fathers were reminded that a wife should be a husband’s first priority, humanly speaking, second only to the biblical command of placing God in the position of first place (Exod 20:3; Deut 5:7). A man’s wife is his closest neighbor and Jesus commanded us to love God and love our neighbor (Matt 22:37-39).

During week 13, I uploaded the video recording of the lesson so that the three who missed the live class could review the material. I also emailed the lesson guide for note taking purposes to the participants. The lesson guide for lesson 4 was developed along with the PowerPoint presentation.

Week 14: Lesson 4 Taught

This session began with seven men in attendance with four absent because of prior commitments. As in previous lessons, the *role* of a D-6 Dad was reviewed and the importance of having a process and a plan was emphasized. This lesson focused on the dads’ process—The Big Questions. The “hook” for this session was for the men to think about the word *catechism*. One of the participants said that he was raised Methodist and went through Catechism and Confirmation as a child. Another man said he was raised in the Catholic Church and he also went through the process of Confirmation; Catechism was a part of that process. The general impression of the group was that catechism was a process that other denominations (certainly other than Baptists) practiced. I then moved through a time of teaching brief historical survey of catechisms in order to demonstrate the great doctrinal truths embedded in these documents.⁴³ One of the participants (thirty

⁴³See appendix 3.

years old with three children) commented, “I did not know what catechism was; I had never heard of it before. The study of the history of catechism helped me to know that I need to incorporate this in my family.”

The next sections were taught as written in the lesson guide covering the common doctrinal truths in the historical catechisms and then Parrett and Packer’s “Five Founts” were covered. The lesson ended with the exhortation to the dads not to let the word catechism stop them catechizing. I then provided them with Piper’s *A Baptist Catechism* and class was dismissed by praying that God would provide the tools and the time to lead out in the discipleship of their children. After the class was over, one of the fathers expressed his appreciation of the catechetical content, but he was still not clear as to exactly how to conduct a family devotion in his home with his children. I told him I appreciated his concern and told him the “how to” would be presented in lesson 5 and a video would be reviewed to help the class know what a devotion time looks like.

During week 14, I uploaded the video recording of the lesson so that the four men who missed the live class could review the material. I also emailed the lesson guide for note taking purposes to them. The lesson guide and a PowerPoint presentation were developed for next lesson 5.

Week 15: Lesson 5 Taught

This lesson began with nine men in attendance while two were absent because of prior commitments. This lesson focused on the *plan* for discipleship. The “hook” for this lesson began by asking the men if they had ever considered the cost of raising children. I went around the room and determined that between all of us in the room we had thirty children. I then presented the research data that estimates the cost of raising a child to be at \$289,000. That amount was used to multiply the number of children represented in the class and the total cost was close to \$9 million. Of course the value of children is immeasurable, but the actual dollar amount to raise them is staggering. I pointed out that the dad needs to invest in their children and it means more than just dollars. Dads need to

put a spiritual investment into their children. Psalm 127:3-5 says that children are a heritage from the Lord—they are like arrows in the hand of a warrior, and blessed is the man who has a quiver full of children. This psalm clearly demonstrates the value of children and should entice fathers to formulate an investment plan for discipleship.

The next section of the lesson covered John Ellis Steen’s F.O.C.U.S. and was taught according to the curriculum guide.⁴⁴ Then the family-equipping model was taught along with the concept of family-as-church and church-as-family. Faith talks and faith walks were emphasized along with the importance of faith processes and sharing the gospel to spiritual orphans. Whitney’s *read, pray, and sing* technique was presented as a plan to help with family talk times. We took ten minutes to watch the video showing Timothy Paul Jones conduct a live family talk.⁴⁵

The session ended with a challenge to the men to conduct a family talk time prior to lesson 6. Several of the men intimated that they were nervous about conducting a family talk time, but they were willing to begin. I explained that the next week there would be a time to share successes and challenges in conducting the family talk times. The benefit is that the fathers can learn from each other. The men were reminded of the quote from Jones studied earlier in lesson 2: “It is a task too significant to allow someone else to do.”

During week 15, I uploaded the video recording of the lesson so that the two men who missed the live class could review the material. I also emailed the lesson guide for note taking purposes to them. The lesson guide and a PowerPoint presentation were developed for the final lesson.

⁴⁴See appendix 3.

⁴⁵Derek Brown, “Jim Hamilton, Tom Nettles, and Timothy Paul Jones on Family Devotions,” *Family Ministry Today*, January 13, 2016, accessed September 21, 2016, <http://www.sbts.edu/family/2014/01/13/jim-hamilton-tom-nettles-and-timothy-paul-jones-on-family-devotions/>.

Week 16: Lesson 6 Taught

This session began with seven men in attendance and four absent because of prior commitments. This lesson focused on The Big Events and The Big Outcomes. The “hook” for this session began by asking the men to think about a big event from their childhood that made a big impression on them. One remembered his childhood in Jamaica when his mom would take him to visit his dad on the ship his dad worked on when his father was in port. One recounted times at the Orange Bowl watching college football games with his dad. Another recalled a time in high school when he made the state finals and his father came to watch him compete. Another mentioned his grandfather taking him to football games at the University of Florida and how he enjoyed that time together. He also shared that the experience had a profound impact on him and he ended up attending the University of Florida later in his life. All of the answers were summarized on a whiteboard and the overarching theme was easy to see. The interaction with parents, grandparents, and family played a major role in the lives of these men. These events were so impactful that the men could vividly recall the memories associated with them as if it were yesterday. The transition to the lesson was fluid as I pointed out how big events can impact their children like they impacted each man. As fathers who want to lead out in discipleship, the goal should be to build those same types of memories with their children.

I then asked the men to share if they were able to conduct a family talk time since the last meeting. Five of the seven in class shared that they had. Later in the week I found out two of the four who were not in the class that day were able to conduct a family talk. In total, seven of the eleven were successful in finding the time and tools to conduct a devotional time with their family. Each man shared the tools he used: two used Piper’s catechism, three utilized some type of children’s devotional, and the other two used passages from Psalms and Proverbs. An interesting phenomenon came up as the men were sharing. Of those who did a family talk, reading and praying were incorporated, but they did not incorporate singing. I encouraged the men that they should celebrate the fact that they did a family talk time and celebrate that as a big event in their

family's journey. I also encouraged them not to feel bad about not singing; they could always incorporate songs in later family talks. There was an overall sense of accomplishment and one dad added that he had always known that he should be doing something, but he simply did not know where to start. Another dad shared that he was convicted to take the lead in this process: "I was content to allow my wife to take the lead and now I want to be the primary person who teaches."

The balance of the time was spent teaching the lesson as spelled out in the curriculum guide. Elements taught were Brian Haynes' "Legacy Path" and his "Legacy Milestones." For the purposes of this training, I referred to Haynes' milestones as The Big Events. The lesson then advanced into The Big Outcomes and the results of research by Holly Allen in her qualitative study surveying parents. The twenty outcomes from Allen's work were covered and then the men were instructed to take some time and circle their top ten in order to help them devise a plan for discipleship of their children. The curriculum called for the men to break into groups and share their top ten and to pray for each other. Because of time constraints this did not occur. Instead, I asked the men to pray for each other as part of their homework.

As the class (and course) came to a close, I asked the men to attempt another family talk time and informed them that I would try to follow-up via phone, email, or in person to see how things went. I handed out a copy of the post-survey to the men and instructed them to ensure their four digit code was on the survey and upon completion to email it to the ministry assistant in the church office within the week. The ministry assistant was instructed to print the post-surveys and deliver them to me in order to protect the participants' anonymity. Before the class was dismissed, I presented each man with a certificate of completion and encouraged them to show their children that they had achieved a "big event."

During week 16, I uploaded the video recording of the lesson so that the four men who missed the live class could review the material. I also emailed them the lesson

guide for note taking purposes, as well as the post-survey with the instructions in how to send back there survey to the office.

Week 17: Participant Followed-Up

I made personal contacts during this week for the purpose of accountability. I wanted to determine if the men were indeed having a family talk time. I was able to contact each participant either by phone, email, or personal conversation. Only one man had not been able to do a family talk since the completion of the course because he was waiting on a resource to come in that he had ordered. He shared with me that as soon as he received Machowski's *Long Story Short* and *Old Story New* he was ready to begin. One dad shared how he was still working to find that perfect time and technique for his family's context and schedule—he has several children ranging from age four to teenagers. Another man laughed as he told me about how his daughters loved the devotionals but his three year old son just ran around the living room. Another told me that his wife had been leading his children and he had been content with that. Now he is convicted to lead not only his children, but his wife as well. He mentioned that he started using *The Jesus Story Book Bible: Every Story Whispers His Name* by Sally Lloyd-Jones and his children loved it. Finally, another father told me that he and his family were working through Piper's catechism that he received in class and that his son who is going into sixth grade was "devouring it."

Strategic Plan

The fourth goal was to develop a three-to-five year strategic plan outline that sought to incorporate the curriculum and implement an ongoing effort that sought to encourage and equip parents in the discipleship of their children. In order for a ministry to continuously improve within its context, an ongoing strategic plan needed to be developed. Aubrey Malphurs writes, "Your strategy is the vehicle that enables the

ministry or church to accomplish its mission or overall goal, which is the Great Commission (Matt 28: 19-20).”⁴⁶

The strategic plan that was developed for completion of the fourth goal included (1) envisioning the processes for family equipping, (2) designating a point leader, (3) assembling a strategic leadership team (SLT), (4) thinking theologically and asking fundamental questions, (5) refining and redesigning the model, (6) focusing on the Great Commission, (7) taking into account the PBC’s unique ministry context.⁴⁷

Envision the Process

Strategic planning is a process. According to Malphurs, the old conventional strategic planning is now “strategic envisioning.”⁴⁸ For the purposes of this project, the envisioning process is a three-to-five year process that includes evaluating the discipleship programs in order to discover ways in which parents can be better equipped to disciple their children. Existing programs and family events would need to be assessed as to the effectiveness of the church partnering with parents for family equipping. Malphurs describes the process: “You envision the future and then ask, How will we get there.”⁴⁹

Designate a Point Leader

Strategic planning requires strategic point leader. Someone has to be responsible for the day-to-day operations. This person needs to be able to make decisions as plans unfold. Sometimes these decisions can be tough and many may have to be made quickly and with certainty. The person needs to have passion to see the ultimate goal of

⁴⁶Aubrey Malphurs, *Strategy 2000: Churches Making Disciples for the Next Millennium* (Grand Rapids: Kregel, 1996), 30.

⁴⁷Aubrey Malphurs, *Advanced Strategic Planning: A New Model for Church and Ministry Leaders*, 2nd ed. (Grand Rapids: Baker, 2005), 26-29.

⁴⁸*Ibid.*, 27.

⁴⁹*Ibid.*

disciplining children achieved, and at the same time be able to influence a team to get the job done.

Assemble a Strategic Leadership Team

A strategic leadership team is vital in the strategic planning process. A team approach can be a good way to change the church culture that often looks to the pastor for the next big idea. More ideas can be gathered from a team and gifted leaders understand that there is wisdom in many counselors (Prov 15:22). Malphurs writes that leaders “understand that they can accomplish far more through the wisdom of a gifted and committed strategic team of staff and lay leaders.”⁵⁰

Think Theologically toward a Model

Strategic planning requires thinking. When pastors and lay-leaders work together on a strategic team they should think theologically. Malphurs recommends that the team should ask fundamental questions such as, “What does the Bible say about why we are here? Who are we? What drives us? What are we supposed to be doing? What does that look like? How will we accomplish what we are supposed to be doing?”⁵¹ Strategic teams should avoid an approach that is gleaned from another ministry. What works well at another church may not work in the context of the strategic team’s church. Asking the appropriate fundamental questions ensures the team’s developed model fits their particular ministry context.

Refine and Redesign the Model

The outcome of the strategic process is a model for ministry and discipleship. As the strategic team begins to implement the model, adjustments will need to be made.

⁵⁰Malphurs, *Advanced Strategic Planning*, 28.

⁵¹Ibid.

Malphurs asserts, “As leaders continue to apply the process, they will continually redesign the model to reach their community as it changes. Thus over time they are designing and redesigning how they do church.”⁵² An effective point leader will always be looking for ways to assess the model and to seek the wisdom of the strategic team for improvements.

Focus on the Great Commission

A strategic plan for ministry and discipleship has its foundation in the Great Commission. Christ commanded his followers to “Make disciples.” Finding an effective model for ministry to make disciples, both corporately and individually, is being obedient to Christ.

Consider the Ministry Context

A strategic leadership team that seeks to be obedient to the Great Commission will remember that each church is unique. Just as no two snowflakes are alike, no two churches are alike. Churches are made up of unique individuals from different cultures and lifestyles. Malphurs stresses this for point leaders and strategic leadership team members: “Strategic planning takes into account the church’s unique ministry context.”⁵³ One thing all churches share is the need to reach the lost with the gospel and to make disciples. Having a strategic plan helps to achieve this mutual goal given to all believers. Incorporating a strategic plan helps to ensure clear communication and consistency among ministry leaders in the church. Malphurs expands on the value of the strategic plan and communication:

The strategy is the thread that runs through all the programs and not only ties them together but communicates the spiritual purpose of each. . . . The strategy communicates to your people what they have to do to get where they want to go—

⁵²Malphurs, *Advanced Strategic Planning*, 29.

⁵³Ibid.

the process—and different programs work together to facilitate their spiritual development.⁵⁴

This strategic plan outline was presented to the senior leadership at PBC and the approval was given to begin the implementation process and the selection of a strategic leadership team.⁵⁵ Some ideas were discussed for the team's initial agenda and will be discussed in the next chapter.

Conclusion

The development and implementation of the curriculum was completed over a span of seventeen weeks and served to equip the fathers who participated to be the lead disciple-maker of their children. Eleven pre-surveys and eleven post-surveys were returned, which met the minimum requirements of at least ten as outlined in the methodology goals in chapter 1. The perceptions and practices of biblical discipleship were assessed through the pre-series survey. A six-week curriculum was developed and implemented. A strategic plan was developed and presented to the leadership of Parkridge Baptist Church for the approval to ensure family equipping would continue to be integrated in the overall discipleship plan. Finally, a post-test survey was administered to the fathers and the completed project was ready to be evaluated and the effectiveness measured.

⁵⁴Malphurs, *Strategy 2000*, 31.

⁵⁵See appendix 7.

CHAPTER 5

PROJECT EVALUATION

An evaluation of this project is needed to determine the effectiveness and fulfillment of its purpose. To support the purpose of this project, a six-week curriculum entitled *D-6 Dads* was developed and trained to eleven fathers. This chapter evaluates the overall effectiveness of the project by reviewing the purpose and goals. Further, the strengths and weaknesses of the project are presented and a reflection of what could have been done differently. Finally, the chapter concludes with theological and personal reflections.

Evaluation of the Purpose

The purpose of this project was to equip fathers at Parkridge Baptist Church in Coral Springs, Florida, to lead in the discipleship of their children. The first chapter of this project explored the context and rationale for this project. PBC has experienced a substantial growth in its attendance rendering this project very timely because of the lack of intentional training for fathers to be the lead disciple-maker to their children.

In chapter 2, the theological justification established the responsibility of fathers to be the lead disciple-maker of their children. In chapter 3, practical tools were developed to aid fathers in an understanding of their role as a husband and a father along with the process and plan for disciple-making. Upon the completion of this project, it was clear by the reaction to the fathers who participated that such an endeavor was needed. It was also evident by exploring the “family-as-church” and “church-as-family” concepts, that PBC needed to continue to partner with families so that fathers will be successful in discipling their children at home. Chapter 4 included an extensive overview

of the development and implantation of the training curriculum. The family-equipping model was the philosophy determined to be the most effective model to equip fathers to be the lead disciple-makers to their children. Finally, a strategic plan outline was developed and presented to the pastoral leadership of the church.

Evaluation of the Goals

The success of this project included the development and completion of four goals. The first goal of this project was to assess the perceptions and practices fathers have in the area of biblical discipleship utilizing a pre-survey to assess the basic understanding of biblical discipleship.¹ The survey was evaluated by my supervisor prior to deployment. Trentham expressed a concern that forty questions may be too many for the participants and there may be a risk of survey fatigue. I elected to keep all forty questions in the original survey, but later discovered that many of the questions were not needed in the final evaluation and the statistical significance of the curriculum. The second goal was to develop a six-week training curriculum that would encourage and equip at least ten fathers to take the lead role in the discipleship of their children.² The third goal was to implement the training utilizing the curriculum, equip fathers to provide biblical discipleship to their children, and hold them accountable for the implementation of a devotional time in their homes. A post-survey was given to evaluate if progress was made in the area of biblical discipleship. Finally, the fourth goal was to develop a three-to-five year strategic plan outline that sought to incorporate an ongoing effort seeking to encourage and equip fathers in the discipleship of their children.³

¹See appendix 1. The questions in the BBDI were compiled with the assistance of the work by Timothy Paul Jones, in *Family Ministry Field Guide: How Your Church Can Equip Parents to Make Disciples* (Indianapolis: Wesleyan Publishing House, 2011), 202-3. All rights reserved, used by permission. All of the research instruments used in this project were performed in compliance with and approved by the Southern Baptist Theological Seminary Research Ethics Committee prior to use in the ministry project.

²See appendix 3.

³See appendix 7.

Goal 1

The first goal of this project was to assess the present perceptions and practices fathers have in the area of biblical discipleship. This goal utilized a pre-survey (BBDI) to assess the basic understanding of biblical discipleship. Prior to the training of *D-6 Dads*, each participant was given the BBDI and asked to identify themselves with a four-digit identification number in order to guarantee anonymity. The pre-survey was comprised of forty questions and was designed to determine the level of discipleship occurring within the participants' home. The target group was married men who were professing Christians and had at least one child still in the home—in fact the father all had multiple children at home. In order for this goal to be considered successful, at least ten men had to complete the pre-survey and the survey had to demonstrate their current level of basic understanding of biblical discipleship. This goal was considered fulfilled as eleven surveys were completed and handed in for evaluation

Goal 2

The second goal was to develop a six-week curriculum that would encourage and equip at least ten fathers to take the lead role in the discipleship of their children. A curriculum entitled “*D-6 Dads*” included the role of the father, the process, and the plan for discipleship. The expert panel evaluated the curriculum utilizing a rubric to determine the biblical faithfulness, teaching methodology, scope, and applicability of the curriculum.⁴ In order for this goal to be considered successful, the expert panel had to score each section with a minimum of 90 percent at the “sufficient” level according to the rubric.

The lessons were given to the panel over the course of the development period. Each evaluator gave positive feedback and overall supported the content. This goal was fulfilled as each lesson plan met at least the required minimum of the 90 percent

⁴See appendix 2.

“sufficient.” Upon receiving the rubrics from the panel and tabulating the results, the goal of developing a six-week curriculum was considered successful.

Goal 3

The third goal was to implement a curriculum in order to equip fathers to provide biblical discipleship to their children, and hold them accountable for the implementation of a devotional time at home. The training series was conducted over a six-week period of time to eleven fathers. The effectiveness of the goal was measured through administering a post-survey that evaluated the participants’ basic understanding of biblical discipleship and to test if any progress was made in the practices of biblical family discipleship.

This goal was considered successfully met when the t-test for dependent samples demonstrated a statistically significant improvement in the pre- and post-survey scores. According to Salkind, a t-test for dependent samples “involves a comparison of the means from each group of scores and focuses on the differences between the scores.”⁵ Since this project involved a single group of the same subjects being surveyed under two conditions, a t-test of dependent samples was the appropriate test statistic.⁶

T-test methodology. Eleven men completed the pre- and post-survey. The data collected from the pre-and post-test allowed me to measure the statistical significance in the biblical understanding of discipleship. The responses from the BBDI that were tested were from questions 6-22 and 32-40. Each question utilized a Likert scale with six possible selections, “strongly disagree” was assigned a value of “1” and “strongly agree” received a value of “6.” The exception to this rule applied to questions 16, 17, 19, and 20. Question 16 asked the father to rank his perception that his family

⁵Neil J. Salkind, *Statistics for People Who (Think They) Hate Statistics*, 6th ed. (Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage, 2017), 232.

⁶Ibid., 230.

was “too busy” as a reason why devotions and Bible reading at home was not happening. The next three questions asked the father to rank his perceptions of the church in the following areas: the church as the primary source for teaching the Bible, the church leaders having the primary responsibility to engage in a discipleship process with the child, and the church leaders having the primary responsibility to teach children how to present the gospel. The stronger the father agreed with these four questions the more negative the response was viewed in the survey. For these questions, the Likert scale values were reversed; a “strongly disagree” received a value of “6” and the opposite response of “strongly agree” received a value of “1.” In addition, question 36 asked specifically about family discipleship at home and was scored on the basis of movement observed in the answers between the pre- and post-test. If the participant selected the letter “H” or “not at all” in the pre-or post-test, the response received a value of “0.” If the participant selected “H” on the pre-test and any other letter in the post-test the response was scored as a “1” for the post-test evaluation. If any family discipleship was happening in the home recorded on the pre-test, the response received a value of “1.” If the post-test revealed that participant increased the frequency of family discipleship then the post-test response for question 36 receive a value of “2.” The main goal for question 36 was to document that the fathers who were not doing any type of family discipleship time had indeed begun doing one after the training. For those who stated on the pre-survey that they were already doing some type of family discipleship, it was the goal to see if the frequency increased after receiving the training.

T-test calculation. A t-test for dependent samples was conducted to compare the scores on the pre-and post-test. The result revealed that the mean score of the test after the *D-6 Dads* training ($m = 133.73$, Pearson Correlation = 0.63) was significantly greater than the result before the training ($m = 111.09$, Pearson Correlation = 0.63).⁷ The

⁷See appendix 6.

results of the t-test showed an increase in the mean of scores (22.64) comparing the pre- and post-surveys. The implementation of the *D-6 Dads* curriculum to the select group of eleven fathers at PBC made a statistically significant difference. Salkind states, “If variables change in the same direction, the correlation is called a direct correlation or a positive correlation.”⁸ Since the correlation of the variables had a positive change in the means, it can be assumed the *D-6 Dads* training had a positive or direct correlation on the participants’ understanding of biblical discipleship and the importance of being the lead disciple-maker to their children. There was a statistically significant improvement in the pre- and post-test scores using a one-tail t-test for dependent ($t(10) = 8.81, p > .0001$).

Table. The statistical results of the *D-6 Dads* training

	<i>Pre-test</i>	<i>Post-test</i>
Mean	111.09	133.73
Variance	107.69	86.02
Observations	11	11
Pearson Correlation	0.63	
Hypothesized Mean Difference	0	
df	10	
t Stat	8.81	
P(T<=t) one-tail	2.51	
t Critical one-tail	1.81	
P(T<=t) two-tail	5.02	
t Critical two-tail	2.23	

A t-test can show a positive statistically significant difference yet may not be meaningful. The results of the training were considered meaningful because the pre- post-survey revealed that eight of the fathers showed an increase in the frequency of family discipleship (daily, weekly, several times per week, monthly, or several times per month). Two of the participants responded on the pre-survey that they were conducting family discipleship times, one reported doing a family-talk time once per week, and the other one reported

⁸Salkind, *Statistics for People Who (Think They) Hate Statistics*, 82.

once per month. Both of these men showed no increase in the frequency of their family talk times in the post-survey. One of the participants checked letter “H” on the pre-survey and did not implement a family discipleship time as of the time of the post-survey was completed. In total, four fathers reported in the pre-survey that they were not doing any type of family discipleship time at home. Of those men who were not doing family discipleship, three reported on the post-survey that they had begun a family discipleship time at home on a weekly basis.

For the purpose of accountability I was able to speak to the participants within a week of the completion of the training to determine if the fathers had continued to conduct a time of discipleship in their homes. Ten fathers had incorporated some type of family discipleship time in their homes and most were pleased with the information they learned. Several fathers enthusiastically shared stories about their family talk times. Therefore, this portion of goal 3 was considered fulfilled as more than five fathers had integrated a family talk time as stipulated in chapter 1.

Goal 4

The fourth goal was to develop a three-to-five year strategic plan outline that sought to incorporate an ongoing effort to encourage and equip parents in the discipleship of their children. This goal was measured by presenting the strategic plan outline to the senior pastor and the discipleship pastor in order to gain their support to implement the strategy.

The strategic plan outline presented to the leadership included: (1) envisioning the processes for family equipping, (2) designating a point leader, (3) assembling a strategic leadership team, (4) thinking theologically and asking fundamental questions, (5) refining and redesigning the model, (6) focusing on the Great Commission, (7) taking

into account the PBC's unique ministry context.⁹ This goal was considered successfully met as the approval to proceed with the implementation of the strategic plan outline was given by the pastoral staff and the leadership team at PBC. During the approval process I was designated as the point leader to begin recruiting a strategic leadership team in order to continuously evaluate our current discipleship programming, make improvements, and partner with parents in order to equip them in the discipleship of their children.

Despite the strategic leadership team not being formed, the leadership of PBC discussed an idea for a program to be implemented under the guidance of the future strategic planning team. The discussion included the development and implementation of a monthly Wednesday dinner night to focus on family discipleship. This night will be a ninety-minute session that will include a time of worship, devotion, prayer, and family activities that focus on the night's message. These sessions will emphasize the father's role in leading his family in discipleship and supply him with tools to take home that are instrumental for leading a family discipleship time in the home. The Wednesday dinner night was included as an agenda item for the strategic leadership team.

Prior to the presentation and approval of the strategic plan outline, two enhancements were incorporated in the Sunday morning children's' program. First, a quarterly newsletter was developed for parents. This newsletter includes articles from me and other staff members providing tools, resources, and encouragement to parents in the church who desire to take up the mantle of discipling their children. The next addition to the Sunday program was a personal quarterly journal (developed by the children's director and her staff) that students in the Sunday morning age-segmented classes utilize on a weekly basis to track memory verses, document weekly Bible lessons, list prayer requests. This journal also includes other key elements such as the Lord's Prayer and the Ten Commandments for the purposes of memorization. The journal would be sent home

⁹Aubrey Malphurs, *Advanced Strategic Planning: A New Model for Church and Ministry Leaders*, 2nd ed. (Grand Rapids: Baker, 2005), 26-29.

with the student at the end of each quarter along with a note to parents encouraging them to review the information that their child has learned in the past quarter. As of the writing of this project, one quarterly journal was sent home with the students. The feedback from parents regarding this new tool has been very positive.

Strengths of the Project

This project had a number of strengths. The first was that this project met a need that existed at PBC. Despite the fact that PBC provides several opportunities to disciple men, there was a void in the subject matter of equipping fathers to disciple their children. Therefore, this project was timely because of recent growth and the influx of new families.

The second strength is that this project was able to demonstrate sound biblical evidence for the role of the father as the lead disciple-maker. Both the Old Testament and the New Testament make it clear that not only is the father to lead in discipleship he is to be the one to actually engage with their children. Deuteronomy 6: 4-9, Psalm 78: 1-8, and Ephesians 6:1-9 were presented as proof texts to equip fathers to teach and transfer the faith and God's redemptive story to the next generation.

The third strength was the collective sense of camaraderie among the participants involved in the class. Often men who are not doing what they instinctively know they should be doing will become withdrawn and isolated. Proverbs 27:17 states that iron sharpens iron, and the interaction and encouragement the men received from one another was a welcomed manifestation.

The fourth strength was the flexibility in the format of the recommended family talk time. *Read, pray, and sing* was the overarching plan and the *D-6 Dads* curriculum provided many resources that could be incorporated in the process of developing a family talk time. This format of discipleship was not a "cookie cutter" approach. It was recommended that the fathers find the resource that worked best for their families, keeping in mind the stages of development that is unique in each family.

The fifth strength was that fathers had a chance to put what they learned into action. They were challenged to conduct two family talk times as a part of the curriculum. In week 6, the fathers were able to report to the other participants, in class, about how their family talk time went. They reported on what went well, what did not go so well, and some challenges in attempting a family talk time. The men enthusiastically shared stories of the family talk time they led.

The sixth strength was that each class was video recorded and the recordings of the classes were uploaded to a closed YouTube site. Seven men missed at least one class during the six-week training. The recorded sessions provided an opportunity for the men to keep up with the information presented in the specific lesson they missed.

Finally, the last strength is the follow-up conversations I had with the fathers after the training was conducted. I found that ten of the eleven men had conducted a second family talk time. By God's grace, the fathers will continue this practice and their children will continue to grow in their walk with the Lord.

Weaknesses of the Purpose

While the project met all the goals and generally was considered successful, there is always room for improvement. There were at least three weaknesses in this project. The first weakness was that the time of the year in which the classes were conducted prevented 100 percent attendance. Only four out of the eleven fathers attended all of the live classes. The other seven missed one to four classes and had to make up their absences by watching a recording that was made available to them via a closed YouTube site. The reason attendance was sporadic was that the class began June 18, and the fathers' summer schedule was impacted by vacations and other summer activities. The training was initially planned to begin much earlier in the year so that the classes could be finished by the end of May; however, I was unable to begin training as planned because of a family emergency and had to postpone the start date into June.

The second weakness was that the curriculum was content heavy, especially in lesson 4, which covered catechism. The historical surveys of catechisms were lengthy. One participant remarked that he felt that the material could have been taught faster by simply pointing out the significance of catechisms and mentioning their historical usage. Glancing over the catechisms could have allowed for more class time to cover the major doctrinal aspects that each catechism shared in more detail. Another benefit of expediting the material on catechisms would have been to give the fathers more time to discuss a practical approach in how to use a catechism as a part of their family talks.

The third weakness was the duration of the training, six weeks were not enough. The style of delivery was lecture-based, which did not foster a lot of discussion. The classes were taught on Sunday mornings and limited to 75 minutes, which did not allow time for roleplaying or modeling to the class what a family talk time looks like. A video was provided that showed Timothy Paul Jones modeling a family talk, but the roleplay section in lesson 5 that was planned had to be eliminated because of time.

What I Would Do Differently

As I implemented the curriculum, I found several things I will do differently when I teach *D-6 Dads* again. First, I will select a time other than the months of June and July to teach the curriculum in the hope that more men would be able to attend more live sessions. As stated in the weaknesses section, the middle of summer was a deterrent for many of the fathers' ability to attend every week.

The second issue to be addressed is the content, especially the historical surveys of the catechisms in lesson 4. Catechism has an overt connection with other denominations and this can be confusing for many men who are not familiar with how the concept of catechism can help them in discipling their children. The aim of this lesson was to open the discussion regarding the word *catechism* and how catechisms have been used for the purposes of discipleship throughout church history. This section should be covered with a general statement that gives credibility to each catechism and then move more quickly

to the commonality that each catechism shares so that the participants can effectively incorporate these doctrinal truths in their plan.

The third thing I plan to do differently is to rearrange the material so that the curriculum would be presented in eight weeks instead of six. In addition to adding two weeks to the training, I will also find a day or evening that does not have a time constraint of 75 minutes. At the time of this writing, PBC had three services on Sunday morning which mandated the time limitation. In my context, moving this class to Wednesday evening or Sunday evening would allow for a ninety-minute class. In making these two adjustments there would be more time for questions, discussion, group assignments, and role-play.

Finally, I would edit the pre- and post-survey from forty questions to twenty-five. Although I do not think there was survey fatigue, several included questions simply were not necessary for the purposes of measuring the fathers' perceptions and practices of family discipleship.

Theological Reflections

The aim of this project was to equip fathers to lead in the discipleship of their children. The first step was to show fathers that this discipleship role is a God-given command. The biblical mandate that fathers should lead in the discipleship process has been clearly demonstrated in this project. Although this project focused on the fathers, this project in no way should be viewed as diminishing the role of a mother to her children and the support she provides to her husband. The following five theological reflections are provided to reinforce the biblical principles in this project.

First, Hebrews 12:1-3 encourages believers to remember that there is a great cloud of witnesses surrounding them, to fix their eyes on Jesus, who is the perfecter of the faith, and not to grow weary as they run the race of life with endurance. The task of discipling their children can be somewhat daunting for parents. Fathers should be encouraged to know that a cloud of witnesses have come before them and fathers who

desire to disciple can learn from the teachings of those great men, and women, of God. These witnesses lived a faithful Christian life and now enjoy their inheritance in eternity with the Lord. These witnesses kept the faith and finished the race well and it is upon their shoulders that parents can stand as they transfer the Master's story to their children. Fathers should strive to finish the race well and leave a legacy through the lives of their children and unto the next generation.

Second, a father needs to seek to be discipled before he can be a discipler. There can be no successful spiritual leadership in the home without a constant devotion to prayer and meditation on the Scriptures. It is the responsibility of a godly man to ensure he practices spiritual disciplines in order to grow in his walk with the Lord. First Peter 3:15 says, "But sanctify Christ as Lord in your hearts, always being ready to make a defense to everyone who asks you to give an account for the hope that is in you, yet with gentleness and reverence." A godly father is prepared to teach his children the hope that is Christ Jesus.

Third, the man must know his role as a husband. Marriage is the foundation upon which a family is built. In Genesis 2:18, the Bible records God giving the man a helper. A man needs to remember that without the God-given gift of his wife he would not be able to wear the title of father. God never intended for the husband to be alone when it comes to the responsibilities of parenthood; God created a wife to be the husband's helper and to raise a family together. Ephesians 5:25 points out that a husband should love his wife in the same way Christ loved the church. In 1 Corinthians 11:3, husbands are instructed to lead their wives as the head of the household, not forgetting that they are to be under the headship of Christ. Ephesians 5:22 reminds the reader that both the husband and wife are to be subject to one another in the fear of Christ. A godly husband will strive to prioritize time with his wife and place her in the position of prominence. The only relationship that takes priority over the marital relationship should

be the relationship each spouse has with Christ. Once this godly priority is established within the marriage, fathers can direct their focus on discipling his children.

Fourth, the godly man must know his role as a father. Deuteronomy 6: 4-9, Psalm 78:1-8; and Ephesians 6:4 clearly demonstrate the role of the father as it pertains to discipling his children. Parents are raising children in a battlefield and fathers need to be prepared for the fight for their families. Ephesians 6:10 says, “Finally, be strong in the Lord and in the strength of His might. Put on the full armor of God, so that you will be able to stand firm against the schemes of the devil.” Fathers need to be aware that there is a devil and he is scheming to cause serious harm to families. Fortunately, the writer of Ephesians does not leave believers without a plan of action. He spelled out the strategy for the battle. The plan is to put on the armor of God, and in Ephesians 6:14-18, Paul describes the pieces of that armor: (1) stand firm on the doctrinal Truth of God’s Word which leads to righteousness, (2) be prepared with the gospel of Peace, (3) keep the faith which has power over the enemy, (4) be covered with the Salvation of Jesus, (5) rely on the Sword of the Spirit, which is the Word of God, and (6) be willing to pray at all times. Reliance on the armor of God empowers fathers to fulfill the biblical mandate of leading in the discipleship of their children.

Finally, the church has a role to partner with fathers in the task of discipleship. Acts 2:42 serves as a great purpose statement for the church: “They were continually devoting themselves to the apostles’ teaching and to fellowship, to the breaking of bread and to prayer.” According to this verse, the church is to teach biblical doctrine, provide a place where members can enjoy fellowship, worship together while celebrating the Lord’s Supper, and be devoted to prayer. Fathers need to know that they are not alone in this endeavor to disciple their children. The church-as-family and the family-as-church are two essential models to accomplish the task of family equipping so that fathers can gain the confidence of being the lead disciple maker to their children.

Personal Reflections

I am thankful that PBC is a church that places a high value on the family and family equipping. I am also thankful to all the faithful members who have supported me as I pursued this degree. I will be forever grateful for the prayers, the kind words of encouragement, and the financial support I have received.

I have felt for a long time that it was the duty of godly fathers to do more in the area of discipling their children. This project was borne out of my own memories of times around the breakfast table as I led my children in devotions. My heart's desire began to move toward seeing other fathers sharing in the same joy I had found as my family studied God's Word together.

In the past, parents would seek my advice regarding family discipleship. They would ask me what they should teach their children and what resources they should use. I generally would point them to a children's devotional Bible I might have had on my shelf or encourage them to go to the local LifeWay store for some helpful ideas. Sometimes I would simply recommend that they read the Bible. I have to admit that my anemic responses to simply teach the Bible or find a resource at the local bookstore were not very encouraging or empowering to parents. This project has given me knowledge and confidence in what the Bible has to say on this subject and enabled me to equip parents with the tools, process, and plan for effective discipleship in the home. It has been a while since I have had children under my roof to disciple and now I find my energies have shifted from my children, who are all adults, to fathers who are raising their children. I have a great passion to help fathers who are younger than me to experience the blessings of leading their children in a family talk times. My commitment, with God's grace, is to be a lifelong student in this area of family equipping for discipleship and to continue to provide training and encouragement to fathers so that they can fulfill their God-given role as disciple-makers in their families.

Conclusion

The purpose of this project was to equip fathers at Parkridge Baptist Church in Coral Springs, Florida, to lead in the discipleship of their children. The purpose of the project was accomplished and all four goals set forth were successfully achieved.

In chapter 1, a review of the ministry context at PBC highlighted the current programming that is designed to minister to men and further demonstrated a void in the discipleship strategy to equip fathers to be the lead disciple makers within their homes. Chapter 2 explored the biblical and theological justification in challenging fathers to the task of leading their children in discipleship. Chapter 3 developed theoretical and practical models in order to equip fathers with the process and plan for discipleship. Chapter 4 listed the detailed steps in the development and training of the curriculum. A strategic plan outline was also developed. Chapter 5 reflected upon the overall evaluation of the project. Categories covered were the project purpose, goals, strengths, weaknesses, what could have been done differently, theological reflections, and personal reflections.

The project fulfilled its purpose of equipping fathers at Parkridge Baptist Church in Coral Springs, Florida, to lead in the discipleship of their children. The results of the project will continue to impact PBC and equip fathers in discipling their children in three ways. First, the *D-6 Dads* curriculum developed in this project will be provided to other fathers at PBC in the future. This curriculum will result in more men leading in the discipleship of their children at home. Men who attended the training agreed that they should be the ones who lead their children in discipleship, but lacked the time and the tools. The curriculum developed and implemented for this project provided tools necessary to carry out the biblical mandate. Second, as a part of a three- to five-year strategy, I will begin to recruit a strategic leadership team and I look forward to the ideas that will flow from future meetings. One idea that we will begin to implement is family nights on Wednesday evenings once per month that will empower fathers as they lead their families in table discussions. This family night strategy will strengthen families, ensure consistency, and continue to give fathers confidence in their role as the lead disciple-

maker. Finally, PBC will partner with fathers in the effort of making disciples by constantly focusing on ways to incorporate elements of a family equipping model in the church's discipleship programming. By God's grace, obedience to His Word and reliance upon the Holy Spirit, families at Parkridge Baptist Church will be blessed as fathers take up the mantle in training the Master's Story to their children and to future generations.

APPENDIX 1

BASICS OF BIBLICAL DISCIPLESHIP INVENTORY

Agreement to Participate

The research in which you are about to participate is designed to identify the current understanding of practices and perceptions of the participant in the area of leading children in biblical discipleship at home. This research is being conducted by Bradley B. Boyette for the purposes of collecting data for a ministry project. In this research, you will answer questions before the project and you will answer the same questions at the conclusion of the project. Any information you provide will be held *strictly confidential*, and at no time will your name be reported or your name identified with your responses. *Participation is strictly voluntary and you are free to withdraw at any time.* By your completion of this survey, you are giving informed consent for the use of your responses in this project.

Personal Identification Number: _____ (Please use a four-digit number)

Part 1(Parental Information)¹

1. Do you consider yourself a Christian?
☐ A. Yes
☐ B. No
2. Have you repented of your sin and trusted in Jesus Christ for salvation?
☐ A. Yes
☐ B. No
3. Are you married?
☐ A. Yes
☐ B. No
4. Do you have any children age 18 or younger living in the home?
☐ A. Yes
☐ B. Yes
5. What is your age in years?
☐ A. 18-24 ☐ D. 45-54
☐ B. 25-34 ☐ E. 55-64
☐ C. 35-44 ☐ F. 65 and over

¹Questions were compiled with the assistance of the work of Timothy Paul Jones, *Family Ministry Field Guide: How Your Church Can Equip Parents to Make Disciples* (Indianapolis: Wesleyan Publishing House, 2011), 202-3. All rights reserved, used by permission.

Directions: Please mark the appropriate answer. Some questions may ask you to give your opinion using the following scale:

SD = strongly disagree

D = disagree

DS = disagree somewhat

AS = agree somewhat

A = agree

SA = strongly agree

Part 2

- | | | | | | | |
|---|----|---|----|----|---|----|
| 6. I consider myself to be the spiritual leader of my home. | SD | D | DS | AS | A | SA |
| 7. I am an effective spiritual leader of my home. | SD | D | DS | AS | A | SA |
| 8. I desire to lead my family well. | SD | D | DS | AS | A | SA |
| 9. I have a strong grasp of what it means to be the disciple-maker of my home. | SD | D | DS | AS | A | SA |
| 10. I have a clear process in the discipleship of my children in my home. | SD | D | DS | AS | A | SA |
| 11. If asked, I could articulate the gospel to my children. | SD | D | DS | AS | A | SA |
| 12. I have a very good knowledge of what Scripture has to say about the role of fathers leading in the discipleship of their children. | SD | D | DS | AS | A | SA |
| 13. If asked, I could easily locate key Scriptures that discuss the discipleship of children. | SD | D | DS | AS | A | SA |
| 14. I believe that it is the responsibility of the father to lead in the discipleship of children. | SD | D | DS | AS | A | SA |
| 15. I prioritize consistent family devotions in my family's schedule. | SD | D | DS | AS | A | SA |
| 16. I would like to do regular family devotions or Bible readings at home, but my family is too busy at this time. | SD | D | DS | AS | A | SA |
| 17. The church is where children ought to receive most of their Bible teaching. | SD | D | DS | AS | A | SA |
| 18. Parents, and particularly fathers, have a responsibility to engage personally in a discipleship process with each individual child. | SD | D | DS | AS | A | SA |
| 19. The church leaders are the people primarily responsible for discipling my children. | SD | D | DS | AS | A | SA |
| 20. The church leaders are the people primarily responsible for teaching my child how to present the gospel to others. | SD | D | DS | AS | A | SA |

- | | | | | | | |
|---|----|---|----|----|---|----|
| 21. My church has helped me to develop a clear plan to disciple my child. | SD | D | DS | AS | A | SA |
| 22. I am comfortable in leading a time of discipleship with my family. | SD | D | DS | AS | A | SA |

Part 3

23. I read my Bible (check only one)
- ☐ A. more than once per day
 - ☐ B. once per day
 - ☐ C. several times per week
 - ☐ D. once per week
 - ☐ E. several times per month
 - ☐ F. once per month
 - ☐ G. several times per year
 - ☐ H. not at all
24. I meditate on Scripture (check only one)
- ☐ A. more than once per day
 - ☐ B. once per day
 - ☐ C. several times per week
 - ☐ D. once per week
 - ☐ E. several times per month
 - ☐ F. once per month
 - ☐ G. several times per year
 - ☐ H. not at all
25. I pray (check only one)
- ☐ A. more than once per day
 - ☐ B. once per day
 - ☐ C. several times per week
 - ☐ D. once per week
 - ☐ E. several times per month
 - ☐ F. once per month
 - ☐ G. several times per year
 - ☐ H. not at all
26. I have a specific time set aside for prayer.
- ☐ A. Yes
 - ☐ B. No
27. I most often pray for (check only one)
- ☐ A. myself
 - ☐ B. family
 - ☐ C. friends
 - ☐ D. other
28. I most often pray (check only one)
- ☐ A. at church
 - ☐ B. at home
 - ☐ C. while traveling
 - ☐ D. at work
 - ☐ E. other

29. I pray with my children (choose only one)
- ☐ A. more than once per day
 - ☐ B. once per day
 - ☐ C. several times per week
 - ☐ D. once per week
 - ☐ E. several times per month
 - ☐ F. once per month
 - ☐ G. several times per year
 - ☐ H. not at all
30. I read the Bible with my children (choose only one)
- ☐ A. more than once per day
 - ☐ B. once per day
 - ☐ C. several times per week
 - ☐ D. once per week
 - ☐ E. several times per month
 - ☐ F. once per month
 - ☐ G. several times per year
 - ☐ H. not at all
31. I read Christian books to/with my children (choose only one)
- ☐ A. more than once per day
 - ☐ B. once per day
 - ☐ C. several times per week
 - ☐ D. once per week
 - ☐ E. several times per month
 - ☐ F. once per month
 - ☐ G. several times per year
 - ☐ H. not at all
32. I know the areas in which my believing children are struggling in their sanctification. SD D DS AS A SA
33. I spend time encouraging my wife's spiritual walk. SD D DS AS A SA
34. I encourage my children to spend time reading the Bible and praying. SD D DS AS A SA
35. I use everyday situations as opportunities to instruct my children with biblical principles. SD D DS AS A SA
36. I lead my home in family discipleship (specific time of Bible-reading and prayer) (check only one)
- ☐ A. more than once per day
 - ☐ B. once per day
 - ☐ C. several times per week
 - ☐ D. once per week
 - ☐ E. several times per month
 - ☐ F. once per month
 - ☐ G. several times per year
 - ☐ H. not at all

37. It is important to teach children to have a missional mindset.	SD	D	DS	AS	A	SA
38. I have a clear process (big picture of what I should do) for spiritually leading my wife and children.	SD	D	DS	AS	A	SA
39. I have a plan of action (steps I will take) for spiritually leading my wife and children	SD	D	DS	AS	A	SA
40. My spiritual health directly impacts my ability to lead my family spiritually.	SD	D	DS	AS	A	SA

Thank you for taking the time to fill out this survey.

Bradley B. Boyette

APPENDIX 2
CURRICULUM EVALUATION RUBRIC

Name of evaluator: _____ Date: _____

Lesson number: _____

Curriculum Evaluation					
1 = insufficient; 2 = requires attention; 3 = sufficient; 4 = exemplary					
Criteria	1	2	3	4	Comments
Biblical Faithfulness					
The content of the lesson is biblical. All Scriptures utilized are accurately interpreted and applied.					
The content of the curriculum is theologically sound and applies to the central thesis.					
Scope					
The content of the curriculum covers the lesson it is designed to address.					
The curriculum sufficiently reinforces that Fathers should lead in the discipleship of their children.					
Methodology					
The lesson sufficiently reinforces the importance of Fathers leading in the discipleship of their children.					
The curriculum makes use of appropriate learning approaches such as lecture, discussion, case studies, role play, and homework.					
Overall (only applicable after the final lesson)					
The lessons include elements that are effective for adult learners.					
The lessons are clearly arranged.					

APPENDIX 3

D-6 DADS CURRICULUM

Lesson 1: Introduction

Lesson Aim: To equip fathers at Parkridge Baptist Church to lead in the discipleship of their children.

Target Group: Christian men who are fathers at Parkridge Baptist Church.

A “D-6 Dad” is a dad that desires to lead his family, particularly his children, in the discipleship at home according to Deuteronomy 6:4-9.

The best *plan* parents [dads] can have to help develop their children spiritually is to realize the distinctiveness of their [dads] *role* and the church’s role, respectively. Spiritual growth and learning necessitates a shared effort [*process*] put forth within a community . . . but home will always tend to have the greater impact (emphasis mine).¹

The traits of a “D-6 Dad” entail 3 things:

1. He must know his **Role**.
2. He must have a **Process**.
3. He must have a **Plan**.

- I. Hook²: What is going on in our families?
 - a. FamilyLife, “Family Needs Survey.”³
 - b. 56% of parents did not engage in family devotions.
 - c. 23% engages “rarely.”
 - d. Most Christian men agree that they should lead, however, they don’t.

The goal of the church-as-family is to help God’s people relate to one another more like a family. The goal of the family-as-church model is to equip parents to disciple their children in the context of daily lives together.
~Timothy Paul Jones

¹John Ellis Steen, “Family: A Context for Discipleship,” in *Practical Family Ministry: A Collection of Ideas for Your Church*, by Timothy Paul Jones and John David Trentham (Nashville: Randall House, 2015), 41.

²The format of the lesson plans use the elements found in Lawrence O. Richards and Gary J. Bredfeldt, *Creative Bible Teaching*, rev. and expanded ed. (Chicago: Moody, 1998), 151-66; see also table 14a, 14b. The Hook is the attention getter; the Book covers a breakdown of the text; the Look seeks to engage practically; and the Took seeks to apply the lesson aim in order to see a change in the learner.

³Timothy Paul Jones, *Family Ministry Field Guide: How Your Church Can Equip Parents to Make Disciples* (Indianapolis: Wesleyan Publishing House, 2011), 27-28. For further results of nearly 40,000 parents, see FamilyLife, *Family Needs Survey: National Database: August 2008* (Little Rock, AR: FamilyLife Church and Pastor Relations, 2008).

- i. Why? The answer most given is time and training.
 - ii. How many men here tonight know what the Bible says about discipling our children and where to find it?
 - e. Discipleship defined: “*A personal and intentional process in which one or more Christians guide unbelievers or less mature believers to embrace and apply the gospel in every part of their lives. Discipleship is a process that includes a personal profession of faith in Jesus Christ, as he has been revealed to us in Scripture. Discipleship involves developing perspectives and practices that reflect the mind of Christ.*”⁴
- II. Book: 1 Thessalonians 2:11-12.
- a. Paul assumed believing fathers were involved in their children’s lives.
 - b. This expectation did not end in the New Testament era.⁵
 - i. *Didache* and *Letter of Barnabas* post New Testament era.
 - ii. “You shall train [your son and your daughter] in the fear of God from their youth up.”⁶
 - iii. Clement of Rome urged parents to embrace the privilege of sharing “the instruction that is in Christ.”⁷
- III. Look: Introduce Basics of Biblical Discipleship Inventory (BBDI).
- a. Give time for fathers to fill out the BBDI.
 - b. This is the Pre-survey; a post-survey will be taken upon completion of the sessions.
- IV. Took: “What you do for God beyond your home will typically never be greater than what you practice with God within your home.”⁸
- a. Next session will include exegesis for the following Scriptures:
 - i. Deuteronomy 6: 4-9
 - ii. Psalm 78: 1-8
 - iii. Ephesians 6:1-4

⁴Jones, *Family Ministry Field Guide*, 17.

⁵Timothy Paul Jones, “The Task Too Significant to Hire Someone Else to Do,” in *Perspectives on Family Ministry: 3 Views*, ed. Timothy Paul Jones (Nashville: B & H, 2009), 19.

⁶*Ibid.*, Jones cites the *Didache* 4:9 and the *Epistle of Barnabas*.

⁷Clement of Rome, *First Epistle*, 21:6-8. Jones covers many early church fathers who reinforced the duty of parents in the discipleship of their children. Polycarp encouraged parents to “train their children in the fear of God” (Polycarp of Smyrna, *To the Philippians*, 4:2). John Chrysostom described the process as training children to be “athletes for Christ” (*De Inani*, 19; 39; 63; 90). See *Perspectives on Family Ministry*, 19-20.

⁸Bryan Nelson and Timothy Paul Jones, “Introduction: The Problem with Family Ministry,” in *Trained in the Fear of God: Family Ministry in Theological, Historical, and Practical Perspective*, ed. Randy Stinson and Timothy Paul Jones (Grand Rapids: Kregel, 2011), 14.

Lesson 2: Theological Support

Lesson Aim: To equip fathers at Parkridge Baptist Church to lead in the discipleship of their children.

Target Group: Christian men who are fathers at Parkridge Baptist Church.

A “D-6 Dad” is a dad that desires to lead his family, particularly his children, in the discipleship at home according to Deuteronomy 6:4-9.

The best *plan* parents [dads] can have to help develop their children spiritually is to realize the distinctiveness of their [dads] *role* and the church’s role, respectively. Spiritual growth and learning necessitates a shared effort [*process*] put forth within a community . . . but home will always tend to have the greater impact (emphasis mine).¹

The traits of a “D-6 Dad” entail 3 things:

1. He must know his **Role**.
2. He must have a **Process**.
3. He must have a **Plan**.

God desired for all of His children to know His Word, be able to talk about His Word, and to live out His Word in their lives. Therefore it was imperative that parents understood, embodied, and taught the Shema to their children. ~John Ellis Steen

- I. Hook²: The Task Too Significant to Hire Someone Else to Do.³
 - a. Imagine for a moment that you call your spouse and tell her that it has been too long since your last date night. You tell her that you hired a *professional dater* to take her out. “That’s right honey, a professional and he is much better than me at dating – he likes chick flicks.” What do you think the response would be? (If she is willing you may have bigger problems than discipling your children).
 - b. There is no better person than you, as a husband, to take your wife out on date night. Some tasks are too significant to be surrendered to “professionals.”
 - c. Now apply this to the discipleship of your children. Too often parents rely too heavily on the professionals at church.
 - d. Ministers can help in the support and reinforcement of what should be happening at home.

¹John Ellis Steen, “Family: A Context for Discipleship,” in *Practical Family Ministry: A Collection of Ideas for Your Church*, by Timothy Paul Jones and John David Trentham (Nashville: Randall House, 2015), 41.

²The format of the lesson plans use the elements found in Lawrence O. Richards and Gary J. Bredfeldt, *Creative Bible Teaching*, rev. and expanded ed. (Chicago: Moody, 1998), 151-66, see also table 14a, 14b. The Hook is the attention getter; the Book covers a breakdown of the text; the Look seeks to engage practically; and the Took seeks to apply the lesson aim in order to see a change in the learner.

³Timothy Paul Jones, “The Task Too Significant to Hire Someone Else to Do,” in *Perspectives on Family Ministry: 3 Views*, ed. Timothy Paul Jones (Nashville: B & H, 2009), 19.

- e. Our question from last week: Most Christian men agree that they should lead, however, they don't.
 - i. Why? (We are fighting a spiritual battle, Eph 6:12-17).
 - 1. Time- do more than you do now.
 - 2. Training- this course will help you with the process and plan.
 - ii. Today we will explore several key Scriptures that deal with the responsibility of dads being the disciple-makers at home.

II. Book: Supporting Scriptures.⁴

- a. Deuteronomy 6: 4-9 (*Shema*, “to hear”).
 - i. Fundamental truth of Israel’s religion.⁵
 - 1. God is one
 - 2. He is the true God.
 - ii. Fundamental duty.
 - 1. Love him, hear him, and obey him.⁶
 - a. Transfer the great deeds of God recorded in Exodus.
 - b. Generations to come should be taught to observe the commands and laws (6:20-25).
 - iii. Jewish fathers had the same influence in their homes as priests in the Temple.
 - iv. A repetitive formula is seen: teach and talk to their children when they are sitting, walking, lying down, and rising up; all the time.
 - 1. The *Shema* was a daily confession of faith in the home, typically recited twice per day.
 - 2. It was used as a benediction in the synagogue.⁷
 - v. Scripture memorization was encouraged (6:8, 9).
 - 1. Phylacteries (individual)⁸
 - 2. Door posts (family/home)
 - 3. Gates (society)

⁴Many passages clearly state the importance of fathers being the lead disciple-maker of their children. See Gen 1-3; 12:2, 17: 4-6; 18: 16-19; 46:3, Exod 12:25-27; Deut 6:1-15; 26:5, 32: 45-47; Ps 78: 1-8; Prov 1:7-9; 13:1; 22:6, Mal 2:15.

⁵Peter C. Craigie, *The Book of Deuteronomy*, New International Commentary on the Old Testament (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1976), 168.

⁶David Prince, “The Pastor’s Home as Paradigm for the Church’s Family Ministry,” in *Trained in the Fear of God: Family Ministry in Theological, Historical, and Practical Perspective*, ed. Randy Stinson and Timothy P. Jones (Grand Rapids: Kregel, 2011), 174.

⁷J. Julius Scott, Jr., *Jewish Backgrounds of the New Testament* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1995), 141.

⁸In Jewish tradition, phylacteries and frontals were inscribed scrolls placed in a small box. These boxes would have been attached to the hands and worn around the wearer above the eyebrows. Christians today can utilize this concept metaphorically to instill in children the importance of hands working for God, as well as the Word of God being in front of their eyes and influencing their minds.

- vi. Jesus expressed the importance of the *Shema* in all three synoptic Gospels (Matt 22:37-38; Mark 12:29-30; and Luke 10:27).
 - 1. “The great and foremost greatest commandment.”
 - 2. Correlation between the *Shema* and the Decalogue (Luke 10:26).
- b. Psalm 78:1-8. A didactic (teaching) psalm.
 - i. Duty: God’s people to pass on the history of God to children and to the next generation.
 - 1. Wondrous works (v.4, 5)
 - a. The testimony of Jacob
 - b. The appointment of the Law
 - 2. Wondrous works linked with subject matter
 - a. Deuteronomy 6:20-21 (Read).
 - b. When our “sons ask” fathers need to have answer
 - c. We were once “slaves” and now we have been brought out of slavery (forgiven of sin).
 - ii. Listen – sets the tone for the importance of the subject matter (cf. Deut 6:4; Ps 49).
 - 1. Incline your ears; pay attention or lean in.
 - 2. Meditate on this.
 - iii. Warning: Not to be as their fathers, rebellious and stubborn.
- c. Ephesians 6:1-4
 - i. Having addressed wives and husbands in the “house codes,” Paul now focuses on fathers.
 - ii. Four exhortations (1-9); we will look at two here.
 - 1. Children (v.1)
 - 2. Fathers (v. 4)
 - iii. Closely paired with Colossians 3:20-21.
 - iv. Two imperative verbs given to children (1-3).
 - 1. Obey
 - a. In the Lord (cf. Col 3:20 “in all things”).
 - b. It is right.
 - 2. Honor- twofold promise.
 - a. It may be well with you.
 - b. You may live a long time on earth.
 - v. Fathers
 - 1. Do not make your children angry.
 - a. If fathers enrage their children it produces the opposite of the desired effect (anger is sin Eph 4:26).
 - b. In classical Roman culture *patria potestas* gave the father, as the head of the household, full authority and unlimited power over his children, even holding power of life and death.
 - c. Avoid exasperating your children. It is hard to think of anything more exasperating to a son than growing into adulthood and feeling that his father did not

- adequately prepare him to face a world in which his faith will be tested at every turn.
2. Bring them up in the training and instruction of the Lord.
 - a. Directly connected to Deuteronomy 6:4-9 and Psalm 78:1-8.
 - b. Training is to be “of the Lord.”
 - i. Christlike example.
 - ii. Meekness and gentleness (2 Cor 10:1).
 - iii. A radical and unique idea in Hellenistic and Roman culture.
 - iv. Paul does not question the authority of the parent (*patria potestas*) he simply encourages them to use the power and authority to train and instruct.
 - v. Empowered by the Holy Spirit.
- III. Look: Deuteronomy 17: 18-20.⁹ The King as a type of father. Divide into two groups and have them read the Scripture.
- a. What are three key concepts in this story that dads can apply? (Record answers on a white board and lead to the following answers).
 - i. The king was to write for himself a copy- Individual responsibility.
 - ii. Keep the copy with him at all times.
 1. Internalize the Word of God.
 2. Apply it to daily living.
 - iii. Read the copy all the days of his life- Devotion to God’s Word.
 - b. The purpose:
 - i. To learn to fear the Lord
 - ii. Not be prideful
 - iii. Not be disobedient and turn from the Torah.
 - iv. Transfer the blessings of Israel to his sons.
- IV. Took: “*What you do for God beyond your home will typically never be greater than what you practice with God within your home.*”¹⁰
- a. Commit to pray that the texts studied in this lesson will begin to change the way you view the discipleship of your children and your role as a father in the process.
 - b. Remember, it is a task too significant to hire someone else to do.
 - i. Next session will include *The Role of the Husband*.
 1. Love.
 2. Lead.

⁹James M. Hamilton, Jr., “That the Coming Generation Might Praise the Lord: Family Discipleship in the Old Testament,” in *Trained in the Fear of God*, 39. The comparison to the king’s instructions and how it relates to the father’s duties to teach children were very helpful to identify that this standard holds true for leaders of nations and leaders of households.

¹⁰Nelson and Jones, “Introduction,” 14.

Lesson 3: The Role of the Husband

Lesson Aim: To equip husbands to understand that in order to lead in the discipleship of their children they must acknowledge that God gave wives to them first and without that they would not have the privilege to wear the title of father.

Target Group: Christian men who are fathers at Parkridge Baptist Church.

A “D-6 Dad” is a dad that desires to lead his family, particularly his children, in the discipleship at home according to Deuteronomy 6:4-9.

The best *plan* parents [dads] can have to help develop their children spiritually is to realize the distinctiveness of their [dads] *role* and the church’s role, respectively. Spiritual growth and learning necessitates a shared effort [*process*] put forth within a community . . . but home will always tend to have the greater impact (emphasis mine).¹

The traits of a “D-6 Dad” entail 3 things:

1. He must know his **Role**.
2. He must have a **Process**.
3. He must have a **Plan**.

A strong marriage is the foundation to the success upon which a strong family is built. And having a strong marriage requires a biblical understanding of the purpose for which God gave us the institution. ~Voddie Baucham Jr.

- I. Hook²: The decline of marriage.³
 - a. Over the last forty years, the “leading marriage indicators: - empirical descriptions of marriage health and satisfaction in the United States –have been in steady decline. (77 percent of marriages intact in 1970 – 61 in 2011).
 - i. The divorce rate is nearly twice the rate it was in 1960.
 - ii. In 1970, 89 percent of all births were to married couples, but today only 60 percent are.

¹John Ellis Steen, “Family: A Context for Discipleship,” in *Practical Family Ministry: A Collection of Ideas for Your Church*, by Timothy Paul Jones and John David Trentham (Nashville: Randall House, 2015), 41.

²The format of the lesson plans use the elements found in Lawrence O. Richards and Gary J. Bredfeldt, *Creative Bible Teaching*, rev. and expanded ed. (Chicago: Moody, 1998), 151-66, see also table 14a, 14b. The Hook is the attention getter; the Book covers a breakdown of the text; the Look seeks to engage practically; and the Took seeks to apply the lesson aim in order to see a change in the learner.

³Timothy Keller and Kathy Keller, *The Meaning of Marriage: Facing the Complexities of Commitment with the Wisdom of God* (New York: Riverhead, 2011), 14. The authors quote statistics from W. Bradford Wilcox, ed., *The State of Our Unions: Marriage in America*, 2009 (The National Marriage Project, University of Virginia); and *The Marriage Index: A Proposal to Establish Leading Marriage Indicators* (Institute for American Values and the National Center on African American Marriages and Parenting, 2009). Both of these reports can be found in PDF from online at, respectively, www.stateofourunions.org and www.americanvalues.org (Wilcox) and www.hamptonu.edu/ncaamp (American Values).

- iii. 72 percent of American adults were married in 1960, but only 50 percent were in 2008.⁴
- iv. More than half of all people live together before getting married. In 1960 virtually no one did. Our question from last week: Most Christian men agree that they should lead, however, they don't.
- b. The surprising goodness of Marriage.
 - i. Although 45 percent of marriages end in divorce. The vast majority of the forty-five percent are those who marry before the age of eighteen, who have dropped out of high school, and who had a baby before marriage.
 - ii. Young adults, who come from intact families, are religious, have a decent income, and marry after twenty-five have a far better chance to stay married.
 - iii. People who stay married have higher retirement incomes and earn 10 – 40 percent more than do single men with similar education and backgrounds.
 - iv. Nothing can mature character like marriage.
 - v. People who stay married show a higher degree of satisfaction with their lives.
 - vi. Children who grow up in married, two-parent families have two to three times more positive life outcomes.
 - vii. The verdict – being married and growing up with parents who are married are enormous boosts to overall well-being.
 - viii. Important to see what the Bible has to say about the role of the husband.

A deep experience of the grace of God – a knowledge that you are a sinner saved by grace – will enable the power of truth and love to work together in your marriage. ~Timothy Keller

II. Book: Husbands should Lead.

- a. 1 Corinthians 11:3.
 - i. Christ is the head of every man.
 - ii. Man is the head of his wife.
 - i. We are called to *Lead* her.
 - iii. God is the head of Christ.
- b. Ephesians 5:25-27. Lead her in spiritual welfare.⁵
 - i. Lead her in prayer.
 - ii. Read the Bible together.
- c. Colossians 1:9-10. Lead her in decision making and avoid the two biggest pitfalls.
 - i. Selfishness.
 - ii. Subjectivity. Don't follow feelings.

⁴Keller and Keller, *The Meaning of Marriage*, 14. The authors cite "The Decline of Marriage and the Rise of New Families" (Pew Research Center Report, November 18, 2010).

⁵Stuart Scott, *Biblical Manhood: Masculinity, Leadership and Decision Making* (Bemidji, MN: Focus, 2001), 48. The list of ways to lead is provided in chap. 5, "Leadership Specifics in Marriage."

- d. Titus 2:3-5. Lead her with her relationships.
 - i. The most important relationship you share outside of God is the relationship you share with your wife.
 - ii. Ensure her relationships are God-honoring.
- e. 1 Peter 4:10. Lead her and help her find her ministry.
 - i. Ensure that she is not overextended.
 - ii. Help her to balance time inside and outside the church body.
- f. Ephesians 5:28-29. Lead her in her physical well-being.
 - i. Show concern for health issues.
 - ii. Provide proper medical attention.
 - iii. Help with basics; food, rest, safety, and exercise.

III. Book: Husbands should Love.

- a. Ephesians 5 earlier emphasized the love we show our wives.
 - i. As Christ loved the church
 - ii. Gave himself up for her.
- b. 1 Corinthians 13:4-8.
 - i. Love is patient.
 - ii. Love is kind
 - iii. Love is not jealous.
 - iv. Love does not brag.
 - v. Love is not arrogant.
 - vi. Love does not act unbecomingly.
 - vii. Love does not seek its own.
 - viii. Love is not provoked.
 - ix. Love does not take account of wrong suffered.
 - x. Love does not rejoice in unrighteousness.
 - xi. Love rejoices in truth.
 - xii. Love bears all.
 - xiii. Love believes all.
 - xiv. Love hopes all things.
 - xv. Love endures all things.
 - xvi. Love never fails.
- c. Three ways to love.
 - i. Actively- show her love in tangible ways.
 - i. Action speaks louder than words.
 - ii. Should include loving care and meaningful deeds.
 - ii. According to knowledge- understand your wife, her circumstances, and her interests (1 Peter 3:7-8).
 - i. Prayers will not be hindered.
 - ii. Inherit a blessing.
 - iii. Sacrificially- model the love of Jesus.
 - i. Put your wife ahead of yourself.
 - ii. Serve her. A woman who experiences the kind sacrificial love that Christ demonstrated on the Cross rarely will have an issue being subject to her husband even as the church is subject to Christ (Eph 5:24).

- iii. Sanctify her (Eph 5:26). That's a God-sized responsibility that calls for a God-sized process and plan.

- IV. Look: A Husband is called to *Lead* and to *Love* his wife out of heart of compassion.
 - a. "Be imitators of me, just as I am of Christ" (1 Cor 11:1).
 - i. "To serve as an improving copy of our perfect pattern, Jesus Christ, by deliberately focusing on and practicing His likeness."⁶
 - ii. It is through this role that the husband exemplifies Christ to his wife, his family, and the world.⁷
 - b. A wife should be the husband's number one priority, humanly speaking, second only to the biblical command of placing God in the position of first place (Exod 20:3; Deut 5:7).
 - i. Christian husbands need to have a heart of worship toward God.⁸
 - ii. Jesus gave us the greatest commandment in Matthew 22:37-39.
 - i. Love God.
 - ii. Love your neighbor. A husband who loves God with all his, heart, soul, and mind will transmit that love to his wife who is his closest neighbor.
- V. Took: "*The only person over whom you have control is yourself.*"⁹
 - a. Encourage participants to take a moment and pray about ways in which he can lead and love his wife.
 - i. Write those ways in an action plan.
 - ii. Pray that God will give you the ability to lead and love your wife well.
 - iii. Plan a date night with your spouse and discuss some of the key concepts that were covered in this lesson.
 - i. Let her know how important she is to you (first place on Earth).
 - ii. Be sensitive that you may have to admit there have been some areas in your marriage that you have not led or loved well.
 - a. Be prepared to ask forgiveness in those areas.
 - b. Pray with your wife.
 - b. Remember last week, "it is a task too significant to hire someone else to do."

⁶Stuart Scott, *The Exemplary Husband: A Biblical Perspective*, rev. ed. (Bemidji, MN: Focus, 2002), 9.

⁷Ibid., 75.

⁸Ibid., 87.

⁹Keller and Keller, *The Meaning of Marriage*, 216.

- c. Next session will cover:
 - i. *A Process of Family Discipleship.*
 - i. The “Big Questions.”
 - ii. The tool “5,4,3,2,1.”

Lesson 4: A Process of Family Discipleship: The Big Questions

Lesson Aim: To equip fathers at Parkridge Baptist Church with a *process* that will enable them to lead in the discipleship of their children.

Target Group: Christian men who are fathers at Parkridge Baptist Church.

A “D-6 Dad” is a dad that desires to lead his family, particularly his children, in the discipleship at home according to Deuteronomy 6:4-9.

The best *plan* parents [dads] can have to help develop their children spiritually is to realize the distinctiveness of their [dads] *role* and the church’s role, respectively. Spiritual growth and learning necessitates a shared effort [*process*] put forth within a community . . . but home will always tend to have the greater impact (emphasis mine).¹

The traits of a “D-6 Dad” entail 3 things:

1. He must know his **Role**.
2. He must have a **Process**.²
3. He must have a **Plan**.

The three parts of the catechism . . . “Of Man’s Misery,” “Of Man’s Redemption,” and “Of Thankfulness.” ~Tom Nettles

- I. Hook³: When you think of the word catechism what comes to mind?
 - a. Collect various answers. (Answers will include: Presbyterian and Catholic).
 - b. Catechesis (the process or form of what is taught).
 - c. Catechism (the content of what is taught).
 - i. *Katēcheō* (Greek) has faded from Evangelicals’ vocabulary.
 - ii. A biblical word (Acts 21:21; 1 Cor 14:19).
 - iii. Excellent tool for the process of discipleship.⁴
 - iv. Defined:

¹John Ellis Steen, “Family: A Context for Discipleship,” in *Practical Family Ministry: A Collection of Ideas for Your Church*, by Timothy Paul Jones and John David Trentham (Nashville: Randall House, 2015), 41.

²Tom Nettles, “An Encouragement to Use Catechisms,” *The Journal of Discipleship & Family Ministry: Family-Based Youth Ministry, 20 Years Later* 4, no. 2 (Spring/Summer 2014): 8.

³The format of the lesson plans use the elements found in Lawrence O. Richards and Gary J. Bredfeldt, *Creative Bible Teaching*, rev. and expanded ed. (Chicago: Moody, 1998), 151-66; see also table 14a, 14b. The Hook is the attention getter; the Book covers a breakdown of the text; the Look seeks to engage practically; and the Took seeks to apply the lesson aim in order to see a change in the learner.

⁴Gary Parrett and J. I. Packer, *Grounded in the Gospel: Building Believers the Old-Fashioned Way* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 2010), 27.

1. “To share a communication that one receives,” and “to teach, instruct.”⁵
2. *Shanan* (Hebrew), “whet or sharpen” (See Deut 6:7).
- d. Review: Discipleship defined: “*A personal and intentional process in which one or more Christians guide unbelievers or less mature believers to embrace and apply the gospel in every part of their lives. Discipleship is a process that includes a personal profession of faith in Jesus Christ, as he has been revealed to us in Scripture. Discipleship involves developing perspectives and practices [plan] that reflect the mind of Christ.*”⁶
- e. What we will discover in this session is that catechisms provide a great path for fathers who desire to have a systematic approach (process and content) for discipleship.
- f. We can refer to them as: The “Big Questions.”

II. Book: *Katēcheō* appears many times in the New Testament.

- a. Acts 21:21 and 1 Corinthians and the use is always to “instruct in the faith.”
- b. Three examples of Scriptures indicate the early church used this form of instruction to “teach” sound doctrine.
 - i. Luke 1:3-4 describes a well researched and orderly account of what the disciple was *taught*.
 - ii. Acts 18:25. Apollos was *instructed* (catechized) in the way of the Lord. He was fervent and *taught* accurately about Jesus.
 - iii. Galatians 6:6. Literally means, “One who is *catechized* must share all good things with one who *catechizes*.”⁷

The only thing more difficult than finding the truth is not losing it.
~Kevin DeYoung

III. Look: Historical Survey of Catechisms

- a. Calvin’s Catechism, 1541.
 - i. Author John Calvin. Intended to teach children from ten to fifteen, directing to one Christ.
 - ii. Published in French and Latin.
 - iii. Includes 373 questions with four main parts:
 1. Faith. Includes the Apostles’ Creed.
 2. The Law. Including the Ten Commandments.
 3. Prayer. Including the Lord’s Prayer.
 4. The Word and Sacraments.

⁵Parrett and Packer, *Grounded in the Gospel*, 27-29. See all the various renderings and usages of *katēcheō*.

⁶Timothy Paul Jones, *Family Ministry Field Guide: How Your Church Can Equip Parents to Make Disciples* (Indianapolis: Wesleyan Publishing House, 2011), 17.

⁷Parrett and Packer, *Grounded in the Gospel*, 33. The authors argue that this passage is the clearest usage of the term *katēcheō* and forged the future use of catechism for the purpose of teaching sound doctrine and instruction on the way of the Lord.

- b. The Heidelberg Catechism, 1563.
 - i. Author Zacharias Ursinus (German), professor at the University of Heidelberg.
 - ii. Intended to focus the student to express the proper gratitude for God's redemption.
 - iii. Eventually translated into Latin and in 1591 translated into English.
 - iv. In 1615 it was used by the Kirk [church] of Edinburgh, praised as highly devotional and most loved catechism of the Reformation.⁸
 - v. Includes 129 questions with three main parts:
 - 1. The Misery of Man includes a treatment on sin, the fall and the need for redemption.
 - 2. Redemption includes Christ as the Mediator. Also in includes the Apostles' Creed, the Word, and the Sacraments.
 - 3. Thankfulness includes a treatment on the Ten Commandments and the Lord's Prayer.
- c. Craig's Catechism, 1581.
 - i. Author was John Craig. He was a Dominican theologian who was converted to the Reformed Faith through reading Calvin's original *Institutes of the Christian Religion*.
 - ii. Served as the chaplain to the King from 1579 to 1594.
 - iii. Craig encouraged this catechism be read often in the homes for the purposes of instruction and to learn the principle points of salvation.
 - iv. Includes 897 questions and is complex in its division.
 - 1. The Three-fold State of Man. Includes creation, his miserable fall and bondage under sin, his calling to repent and be restored.
 - 2. The Four Parts of God's Honour. Includes faith, obedience, prayer, and thanksgiving.
- d. The New Catechism, 1644.
 - i. Published in London and had the shortest lifespan. It was superseded by the Westminster Catechism.
 - ii. Includes 167 questions with four main parts:
 - 1. The Belief. Includes the Apostles' Creed.
 - 2. The Ten Commandments. Includes the importance of our obedience to God and love of our neighbor. Also includes a section on the Word and the Spirit.
 - 3. Prayer. Examines our need to seek God for all of our needs.
 - 4. The Sacraments. Remembering Christ's sacrifice.
- e. The Westminster Larger Catechism, 1648.
 - i. One of two catechisms adopted by the Westminster Assembly.

⁸Kevin DeYoung, *The Good News We Almost Forgot: Rediscovering the Gospel in a 16th Century Catechism*, new ed. (Chicago: Moody, 2010), 13.

- ii. Intended for the purposes of teaching Sunday by Sunday by the Elders.
 - iii. Upon its adoption it was considered the supreme catechism and superseded all others written previously.
 - iv. 1649 the Assembly arranged for each household to have a copy, along with the *Westminster Confession of Faith* and the *Directory for Family Worship*.⁹
 - v. Includes 196 questions and after a brief introduction on man's chief end the catechism is divided into two main parts:
 - 1. What Man ought to believe concerning God. Includes the doctrines of God, the covenant of Grace, the benefits of Christ's mediation.
 - 2. The Duty of Man. Includes an exposition of the moral law and the means of grace are outlined by looking at the Ten Commandments, the Word, the Sacraments, and Prayer.
 - f. A Baptist Catechism.
 - i. Authored by John Piper.
 - ii. Adapted from the *London Catechism* in 1742 (*The Philadelphia Confession*), with commentary added.
 - iii. Includes 118 questions.
 - g. The Catechism of Biblical Teaching.
 - i. Authored by John Broadus, one of the founders of The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary.
 - ii. Commissioned by the American Baptist Publication Society and The Southern Baptist Sunday School Board in 1892.
 - iii. Includes fifteen lessons and a section on suggested biblical passages for memorization.
 - h. Catechism share common doctrinal truths and most have shorter versions.
 - i. Creation.
 - ii. Fall.
 - iii. Redemption.
 - iv. The Ten Commandments.
 - v. The Lord's Prayer.
 - vi. The Apostles' Creed.
 - vii. The Word.
 - viii. The Sacraments.
- IV. Look: Catechetical Content.
- a. Five Founts¹⁰
 - i. Triune God.
 - 1. God the Father.
 - 2. God the Son.
 - 3. God the Holy Spirit.

⁹Thomas F. Torrance, *School of Faith* (London: James Clarke & Co, 1959), 184.

¹⁰Parrett and Packer, *Grounded in the Gospel*, 77-94.

- ii. The Scriptures.
 - 1. God-breathed (2 Tim 3:16-17).
 - 2. Infallible, inerrant, and our ultimate authority.
- iii. The Story:
 - 1. Creation.
 - 2. Fall.
 - 3. Redemption.
 - 4. Culmination.
- iv. The Gospel.
 - 1. Simply put, “God saves sinners.”
 - 2. Only Christ, because of his sinless life, could have paid the price for us.
 - 3. The catechetical teaching is Jesus is the Way, the Truth, and the Life.
- v. Faith.
 - 1. What we believe.
 - 2. How faith impacts our lifestyle.
- b. Four Fixtures (Acts 2:42).
 - i. Apostles’ Creed.
 - ii. The Decalogue (Ten Commandments).
 - iii. The Lord’s Prayer.
 - iv. The Sacraments or Church Ordinances.
 - 1. Baptism.
 - 2. Lord’s Supper.
- c. Three Facets of the Faith (John 14:6).
 - i. Truth.
 - 1. Preaching.
 - 2. Teaching.
 - 3. Living according to the Gospel and sound doctrine (Gal 2:5; Eph 1:13; 1 Tim 1:10).
 - ii. The Life.
 - 1. The eternal relationship we have with God.
 - 2. First through new birth.
 - 3. Second, by the Grace of God we are sanctified.
 - iii. The Way.
 - 1. Inseparable from the Truth and the Life.
 - 2. “We live in love of God and neighbor.”¹¹
- d. Two Fundamentals of the Way (Matt 22:37; Mark 12:29; Luke 10:25-37).
 - 1. Love God with all your heart, mind, soul, and strength.
 - 2. Love your neighbor as yourself.
- e. One Focus—Proclaim Christ (Matt 28:19, 20).
 - i. Learn Christ.
 - ii. Proclaim Christ to a lost and dying world.

¹¹Parrett and Packer, *Grounded in the Gospel*, 90. The Ten Commandments can be summed up with love God and love your neighbor.

1. The best way to love someone is to share the Gospel with them.
2. No better way to love our children than to proclaim the saving grace of Jesus to them.

There are *five founts, or frames*, for catechesis → the fifth element of which is the Faith → which has been traditionally communicated through the *four fixtures* of the catechism → which together bear witness to the *three facets of the Faith* → the third of which is *the Way* → which has *two fundamentals*: love of God and love of neighbor → which Jesus alone has fully obeyed, and whose grace alone enables us to begin to obey. Therefore Jesus Christ must ever be the one focus of all our ministries of catechesis.¹²

- V. Took: Do not allow the term *catechism* stop you from *catechizing*.
- a. A “D-6 Dad” will choose the process that works for him.
 - i. Choose a term that fits for your family:
 1. “Grounded and growing.”
 2. “Faithful formation.”
 3. “Mastering maturity.”
 4. “Going for Growth.”
 5. Or, invent your own.
 - ii. Choose your catechism.
 1. A great way to ensure that doctrinal truths are taught to your children.
 2. Hand out Piper’s “A Baptist Catechism”¹³ (40 pages).
 - iii. Pray that God will give you the tools and the time to lead in the discipleship of your children.
 - b. Next session will include *The Plan*.
 - i. Family Equipping.
 - ii. “Read, Pray, and Sing.”
 - iii. Big Events.

The Apostles’ Creed (Traditional ecumenical version)

*I believe in God, the Father Almighty,
maker of heaven and earth;
And in Jesus Christ his only Son, our Lord;
who was conceived by the Holy Spirit,
born of the Virgin Mary,
suffered under Pontius Pilate,
was crucified, dead, and buried;*
the third day he rose from the dead;
he ascended into heaven,*

¹²Parrett and Packer, *Grounded in the Gospel*, 94.

¹³John Piper, “A Baptist Catechism,” *Desiring God*, accessed March 20, 2017, <http://www.desiringgod.org/articles/a-baptist-catechism>.

*and sitteth at the right hand of God the Father Almighty;
from thence he shall come to judge the quick and the dead.
I believe in the Holy Spirit,
the holy catholic** church,
the communion of saints,
the forgiveness of sins,
the resurrection of the body,
and the life everlasting. Amen.*¹⁴

*Traditional use of this creed includes these words: "He descended into hell."

** Universal.

¹⁴For a treatment of the wording "He descended into hell," see "Did Jesus Really Go into Hell?" *Christianity Today* 44, no. 2 (2000): 74, accessed July 5, 2017, <http://www.christianitytoday.com/ct/2000/february7/31.74.html>.

Lesson 5: The Plan for Discipleship

Lesson Aim: To equip fathers at Parkridge Baptist Church with a *plan* that will enable them to lead in the discipleship of their children.

Target Group: Christian men who are fathers at Parkridge Baptist Church.

A “D-6 Dad” is a dad that desires to lead his family, particularly his children, in the discipleship at home according to Deuteronomy 6:4-9.

The best *plan* parents [dads] can have to help develop their children spiritually is to realize the distinctiveness of their [dads] *role* and the church’s role, respectively. Spiritual growth and learning necessitates a shared effort [*process*] put forth within a community . . . but home will always tend to have the greater impact (emphasis mine).¹

The traits of a “D-6 Dad” entail 3 things:

1. He must know his **Role**.
2. He must have a **Process**.
3. He must have a **Plan**.

<i>Good parents love their kids. Godly parents understand that they are an incredible blessing from God. ~Steve Wright.</i>

- I. Hook²: Have you considered the cost of having children?
 - a. Go around the room and simply ask each father to tell the group how many children they have.
 - b. Recent studies show that the cost of having children is as high as \$289,000.³
 - c. Quickly calculate the collective cost in the class based on the number of children represented in the room to show the financial impact.
 - d. Read Psalm 127: 3-5.
 - i. Heritage from the Lord.
 - ii. Like arrows in the hand of a warrior.
 - iii. Blessed is the man who fills his quiver with them.

¹John Ellis Steen, “Family: A Context for Discipleship,” in *Practical Family Ministry: A Collection of Ideas for Your Church*, by Timothy Paul Jones and John David Trentham (Nashville: Randall House, 2015), 41.

²The format of the lesson plans use the elements found in Lawrence O. Richards and Gary J. Bredfeldt, *Creative Bible Teaching*, rev. and expanded ed. (Chicago: Moody, 1998), 151-66; see also table 14a, 14b. The Hook is the attention getter; the Book covers a breakdown of the text; the Look seeks to engage practically; and the Took seeks to apply the lesson aim in order to see a change in the learner.

³Steve Wright and Chris Graves, *ApParent Privilege* (Royal Palm Beach, FL: InQuest, 2008), 69. The authors quote from the article “Cost of Children? The Numbers Ain’t Kidding” found at www.msnbc.msn.com/id/20203458/. At the time of this writing, this link was a dead link. The following link reflect the same numbers: “Cost of Children? The Numbers Ain’t Kidding,” August 9, 2007, accessed March 28, 2017, <http://www.today.com/money/cost-children-numbers-ain-t-kidding-wbna20203458>.

- e. 4.1 million Women said they do not want children and elect to be “childless by choice.”
 - i. One woman said that having children hurts the environment, “Having children is selfish. It’s all about maintaining your genetic line at the expense of the planet.”
 - ii. One woman terminated a pregnancy believing she was helping the planet.⁴
- f. This is more than a liberal commentary on global warming, this is an attack by the evil one who would have us, as parents, forget that children are a blessing from God.
- g. This lesson will equip you with a plan that will enable you to disciple your children, who are a precious gift from God.

II. Book: Fathers need to F.O.C.U.S.⁵

- a. First, seek him (Matt 6:33).
 - i. Keep your personal life on track.
 - ii. Strive for Christlikeness.
 - iii. Exercise spiritual discipline; daily prayer and reading Scripture.
 - i. Fathers cannot lead their children where they have not gone.
 - ii. Stay attuned to what God is teaching you so you can pass that to your children.
 - iv. Example: The flight attendant tells you to put your oxygen mask on first and then help your children. Think of your task as putting on your “spiritual oxygen mask” first.
- b. Opportunities come knocking- listen for them (Eph 5:16).
 - i. Look for teachable moments.
 - ii. Driving in the car.
 - iii. Listen to what your children have to say.
 - iv. Ask them what questions do they have about, God, the Bible, or what they have been learning in church.
 - v. Celebrate milestones (covered more in next lesson).
- c. Color outside the lines.
 - i. Spiritual growth does not have to happen while reading the Bible.
 - ii. Take walks, ride bikes, go to the park or to the park. Talk about God’s creation and His goodness.
 - iii. Plan a block party and invite your neighbors in order to meet them with purposes of finding out their spiritual condition.

Whether walking, talking or resting, you must be involved in helping your child to understand life, himself, and his needs from a biblical perspective (Deut 6: 6-7). ~Tedd Tripp

⁴Wright and Graves, *ApParent Privilege*, 49. Taken from Natasha Courtenay-Smith and Morag Turner, “Meet the Women Who Won’t Have Babies—Because They’re Not Eco Friendly,” November 21, 2007, www.dailymail.co.uk/female/article-495495/Meet-women-wont-babies--theyre-eco-friendly.html.

⁵Steen, “Family,” 45-47.

- d. Understand that your children do not always understand the things of God (Isa 55:8-9).
 - i. Your child is on a spiritual journey and at different stages of learning.
 - ii. Related biblical truths such as tithing, respect, and obedience in ways your child can understand.
- e. Simple teaching and activities are important. (Prov 22:6).
 - i. Cook breakfast with your children and then do a short devotion together.
 - ii. Pray before bedtime.
 - iii. Take time to discuss activity pages sent home from church.
 - iv. Mealtime blessings and allow the children to lead sometimes
 - v. Put a verse and a word of encouragement in a lunch box.

III. Look: The Family-Equipping Model.

- a. Timothy Paul Jones states that family-equipping is a “process of reorienting existing ministries to partner with parents. . .”⁶Be imitators of me, just as I am of Christ” (1 Cor 11:1).
- b. Two key dynamics involved:
 - i. Family-as-church
 - i. The goal of the family-as-church model is to “equip parents to disciple their children in the context of daily lives together.”⁷
 - ii. Jonathan Edwards described the home as “a little church” and claimed it to be more effective in the Christian formation of the child than the ministers in the congregation.⁸
 - ii. Church-as-family.⁹
 - i. The goal of the church-as-family is to “help God’s people relate to one another more like a family.”¹⁰

⁶Timothy Paul Jones, *Family Ministry Field Guide: How Your Church Can Equip Parents to Make Disciples* (Indianapolis: Wesleyan Publishing House, 2011), 26.

⁷Ibid., 11.

⁸Ibid. Jones quotes Jonathan Edwards, “Living to Christ,” in *Sermons and Discourses, 1720-1723*, vol. 10 of *The Works of Jonathan Edwards*, ed. W. H. Kinnach (New Haven, CT: Yale University, 1992), 577.

⁹Timothy Paul Jones, introduction to *Practical Family Ministry: A Collection of Ideas for Your Church*, by Timothy Paul Jones and John David Trentham (Nashville: Randall House, 2015), 11. For historical exploration of “church as family,” see Joseph Hellerman, *The Ancient Church as Family* (Minneapolis: Augsburg Fortress, 2001). Jones credits Chap Clark as the first time he heard this term.

¹⁰Ibid., 12.

- ii. James K. A. Smith calls the church our “first family”¹¹ which cooperates with parents in:
 - a. The worship liturgy,
 - b. The sacraments of the church,
 - c. Assisting parents in the spiritual formation of their children
- c. Components of family-equipping.
 - i. Faith talks.
 - i. Designated times, at least once per week, gathering for prayer and the study of biblical truths.¹²
 - ii. Show video of Hamilton, Nettles and Jones.¹³
 - ii. Faith walks.
 - i. Fathers are called to talk as they walk by the way. (Deut 6:7).
 - ii. Is a “discussion in the course of daily life that turns a child’s attention toward the presence of the gospel and the providence of God in every part of life.”¹⁴
 - iii. Works for busy dads because it’s not another thing to put on the calendar- spontaneous and no planning required.
 - iii. Faith processes in the home.
 - i. The plan which attends to the child’s spiritual needs at his/her level.
 - ii. Seeks to ask, “What needs to happen next in the child’s spiritual growth.”¹⁵ (More will be presented in the next session- Brian Haynes’ milestones.)
 - iv. Faith examples to spiritual orphans.
 - i. A family that practices faith talks and faith walks will want to reach out to others.
 - ii. The goal is to share the Gospel to spiritual orphans.

¹¹James K. A. Smith, *You Are What You Love: The Spiritual Power of Habit* (Grand Rapids: Brazos, 2016), 116-17.

¹²Jones, *Family Ministry Field Guide*, 154.

¹³Derek Brown, “Jim Hamilton, Tom Nettles, and Timothy Paul Jones on Family Devotions,” *Family Ministry Today: The Center for Christian Family Ministry at The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary*, January 13, 2016, accessed September 21, 2016, <http://www.sbts.edu/family/2014/01/13/jim-hamilton-tom-nettles-and-timothy-paul-jones-on-family-devotions/>.

¹⁴Jones, *Family Ministry Field Guide*, 162.

¹⁵*Ibid.*, 164.

- IV. Took: Plan and do a family-talk time this week.¹⁶
- a. Read.¹⁷
- i. The Bible as the training manual life.
 - ii. The Bible is our source of wisdom.
 - iii. The Bible is our source of righteousness.
 - iv. The Bible is our source of hope.
 - v. Show examples of resources;
 - i. *Old Story New: Ten-Minute Devotions to Draw Your Family to God*.¹⁸
 - ii. *Long Story Short: Ten-Minute Devotions to Draw Your Family to God*.¹⁹
 - iii. *The Bible's Big Story: Salvation History for Kids*.²⁰
- b. Pray.
- i. "There are two mistakes we can make . . . Emphasize Scripture without prayer; Emphasize prayer without Scripture."²¹
 - ii. Keep a family prayer list.
 - iii. Teach children to pray aloud. A child who prays aloud in the early years will feel less awkward doing so as they grow older.²²
- c. Sing.
- i. Use a song book or sing songs that your family heard on Sunday.
 - ii. Pick a monthly family song that can be memorized.
 - iii. A cappella
 - iv. Make a joyful noise (Ps 100:1).
 - v. Utilize technology (Smart phones, iPads or Tablet).
- d. Remember what we said about leading and loving your wife, "it is a task too significant to hire someone else to do."
- e. Next session will cover:

¹⁶Donald S. Whitney, *Family Worship* (Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2016), 45. Whitney refers to this as simply family worship. The three components are *read*, *pray*, and *sing*.

¹⁷Voddie Baucham, Jr., *Family Driven Faith: Doing What It Takes to Raise Sons and Daughters Who Walk with God* (Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2007), 98-99.

¹⁸Marty Machowski, *Old Story New: Ten-Minute Devotions to Draw Your Family to God* (Greensboro, NC: New Growth, 2012).

¹⁹Marty Machowski, *Long Story Short: Ten-Minute Devotions to Draw Your Family to God* (Greensboro, NC: New Growth, 2010).

²⁰James M. Hamilton, Jr., *The Bible's Big Story: Salvation History for Kids* (Fearn, Scotland: Christian Focus, 2014).

²¹Steve Farrar, *Point Man: How a Man Can Lead His Family* (Sisters, OR: Multnomah, 2003), 129.

²²Joel Beeke, *Parenting by God's Promises: How to Raise Children in the Covenant of Grace* (York, PA: Maple, 2011), 82. As children acquire the ability, they should read and memorize Scripture. Commentaries and concordances, and dictionaries are helpful in explaining difficult passages.

- i. The Big Outcomes, Holly Allen.
- ii. The Big Events, Brian Haynes.
- iii. Report on how your family-talk went.

Lesson 6: The Big Events and The Big Outcomes

Lesson Aim: To equip fathers at Parkridge Baptist Church with a *plan* that will enable them to lead in the discipleship of their children.

Target Group: Christian men who are fathers at Parkridge Baptist Church.

A “D-6 Dad” is a dad that desires to lead his family, particularly his children, in the discipleship at home according to Deuteronomy 6:4-9.

The best *plan* parents [dads] can have to help develop their children spiritually is to realize the distinctiveness of their [dads] *role* and the church’s role, respectively. Spiritual growth and learning necessitates a shared effort [*process*] put forth within a community . . . but home will always tend to have the greater impact (emphasis mine).¹

The traits of a “D-6 Dad” entail 3 things:

1. He must know his **Role**.
2. He must have a **Process**.
3. He must have a **Plan**.

The legacy path is an intentional way to lead the next generation to faith in Jesus in the way trodden by others. ~Brian Haynes.

- I. Hook²: The “Big Events” and the “Big Outcomes”.
 - a. Go around the room and simply ask each father to remember and then share a big event in your childhood. (Answers will vary – note each answer on the board).
 - b. After each event is recorded try to group the answers. Ask: “Are there any similarities? (Look for events that related to family activities, events that related to church or spiritual growth, others may include graduation, marriage, birth, and deaths).
 - c. These events had a profound impact on your lives didn’t they? You can still remember them in your adulthood.
 - d. Brian Haynes writes, “Planning your journey is the difference between hoping your kids randomly end up loving God versus actually “training them up in the way they should go.”³
 - e. This lesson will identify some of the “Big Events” and the “Big Outcomes” that we desire our children to experience as we disciple them.

¹John Ellis Steen, “Family: A Context for Discipleship,” in *Practical Family Ministry: A Collection of Ideas for Your Church*, by Timothy Paul Jones and John David Trentham (Nashville: Randall House, 2015), 41.

²The format of the lesson plans use the elements found in Lawrence O. Richards and Gary J. Bredfeldt, *Creative Bible Teaching*, rev. and expanded ed. (Chicago: Moody, 1998), 151-66; see also table 14a, 14b. The Hook is the attention getter; the Book covers a breakdown of the text; the Look seeks to engage practically; and the Took seeks to apply the lesson aim in order to see a change in the learner.

³Brian Haynes, *The Legacy Path: Discovering Intentional Spiritual Parenting* (Nashville: Randall House, 2011), 60-61.

- f. Briefly ask for a testimony regarding the homework assignment to do a family-talk time from last session.
 - i. What went well?
 - ii. What study did you do?
 - iii. What hurdles did you have to overcome?
 - iv. Did you incorporate the *Read, Pray, and Sing* tools?
 - v. Celebrate that as a major “Big Event” and a Big Outcome.”

II. Book: The Legacy Path.⁴

a. Deuteronomy 6 is the essence of the legacy path.

- i. Legacy is “anything handed down from the past, as from an ancestor or predecessor.”⁵
- ii. A path always has a destination. “In this case the journey produces a new generation of Christ-followers living according to a biblical worldview and able to pass the faith on to the next generation.”⁶
- iii. The legacy path involves one generation passing down the faith to the next in the everyday of life.
- iv. As Moses found out it only takes one generation of parents to forsake their role as faith trainers to cause a culture to turn from God and embrace the gods, the belief systems, and lifestyle of the pagan world.⁷

Passing on a legacy of biblical faith to the next generation has always been a part of God's plan. ~Brian Haynes

b. Genesis 17:4-7 was God's original master plan for the legacy path.⁸

- i. God constructs the foundation of biblical faith on the heart of a righteous man.
- ii. Abraham became a father who is the conduit for God's spiritual formation plan for the generations.
- iii. Without Abraham we would know nothing of Christ.
- iv. Without Abraham the biblical accounts that comfort and encourage the heart of a Christian would be lost.
- v. In a sense, no father, no legacy of faith.
- vi. God led Abraham, as a father, and He will lead us as we embark on the legacy path (Is 40:11).

c. Legacy_Milestones,⁹ the “Big Events.”

- i. Baby [family] dedication.

⁴Haynes, *The Legacy Path*, 1. In chap. 1, Haynes identifies the “Theology of Legacy.”

⁵Ibid., 3.

⁶Ibid.

⁷Ibid., 2.

⁸Ibid., 4.

⁹Ibid., 61-96. Haynes presents seven milestones that can be celebrated by the family and utilized for teachable moments in the discipleship of a child. The first three are “faith destinations for

- i. Covenant with the church to help raise the child, “church-as-family.”
 - ii. The parents make a commitment to be the primary faith trainer.
 - iii. Make it memorable. Since each milestone builds upon the other, it is important to record this with pictures and a certificate so the child can reflect on this event as they grow older.
- ii. Faith commitment; not a box to check off.
 - i. When the child makes a “personal decision” to follow Christ (ages vary, usually between seven and thirteen for most Christian families).¹⁰
 - ii. Can’t make the decision for them, but we can . . .
 - a. Pray.
 - b. Teach them Scripture.
 - c. Present the Gospel.
 - i. Must have an understanding of Sin.
 - ii. Confession.
 - iii. Repentance.
 - d. Tell them your own testimony of salvation.
- iii. Preparing for adolescence (between age of 9 and 12).
 - i. Parents need to adjust their strategy in how they connect with their adolescent child; the kids are no longer childlike.
 - a. Changes physically—talk to your child about what changes are happening as this is an awkward time for both child and parent.
 - b. Spiritually—the adolescent begins forming his own opinions, thinking for himself, and making his own decisions.
 - c. Emotionally—they begin to have a keen sense of self-identity. Reinforce that Christ defines them, not their friends, and certainly, not the media.
- iv. Commitment to purity, not easy—two things can help.
 - i. Relational connection.
 - ii. Open lines of communication (1 Cor 6:18; 1 Thess 4:3-5).
- v. Rite of passage—two years or so may pass between milestone four and milestone five.
 - i. Middle school to high school.
 - ii. Increasing freedoms granted not based on age, but based on spiritual maturity and overall handling of responsibility.
 - iii. Somewhere between milestone four and milestone five; apologetics, dating, marriage, and practical life skills.

children.” The next four are designed to help parents focus on the “journey from adolescence to adulthood.”

¹⁰Haynes, *The Legacy Path*, 64.

- iv. College preparation.
- vi. High school graduation.
 - i. Reinforce the skills and knowledge that will be important as they follow in obedience to God.
 - ii. Reinforce their identity in Christ.
 - iii. Reinforce their ability to defend their faith.
 - iv. Keep the relational line of communication open.
- vii. Life in Christ.
 - i. Milestone seven is the end goal of the legacy path, but it is the beginning of another journey.
 - ii. Your child now needs to live out their walk with Christ.
 - iii. The parent becomes less of teacher or guide on the legacy path and takes on the role of a wise counselor helping your adult child navigate through life.
 - iv. Trust God that He is sovereign (Jer 29:11).

III. Look: The “Big Outcomes.”¹¹

- a. Holly Allen surveyed parents and asked: “What do you want for the children in this community of believers? That is, “What do you want them to know? How do you want them to live? Who do you hope they will become?”
- b. That they will . . .
 - i. know God.
 - ii. believe God is love.
 - iii. will receive Christ.
 - iv. love their “neighbor”—serve the poor, the hurting, and the broken.
 - v. pray.
 - vi. know the “Master Story” [creation, fall, redemption, consummation].
 - vii. desire to worship God.
 - viii. share Jesus with others.
 - ix. be growing in compassion, humility, love, and mercy.
 - x. have their identity in Christ.
- c. That they will begin to acquire an understanding of . . .
 - i. their place in the Kingdom.
 - ii. the role of the Holy Spirit.
 - iii. the Trinity
 - iv. the central importance of Scripture.
 - v. the power of sin.
 - vi. the crucial role of the church as an essential community of Christ-followers.
 - vii. the need for Christ to save them.

¹¹Holly Allen, “Curriculum and Children’s Ministry,” in *Mapping Out Curriculum in Your Church: Cartography for Christian Pilgrims*, ed. James Estep, Roger White, and Karen Estep (Nashville: B & H, 2012), 240. Allen presents Figure 12.1: “Children’s Learning Goals,” which was based on a qualitative study done in a church revitalization program.

- IV. Took: Break into pairs.
- a. Pray for each other's journey to disciple his family.
 - i. Share how you can use the legacy milestones to help build your discipleship strategy plan.
 - ii. Review Holly Allen's big outcomes and circle your top ten.
 - b. Conduct your second family-talk time; Read, Pray, and Sing.
 - c. Hand out the Basics of Biblical Discipleship Inventory (BBDI).
 - i. Commit to taking the post-survey.
 - ii. Commit to return the survey within one week to the facilitator.

APPENDIX 4

D-6 DADS CURRICULUM: LESSON GUIDES

Lesson 1: Introduction

Lesson Aim: To equip fathers at Parkridge Church to lead in the discipleship of their children.

A “D-6 Dad” is a dad that desires to lead his family, particularly his children, in the discipleship at home according to Deuteronomy 6:4-9.

The best *plan* parents [dads] can have to help develop their children spiritually is to realize the distinctiveness of their [dads] *role* and the church’s role, respectively. Spiritual growth and learning necessitates a shared effort [*process*] put forth within a community . . . but home will always tend to have the greater impact (emphasis mine).

The traits of a “D-6 Dad” entail 3 things:

1. He must know his _____.
2. He must have a _____.
3. He must have a _____.

The goal of the church-as-family is to help God’s people relate to one another more like a family. The goal of the family-as-church model is to equip parents to disciple their children in the context of daily lives together.
~Timothy Paul Jones

What is going on in our families?

FamilyLife, “Family Needs Survey.”

_____ % of parents did not engage in family devotions.

_____ % engages “rarely.”

Most Christian men agree that they should lead, however, they don’t.

Why?

The answer most given is _____ and _____.

Discipleship defined: “A personal and intentional process in which one or more Christians guide unbelievers or less mature believers to embrace and apply the gospel in every part of their lives. Discipleship is a process that includes a personal profession of faith in Jesus Christ, as he has been revealed to us in Scripture. Discipleship involves developing perspectives and practices that reflect the mind of Christ.”

1 Thessalonians 2:11-12.

Paul assumed believing fathers were _____ in their children’s lives.

This expectation did not end in the _____ era.

_____ and Letter of _____ post New Testament era.

“You shall train [your son and your daughter] in the fear of God from their youth up.”

Clement of Rome urged parents to embrace the privilege of sharing “the instruction that is in Christ.”

“What you do for God beyond your home will typically never be greater than what you practice with God within your home.”

Next session will explore the following Scriptures: Deut 6: 4-9, Ps78:1-8, and Eph 6:1-4

Lesson 2: Theological Support

Lesson Aim: To equip fathers at Parkridge Baptist Church to lead in the discipleship of their children.

Target Group: Christian men who are fathers at Parkridge Baptist Church.

A “D-6 Dad” is a dad that desires to lead his family, particularly his children, in the discipleship at home according to Deuteronomy 6:4-9.

The best *plan* parents [dads] can have to help develop their children spiritually is to realize the distinctiveness of their [dads] *role* and the church’s role, respectively. Spiritual growth and learning necessitates a shared effort [*process*] put forth within a community . . . but home will always tend to have the greater impact (emphasis mine).

The traits of a “D-6 Dad” entail 3 things:

1. He must know his **Role**.
2. He must have a **Process**.
3. He must have a **Plan**.

God desired for all of His children to know His Word, be able to talk about His Word, and to live out His Word in their lives. Therefore it was imperative that parents understood, embodied, and taught the Shema to their children. ~John Ellis Steen

The Task Too Significant to Hire Someone Else to Do.

Imagine for a moment that you call your spouse and tell her that it has been too long since your last date night. You tell her that you hired a *professional dater* to take her out. “That’s right honey, a professional and he is much better than me at dating – he likes chick flicks.” What do you think the response would be? (If she is willing you may have bigger problems than discipling your children).

We are fighting a spiritual battle, Eph 6:12-17

Today we will explore several key Scriptures that deal with the responsibility of dads being the disciple-makers at home.

Deuteronomy 6: 4-9 (*Shema*, “to hear”).

Fundamental _____ of Israel’s religion.

God is _____.

He is the _____ God.

Fundamental _____.

_____ him, _____ him, and _____ him.

Transfer the great deeds of God recorded in Exodus.

Generations to come should be taught to observe the commands and laws (6:20-25).

Jewish fathers had the same influence in their homes as priests in the Temple.

A repetitive formula is seen: _____ and _____ to their children when they are _____, _____, _____, and _____; all the time.

The *Shema* was a daily confession of faith in the home, typically recited twice per day. It was used as a benediction in the synagogue.

Scripture memorization was encouraged (6:8, 9).

- Phylacteries (individual)¹
- Door posts (family/home)
- Gates (society)

Jesus expressed the importance of the *Shema* in all three synoptic Gospels (Matt 22:37-38; Mark 12:29-30; and Luke 10:27.

“The great and foremost greatest commandment.”

Correlation between the *Shema* and the Decalogue (Luke 10:26).

Psalm 78: 1-8. A didactic (teaching) psalm.

Duty: God’s people to pass on the _____ of God to _____ and to the next _____.

- Wondrous works (v.4, 5)
- The testimony of Jacob
- The appointment of the Law

Wondrous works linked with subject matter

Deuteronomy 6:20-21 (Read).

When our “sons ask” fathers need to have answer

We were once “slaves” and now we have been brought out of slavery (forgiven of sin).

Listen – sets the tone for the importance of the subject matter (cf. Deut 6:4; Ps 49).

Incline your ears; pay attention or lean in.

Meditate on this.

Warning: Not to be as their fathers, rebellious and stubborn.

Ephesians 6:1-4

Having addressed wives and husbands in the “house codes,” Paul now focuses on fathers.

Four exhortations (1-9); we will look at two here.

Children (v.1) and Fathers (v. 4) - Closely paired with Colossians 3:20-21.

Two imperative verbs given to children (1-3).

¹In Jewish tradition, phylacteries and frontals were inscribed scrolls placed in a small box. These boxes would have been attached to the hands and worn around the wearer above the eyebrows. Christians today can utilize this concept metaphorically to instill in children the importance of hands working for God, as well as the Word of God being in front of their eyes and influencing their minds.

In the Lord (cf. Col 3:20 “in all things”).
It is right.

_____ - twofold promise.
It may be well with you.
You may live a long time on earth.

Fathers

Do not make your children _____.

If fathers enrage their children it produces the opposite of the desired effect (anger is sin Eph 4:26).

In classical Roman culture *patria potestas* gave the father, as the head of the household, full authority and unlimited power over his children, even holding power of life and death.

Avoid exasperating your children. It is hard to think of anything more exasperating to a son than growing into adulthood and feeling that his father did not adequately prepare him to face a world in which his faith will be tested at every turn.

Bring them up in the _____ and _____ of the Lord.

Directly connected to Deuteronomy 4:4-9 and Psalms 78:1-8.

Training is to be “of the Lord.”

Christlike example.

Meekness and gentleness (2 Cor 10:1).

A radical and unique idea in Hellenistic and Roman culture.

Paul does not question the authority of the parent (*patria potestas*)
he simply encourages them to use the power and authority to train
and instruct.

Empowered by the Holy Spirit.

Deuteronomy 17: 18-20. The King as a type of father.

What are three key concepts in this story that dads can apply?

The king was to write for himself a copy- _____ responsibility.

Keep the copy with him at all times.

Internalize the Word of God.

Apply it to daily living.

Read the copy all the days of his life- Devotion to God’s Word.

The purpose?

To learn to fear the Lord

Not be prideful

Not be disobedient and turn from the Torah.

Transfer the blessings of Israel to his sons.

“What you do for God beyond your home will typically never be greater than what you practice with God within your home.”

Commit to pray that the texts studied in this lesson will begin to change the way you view the discipleship of your children and your role as a father in the process.

Remember, it is a task too significant to hire someone else to do.

Next session will include *The Role of the Husband*.

Love.

Lead.

Lesson 3: The Role of the Husband

Lesson Aim: To equip husbands to understand that in order to lead in the discipleship of their children they must acknowledge that God gave wives to them first and without that they would not have the privilege to wear the title of father.

Target Group: Christian men who are fathers at Parkridge Baptist Church.

A “D-6 Dad” is a dad that desires to lead his family, particularly his children, in the discipleship at home according to Deuteronomy 6:4-9.

The best *plan* parents [dads] can have to help develop their children spiritually is to realize the distinctiveness of their [dads] *role* and the church’s role, respectively. Spiritual growth and learning necessitates a shared effort [*process*] put forth within a community . . . but home will always tend to have the greater impact (emphasis mine).¹

The traits of a “D-6 Dad” entail 3 things:

4. He must know his **Role**.
5. He must have a **Process**.
6. He must have a **Plan**.

A strong marriage is the foundation to the success upon which a strong family is built. And having a strong marriage requires a biblical understanding of the purpose for which God gave us the institution. ~Voddie Baucham Jr.

The decline of marriage.

Over the last forty years, the “leading marriage indicators: - empirical descriptions of marriage health and satisfaction in the United States –have been in steady decline. (77 percent of marriages intact in 1970 – 61 in 2011).

The divorce rate is nearly twice the rate it was in 1960.

In 1970, 89 percent of all births were to married couples, but today only 60 percent are.

72 percent of American adults were married in 1960, but only 50 percent were in 2008.²

More than half of all people live together before getting married. In 1960 virtually no one did.

The surprising goodness of Marriage.

¹John Ellis Steen, “Family: A Context for Discipleship,” in *Practical Family Ministry: A Collection of Ideas for Your Church*, by Timothy Paul Jones and John David Trentham (Nashville: Randall House, 2015), 41.

²Ibid. Steen cites “The Decline of Marriage and the Rise of New Families” (Pew Research Center Report, November 18, 2010).

Although 45 percent of marriages end in divorce. The vast majority of the 45 percent are those who marry before the age of eighteen, who have dropped out of high school, and who had a baby before marriage.

Young adults, who come from intact families, are religious, have a decent income, and marry after twenty-five have a far better chance to stay married.

People who stay married have higher retirement incomes and earn 10 – 40 percent more than do single men with similar education and backgrounds.

- Nothing can mature character like marriage.
- People who stay married show a higher degree of satisfaction with their lives.
- Children who grow up in married, two-parent families have two to three times more positive life outcomes.
- The verdict – being married and growing up with parents who are married are enormous boosts to overall well-being.
- Important to see what the Bible has to say about the role of the husband.

Husbands should _____. 1 Corinthians 11:3.
Christ is the _____ of every man.
Man is the _____ of his wife.
We are called to _____ her.
God is the _____ of Christ.

A deep experience of the grace of God – a knowledge that you are a sinner saved by grace – will enable the power of truth and love to work together in your marriage. ~Timothy Keller

Ephesians 5:25-27. Lead her in _____ welfare.³
Lead her in _____.
Read the _____ together.

Colossians 1:9-10. Lead her in _____ and avoid the two biggest pitfalls.

_____.
_____. Don't follow feelings.

Titus 2:3-5. Lead her with her _____.
The most important _____ you share outside of God is the relationship you share with your wife.
Ensure her relationships are God-honoring.

1 Peter 4:10. Lead her and help her find her _____.
Ensure that she is not _____.
Help her to balance time inside and outside the church body.

³Stuart Scott, *Biblical Manhood: Masculinity, Leadership and Decision Making* (Bemidji, MN: Focus, 2001), 48. The list of ways to lead is provided in chap. 5, "Leadership Specifics in Marriage."

Ephesians 5:28-29. Lead her in her _____ - _____.
Show concern for _____ issues.
Provide proper medical attention.
Help with basics; food, rest, safety, and exercise.

Husbands should _____.

Ephesians 5 earlier emphasized the love we show our wives.
As Christ loved the _____
Gave himself up for her.

1 Corinthians 13:4-8.

- Love is patient.
- Love is kind
- Love is not jealous.
- Love does not brag.
- Love is not arrogant.
- Love does not act unbecomingly.
- Love does not seek its own.
- Love is not provoked.
- Love does not take account of wrong suffered.
- Love does not rejoice in unrighteousness.
- Love rejoices in truth.
- Love bears all.
- Love believes all.
- Love hopes all things.
- Love endures all things.
- Love never fails.

Three ways to love:

_____ - show her love in tangible ways.

Action speaks louder than words.

Loving care and meaningful deeds.

_____ - understand your wife, her circumstances, and
her interests (1 Peter 3:7-8).

_____ will not be hindered.

_____ a blessing.

_____ - model the love of Jesus.

Put your wife ahead of _____.

_____ her. A woman who experiences the kind sacrificial love that
Christ demonstrated on the Cross rarely will have an issue being subject to
her husband even as the church is subject to Christ (Eph 5:24).

_____ her (Eph 5:26). That's a God-sized responsibility that calls for
a God-sized process and plan.

A Husband is called to *Lead* and to *Love* his wife out of heart of compassion.

“Be _____ of me, just as I am of Christ” (1 Cor 11:1).

“To serve as an improving copy of our perfect pattern, Jesus Christ, by deliberately focusing on and practicing His likeness.”⁴

It is through this role that the husband exemplifies Christ to his wife, his family, and the world.⁵

A wife should be the husband’s _____, humanly speaking, second only to the biblical command of placing God in the position of first place (Exod 20:3; Deut 5:7).

Christian husbands need to have a _____ toward God.⁶

Jesus gave us the greatest commandment in Matthew 22:37-39.

Love God.

Love your neighbor. A husband who loves God with all his, heart, soul, and mind will transmit that love to his wife who is his closest neighbor.

“The only person over whom you have control is yourself.”⁷

Take a moment and pray about ways in which you can lead and love your wife.

Write those ways in an action plan.

Pray that God will give you the ability to lead and love your wife well.

Plan a date night with your spouse and discuss some of the key concepts that were covered in this lesson.

Let her know how important she is to you (first place on Earth).

Be sensitive that you may have to admit there have been some areas in your marriage that you have not led or loved well.

- a. Be prepared to ask forgiveness in those areas.
- b. Pray with your wife.

Remember last week, “it is a task too significant to hire someone else to do.”

Next session will cover:

A Process of Family Discipleship.

The “Big Questions.”

The tool “5,4,3,2,1.”

⁴Stuart Scott, *The Exemplary Husband: A Biblical Perspective*, rev. ed. (Bemidji, MN: Focus, 2002), 9.

⁵Ibid., 75.

⁶Ibid., 87.

⁷Timothy Keller and Kathy Keller, *The Meaning of Marriage: Facing the Complexities of Commitment with the Wisdom of God* (New York: Riverhead, 2011), 216.

Lesson 4: A Process of Family Discipleship:

The Big Questions

Lesson Aim: To equip fathers at Parkridge Baptist Church with a *process* that will enable them to lead in the discipleship of their children.

Target Group: Christian men who are fathers at Parkridge Baptist Church.

A “D-6 Dad” is a dad that desires to lead his family, particularly his children, in the discipleship at home according to Deuteronomy 6:4-9.

The best *plan* parents [dads] can have to help develop their children spiritually is to realize the distinctiveness of their [dads] *role* and the church’s role, respectively. Spiritual growth and learning necessitates a shared effort [*process*] put forth within a community . . . but home will always tend to have the greater impact (emphasis mine).¹

The traits of a “D-6 Dad” entail 3 things:

1. He must know his **Role**.
2. He must have a **Process**.²
3. He must have a **Plan**.

The three parts of the catechism . . . “Of Man’s Misery,” “Of Man’s Redemption,” and “Of Thankfulness.” ~Tom Nettles

When you think of the word catechism what comes to mind?

Catechesis (the _____ or form of what is taught).

Catechism (the _____ of what is taught).

Katēcheō (Greek) has faded from Evangelicals’ vocabulary.

A biblical word (Acts 21:21; 1 Cor 14:19).

Excellent tool for the process of discipleship.³

Defined:

“To share a communication that one receives,” and “to teach, instruct.”⁴

Shanan (Hebrew), “whet or sharpen” (See Deut 6:7).

Review: Discipleship defined: “A *personal and intentional process* in which one or more Christians guide unbelievers or less mature believers to embrace and apply the gospel in every part of their lives. *Discipleship is a process that includes a personal profession of*

¹John Ellis Steen, “Family: A Context for Discipleship,” in *Practical Family Ministry: A Collection of Ideas for Your Church*, by Timothy Paul Jones and John David Trentham (Nashville: Randall House, 2015), 41.

²Tom Nettles, “An Encouragement to Use Catechisms,” *The Journal of Discipleship & Family Ministry: Family-Based Youth Ministry, 20 Years Later* 4, no. 2 (Spring/Summer 2014): 8.

³Gary Parrett and J. I. Packer, *Grounded in the Gospel: Building Believers the Old-Fashioned Way* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 2010), 27.

⁴*Ibid.*, 27-29. See all the various renderings and usages of *katēcheō*.

*faith in Jesus Christ, as he has been revealed to us in Scripture. Discipleship involves developing perspectives and practices [plan] that reflect the mind of Christ.”*⁵

What we will discover in this session is that catechisms provide a great path for fathers who desire to have a systematic approach (process and content) for discipleship.

We can refer to them as: The “Big Questions.”

Katēcheō appears many times in the New Testament.

Acts 21:21 and 1 Corinthians and the use is always to “_____ in the faith.”

Three examples of Scriptures indicate the early church used this form of instruction to “teach” sound doctrine.

Luke 1:3-4 describes a well researched and orderly account of what the disciple was *taught*.

Acts 18:25. Apollos was *instructed* (catechized) in the way of the Lord. He was fervent and *taught* accurately about Jesus.

Galatians 6:6. Literally means, “One who is *catechized* must share all good things with one who *catechizes*.”⁶

The only thing more difficult than finding the truth is not losing it.
~Kevin DeYoung

Historical Survey of Catechisms

Calvin’s Catechism, 1541.

Author John Calvin. Intended to teach children from ten to fifteen, directing to one Christ.

Published in French and Latin.

Includes 373 questions with four main parts:

1. Faith. Includes the Apostles’ Creed.
2. The Law. Including the Ten Commandments.
3. Prayer. Including the Lord’s Prayer.
4. The Word and Sacraments.

The Heidelberg Catechism, 1563.

Author Zacharias Ursinus (German), professor at the University of Heidelberg.

Intended to focus the student to express the proper gratitude for God’s redemption.

Eventually translated into Latin and in 1591 translated into English.

In 1615 it was used by the Kirk [church] of Edinburgh, praised as highly devotional and most loved catechism of the Reformation.⁷

⁵Timothy Paul Jones, *Family Ministry Field Guide: How Your Church Can Equip Parents to Make Disciples* (Indianapolis: Wesleyan Publishing House, 2011), 17.

⁶Parrett and Packer, *Grounded in the Gospel*, 33. The authors argue that his passage is the clearest usage of the term *katēcheō* and forged the future use of catechism for the purpose of teaching sound doctrine and instruction on the way of the Lord.

⁷Kevin DeYoung, *The Good News We Almost Forgot: Rediscovering the Gospel in a 16th Century Catechism*, new ed. (Chicago: Moody, 2010), 13.

Includes 129 questions with three main parts:

1. The Misery of Man includes a treatment on sin, the fall and the need for redemption.
2. Redemption includes Christ as the Mediator. Also in includes the Apostles' Creed, the Word, and the Sacraments.
3. Thankfulness includes a treatment on the Ten Commandments and the Lord's Prayer.

Craig's Catechism, 1581.

Author was John Craig. He was a Dominican theologian who was converted to the Reformed Faith through reading Calvin's original *Institutes of the Christian Religion*.

Served as the chaplain to the King from 1579 to 1594.

Craig encouraged this catechism be read often in the homes for the purposes of instruction and to learn the principle points of salvation.

Includes 897 questions and is complex in its division.

1. The Three-fold State of Man. Includes creation, his miserable fall and bondage under sin, his calling to repent and be restored.
2. The Four Parts of God's Honour. Includes faith, obedience, prayer, and thanksgiving.

The New Catechism, 1644.

Published in London and had the shortest lifespan. It was superseded by the Westminster Catechism.

Includes 167 questions with four main parts:

1. The Belief. Includes the Apostles' Creed.
2. The Ten Commandments. Includes the importance of our obedience to God and love of our neighbor. Also includes a section on the Word and the Spirit.
3. Prayer. Examines our need to seek God for all of our needs.
4. The Sacraments. Remembering Christ's sacrifice.

The Westminster Larger Catechism, 1648.

One of two catechisms adopted by the Westminster Assembly.

Intended for the purposes of teaching Sunday by Sunday by the Elders.

Upon its adoption it was considered the supreme catechism and superseded all others written previously.

1649 the Assembly arranged for each household to have a copy, along with the *Westminster Confession of Faith* and the *Directory for Family Worship*.⁸

Includes 196 questions and after a brief introduction on man's chief end the catechism is divided into two main parts:

⁸Thomas F. Torrance, *School of Faith* (London: James Clarke & Co, 1959), 184.

1. What Man ought to believe concerning God. Includes the doctrines of God, the covenant of Grace, the benefits of Christ's mediation.
2. The Duty of Man. Includes an exposition of the moral law and the means of grace are outlined by looking at the Ten Commandments, the Word, the Sacraments, and Prayer.

A Baptist Catechism.

Authored by John Piper.

Adapted from the *London Catechism* in 1742 (*The Philadelphia Confession*), with commentary added.

Includes 118 questions.

The Catechism of Biblical Teaching.

Authored by John Broadus, one of the founders of The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary.

Commissioned by the American Baptist Publication Society and The Southern Baptist Sunday school Board in 1892.

Includes fifteen lessons and a section on suggested biblical passages for memorization.

Catechism share common doctrinal truths and most have shorter versions.

 _____.
 _____.
 The _____.
 The _____.
 The _____.
 The _____.
 The _____.

Catechetical Content.

Five _____⁹

_____ God.
 God the Father.
 God the Son.
 God the Holy Spirit.
 The _____.
 God-breathed (2 Tim 3:16-17).
 Infallible, inerrant, and our ultimate authority.
 The _____:
 Creation.
 Fall.
 Redemption.
 Culmination.

⁹Parrett and Packer, *Grounded in the Gospel*, 77-94.

The _____.

Simply put, “God saves sinners.”

Only Christ, because of his sinless life, could have paid the price for us.

The catechetical teaching is Jesus is the Way, the Truth, and the Life.

_____.

What we believe.

How faith impacts our lifestyle.

Four _____ (Acts 2:42).

Apostles’ _____.

The _____ (Ten Commandments).

The _____ Prayer.

The Sacraments or Church Ordinances.

_____.

Lord’s _____.

Three _____ of the Faith (John 14:6).

_____.

Preaching.

Teaching.

Living according to the Gospel and sound doctrine (Gal 2:5; Eph 1:13; 1 Tim 1:10).

The _____.

The eternal relationship we have with God.

First through new birth.

Second, by the Grace of God we are sanctified.

The _____.

Inseparable from the Truth and the Life.

“We live in love of God and neighbor.”¹⁰

Two _____ of the _____ (Matt 22:37; Mark 12:29; Luke 10:25-37).

Love God with all your heart, mind, soul, and strength.

Love your neighbor as yourself.

One _____—Proclaim Christ (Matt 28:19, 20).

Learn Christ.

Proclaim Christ to a lost and dying world.

The best way to love someone is to share the Gospel with them.

No better way to love our children than to proclaim the saving grace of Jesus to them.

¹⁰Parrett and Packer, *Grounded in the Gospel*, 90. The Ten Commandments can be summed up in love God and love your neighbor.

There are *five founts, or frames*, for catechesis → the fifth element of which is the Faith → which has been traditionally communicated through the *four fixtures* of the catechism → which together bear witness to the *three facets of the Faith* → the third of which is *the Way* → which has *two fundamentals*: love of God and love of neighbor → which Jesus alone has fully obeyed, and whose grace alone enables us to begin to obey. Therefore Jesus Christ must ever be the one focus of all our ministries of catechesis.¹¹

Do not allow the term _____ stop you from _____.

A “D-6 Dad” will choose the process that works for him.

Choose a term that fits for your family:

“Grounded and growing.”

“Faithful formation.”

“Mastering maturity.”

“Going for Growth.”

Or, invent your own.

Choose your catechism.

A great way to ensure that doctrinal truths are taught to your children.

Resource: Piper’s “A Baptist Catechism”¹² (40 pages).

Pray that God will give you the tools and the time to lead in the discipleship of your children.

The Apostles’ Creed (Traditional ecumenical version)

*I believe in God, the Father Almighty,
maker of heaven and earth;
And in Jesus Christ his only Son, our Lord;
who was conceived by the Holy Spirit,
born of the Virgin Mary,
suffered under Pontius Pilate,
was crucified, dead, and buried;*
the third day he rose from the dead;
he ascended into heaven,
and sitteth at the right hand of God the Father Almighty;
from thence he shall come to judge the quick and the dead.
I believe in the Holy Spirit,
the holy catholic** church,
the communion of saints,
the forgiveness of sins,
the resurrection of the body,*

¹¹Parrett and Packer, *Grounded in the Gospel*, 94.

¹²John Piper, “A Baptist Catechism,” *Desiring God*, accessed March 20, 2017, <http://www.desiringgod.org/articles/a-baptist-catechism>.

*and the life everlasting. Amen.*¹³

*Traditional use of this creed includes these words: "He descended into hell."

** Universal.

Next session will include *The Plan*.

Family Equipping.

"Read, Pray, and Sing."

Big Events.

¹³For a treatment of the wording "He descended into hell," see "Did Jesus Really Go into Hell?" *Christianity Today* 44, no. 2 (2000): 74, accessed July 5, 2017, <http://www.christianitytoday.com/ct/2000/february7/31.74.html>.

Lesson 5: The Plan for Discipleship

Lesson Aim: To equip fathers at Parkridge Baptist Church with a *plan* that will enable them to lead in the discipleship of their children.

Target Group: Christian men who are fathers at Parkridge Baptist Church.

A “D-6 Dad” is a dad that desires to lead his family, particularly his children, in the discipleship at home according to Deuteronomy 6:4-9.

The best *plan* parents [dads] can have to help develop their children spiritually is to realize the distinctiveness of their [dads] *role* and the church’s role, respectively. Spiritual growth and learning necessitates a shared effort [*process*] put forth within a community . . . but home will always tend to have the greater impact (emphasis mine).

The traits of a “D-6 Dad” entail 3 things:

4. He must know his **Role**.
5. He must have a **Process**.
6. He must have a **Plan**.

Good parents love their kids. Godly parents understand that they are an incredible blessing from God. ~Steve Wright.

Have you considered the cost of having children?

Read Psalm 127: 3-5.

Heritage from the Lord.

Like arrows in the hand of a warrior.

Blessed is the man who fills his quiver with them.

4.1 million Women said they do not want children and elect to be “childless by choice.”

One woman said that having children hurts the environment, “Having children is selfish. It’s all about maintaining your genetic line at the expense of the planet.”

One woman terminated a pregnancy believing she was helping the planet.¹

This is more than a liberal commentary on global warming, this is an attack by the evil one who would have us, as parents, forget that children are a blessing from God.

This lesson will equip you with a plan that will enable you to disciple your children, who are a precious gift from God.

Whether walking, talking or resting, you must be involved in helping your child to understand life, himself, and his needs from a biblical perspective (Deut 6: 6-7). ~Tedd Tripp

¹Steve Wright and Chris Graves, *ApParent Privilege* (Royal Palm Beach, FL: InQuest, 2008), 49. Taken from Natasha Courtenay-Smith and Morag Turner, “Meet the Women Who Won’t Have Babies—Because They’re Not Eco Friendly,” November 21, 2007, www.dailymail.co.uk/female/article-495495/Meet-women-wont-babies--theyre-eco-friendlyu.html.

Fathers need to F.O.C.U.S.²

_____, seek him (Matt 6:33).

Keep your personal life on track.

Strive for Christlikeness.

Exercise spiritual discipline; daily prayer and reading Scripture.

Fathers cannot lead their children where they have not gone.

Stay attuned to what God is teaching you so you can pass that to your children.

Example: The flight attendant tells you to put your oxygen mask on first and then help your children. Think of your task as putting on your “spiritual oxygen mask” first.

_____ come knocking- listen for them (Eph 5:16).

Look for teachable moments.

Driving in the car.

Listen to what your children have to say.

Ask them what questions do they have about, God, the Bible, or what they have been learning in church.

Celebrate milestones (covered more in next lesson).

_____ outside the lines.

Spiritual growth does not have to happen while reading the Bible.

Take walks, ride bikes, go to the park or to the park. Talk about God’s creation and His goodness.

Plan a block party and invite your neighbors in order to meet them with purposes of finding out their spiritual condition.

_____ that your children do not always understand the things of God (Isaiah 55:8-9).

Your child is on a spiritual journey and at different stages of learning.

Related biblical truths such as tithing, respect, and obedience in ways your child can understand.

_____ teaching and activities are important. (Prov 22:6).

Cook breakfast with your children and then do a short devotion together.

Pray before bedtime.

Take time to discuss activity pages sent home from church.

Mealtime blessings and allow the children to lead sometimes

Put a verse and a word of encouragement in a lunch box.

The _____ - _____ Model.

²John Ellis Steen, “Family: A Context for Discipleship,” in *Practical Family Ministry: A Collection of Ideas for Your Church*, by Timothy Paul Jones and John David Trentham (Nashville: Randall House, 2015), 45-47.

Timothy Paul Jones states that family-equipping is a “process of reorienting existing ministries to partner with parents. . .”³Be imitators of me, just as I am of Christ” (1 Cor 11:1).

Two key dynamics involved:

_____-as-_____

The goal of the family-as-church model is to “equip parents to disciple their children in the context of daily lives together.”⁴

Jonathan Edwards described the home as “a little church” and claimed it to be more effective in the Christian formation of the child than the ministers in the congregation.⁵

_____-as-_____.⁶

The goal of the church-as-family is to “help God’s people relate to one another more like a family.”⁷

James K. A. Smith calls the church our “first family”⁸ which cooperates with parents in:

The worship liturgy,

The sacraments of the church,

Assisting parents in the spiritual formation of their children

_____ of family-equipping.
Faith _____.

³Timothy Paul Jones, *Family Ministry Field Guide: How Your Church Can Equip Parents to Make Disciples* (Indianapolis: Wesleyan Publishing House, 2011), 26.

⁴Ibid., 11.

⁵Ibid., Jones quotes Jonathan Edwards, “Living to Christ, in *Sermons and Discourses, 1720-1723*, vol. 10 of *The Works of Jonathan Edwards*, ed. W. H. Kimnach (New Haven, CT: Yale University, 1992), 577.

⁶Timothy Paul Jones, introduction to *Practical Family Ministry: A Collection of Ideas for Your Church*, by Timothy Paul Jones and John David Trentham (Nashville: Randall House, 2015), 11. For historical exploration of “church as family,” see Joseph Hellerman, *The Ancient Church as Family* (Minneapolis: Augsburg Fortress, 2001). Jones credits Chap Clark as the first time he heard this term.

⁷Ibid., 12.

⁸James K. A. Smith, *You Are What You Love: The Spiritual Power of Habit* (Grand Rapids: Brazos, 2016), 116-17.

Designated times, at least once per week, gathering for prayer and the study of biblical truths.⁹
Show video of Hamilton, Nettles and Jones.¹⁰

Faith _____.

Fathers are called to talk as they walk by the way. (Deut 6:7).

Is a “discussion in the course of daily life that turns a child’s attention toward the presence of the gospel and the providence of God in every part of life.”¹¹

Works for busy dads because it’s not another thing to put on the calendar- spontaneous and no planning required.

Faith _____ in the home.

The plan which attends to the child’s spiritual needs at his/her level.

Seeks to ask, “What needs to happen next in the child’s spiritual growth.”¹² (More will be presented in the next session- Brian Haynes’ milestones.)

Faith examples to _____.

A family that practices faith talks and faith walks will want to reach out to others.

The goal is to share the Gospel to spiritual orphans.

Plan and do a family-talk time this week.¹³

_____¹⁴.

The Bible as the training manual life.

The Bible is our source of wisdom.

The Bible is our source of righteousness.

The Bible is our source of hope.

Show examples of resources;

⁹Jones, *Family Ministry Field Guide*, 154.

¹⁰Derek Brown, “Jim Hamilton, Tom Nettles, and Timothy Paul Jones on Family Devotions,” *Family Ministry Today: The Center for Christian Family Ministry at The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary*, January 13, 2016, accessed September 21, 2016, <http://www.sbts.edu/family/2014/01/13/jim-hamilton-tom-nettles-and-timothy-paul-jones-on-family-devotions/>.

¹¹Jones, *Family Ministry Field Guide*. 162.

¹²*Ibid.*, 164.

¹³Donald S. Whitney, *Family Worship* (Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2016), 45. Whitney refers to this as simply family worship. The three components are *read*, *pray*, and *sing*.

¹⁴Voddie Baucham, Jr., *Family Driven Faith: Doing What It Takes to Raise Sons and Daughters Who Walk with God* (Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2007), 98-99.

- i. *Old Story New: Ten-Minute Devotions to Draw Your Family to God.*¹⁵
- ii. *Long Story Short: Ten-Minute Devotions to Draw Your Family to God.*¹⁶
- iii. *The Bible's Big Story: Salvation History for Kids.*¹⁷

“There are two mistakes we can make . . . Emphasize Scripture without prayer; Emphasize prayer without Scripture.
 Keep a family prayer list.
 Teach children to pray aloud. A child who prays aloud in the early years will feel less awkward doing so as they grow older.

Use a song book or sing songs that your family heard on Sunday.
 Pick a monthly family song that can be memorized.
 A cappella
 Make a joyful noise (Ps 100:1).
 Utilize technology (Smart phones, iPads or Tablet).

Remember what we said about leading and loving your wife, “it is a task too significant to hire someone else to do.”

Next session will cover:

The Big Outcomes, Holly Allen.

The Big Events, Brian Haynes.

Report on how your family-talk went.

¹⁵Marty Machowski, *Old Story New: Ten-Minute Devotions to Draw Your Family to God*, (Greensboro, NC: New Growth, 2012).

¹⁶Marty Machowski, *Long Story Short: Ten-Minute Devotions to Draw Your Family to God* (Greensboro, NC: New Growth, 2010).

¹⁷James M. Hamilton, Jr., *The Bible's Big Story: Salvation History for Kids* (Fearn, Scotland: Christian Focus, 2014).

Lesson 6: The Big Events and The Big Outcomes

Lesson Aim: To equip fathers at Parkridge Baptist Church with a *plan* that will enable them to lead in the discipleship of their children.

Target Group: Christian men who are fathers at Parkridge Baptist Church.

A “D-6 Dad” is a dad that desires to lead his family, particularly his children, in the discipleship at home according to Deuteronomy 6:4-9.

The best *plan* parents [dads] can have to help develop their children spiritually is to realize the distinctiveness of their [dads] *role* and the church’s role, respectively. Spiritual growth and learning necessitates a shared effort [*process*] put forth within a community . . . but home will always tend to have the greater impact (emphasis mine).

The traits of a “D-6 Dad” entail 3 things:

1. He must know his **Role**.
2. He must have a **Process**.
3. He must have a **Plan**.

The legacy path is an intentional way to lead the next generation to faith in Jesus in the way trodden by others. ~Brian Haynes.

The “Big Events” and the “Big Outcomes”.

Brian Haynes writes, “Planning your journey is the difference between hoping your kids randomly end up loving God versus actually “training them up in the way they should go.”¹

This lesson will identify some of the “Big Events” and the “Big Outcomes” that we desire our children to experience as we disciple them.

Briefly ask for a testimony regarding the homework assignment to do a family-talk time from last session.

What went well?

What study did you do?

What hurdles did you have to overcome?

Did you incorporate the *Read, Pray, and Sing* tools?

Celebrate that as a major “Big Event” and a Big Outcome.”

The Legacy Path.²

Deuteronomy 6 is the essence of the legacy path.

¹Brian Haynes, *The Legacy Path: Discovering Intentional Spiritual Parenting*. (Nashville: Randall House, 2011), 60-61.

²Ibid., 1. In chapter 1, Haynes identifies the “Theology of Legacy.”

Passing on a legacy of biblical faith to the next generation has always been a part of God's plan. ~Brian Haynes

_____ is “anything handed down from the past, as from an ancestor or predecessor.”³

A _____ always has a destination. “In this case the journey produces a new generation of Christ-followers living according to a biblical worldview and able to pass the faith on to the next generation.”⁴

The legacy path involves one _____ passing down the faith to the next in the everyday of life.

As Moses found out it only takes one generation of parents to forsake their role as faith trainers to cause a culture to turn from God and embrace the gods, the belief systems, and lifestyle of the pagan world.⁵

Genesis 17:4-7 was God's original master plan for the legacy path.⁶

God constructs the foundation of biblical faith on the heart of a righteous man.

Abraham became a father who is the conduit for God's spiritual formation plan for the generations.

Without Abraham we would know nothing of Christ.

Without Abraham the biblical accounts that comfort and encourage the heart of a Christian would be lost.

In a sense, no father, no legacy of faith.

God led Abraham, as a father, and He will lead us as we embark on the legacy path (Is 40:11).

Legacy _____,⁷ the “Big Events.”

Baby [family] _____.

Covenant with the church to help raise the child, “church-as-family.”

The parents make a commitment to be the primary faith trainer.

Make it memorable. Since each milestone builds upon the other, it is important to record this with pictures and a

³Haynes, *The Legacy Path*, 3.

⁴Ibid.

⁵Ibid., 2.

⁶Ibid., 4.

⁷Ibid., 61-96. Haynes presents seven milestones that can be celebrated by the family and utilized for teachable moments in the discipleship of a child. The first three are “faith destinations for children.” The next four are designed to help parents focus on the “journey from adolescence to adulthood.”

certificate so the child can reflect on this event as they grow older.

Faith _____; not a box to check off.

When the child makes a “personal decision” to follow Christ (ages vary, usually between seven and thirteen for most Christian families).⁸

Can’t make the decision for them, but we can . . .

Pray.

Teach them Scripture.

Present the Gospel.

Must have an understanding of Sin.

Confession.

Repentance.

Tell them your own testimony of salvation.

Preparing for _____ (between age of 9 and 12).

Parents need to adjust their strategy in how they connect with their adolescent child; the kids are no longer childlike.

Changes physically—talk to your child about what changes are happening as this is an awkward time for both child and parent.

Spiritually—the adolescent begins forming his own opinions, thinking for himself, and making his own decisions.

Emotionally—they begin to have a keen sense of self-identity. Reinforce that Christ defines them, not their friends, and certainly, not the media.

Commitment to _____, not easy—two things can help.

Relational connection.

Open lines of communication (1 Cor 6:18; 1 Thess 4:3-5).

Rite of _____—two years or so may pass between milestone four and milestone five.

Middle school to high school.

Increasing freedoms granted not based on age, but based on spiritual maturity and overall handling of responsibility.

Somewhere between milestone four and milestone five; apologetics, dating, marriage, and practical life skills.

College preparation.

High school _____.

Reinforce the skills and knowledge that will be important as they follow in obedience to God.

⁸Haynes, *The Legacy Path*, 64.

Reinforce their identity in Christ.
Reinforce their ability to defend their faith.
Keep the relational line of communication open.

Life in _____.

Milestone seven is the end goal of the legacy path, but it is the beginning of another journey.

Your child now needs to live out their walk with Christ.

The parent becomes less of teacher or guide on the legacy path and takes on the role of a wise counselor helping your adult child navigate through life.

Trust God that He is sovereign (Jer 29:11).

The “Big Outcomes.”⁹

Holly Allen surveyed parents and asked: “What do you want for the children in this community of believers? That is, “What do you want them to know? How do you want them to live? Who do you hope they will become?

That they will . . .

know _____.

believe God is _____.

will receive _____.

love their “_____”—serve the poor, the hurting, and the broken.

_____.

know the “_____” [creation, fall, redemption, consummation].

desire to _____ God.

share _____ with others.

be growing in _____, _____, _____, and _____.

have their _____ in Christ.

That they will begin to acquire an understanding of . . .

their place in the _____.

the role of the _____.

the _____

the central importance of _____.

the power of _____.

the crucial role of the _____ as an essential community of Christ-followers.

the need for _____ to save them.

⁹Holly Allen, “Curriculum and Children’s Ministry,” in *Mapping Out Curriculum in Your Church: Cartography for Christian Pilgrims*, ed. James Estep, Roger White, and Karen Estep (Nashville: B & H, 2012), 240. Allen presents Figure 12.1: “Children’s Learning Goals,” which was based on a qualitative study done in a church revitalization program.

Break into pairs.

Pray for each other's journey to disciple his family.

Share how you can use the legacy milestones to help build your discipleship strategy plan.

Review Holly Allen's big outcomes and circle your top ten.

Conduct your second family-talk time; Read, Pray, and Sing.

Basics of Biblical Discipleship Inventory (BBDI).

Commit to taking the post-survey.

Commit to return the survey within one week to the facilitator.

APPENDIX 5

EMAIL TO PARTICIPANTS

Hello gentlemen,

I am writing to a select group of fathers to see if they can help me in the fulfillment of the requirements for my doctoral work at The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary. I am working on a Doctoral of Educational Ministry with a concentration in Family Ministry. My doctoral project focuses on fathers taking the lead role in the discipleship of their children at home. As a part of my work I am required to create a curriculum that explores what the Bible says about this topic and then present a practical solution within the ministry context at Parkridge. I have created the curriculum and I am now ready to present this to a select group of men by invitation only. This will not be advertised in the bulletin because the class needs to be a select group of fathers. This is not a parenting course, this is a course directed toward fathers being involved in the discipleship of their children.

My classes will be taught over six Sundays in the third hour at the campus of Parkridge. The classes will begin on **June 18th and will end July 30th**. This is for the purposes of completion of my doctoral degree and you will be asked to take part in a pre-survey before the class and a post survey after the class. Your privacy will be protected and your name will not be used in my final dissertation; just the results of the class. I am hopeful that you will consider attending this 6 week class. I realize I'm trying to teach this at a time when many families might be traveling. Please do not let this deter you. I plan to video the classes which will allow you to watch the class you missed and homework will be minimal.

If you are interested in taking part in the class please email me with your confirmation. I will let you know what classroom we will use for teaching on June 18.

Thank you in advance for your help and I'm praying even now that this course will impact you and your family for God's glory. If you have questions before you commit please call me directly on my cell at XXX-XXX-XXXX.

Brad Boyette

Children and Families Pastor

Parkridge Church

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APPENDIX 6
EMAIL TO PANEL

Dear panel,

Thank you for your willingness to help me in the evaluation of my 6 session training outlines as a part of my Doctoral of Educational Ministry degree. This is a requirement for my project that I am writing for The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary. My plan is to try to send one lesson per week for the next several weeks. This series of lessons are designed to equip fathers at Parkridge Church to take the lead in the discipleship of their children at home. I will train this to a select group of men invited by me to attend; probably no more than twelve at this time.

I have attached the evaluation rubric along with the first lesson outline (one document). If you will mark up the rubric scan it and email it back to me by the end of next week I would appreciate it. While you are reviewing each lesson I will begin working on the next lesson - I will then send you the next lesson for your review and then begin working on the next lesson, so on and so forth.

My hope is that this will not take a lot of your time, but will serve as a useful tool for me as I develop the actual training. I will be using your name as a member of my panel, so by participating in this evaluation process you are granting me permission to use your information.

In order for the outline to "pass" I must receive at least 90% "Satisfactory." If the rubric scores under 90% (combined) I will re-submit the outline to the panel for a second review. It is important to note this is in outline form only.

The rough outline is as follows:

1. Introduction to the context, to complete a pre-survey and a brief historical review of early church fathers in regards to parents discipling their children.
2. Theological justification: Deut 6:4-9 (*Shema*); Ps 78:1-8; and Eph 6:1-4
3. Purpose/role of the Husband: Love and Lead
4. Process of discipleship: Historical survey of Catechism, "the Big Questions," and The Five Founts (Packer and Parrett).
5. Plan: Family equipping model (Jones - Family Talks and Family Walks), "Read, Pray, and Sing" (D. Whitney), and "Big Events" (Brian Haynes - Milestones).
6. "Big Outcomes." What do we want our children to know? (Holly Allen).

As you review the outline and rubric please let me know if you have questions or I can clear up any confusion. I would like to have this phase finished in 4-6 weeks.

Again, thank you for your help.

Brad Boyette

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APPENDIX 7

STRATEGIC PLAN OUTLINE

A meeting was held with the leadership of Parkridge Church to present the following three-to-five year strategic plan which sought to incorporate the curriculum and implement an ongoing effort that will continue to encourage and equip parents in the discipleship of their children.

I. Envision the process.

- a. According to Malphurs, the old conventional strategic planning is now “strategic envisioning.”¹
- b. This plan includes a three-to-five year process.
 - i. Evaluate current discipleship programs – for equipping opportunities.
 - ii. Assess existing programs and family events – for equipping opportunities.
- c. Malphurs describes the process this way, “You envision the future and then ask, How will we get there.”²

II. Designate a point leader.

- a. This person is responsible for the day-to-day operations.
- b. This person needs to be a decision maker.
- c. This person needs to have passion for discipling children.
- d. This person needs to be able to influence a team to get the job done.

III. Assemble a strategic leadership team.

- a. A team is vital for the strategic planning process.
 - i. This will require a cultural shift, over time.
 - ii. Takes pressure off of the pastor for the “next big idea.”
- b. More ideas can be gathered through gifted leaders (Prov 15:22).

¹Aubrey Malphurs, *Advanced Strategic Planning: A New Model for Church and Ministry Leaders*, 2nd ed. (Grand Rapids: Baker, 2005), 27.

²Ibid.

- i. Malphurs writes that leaders “understand that they can accomplish far more through the wisdom of a gifted and committed strategic team of staff and lay leaders.”³

IV. Think theologically toward a model.

- a. Strategic planning requires thinking and brainstorming.
 - i. The key is to filter ideas through a theological point of view.
 - ii. Malphurs recommends that the team should ask fundamental questions such as,
 - 1. “What does the Bible say about why we are here?
 - 2. Who are we?
 - 3. What drives us?
 - 4. What are we supposed to be doing?
 - 5. What does that look like?
 - 6. How will we accomplish what we are supposed to be doing?⁴
- b. Avoid looking at other church models.
 - i. Strive to find a model that works in Parkridge Church’s context.

V. Refine and redesign the model.

- a. As the team implements the strategy, adjustments will need to be made.
 - i. Malphurs makes this assertion, “As leaders continue to apply the process, they will continually redesign the model to reach their community as it changes. Thus over time they are designing and redesigning how they do church.”⁵
- b. An effective point leader will always be looking for ways to assess and improve the model.

VI. Focus on the Great Commission.

- a. “Make disciples.”
 - i. Corporately.
 - ii. Individually.
 - iii. Family
- b. An effective model for ministry to make disciples is being obedient to Christ.

³Malphurs, *Advanced Strategic Planning*, 28.

⁴Ibid.

⁵Ibid., 29.

VII. Consider the ministry context.

- a. As the team develops the strategic plan we do well to remember the church is unique.
 - i. No two snowflakes are alike and no two churches are alike.
 - ii. Churches are made up of unique individuals from different cultures and lifestyles.
- b. Having a strategic plan helps to achieve the mutual goal of making disciples that is given to all believers.
- c. Incorporating a strategic plan helps to ensure clear communication and consistency among ministry leaders in the church.
 - i. Malphurs writes, “The strategy is the thread that runs through all the programs and not only ties them together but communicates the spiritual purpose of each. . . . The strategy communicates to your people what they have to do to get where they want to go—the process—and different programs work together to facilitate their spiritual development.”⁶

Recommendation:

It is the recommendation that a point leader be designated to begin this three-to-five year process. The first point of order for the point leader is to begin the process of forming a strategic leadership team.

A progress report on the development of the leadership team is due to the leadership of Parkridge Church within six months.

⁶Aubrey Malphurs, *Strategy 2000: Churches Making Disciples for the Next Millennium*. (Grand Rapids: Kregel, 1996), 31.

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ABSTRACT

EQUIPPING FATHERS AT PARKRIDGE BAPTIST CHURCH IN CORAL SPRINGS, FLORIDA, TO LEAD IN THE DISCIPLESHIP OF THEIR CHILDREN

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This project was designed to equip fathers at Parkridge Baptist Church in Coral Springs, Florida, to lead in the discipleship of their children. The project involved administering a pre- and post-series survey that assessed the understanding of the biblical role of a father and the level of training the participants were doing in their home. A six-week curriculum was developed and a strategic plan was developed to incorporate a Family-Equipping model for discipleship over a three-to-five year period.

Chapter 1 introduces the ministry context of Parkridge Baptist Church, along with the rationale, purpose, goals, research methodologies, definitions, limitations, and delimitations of the project. Chapter 2 provides the biblical and theological basis for fathers to lead their children in discipleship. Foundational Scriptures in this chapter include Deuteronomy 6:4-9, Psalm 78:1-8, and Ephesians 6:4 1-9. Chapter 3 addresses the biblical role of the husband as it relates to the effective discipleship of his children. Included in this chapter are ways the church can assist fathers in the family-equipping model helps them with a process, the content, and a clear plan to help incorporate training in the home. Chapter 4 details the curriculum, including the administration of a pre- and post-series survey to measure any increase in the biblical knowledge and practices of the fathers who attended the teaching lessons. Chapter 5 concludes with an overall evaluation of the project, suggestions for improvement, and a strategic plan for Family-Equipping at Parkridge Baptist Church.

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