THE PRESENT MINISTRY OF THE PROTESTANT CHURCH IN FOSTERING

CHRISTIAN LOVE WITHIN THE FAMILY

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A Thesis

Submitted in Partial Fulfillment
of the Requirements for
THE DEGREE OF MASTER OF SACRED THEOLOGY
The Biblical Seminary in New York

New York, N. Y.
April, 1952

Dedicated to My Family
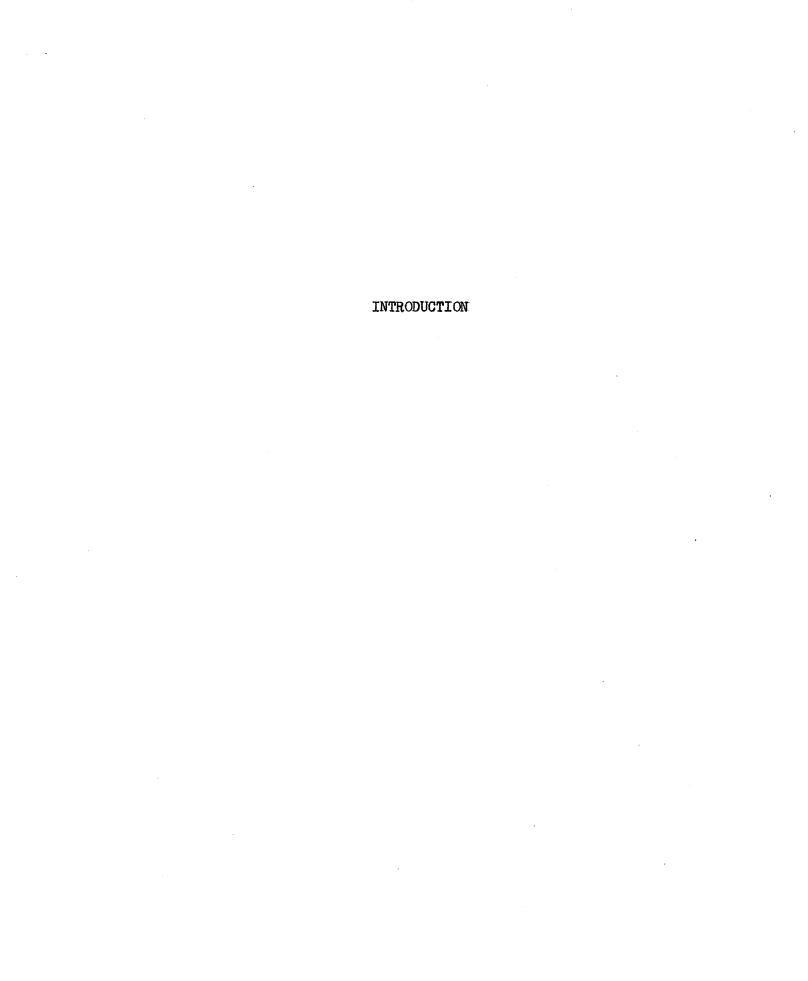
OUTLINE

Introduction
  A. The Problem Stated and Delimited
  B. Justification of Study
  C. Method of Procedure
  D. Sources of Data

Chapter I Basic Family Problems Relating to Family Instability
  A. Introduction
  B. The Economic Problem
  C. The Problem of Rearing Children
  D. The Problem of Morals
  E. The Problem of Interpersonal Relationships within the Family
      1. Personality Maladjustments
      2. Different Cultural, Racial, and Religious Backgrounds
      3. Sexual Incompatibility
      4. In-Laws
      5. Parent-Child Conflict

Chapter II The Stabilizing Power of Christian Love
  A. Introduction
  B. Christian Love Analysed
      1. Its Divine Source
      2. The Essence of its Divine Expression
      3. A Relationship between People
      4. Contrasted with Non-Christian Love
  C. How Christian Love Brings Stability into the Family Unit
      1. It United the Family in its Experiences with God
      2. It Unites the Family in a Mutual Relationship
      3. It Unites the Family in a Common Purpose for Living
  D. Summary

Chapter III Possibilities open to the Protestant Church for Effectively
             Causing the Power of Christian Love to Operate within its
             Parish Families
  A. Introduction -- A Family Centered Program
      1. Aware of Family-Related Needs
      2. Aware of the Church's Responsibility to Bring Stability
         to its Community Families
      3. Aware that the Church has the Necessary Means in the Gospel
  B. Cooperation with Existing Social Agencies to Meet Causes of
     Instability
      1. Help from Denominational Agencies
      2. Help from Interdenominational Agencies
      3. Help from Secular Agencies

C. Formal Worship a Most Effective Agent
   1. The Message of God's Love in Christ
   2. The Expression of Love to God
   3. The Family Worship in Church
D. A Planned Educational Program Using Every Avenue within the Congregational Area of Activity
   1. The Family Altar
   2. The Sunday School
   3. The Youth Groups
   4. The Adult Groups
   5. Social Activities
   6. Conclusion
E. Opportunities for Church Related Families to Express Christian Love to Others ouside the Family
F. Pastoral Counseling a Most Effective Agent
   1. General Responsibility, Opportunity and Effectiveness
   2. Family Counseling
   3. Premarital Counseling
G. Summary

Chapter V Summary and Conclusion

INTRODUCTION

THE PRESENT MINISTRY OF THE PROTESTANT CHURCH IN FOSTERING CHRISTIAN LOVE WITHIN THE FAMILY

INTRODUCTION

A. The Problem Stated and Delimited

It is virtually stating a truism to say that the ministry of the Christian Church is a ministry of love. This fact is basic to the problem which will be investigated in the following pages, since this study will revolve around the Church's ministry of love. The chief concern, however, will be not so much with love as a manifestation of the Church's activity as with its ministry of instilling love into the lives of individuals so that it becomes an expression of their lives.

The focal point in dealing with this ministry of fostering love within individuals will be the family unit. This will involve a study of the effect of Christian love upon the family -- or more explicitly, of the stabilizing power of Christian love acting both as a healing factor where a condition of instability exists and as a preventive to the emergence of such a condition. Since it is the local Church which can have closest contact with these families in this ministry, the problem will be largely narrowed down to the ministry of the local parish. It will also be confined to the ministry of the Protestant Church in the United States.

The questions for which answers will be sought, then, are these:

Can the Protestant Church make use of Christian love objectively to forestall and to heal family instability, particularly on the parish level? Does it have the means and opportunity to do so? Is there a need for such a ministry? Can it be more effective than it is at the present time? Should it be?

B. Justification of Study

There is general agreement among students of sociology that a process of disintegration has been taking place with regard to the family unit. Scarcely any family escapes it. "In almost every family this process of disintegration is taking place, even in those families in which the closest and richest relationships have been established."[1]

It is generally agreed, too, that over a period of the last three or four decades there has been a considerable change in the emphasis upon the manner of treating problems closely related to the family. From a concern some years ago over the evils of divorce and the kind of divorce laws which could best check this rising tide of divorce, the shift has been to the present concern over conditions which will insure happiness and avert insecurity in the home. From a concentration on child welfare programs as the means of solving social problems connected with children, the emphasis progressed to parent education because of a general recognition that little could be done for the child without parental cooperation. But the focus of social interest

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1. Sidney E. Goldstein: Marriage and Family Counseling, p. 13

and action took another step so that now it is pointed at the family as the necessary basic unit from which the welfare of the individual and of society must emerge.[1]

This thesis is undertaken with a conviction that the Protestant Church should not be slow in recognizing its responsibility in this emphasis upon the family. That the Church's chief concern is the welfare of the individual, both temporal and eternal, is implied in the very name "Christian." That it has a message which is unique in bringing the highest type of welfare to the individual, and that this welfare can be realized in an expression of Christian love by the individuals within the family group, will be shown in the pages that follow. If the Christian Church, then, has that which gives stability and solidarity (basic essentials in family welfare) to families under the influence of disintegrating processes, it is of major concern to know whether or not the Church is in a position to bring this means of stability to the homes within its area of influence. It will be of value to know whether or not the Church can be more effective in the use of these means to arrest family disintegration and to bring stability to the home, and whether or not it ought to be more effective.

C. Method of Procedure

In order to understand better the needs of the family, or rather, in order to discover the presence of any need for an effective stabilizing

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1. Ibid., pp. 1-3. Chapter I, "Introduction", gives a general picture of the changing family situation which is fairly representative.

power and something of the nature of what that power must be, the first chapter of this thesis will deal with some of the problems closely related to family life. These problems may be contributing causes of instability, or they may grow out of a preliminary condition of instability, in which latter case they aggravate the condition and thus contribute to a further development of the process of disintegration. Not all of these causes will be noted, but only those which seem to be most commonly encountered, and under the broader aspects of which most other problems may be found.

The next step will be to analyse Christian love and to discover its effectiveness in bringing stability to the family. Then a chapter outlining possibilities through which the local Church may work in fostering the stabilizing power of Christian love within the family units of the community will conclude the formal investigation of the thesis. A final chapter will summarize the material presented and will suggest the logical conclusions toward which this material has pointed.

D. Sources of Data

The material for this thesis has been gathered from a number of the most recent works by recognized authorities in fields pertinent to social relations, especially as they pertain to the family. Both secular writings and those which have a definite Christian point of view have been used, and they have been drawn particularly from fields of Sociology, Ethics, Education, Psychiatry, and Pastoral Care. The National Council of Churches of Christ in the United States of America,

and the National Lutheran Council have furnished some first hand information that has been helpful. Help from some of the major denominations has been solicited, and their teaching materials were checked. Since Christian love has its basis in the Scriptures, the Bible will be relied upon as an authentic source of reference, especially for the chapter dealing with Christian love.

CHAPTER I

BASIC FAMILY PROBLEMS RELATING TO FAMILY INSTABILITY

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A. Introduction

Concern for preventing the dissolution of the family is involved in the problem of this thesis. Since prevention of such a condition must take into account its cause, it is necessary to recognize two particular characteristics of family instability as it is related to cause. The first of these is the multiplicity of causes, problems and maladjustments which lie behind family breakdowns.[1]

The second major characteristic of importance to this chapter is the interrelationship and interdependence of the many causes which result in some immediate cause of a family unit breakup. The immediate causes of dissolution are divorce, separation, desertion, homicide, or apprehension for crime.[2] Behind these, however, lie a multitude of contributing factors[3] which must be eliminated in one way or another from being causitive if the breakup of the family in which they exist is to be prevented. In short, then, any immediate cause of dissolution

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1. Harold A. Phelps: Contempory Social Problems. A list of thirteen problems related to family unadjustments is given on p. 459. Twelve unadjustments are listed on p. 460, and fifteen "elements or processes in the breakdown of families" (p. 461) are listed on p. 462.
2. Dr. Phelps (Ibid. p. 459) names divorce, desertion and widowhood as the three most obvious.
3. Ibid. pp. 14 and 459. Also Goldstein, op. cit. This consideration is noted throughout this entire work. Specifically see pp. 9-10, 319.

is itself the final result of a medley of other contributing causes.

When these factors influence one or more members of the family, the process of disintegration of the family unit begins. It is the purpose of this chapter to select and present certain basic family problems which influence abnormal[1] behavior within the family. The selection is representative rather than exhaustive.[2] It will be readily noted that they are interrelated and interact in their causal effects upon one another in developing situations of instability.

The purpose, too, is not to discuss each problem in all its phazes and ramifications, but only as it is limited to its influence within the family upon its members. For example, the economic problem is a social problem, and its solution is the concern of sociologists. In this chapter our concern is the response of the family to the economic situation -- and to each of the other problem situations -- in which it finds itself. It may be that a healthy response to each situation can be formulated so that where the outward circumstances of the problem must remain unchanged the problem may still be resolved and stability achieved by the way it is handled within the family unit itself. Chapters III and IV propose to deal with such a response by building upon the findings of this first chapter.

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1. The word "abnormal" is used here to mean any deviation from a projected norm of satisfactory family stability.
2. Different authors stress different problems, some more inclusive than others. While there is rather general agreement as to what the problems are, there is some disagreement as to their comparative degree of influence upon family instability. The choice of problems included in this chapter has been made on the basis of those most commonly emphasized as most influential.

B. The Economic Problem

At the outbreak of the last World War 35.2 percent of the total population of the United States were in poverty. 35.1 per cent were on a minimum comfort level, and 20.2 per cent were in moderate circumstances. The remainder, classified as "comfortable, well-to-do, and wealthy", made up only 9.5 per cent of the population.[1]

The war situation brought a sharp increase in the economic betterment of families, which was reflected in the decrease of the number on dependency rolls. The end of the war brought an increase in dependency rolls, due largely to labor-industry disputes, so that in 1949 they were higher than any year since 1942, but lower than any of the pre-war years. The Korean war has brought a decline again in 1950-51 figures.[2]

This shifting economic picture has had its influence, along with other factors, upon family life in almost every area, and not least in contributing toward anxiety and unhappiness.[3] Attempts to measure the relationship between the economic status and family disintegration, however, are inconclusive because of the many other contributing factors. As Harold A. Phelps points out, ". . . extravagance . . . low income . . . are specific in describing the types of problems, but they are too

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1. Phelps, op. cit., p. 26, taken from "Civilian Spending and Saving", 1941 and 1942, Office of Price Administration, Washington D. C., 1943
2. Emily Hartshorne Judd, The Practice of Marriage Counseling, pp. 14-15. The author uses figures on Pennsylvania as representative of the United States.
3. Ibid., pp. 16-20.

intangible to identify the casuals in divorce."[1] Divorce is more common during periods of prosperity[2] and among certain occupations which include those of higher income brackets such as actors, physicians and surgeons.[3] This would seem to indicate than any connection between income and family instability is due not so much to the size of the income itself as to related factors such as attitudes, division of income, desire for higher standards of living, and the like.

That such is the more accurate picture is born out by those who have made a study of personal factors involved in divorce and domestic discord. For example, in a certain study of divorce cases granted on legal grounds of desertion, financial tension was found to occur as a cause 40.2 per cent of the time, while the next closest was "desertion for another" — 13.2 per cent.[3] The following quotations also serve to substantiate this:

"Family discord is frequently attributable to a failure to agree on how to spend money."[4]

"When couples differ greatly on how money should be used, the feeling of frustrated irritation each may have sometimes effects their behavior in a variety of ways. The husband may become overly critical of his wife's actions in other matters. He may find it easier to be generally critical than to debate with her on the subject of economic values. He may engage in behavior of which she does not approve, such as going out with the "boys" in the evening or drinking "too much". Or he may become surely, moody, and hard to live with."[5]

"Financial difficulties are, as everyone realizes, the

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1. Phelps, op. cit., p. 476
2. Ibid. p. 491
3. Ibid. p. 492
4. Judson T. Landis and Mary G. Landis: The Marriage Handbook, p. 313
5. Ibid. p. 315

true explanation of many divorces."[1]

"The financial ways of a household help or hinder its success."[2]

Reasons for differences over financial matters are many and involved, often reaching back into pre-marital and childhood experiences during formative years. Here radically different senses of value may have been created, or extreme selfishness may have been nurtured, or responsibility for a systematic handling of money may have failed to develop. As a result, clashing attitudes reveal themselves when the principals of the family have to apply their attitudes to the concrete situation of spending the family income.[3]

It is also recognized that difficulties which seem to center around the economic problem are only evidences of other deeper tensions, emotional immaturity, and maladjustments. It was noted above that there is an interrelationship between the various problems resulting in and rising from family instability. And as Dr. Leland Foster Wood has pointed out,

"In some families financial troubles come by way of thoughtlessness, but in other cases troubles over money are merely symptoms of deeper disharmonies that lurk beneath the surface."[4]

The conclusion follows, then, that one of the great needs for stabilizing the family where this economic problem is involved is both the elimination of the "deeper disharmonies" and the creation of correct

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1. Ernest R. Groves: Conserving Marriage and the Family, p. 69
2. Leland Foster Wood: Harmony in Marriage, p. 34
3. Landis and Landis, op. cit., 313-321. Also Groves, op. cit., pp. 69-76/
4. Wood, op. cit., p. 34

attitudes with regard to spending the income. Correct attitudes toward the use of the income necessarily involve correct attitudes toward one another and the rights of each other.

C. The Problem of Rearing Children

What to do about the matter of having children in the family is a bone of contention in many homes. Not only is the conflict over whether or not to have children, or how many to have, but after their arrival they are often the subject of disagreement between parents. The result is a condition of instability which is injurious to the emotional development of the child, and which sometimes leads to family breakups.[1]

1. Contention over whether or not to have children.

Contention over whether or not to have children arises when one party to the marriage may want a child while the other does not. To want children is normal for both husband and wife and one of the purposes of marriage is to have children. Studies by Mr. Landis at Cornell University and Michigan State College revealed that less than one per cent of the students do not wish to have children when they marry.[2] Goldstein adds that most women have such a strong maternal instinct and desire for children that if it is not fulfilled they are unhappy and feel a profound sense of frustration.[3]

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1. Grove, op. cit., pp. 77, 78, 82.
2. Landis and Landis, op. cit., p. 433.
3. Goldstein, op. cit., p. 87.

Ordinarily, then, it is natural to expect some good reason why there should be any objection on the part of either husband or wife to having children. The health of the wife might be such a reason, in which case it might be very unwise and perhaps even fatal for her to become pregnant. A medical examination might also necessitate limiting the number of children after the family already includes a child or more. But often the reasons either spouse might object to having children are found to be quite different -- reasons which others in like circumstances have often not considered substantial enough to militate against having children.

Sometimes one or the other feels that they cannot afford children. Perhaps they agreed at the outset of their marriage to postpone children for a while, discovered that as their income grew their own standard of living rose so that they were no better able to afford children than before, and now one or the other is unwilling to make the sacrifices necessary, while the other desires children. Or this decision not to have children until financial stability has been reached, or for some other reason, may be the cause of conflict over the use of contraceptives, to which use one is opposed and the other not. Or fear of childbirth on the part of the mother, or even her own repulsion to the sexual relationship with her husband, may sometimes be reasons.

The sterility of husband or wife may be the cause for the absence of children, even though both may desire to have them, and thus also be a constant source of contention, especially if one blames the other.

In the main, the reason for conflict in this area, however, is emotional immaturity. Groves reminds us that,

> "Unfortunately, in the majority of such problems the difference of attitude is the cause of the trouble, and this may be so much a part of the personality that any change is difficult."[1]

This largely explains, too, why some of the same objections to having children seem so major to some couples and very minor to others in very similar outward circumstances. It also indicates that one of the basic needs for avoiding conflict over this matter is the development of right attitudes -- a common recognition of the desire for children as being normal for both parents, and an unselfish and patient consideration for the desires of each other and the reasons lying behind their respective desires.

2. Contention over how to rear children.

Studies by Landis and Landis among younger couples revealed "disagreement over child training ranked next to trouble with in-laws and economic difficulties as the focal points of friction." The father often felt that the wife pampered and spoiled the child. (Most of the children in the study were under three years of age.) The mother felt her husband was too harsh with the child and frightened it by scolding. They disagreed over methods of training, one feeling the other did not apply principles of psychology, and the other disagreeing with the principles or the way they were applied. The habit of one spouse countermanding an order, disciplinary or otherwise, of the other was found

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1. Groves, op. cit., p. 78.

to be irritating and to create increasing marital tension. So also did a parallel opposite, that of the husband taking the attitude that training the child is the wife's responsibility, not his.[1]

Again it is evident that conflicts in this area are due largely to emotional immaturity. The reason for a husband's criticising his wife and the way she handles the child is commonly due to a feeling that he has taken second place to the child in her affections. This is "evidence of immaturity."[2]

In this connection Groves points out that in the divergent attitudes of parents toward the training and discipline of children, violent clashing occurs when one or the other seeks to carry out a program which is subjective and not objectively related to the needs of the child. Usually the wife is more objective than the husband, who may meet her program with scorn or opposition. Jealousy over the greater success or influence of the other parent's methods may increase the conflict. Also, the extrovertive or introvertive disposition of one parent may cause him to show favoritism toward the child who is like himself and a constant opposition to the child unlike himself, which also becomes a continual source of conflict.[3]

The need in such situations, too, is unquestionably a change of attitude to an unselfish regard for the rights and position of the other in building the home.

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1. Landis and Landis, op. cit., pp. 438-441.
2. Ibid., p. 441.
3. Groves, op. Cit., pp. 82-84.

D. The Problem of Morals

A rapid increase in such family violations as pre-marital inter-course, adultery after marriage, and homosexuality, is revealed by the Kinsey Report. Carle C. Zimmerman, Professor of Sociology and Social Relations at Harvard University, has analysed the Kinsey Report's critique of sex standards and is rather alarmed at what the effect upon the family might be if its recommendations were followed. He says,

> It is simply impossible to have the kind of idealism in a society which makes good families if the domestic womb becomes just another place for the sexual relaxation of an uninhibited male.
>
> Modern women simply are not going to stay at home and rear families unless the responsibility is jointly shared between themselves and their husbands, who at least must appear to be trying to act in a seemly fashion. Our current divorce rate clearly shows that.
>
> If this new movement is to be one of mutual freedom of both husband and wives, the situation becomes more unworkable.
>
> Further, can you ask parents in a world already so dis-jointed that familism and parenthood is our "most dangerous and least flourishing business" to sacrifice themselves over many years for the sole purpose of rearing children for selfish, un-profitable, and aimless lives? What parent will say that he is willing to do the things necessary to launch children in this world if it is openly and avowedly only for them to waste their heritage in a few years of random, purposeless, and nonchanneled sex-expression? [1]
>
> The United States fortunately has at present within its midst large groups of persons who still think that sex ought to be harnessed to the family system as far as possible. However, this fortunate situation will not last very long if the prestige of science is to be harnessed to the idea of the necessity for a complete sex release of the male. [2]

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1. Carle C. Zimmerman: The Family of Tomorrow, pp. 226-227
2. Ibid., p. 231

This foregoing quotation serves to illustrate how the problem of extra-marital sex activity is made more acute by a philosophy which purports to be scientific, but which does not consider such activity immoral. Such a philosophy by one or both of the marriage partners would tend to rapidly destroy the home, as above stated.

Closely associated with immoral sex conduct is the problem of drinking and gambling. Goldstein observes that the difficulty here may be due to the man believing in one code of morals for men and another for women, while women have standards for themselves which they expect men also to observe.[1]

Differences in ethical ideals are often involved in the process of family disintegration. "One not uncommon cause of trouble . . . is untruth and deception."[2] Groves recognizes that when the standards of one of the marriage partners are dishonest, deliberately deceptive, cruel and exploiting, they are irritating and harmful and cause the permanency of the marriage to grow increasingly hazardous.[3] To quote him,

> It is hard for anyone unfamiliar with what has happened in domestic life to realize how cruel and vicious and morally dangerous men or women of low ideals can be in their contact with children. Occasionally the general public hears of these tragedies because of something which happens and forces the wife to seek the protection of the court. There are homes where the meanness or immorality of the father does not take such open expression, so that the outsider never gets any clue as to the

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1. Goldstein, op. cit., p. 349.
2. Ibid., p. 348
3. Groves, op. cit., pp. 46-47

suffering the wife endures as she realizes the menace continual-
ly facing the growing child.[1]

Referring back again to Goldstein, he sees that the solution in
such matters is for the partners to realize that distrust is an impor-
tant source of discord and distress which must be transformed into
trust by truth, frankness, and sincerety, if happiness is to be
achieved.[2] He also notes only three possible solutions when dissen-
sion has developed over the moral conduct of one of the partners.
Either, he says, (1) both partners must agree to keep the same code;
or (2) one must become reconciled to the conduct of the other; or
(3) they must separate.[3]

Since separation (3) is a final type of family disintegration
which has aroused the problem of this thesis, its consideration as a
solution must be eliminated in favor of solutions (1) and (2). Obvious-
ly the Christian's concern is that the moral code be ideally the very
highest, for Christianity cannot admit of a lowering of the standards
of one spouse to the level of the other. The need here is for that
which will raise the standards of both to the highest possible level.
Where that is unsuccessful, a moral and spiritual power is needed in
order to realise (2), namely, in order for the one spouse to become
reconciled to the other's conduct, not in a spiritless, docile manner,
but with a positively influential force of patience, understanding, and/
forbearance.

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1. Ibid., p. 85
2. Goldstein, op. cit., p. 249
3. Ibid., p. 350

Zimmerman says,

> The making of a family is a serious business involving great
> sacrifice. It requires a very strong form of interest and trust
> in each partner.[1]

> What we need is a recreated system of family values, widely
> heralded and observed by the classes as well as by the masses.[2]

E. The Problem of Interpersonal Relationships within the Family

It should be quite apparent that stability in a family is dependent
upon the harmonious relationships between its members. As has been
noted above throughout this chapter, discord, disagreement, conflict,
and the like, are factors contributing to disintegration -- factors
which seem to grow out of the various other problems a family may face.
There are other causes of friction which stem directly out of the basic
problem of personal relationships within the family. "Broken families
emerge as patterns of . . . unsuccessful personal interaction."[3] What
some of these are will now be briefly outlined.

1. Personality Maladjustments.

Many problems become focal points of conflict because of psycho-
logical factors involved in the personality makeup of the individuals
concerned. Husband or wife or both have failed to grow up emotionally.
As a result they fail to adjust to one another in the intimate associ-
ations of family life. They are unable to cope with the problems

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1. Zimmerman, op. cit., p. 226
2. Ibid., p. 231
3. Phelps, op. cit., p. 459

arising within the family, insignificant problems loom large, and the tendency is always to blame the other for adverse happenings and lack of happiness.

Those who have studied emotional immaturity in relationship to family problems are in general agreement as to which forms are most common. A representative selection has been made for the purposes of the present discussion.

The first of these is frustration. "It is almost certain to make trouble for family life because it so frequently expresses itself in irritability."[1] The causes of frustration may have nothing to do with circumstances of family life, but generally lie back in childhood experiences where a sense of inferiority became established in the personality. Or if this be not the case, the cause as far as the husband is concerned may lie in the circumstances connected with his work. He may feel more or less a failure because of no advancement either in earnings or position, and feel he has been unable to give his wife the little extras which could make her happy and satisfied with him as a husband and provider.[2]

Father or mother fixation is another common personality fault which impels toward instability and eventual family breakups. Fixation is due to the individual's failure to develop an independent personality which can assume the responsibilities in life, generally

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1. Groves, op. cit., p. 34
2. Ibid., pp. 35-37

because a parent crushed the child's initiative. The child in turn grew in dependence upon the parent, upon whom, too, it centered its affection, so that the development of independent judgment failed to occur.

This has tragic implications for the husband-wife relationship. "Indeed, the marriage from the start may be destined to failure because even the choice of a mate is influenced by the fixation."[1] The afflicted individual will often choose a mate as an extension of the parent. As a result the one spouse reacts against the fixation in the other who has been unable to give up the intrenched parent-child relationship and has withdrawn from the necessary independent adjustments demanded by the responsibilities of married life. Consequently "much too often there develops between the spouses an increasing collision."[2]

Another form of emotional immaturity is a clinging to the courtship experience by the wife, with a desire for the revival of its personal attentions and unique romantic atmosphere. The family days have grown monotonous and the husband is blamed for failing to bring family life up to the expected ideal.

Closely related is the monotony which emerges after a brief period of emotional intoxication at the first because anticipation of marital happiness had been built upon physical passion. Monotony may also occur because of the lack of having developed together interests outside

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1. Ibid., p. 93
2. Ibid.

of the home. ". . . gradually they (husband and wives) recoil from a marriage that has become so empty."[1]

Personality maladjustment is also seen in the spouse who tries to dominate the other. The hidden motive behind the quarrelling engendered is to force the other to give up independent thinking and become submissive to the dominating partner, and thus to satisfy a hungry ego. This is so serious because the quarrelling does not cease even when the submergence of the personality has been accomplished.[2]

Landis and Landis, among others, point out that such things as physical and nervous exhaustion may be at the root of much personal conflict, the quarreling being a childish reaction to fatigue and hunger.[3] Or the quarrelling may be due to a release of nervous tension pent up by pressures relating to the demands of ones work.[4]

The cessation of conflicts due to such minor causes can be achieved by finding tension relief in certain constructive ways other than the destructive method of quarrelling.[5] When physical health is influencing emotions a restoration of health or a correction of the physical condition can be the major part of the solution. But where the cause is deeply rooted in the personality the need is, as Groves comments regarding the spouse who has been progressively successful

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1. Ibid., p. 106
2. Ibid., p.. 38
3. Landis and Landis, op. cit., pp. 251-252
4. Ibid., p. 248-249
5. Ibid., p. 252, 255

in dominating the other, " a radical remaking of the personality at fault."[1]

2. Different Cultural, Racial, and/or Religious Backgrounds.

Studies made to discover whether educational differences had any effect upon marital happiness seem to show a slight favor toward couples who have an equal amount of education. However, general belief that a great disparity in education is the cause of marital unhappiness is not supported by reasearch.[2]

The contrary is true with regard to internationality marriages. Here the difference in cultural backgrounds plays an important role. World War II increased the number of couples who contracted this kind of marriage. Difference in language, customs, and manner of living tend toward instability. But here, too, "much depends upon the viewpoint and personality traits of the individuals."[3]

In the case of interracial marriages the causes for conflict within the family are as great or more so than within internationality marriages. The main reason for this is centered around the children, for children carry the social stigma of such unions. They are the objects of discrimination, often by both the races concerned, and parents blame each other when they are hurt by prejudices against their children.[4]

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1. Groves, op. cit., p. 38
2. Landis and Landis, op. cit., pp. 156-158. These authors summarize studies by Kirkpatrick, Hamilton, Terman, and their own findings.
3. Ibid., p. 156
4. Ibid., pp. 152-153

Protestant-Catholic marriages by their very nature contain serious causes for friction. The matter of children again presents the greatest difficulties. Religious differences between the faiths are so major that children must be trained either for the one or the other or for neither. Agreements entered into before marriage thus become a constant source of conflict. If they are changed it is not without conflict. If they remain unaltered they are at least a source of regret by one parent who feels the defeat of his or her desires, and a feeling of victory by the other. This is an inevitable setting for friction and unhappiness. Further, the home cannot be united in family worship because the breach between faiths is so great.

The most satisfactory solution has proved to be a change of faith by one parent to the faith of the other. At least a part of the reason for lower divorce rates resulting from such action has been due to the cessation of conflict over the religious training of the offspring.[1]

Jewish-Gentile marriages face much the same difficulty as those of Protestant-Catholic marriages, plus cultural differences and interracial discriminations. It is difficult for a Gentile to fit into the family and group solidarity, together with a wide divergence of customs, which characterizes the Jewish relationship. And it is easy to see how one from such a background would have difficulty adjusting to differences in a partner from a Gentile environment.[2]

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1. Ibid., pp. 133-147
2. Ibid., pp. 147-151

Goldstein summarizes his own conclusions on these matters as follows:

> Disparity in social background and cultural development hinders marriage, wheras similarity in culture and social environment promotes understanding and concord. When the husband and wife come from different cultural levels, when one is uncouth in manner, coarse in speech, crude in taste, and the other is sensitive, cultivated, and refined, embarrassment and distress are constant companions.

> Difference in race, religion, nationality hinders marriage, whereas likeness of racial origin, religious beliefs, national customs and practices aids in preserving peace. Men and women cannot escape their life-long associations, their education, their group loyalties. Dissimilarity in attitudes and outlooks, latent prejudices, and active partisanship are always a handicap and a hazard.[1]

3. Sexual Incompatibility.

Groves has found that one of the most frequent complaints the marriage counsellor faces is that the couple is badly adjusted sexually.[2] All authors[3] who deal directly with marriage and family counselling give considerable space to the importance of a mutually satisfactory sex relationship. Just how much sexual incompatibility contributes to the instability of the home or to a final breakup is a difficult thing to determine. Landis and Landis observe that this side of married life is only "one of a complicated set of relationships and activities which make up the whole interactional pattern of a marriage."[4] Because of such an interrelationship between all the mutual experiences of married

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1. Goldstein, op., cit., p. 57
2. Groves, op., cit., p. 49
3. All authors, that is, investigated for the purposes of this part of this chapter.
4. Landis and Landis, op. cit., p. 265

life, unsatisfactory sex adjustment may cause conflict; or conflict from some other area in the relationship may be the cause of an unsatisfactory sex relationship. Under such circumstances any measurement of the relationship between this area of interaction and divorce, for example, has not been accurately made.

Yet, to quote Landis and Landis again,

Sex relationship, more often than some of the other places of marital interaction, seem to be the focal point of tensions, because constantly recurring biological urges force couples to reckon with this part of life . . . . . Differences here cannot be ignored as can some other differences. Therefore, although sex is not an all-important factor in itself, a mutually gratifying sex relationship will serve to facilitate all adjustments . . [1]

These authors also found that their studies of happily married couples "all agree that couples who have achieved the highest degree of mutuality in their sex relationships are among the most happily married."[2]

Tension and discord from this source is due to the failure of one or both parties to experience the full normal satisfaction during the sex act. Or the act may itself be forbidden for some reason. If the husband's desires are blocked a generally irritable, critical behavior, and often an explosive behavior, results. If the wife seldom or ever experiences satisfaction during intercourse she may become generally irritable and nervous, and aloof to further sex relationships.

When unsatisfactory sex experience is due to biological causes,

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1. Ibid., p. 266
2. Ibid., p. 266-267

medical advice and treatment can remedy the treatment in the greater number of cases. When fatigue, mental and nervous exhaustion, or emotional weariness are the cause, as is very often the case, it is obvious that these, and any other health factors involved, must be taken care of before mutual satisfaction can be achieved.

Most causes, however, evolve from a deficiency somewhere in a previous preparation of one or both of the partners for a full and happy marital sexual compatibility. The proper development of attitudes is involved. Lack of biological and anatomical information, or misinformation, cultural backgrounds where reticence about sex has been over-emphasised, and failure to understand the differences between men and women in sexual drive, response, and other phases of the emotional make-up, tend to create feelings of fear, guilt shame and aversion. Resistance to a free abandonment during the sex act results and full satisfaction cannot be experienced.

How this deficiency in proper conditioning may develop antagonisms can be illustrated by the failure of husband and wife to understand each other's differences in make-up. The wife, on the one hand, may fail to understand that her husband's sex desires are normally aroused much more rapidly than hers and that he may desire coitus even when he has been generally irritable and personality clashes have occurred between them. Naturally she may feel that his interest in her is then wholly sexual and selfish. The husband, on the other hand, may fail to understand that for his wife interest in the sex act involves her whole personality so that if tension exists between the two she has

little desire for coitus and experiences little gratification from it.
His natural reaction is that she has grown sexually cold, and the aver-
sion which develops toward each other becomes mutual.

Dr. Wood lists nervousness, fear, a wrong emotional attitude, or
a wrong program of living, as causes for seeming impotence, and mental
factors such as also fear, worry, and an unworthy attitude toward the
marital union, as the main causes of frigidity.[1]

It is apparent that the greatest need in achieving mutually satis-
factory sex adjustment is a patient understanding of each other and all
the factors involved. Even where medical treatment or the aid of a skill-
ed counselor can remedy certain adverse conditions, a mutual recognition
of such needs is first necessary. To quote Dr. Wood, "Sympathy and
mutual confidence are the great goals, for, after all, the union of the
two personalities is the main thing."[2] And Landis and Landis say,

> People who are cooperative, perceptive of the reactions of
> others, and considerate of the needs of others are the ones
> who seek to share gratification rather than having as their
> goal self-gratification. Those who are selfish, impatient,
> unaware of the needs of others, and unwilling to learn from
> others, will have far less to contribute toward the achieve-
> ment of a rewarding sex relationship in marriage. These per-
> sonality factors are of far greater importance in sex adjust-
> ment than is simple biological inadequacy."[3]

4. In-Laws.

Research has revealed that the problem of in-law relationships

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1. Wood, op. cit., pp. 70-71
2. Ibid., p. 73
3. Landis and Landis, op. cit., p. 267

is one of the most common and serious causes of friction. Studies by
Landis and Landis revealed that among couples married about twenty
years women mentioned this problem second, and men mentioned it third,
as the most serious in achieving happiness in marriage. Couples in
the early years of marriage placed it first. The observation was also
made that one of the reasons for the second and third place rating
made by the older couples was due to the fact that over this longer
period of time many marriages with in-law difficulties had ended in di-
vorce.[1] Groves observes, "A considerable number of divorces in this
country come from in-law interference."[2] Phelps lists "Interference
of relatives" fourth as a cause of family friction in broken homes.[3]

Reasons for friction are often found in a previous dependence of
one or both of the married partners upon their parents while growing to
adulthood. Mother-in laws are much more frequently involved in the con-
flict than any of the other in-laws.[4] Mothers cling to their children
and find it hard to give them up to an independent relationship with
someone else in which they themselves must take second place, often
feeling lonely and abandoned when sons and daughters have left home to
build homes of their own.

As a result of the mother-in-law's contact, one marriage partner
feels she is interfering when she gives counsel to her son or daughter.

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1. Ibid., pp. 287-288
2. Groves, op. cit., p. 60
3. Phelps, op. cit., p. 515, adapted from chart 8 by D. R. Bucklin
   in "The Family".
4. Landis and Landis, op. cit., p. 289

or that she is usurping that privilege of intimate understanding and
confidence which should belong primarily to the marriage partnership.
Jealousies creep in on both sides. Parent fixation, as mentioned
above[1] aggravates the situation. Irritations prove to be most acute
when in-laws live under the same roof with the married couple, or are
close enough to be daily visitors.

Whatever form the conflict may take according to the immediate
circumstances of in-law relationships, the need is here also one of
correct attitude and mutual understanding.[2] Most crucial is the con-
sideration on the part of all concerned that the proper relationship
between husband and wife shall be deemed primary. Relationships with
in-laws must be secondary. As Wood remarks,

> While the old loyalties are important the new loyalty must
> be supreme, and it is not fair to allow any person, however
> dear, to "edge in" between husband and wife.[3]

When the relationship between husband and wife is rich and happy they
have in common their relationships with respective in-laws. They are
then able to work together to make these relationships the most happy
for all concerned.

5. Parent-Child Conflict.

This subject of conflict between parents and children is included
here under the problem of family-member interrelationships not because

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1. Ante, pp. 14-15
2. Landis and Landis, op. cit., 301-302
3. Wood, op. cit., p. 12

this conflict has much, if any, significant effect upon the dissolution of the immediate family, but because it is in these family relationships that personality maladjustments develop in children. These are carried from childhood into adulthood and married life with the result that the stability or instability of the future home is often determined by the former relationships in the childhood home.

The serious conflicts between parents and children are seldom very apparent until adolescence is reached. At this time the growing independence of the child begins to manifest itself. Before this period is reached the child is more docile and dependent upon the authority of parents.

Paul E. Johnson, professor of the psychology of religion at Boston University, summarizes the growth of these conflicts and their causes in his book, "Christian Love". Here he shows how growing children come into repeated conflict with parents over authority. The boy may revolt against the father and win the mother to his side, while the daughter may revolt against mother and win father. Unwanted children retaliate with aggression toward those who have rejected them. The mother who is rough in handling her baby, impatient at the progress of toilet habits, expects too much of his tender age, scolds and spanks him for not coming up to adult standards -- for such as little accidents, soiling clothing, tracking in mud with dirty shoes, -- and expresses her impatience with him in general, will get a reaction in his biting the nipple with toothless gums, refusing to eat at the table, and other forms of retaliation. As he grows he learns to mind and please his parents

more, who in turn tolerate him. Hostility is repressed beneath an outward appearance of love "until he is strong enough to revolt and strike for freedom".

The father's harsh show of authority toward a fourteen year old son will cause the son to sacrifice privileges in order to gain revenge when opportunity permits. Feelings of frustration, inferiority, guilt, desires for retaliation, and the like, develop from the various family situations and become causes of conflict.[1]

Dr. Luella Cole in her book, "Psychology of Adolescence", reveals the extent of parent-child conflicts. Using thousands of high school boys and girls as her source, she found that approximately one-third of the homes showed some degree of conflict. When groups of these boys and girls expressed themselves concerning the types of parental behavior and home discipline they resented, their objections centered around discipline for themselves and the emotional adjustment or health of the parents.[2]

Mary Alice Jones, in reporting the findings of "The Committee on Family and Parent Education of the White House Conference on Child Health and Protection", says,

> The deciding factor in the development of happy, well-adjusted children on the one hand, or delinquents on the other, was found to be the interplay of personalities within the family. Social and economic factors are involved but they are not primary.[3]

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1. Paul E. Johnson: Christian Love, pp. 172-182
2. Luella Cole: Psychology of Adolescence, pp. 295-298
3. Mary Alice Jones: The Church and the Children, p. 241

The solution resolves itself, then, around a proper parent-
child relationship. This demands the right attitude of parents and
an atmosphere in the home which will channel natural drives into pro-
ducing stable personalities instead of producing immature personal-
ities seething with repressed seeds of interpersonal conflicts.

F. Summary

The purpose of this chapter was to present representative prob-
lems which cause conflict and work toward the disintegration of the
family. The problems chosen for treatment were: The Economic Prob-
lem, The Problem of Rearing Children, The Problem of Morals, and The
Problem of Interpersonal Relationships within the Family.

The Problem of Interpersonal Relationships was subdivided and
discussed under the headings of Personality Maladjustments, Different
Cultural, Racial, and/or Religious Backgrounds, Sexual Incompatibility,
In-Laws, and Parent-Child Conflicts.

In presenting each of these problems it was noted that involved
in all of them as sources of conflict were such negative factors as
emotional immaturity, incorrect attitudes, selfishness, inconsiderate-
ness, and the like. A satisfactory solution, therefore must necessitate
transforming these into their positive counterparts. It was also noted
that there are problems where minor circumstances such as health, ner-
vous exhaustion, and the like, may be major causes so that when they
are removed the problem more or less dissolves. The same is true where

there may be only outward circumstances which create tension. But most conflicts are deeply rooted in the personality, so that whether related causes can be eliminated or not, basic needs for a stable family life lie in maintaining attitudes of unselfishness, kindness, understanding, consideration, and patient forbearance.

It will be the purpose of Chapter II to show how Christian Love meets these needs and develops their positive expression in family life.

CHAPTER II

THE STABILIZING POWER OF CHRISTIAN LOVE

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A. Introduction

The purpose of this chapter is to show that Christian love is a basic solution to family instability.[1] In the foregoing chapter certain representative problems commonly causing instability were discussed. While there are influences outside of the family and the individuals of the family which are contributory causes of these problems, it was found that there are psychological factors involved in all of them which make the problems acute as problems. For the stability of the family is dependent upon the correct interpersonal relationships. This chapter proposes to show how Christian love stimulates and develops these correct interpersonal relationships. When this is established the importance of the Protestant Church's ministry in fostering such love within the homes is also established.

In so doing, it will be necessary first to analyse the meaning of Christian love. No concise definition of love is attempted, since love is a spiritual quality which can be understood only in terms of how its expression is experienced.[2 and 3] But by noting what is ex-

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1. We believe Christian love is also the superior solution if for no other reason than because it is Christian. The purpose of this thesis in this connection, however, is not to make a comparative study of solutions but to show that the Christian Church has a solution.
2. Johnson, op. cit., pp. 14-15.
3. Paul Ramsey in "Basic Christian Ethics", p. 92, quotes (continued p.30)

expected of true Christian love, how it is expressed, and whence it or-
iginates, a sufficient understanding may be gained to recognize its
stabilizing power. When this summary analysis has been made, it is but
a simple step to show how Christian love brings stability to the family.

B. Christian Love Analysed

The very word "Christian" is descriptive of a certain kind of
love. It suggests that there is another kind of love, or perhaps
many kinds, which this term does not cover. What such may be will be
briefly referred to below.[1] But the name "Christian" indicates that
this kind of love is distinctive as to its source, scope and content.
Johnson describes this distinctiveness by the words "depth" and "range"
-- depths as divine, coming from God who shares it with men; and range
as reaching out to all people and excluding no one.[2]

Because it is "Christian", the New Testament is the source of
the teaching about this love, just as it is the source of all Chris-
tian teachings. But more, love is its dominant theme, "the motif of
the New Testament."[3] An investigation of its meaning, therefore, must
be based on the teachings as they originated from this Gospel source.

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1. Post, p.
2. Johnson, op. cit., p. 23
3. Ibid., p. 24
(continued from page 29) Paul Tillich, "The Protestant Era", p. 160,
as follows, "I have given no definition of love. This is impossible
because there is no higher principle by which it could be defined."

1. Its Divine Source.

The first truth about love as taught in the New Testament is that it comes from God, that He has expressed it in Jesus Christ, and that it is expressed toward men.[1] He has loved us men before there was any expression of love on our part.[2] He commended His love toward us while still His enemies, and He did it through the death of Christ.[3] He so loved the world that He gave Christ for our salvation,[4] and thus was able to reach us with His love through His Son.[5]

2. The Essence of its Divine Expression.

God's love to us in Christ is, in its primary practical essence and significance, forgiveness. "God's love, which breaks into the world at this great moment in history, is pardoning love."[6] This is the distinct and dominant emphasis throughout the New Testament. In the Gospels Jesus is revealed as expressing God's love through forgiveness. In Matthew His very name is given this significance: "Thou shalt call His name Jesus for He shall save His people from

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1. Ramsey, op.cit., pp. 20, 130, and so throughout his discussion of love, esp. pp. 116-132. Johnson, op.,cit., p. 24. Gottfried Quell and Ethelbert Stauffer: Love, in Bible Key Words, pp. 49-52, 56, 57,61,62, translated by J. R. Coates from Theologisches Worterbuch Zum Neuen Testament which was edited in the German by Gerhard Kittel. These three authors are chosen from among many whose analysis is in like agreement from three fields, namely, Ramsey, representative of Christian Ethics, Johnson, of Christian Psychology, and Quell and Stauffer, of Christian Theology.
2. I John 4:19
3. Romans 5:8
4. John 3:16
5. John 14:21; 17:23-26
6. Quell and Stauffer, op. cit., p. 51

their sins".[1] In Mark the paralytic,[2] in Luke the penitent woman at Simon's supper,[3] in John the adulterous woman,[4] all received the divine grace of His forgiveness.[5] These examples could easily be multiplied.

The same meaning is found in the Epistles. Paul speaks of us being "justified freely by His grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus."[6] And John declares the same thought when he says, "Herein is love . . . that He loved us and sent His son to be the propitiation[7] for our sins."[8]

It is true that in addition to being the expression of God's forgiving love Jesus also revealed Him as a loving Father bestowing a providential care over all men whether they are good or evil.[9] This providential care, however, is the normal general expression of God's nature[10] because God is love.[11] And since the world of men has rejected this manifestation of God's love [12] the special, supreme manifestation of that love directly to men is through Christ, as stated above, and the character of the love is summed up in "forgiveness".[13]

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1. Matthew 1:21
2. Mark 2:1-11
3. Luke 7:36-50
4. John 8:1-11
5. The word "grace" here is used in the sense of the free and unmerited expression of God's love.
6. Romans 3:24
7. The same thought of propitiation is also in the context of the preceding quotation.
8. I John 4:10
9. Matthew 5:45; 6:25-34; 10:29-31
10. Romans 1:19-23; 2:4
11. I John 4:8
12. Romans 1:18-32, specifically vs. 21; 2:4
13. C. E. B. Cranfield in A Theological Word Book of the Bible, ed. by Alan Richardson, pp. 134-135, (a) and (b).

3. A Human Relationship with God -- its Relation to Faith.

Jesus summed up the relationship of men to God in the commandment, "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind."[1] Gottfried Quell and Ethelbert Stauffer find particularly two facets to this love toward God.[2] The first is faithful obedience to God's orders and making the primary aim of life the extension of His lordship. The second is "regarding God as the ground of one's whole existence", depending completely upon His care, "living out of His hand", "breaking every tie except that with God." Thus love for God means "glowing with a passion for God." They support this meaning of love to God by Matthew 5:10 ff.; 6:24-30 ff.; 10:17 ff.; 24:10, 12; and Luke 17:7 ff.

This love relationship to God is regarded by some as closely identified with man's faith in God. Anders Nygren points out that Paul used "pistis", which is the Greek word for faith, to express what the Gospels mean by love to God, and very seldom used "agape"[3] to denote such love.[4] Johnson, however, objects to Nygren's omission of what he calls "filial love" -- an omission due to Nygren's emphasis on "agape". Filial love Johnson calls the relation Jesus as Son had to the Father, and maintains that Jesus invited us also to have this relationship of love to the Father. He says,

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1. Matthew 22:37-38
2. Quell and Stauffer, op. cit., pp. 45-46
3. Nygren finds "agape" to mean a spontaneous unmerited love flowing out of the infinite generosity of God's own nature. See note #4 below.
4. Anders Nygren: Agape and Eros, Vols. I and II

> There is New Testament evidence that God initiates love for men,
> but no evidence that men are unable to return love for love.
> It is taken for granted that we can and should love God be-
> cause he first loved us. (I John 4:19)[1]

> The experience of Jesus and the New Testament writers, as well
> as the witness of most of the voices in Christian history,
> points to love as a mutual meeting of God and man, each loving
> the other with all his heart, mind and strength.[2]

Whether or not Johnson is justified in this objection, the point

still is made by both him and Nygren that there is a response of men

to God's love. Nygren wants to call it faith, Johnson wants to call

it filial love, but the important thing is that there is a response

coming from men after God's initiating love toward them. God's love

is the first cause of man's response.

So also Quell and Stauffer agree: "When men love God, that is the

immediate reflection of the love which streams down from heaven upon

the elect."[3] They add that "God awakens in man the faith with which

he is entirely dependent upon God. But faith comes into operation and

finds its realization through love."[4]

Ramsey does not feel that the word love is adequate to express a

Christian's relationship to God when the same word must be used to ex-

press his relationship also to his neighbor. So he would use "faith"

with the words, "humility", "obedience", "reliance", "trust", "grati-

tude", "thankfulness", and "glorifying God", because they are central

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1. Johnson, op. cit., p. 28-29. Quotation page 29.
2. Ibid., p. 31
3. Quell and Stauffer, op. cit., p. 56
4. Ibid., p. 57

in Paul's theology in this connection.[1]

James Moffat would seem to agree with this conclusion. He finds
that Jesus preferred to use the word "faith" rather than "love" as the
expression of man's relationship to God, evidently because we cannot
speak of loving God in the same sense as loving one another. The par-
doning element is absent in our love to God, as is also a motive to
enrich and develop the lives of our fellowmen, which is found in the
relationship of love between people. Paul, too, preferred to use
"faith". When he spoke of loving God he had in mind its proof by re-
joicing in His will for us, trust under all circumstance, and hearty
service -- not as a supplement to trust and belief but organic to it.[2]

4. A Relationship Between People.

At the same time that Jesus summarized what the relationship of
men to God should be, He also said, "Thou shalt love thy neighbor as
thyself."[3] Man's response to the divine love is of necessity two-
fold -- response to God in the manner above indicated, and a response
to fellow men which is the activity of love toward them. This response
comes because God's loving action toward men results in a new man. As
soon as He brings to the individual the experience of forgiveness of
sins through Jesus Christ, a new power to love is released within him.
This is especially indicated by the story in Luke 7:36-50 where the
penitent woman demonstrates the love that has been awakened in her.[4]

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1. Ramsey, op. cit., pp. 128-129
2. James Moffat: Love in the New Testament, pp. 93-95, 160-163
3. Matthew 22:39
4. Quell and Stauffer, op. cit., pp. 49-50

This new relationship to God which His mercy has produced be-
comes the basis for the new relationship between men.[1] God's love is
to be imitated. In the parable of the Unmerciful Servant[2] this thought
is climaxed in the words of the forgiving Lord, "I forgave thee all
that debt . . . shouldst not thou also have had mercy on thy fellow-
servant, even as I had mercy on thee?" Again in Luke 6:27-36 Jesus
makes the love of God toward men the basis for man's love toward men,
and says, "Be ye merciful, even as your Father is merciful." And Paul
says in Ephesians 5:1 and 2, after first suggesting in the preceding
that God is kind and tenderhearted as wells as forgiving, "Therefore
be imitators of God, as beloved children. And walk in love, as Christ
loved us . . "

Cranfield's analysis of Romans 5:5 is also to the point, namely,
that the love of man's relationship to man is divine love "poured into
us and overflowing into the lives of others." He quotes Luther's ex-
planation that the Christian man is a medium between God and his
neighbor like a vessel or tube through which the divine blessings re-
ceived from above flow out to other people. Cranfield further finds
in Romans 14:15 and I Corinthians 8:11 that "love means the refusal to
see, think of, or deal with one's neighbor except in the light of what
Christ has done for him, as the brother for whom Christ died."[3]

The purpose of this divine love flowing out from God's children

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1. Ibid., p. 50
2. Matthew 19:23-35
3. Cranfield, op. cit., pp. 135-136

is, then, to make them servants of their fellow men. This Paul states

in Galatians 5:13, "Through love be servants one to another; for the

whole law is fulfilled in one word, even in this: thou shalt love thy

neighbor as thyself." Ramsey, in discussing Christian love as the work

of faith quotes Martin Luther to support his own analysis as follows,

> When you know that you have through Christ a good and gracious
> God who will forgive your sins and remember them no more, and
> are now a child of eternal blessedness, a lord over heaven and
> earth with Christ, then you have nothing more to do than to go
> about your business and serve your neighbor.[1]

He continues to quote Luther to show what the character of the service

of the Christian to his neighbor is like,

> Therefore, in all his works he should be guided by this thought
> and look to this one thing alone, that he may serve and benefit
> others in all that he does, having regard to nothing except the
> need and advantage of his neighbor . . . Lo, this is a truly
> Christian life, here faith is truly effective through love;
> that is, it issues in works of the freest service cheerfully
> and lovingly done, with which a man willingly serves another
> without hope of reward, and for himself is satisfied with the
> fulness and wealth of his faith ...[2]

Specifically, this working of love toward one's neighbor is "will-

ingness to serve and sacrifice, to forgive and make allowances, to

share and sympathize."[3] According to First Corinthians, love is long-

suffering, kind, without envy, unobtrusive, humble, well mannered, un-

selfish, patient under provocation, forgets the evil of others and

is happy over their truth rather than their wickedness; love carries

its load, trusting, hoping, enduring; it is eternal.[4]

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1. Ramesy, op. cit., p. 141
2. Ibid., p. 142
3. Quell and Stauffer, op. cit., p. 58
4. I Corinthians 13.

5. Contrasted with Non-Christian Love.

A summary of what has been said here about Christian love shows
its distinctiveness: (1) It has its source in God. (2) It has been
primarily expressed toward us men in the forgiveness of sin through the
redemptive work of Jesus Christ. (3) On the human side it is a unique
relationship of obedience to God and dependence upon Him in response
to His initiating love. (4) This relationship to God produces a new
relationship between men in which God's love is not only imitated by
them but flows through them to others. Thus Christians become servants
of all men in an expression of consideration, sympathy, kindness, for-
bearance, etc., without self-concern and self-seeking.

It is this unselfishness, motivated by God's love, which charac-
terizes the divine essence of Christian love and makes it different
from all other earthly loves. Dr. Abraham Kuyper calls all other love
natural love, which he places in three classes: (1) Love as revealed
in instinct. (2) Love as a strong natural attachment, not wholly in-
stinctive, but in part unconsciously active, such as parental love,
conjugal love, filial love, and fraternal love. (3) Love as moral kin-
ship, that is, the mutual love and fellowship between friends, congen-
ial minds, comrades, etc. He shows how these exist wholly independent
of the conscious love of Christ. Even in their highest expression
they may be due to the impulse of instinct, or desire for fame, or the
like, but "it is not the throbbing Love of God that vibrates in these
manifestations." That takes place only when natural love "becomes

self-consecrating, self-denying, self-sacrificing."[1]

Ramsey maintains the superiority of this unselfish Christian love over any other attempt to "create and maintain community of persons, or to evoke and sustain personality in community." These other attempts he includes under two general types of philosophy, the self-centered as represented by Jeremy Bentham, and the value-centered as represented by J. S. Mill and Henry Sidgwick. After discussing their pertinent tenets he concludes that increasing men's enlightenment about their own interests or concern for value cannot cause men to advance beyond where they are at a given moment in their relationships with one another. He says,

> Let love penetrate the barriers between man and man at which,
> by definition, all mutual self-interest halts, all concern
> for one another over concern for some good is bound somewhat
> to fail.[2]

C. How Christian Love Brings Stability into the Family Unit

The representative causes of family instability analyzed in Chapter I revealed that there were ordinarily several psychological factors of a negative nature involved in them. Thus stability was found to depend to a large extent upon interpersonal relationships in which these negative forces might be replaced by positive forces. Selfishness would need to be replaced by unselfishness, worry and fear by a feeling of security, and the like.

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1. Abraham Kuyper: The Work of the Holy Spirit, pp. 508-514
2. Ramsey, op. cit., pp. 234-244. Quotation from p. 244

In this present chapter love has been found to be a positive force of emotional response to God and of unselfish service to men. It is at this point, then, that love is able to bring stability into the home since it is a positive creative force in interpersonal relationships. As already noted, Christian love is creative at its source, God's initial love for man creating a responsive action in man both toward God and toward one another.

This creative quality of Christian love is therefore inherent in the very nature of love itself. Creative at its origin, it continues to be creative in the relationships of men with one another.[1] Because it is creative it produces those positive qualities which are necessary for harmonious, happy, and satisfactory interpersonal relationships within the family unit, eliminating at the same time negative psychological factors which are conducive to family instability. As Regina Westcott Wieman says, "Creative interaction released through Christ is love going forth with such freedom and power that it overcomes whatever hinders or opposes its own working — meanness, resistance, indifference, evil doing."[2]

In a study prepared by the Committee on the American Home of the Northern Baptist Convention[3], the general stabilizing effect of love

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1. Regina Westcott Wieman in her book, "The Family Lives its Religion", uses the expression "creative interaction" as synonymous with "love". She says, "All this time that we have been talking about creative interaction in the family we might have been writing the word love in place of creative interaction." p. 19. Johnson, too, in 'Christian Love" treats it as a dynamic, creative power in family relationships.
2. Wieman, op. cit., p. 51
3. Building Spiritual Foundations in the Family, ed. by Leland F. Wood

in the home is recognized. Using the term "religion" to mean "the love of God in the home and all that results from that love", it reports,

> Family ties are most secure when they are bound together in God. Studies have shown that very few divorces occur among those who cultivate a real spiritual life in the home and take their religious duties seriously. Doubtless this is because the spirit of religion safeguards the fellowships on which the home is founded, making people better husbands and wives, better parents, better sons and daughters, and better brothers and sisters.[1]

Love, which is the spirit of our Christian religion, works in the home to prevent family disintegration by uniting its members in common experiences with God, uniting each other in a mutual fellowship, and giving to each member a common purpose for living.

1. Christian love unites the family in its experiences with God.

In man's positive response to God there is the expression of his love to God.[2] Whatever these experiences with God may be, love is the motivating power, the creative power, behind them. There are certain kinds of experiences with God which are common among all Christians. It follows then, that as love for God drives members of the family to experiences with God, the members will be united in a fellowship of common experiences. These may be grouped under the general term of "worship experiences".[3] For worship "has many forms and functions". Its chief function, however, is to keep "the heart pure in ever-renewed

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1. Ibid., p. 8
2. Ante, pp. 33-35
3. Wieman, op., cit., pp 200-221, so discusses them, which provides the suggestion for the order of treatment here, also.

commitment of the whole self to God and His goodness."[1] Among those common worship experiences which aim at such a commitment, love inspires activity in the following four main observances: (1) Observance of Christian Festivals; (2) Repentance; (3) Prayer; and (4) Public Worship.

(1) Observance of Christian Festivals. Of the three major festivals, Christmas, Easter, and Pentecost, Christmas furnishes the best example for illustrative purposes, since it is basic to the other two.

Love is the dominating motive of Christmas worship. Here God's love is emphasized as first expressing itself to men in the giving of His only begotten Son, creating in men a response of love for Him, which in turn is expressed in giving Him thanks and praise. As members of the family are individually brought face to face with this love and respond positively to it, they are united in a common experience of committing at least as much of themselves to God as is involved in genuinely thanking and praising Him for such a gift to them.

(2) Repentance. "Repentance of sin means repudiating all bonds, whether conscious or not, that block the way to creative love."[2] This definition is inclusive enough to take in the experience of bringing before God the quarrels and disharmonies that may arise within the family, the selfishness, the sharp words, the feelings of bitterness and vengefulness, -- everything, in fact, which has crept into the interpersonal relationships contrary to the spirit of love.

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1. Ibid., pp. 201-203
2. Ibid., p. 210

Worship that takes the form of repentance, then, must in-
clude not only the submitting of known disloyalties to the
transforming power of God, but also an unflinching self-search-
ing for those unknown aspects of our personalities which are
still under bondage to lesser gods . . . Repentance of sin as
worship consists of this deliberate searching of the self with-
out reservation under the control of creative love.

Beyond all this, repentance involves all those sins which
we cannot specify because they are beyond the reach of our ut-
most self-searching. These unfindable sins, too, must be sub-
mitted to the transformative working of God. One can offer
himself as a sinner to be remade by the working of creative
interaction as it operates in each concrete situation.[1]

This above quotation should make clear, too, the way repentance

as a common experience of family members brings unity to the family.

For each one repudiates before God those things which destroy unity,

and by this action opens the way for the creative power of love to

operate in his own life. And as all members thus come to realize that

they have with each other like feelings of responsibility for their

actions to God, that each have like guilt before God, and that they

are making like repudiations of those sins in their own lives which

disrupt harmonious relationships, the sense of kinship in these common

experiences knit them together.

(3) Prayer. Families where members pray with and for one another

are united in the common fellowship of dependence upon God and humility

before Him. As they pray together they "will be able to lay hold on

sources of power and of understanding greater than their own, and to

gain for their home something of the strength and serenity of the

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1. Ibid., p. 210

kingdom of God."[1]

In "Building Spiritual Foundations in the Family" consideration
is given to making family worship[2] a progressive experience as the fam-
ily grows.[3] Here we are told,

> Husband and wife will find that the emotional adjustments of ear-
> ly married life are greatly simplified when kneeling together
> before a common Father, confessing their failures and their
> need. It will also help to establish the highest ideals for
> the home and to lift them above the merely selfish point of
> view which wrecks so many marriages.[4]

As soon as the first child is able to sit in its high chair it becomes
a part of the fellowship which unites the family in its prayer exper-
iences with God. It isn't long before this "growing baby in the high
chair will learn to close its eyes and fold its hands, sensing the at-
titudes and reverence of the family in prayer."[5] And as the family
grows, children unite, according to the capabilities of their ages,
with the parents in prayer, both each in turn and in unison. This
unifying value of family prayer is further stimulated by having vari-
ous members of the family take turns in planning occasional family
worship periods.[6]

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1. Wood: Harmony in Marriage, p. 110
2. The terms "family prayer" and "family worship" are often used inter-
   changeably because in its broadest sense prayer "includes all of
   worship". (Wieman, op. cit., p. 212). While there "is such a thing
   as offering our work to God as prayer, our music as praise and our
   fellowship as rejoicing" (Building Spiritual Foundations in the
   Family, ed. by Wood, p. 43), it is felt that the relationship be-
   tween them is such as to justify treating their purposes and re-
   sults together here.
3. Op. cit., pp. 45-47
4. Ibid., p. 47
5. Ibid., p. 47
6. Ibid., p. 51

All the common experiences of the family, "its hope, joys, sorrows, struggles and triumphs", together with any special needs, may be included in family prayer.[1] This becomes one of the most effective ways of solving personal family problems. Wieman, after stating that the two great difficulties in all problem solving are achieving objectivity and gaining insight, declares that the only way members of the family can be made ready for such achievement is "through ever-renewed commitment to the Creativity of God (love). Family problems will never be effectively solved, she says, until "the family gives its devotion to the Source of all values more completely than it does to any one specific value or order of life".[2]

Commenting on the general unifying effect of family prayer, Johnson says,

> Where love fails it usually appears that religious resources have been neglected . . . A family altar is not just a worship center of cross, Bible, or candles for interior decoration. It is a daily event in which the family unites in an act of worship . . . The psychologist cannot deny the effects of sincerely praying together upon the unity and growing appreciation of those persons for each other and the values they hold sacred.[3]

(4) Worship at Church Services. Closely linked with the common experiences of family prayer in the home are the benefits of united fellowship at the formal church worship services. Johnson includes these benefits with those of other family experiences with God, stating that the weekly routine of a family going to Church together is

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1. Wood: Harmony in Marriage, p. 110
2. Wieman, op. cit., pp. 178-179
3. Johnson, op. cit., p. 156

one of the ways the Christian fellowship upholds the family.[1] He also

reports:

> The Burgess and Terman studies show that vital religious experience,
> [and] frequency of attendance of church and Sunday school . . .
> correlated well with harmonious marriages. Not only is the rate
> of divorce less for active church members, but the dangers of
> inertia and conflict are both lessened by the growing aspira-
> tions and reconciliations of religious devotion.[2]

2. Christian love unites the family in a mutual relationship.

Johnson has also given an excellent picture of how Christian love

unites the family in a mutual relationship through the application of

democratic principles. He maintains that Christian love requires de-

mocracy for its expression. This means, then, that when Christian

love rules in the home democracy prevails, and that only as it pre-

vails can the fullest development of love in each member of the family

take place.

In Chapter I of this thesis the problem of conflicts arising be-

tween children and parents was dealt with.[3] Taking account of the re-

pressions and frustrations caused in children by authoritarian domina-

tion on the part of parents, and noting that hatred deceit, and hypoc-

risy develop in them as a result. Johnson insists that love is thus

stifled and denied and bitter resentment to that parental domination

is aroused unless love can be expressed under democracy.

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1. Johnson, op. cit., p. 117
2. Ibid., p. 157
3. Ante, pp. 24-27

Under democratic expression, he says, trustworthy independence
is encouraged by sharing together such experiences as budgeting the
family resources. Leadership is developed by each member having par-
ticular tasks to perform, ideas to contribute and plans to initiate,
which in turn are respected by each other. Decisions are reached by
common consent and thus there is little need for autocratic coercion
which only defeats love and promotes hostility.[1]

Johnson also believes that the goals of mental health can be
reached by this expression of Christian love in the family. He says,

> The family pattern of Christian love provides a basic security and
> progressive development of social competence. Christian faith and
> love at their best undergird each growing life with confidence and
> worth. They develop sociability and co-operation in the inter-
> action of love. They challenge growth to maturity . . . Such
> love casts out fear (I John 4:18), withdrawal, shame, and hostil-
> ity. It is wholesome and makes personality whole.[2]

Among the spiritual resources for mental health which he finds in
the Christian family four may be mentioned as of special bearing here:
(1) Emotional security, which results from the expressions of faith and
love. (2) As the unselfish expression of love is motivated, like re-
sponses are induced in other family members; thus hostilities are re-
duced and interpersonal relations become healthier. "This prepares
for marriage, parenthood and social leadership." (3) "Desired traits
of character are loved into being as united aspiration and devotion
give them spontaneous expression in creative adventures of Christian
living at progressively mature levels of achievement." (4) Confessing

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1. Johnson, op. cit., pp. 109-117
2. Ibid., pp. 120-121

and forgiving faults and mistakes dissolves deceit, invites reconciliation, and gives the humility needed to make a new start together in love. This ready confession and forgiveness saves the family from "cumulating tensions and hostilities in the Christian way of restoring and renewing peace and love."[1]

This above analysis of what a prominent Christian psychologist finds as the result of Christian love expressed and working in the home, can readily be seen to be in full agreement with what has been previously said in this chapter about the nature of Christian love as it is expressed between man and man.[2] It is God's love imitated in His merciful and forgiving activity toward men, and its effects are as Paul gives them in I Corinthians XIII.

Another quotation from Johnson shows the relationship of family worship with the expression of love toward one another, and the stabilizing power which results:

> . . . earnest Christian families are less often found in the divorce court than others. The earnest Christian who accepts the ideals of love as taught by his religion and sincerely tries to practice them is in a stream of continuing purpose to love. If disagreements arise between husband and wife, they are ripples in that stream whose main current sweeps on in the course of love. When quarrels arise, there is reason to face the issues honestly, for love must go on, and it is assumed an understanding will eventually be reached. When offenses are given or received, there is the expectation and requirement of forgiving again to the well-known number of seventy times seven. Where prayer is a daily practice, there is the opportunity in a melting mood of humility and reverence to ask God for a solution and seek to make a new start. Where the family are active in church, there is the

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1. Ibid., pp. 124-127
2. Ante, pp. 35-39

weekly routine of going together and participating with other
families who expect their love to succeed. In these ways the
Christian fellowship upholds the family in the stresses of modern
life and provides a larger reservoir of love to enrich the stream
of family devotion.[1]

3. Christian love unites the family in a common purpose for living.

The purpose of God's love flowing into men is to make them ser-
vants of one another.[2] As Christian love dominates the lives of the
family members, then, it makes them each other's servants. Service
is the Christian purpose for living, as is noted in Jesus' words,

> Ye know that the rulers of the Gentiles lord it over them,
> and their great ones exercise authority over them. Not so
> shall it be among you: but whosoever would become great
> among you shall be your servant; and whosoever would be first
> among you shall be your servant: even as the Son of man came
> not to be ministered unto but to minister, and to give his
> life a ransom for many.[3]

Wieman sees the need for this service of love as creative inter-
action to work out to others in the larger social community. If it
does not the family is caught up in those forces which work disintegra-
tion. If creative interaction grows out of the family and reaches out
to others it experiences "the fulfillment of God's love in the form of
those qualities and meanings of life which are intrinsic to creative
interaction."[4]

Johnson says that the meaning, joy and responsibility of local

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1. Johnson, op. cit., pp. 117-118
2. Ante, p. 37
3. Matthew 20:25-28. Cf. Johnson, op. cit., p. 203
4. Wieman, op. cit., pp. 217-221

family living will be enriched "as we discover the larger dimensions
of Christian love and our responsibility to share the best that we
have and are with others in unselfish service and unbroken fellowship."[1]

D. Summary

In this chapter the meaning of love was first analyzed. It was
found to have its source in God and to flow through men, making them
servants of one another. Then the application of this was made to
family life with the result that love was found to be a positive cre-
ative force in stabilizing the family. It unifies the family by unit-
ing the members in common religious experiences and in mutual expres-
sion of the characteristics of love toward one another. It further
unifies the family by uniting the members in a common service of love
not only to one another but toward the larger social community, thus
giving them the Christian purpose for living.

The over-all benefits of such creative interaction in meeting the
problems of family life, in forestalling the work of forces of disinte-
gration, and in healing breaches that may have begun, is well pointed
up by this final quotation from Johnson:

> Christian love (1) asks complete devotion -- no less than all
> our love; (2) invites constant faithfulness forever; (3) pro-
> motes unfaltering growth of persons in mutual responsiveness;
> (4) accents unselfish attitudes; (5) relates sex to a larger
> perspective as a means to procreation, to social and spiritual
> values; (6) forgives mistakes or misunderstandings and starts
> again on a new basis; (7) keeps a central purpose to love as

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1. Johnson, op. cit., 129-130

the greatest privilige of life, a divine commission to make
heaven here and now; (8) expands family horizons and loving
interactions to community-wide fellowship; (9) expresses love
in kindly motives and deeds of service; (10) worships a Fath-
er of love, aspires to ever-maturing devotion, and dedicates
life energies to make human values more sacred and secure.[1]

Thus Christian love, when it becomes a part of the lives of the

family members, becomes a positive creative force in every family

situation, It is a basic solution to problems arising from or aggra-

vated by negative attitudes in interpersonal relationships, and it

promotes a healthy attitude of maturity toward problems where concrete

material factors are deeply involved.

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1. Ibid., p. 163. This is also Johnson's own summary of two chapters
   in "Christian Love" in which he deals with the stabilizing value
   of Christian love.

CHAPTER III

POSSIBILITIES OPEN TO THE PROTESTANT CHURCH FOR EFFECTIVELY CAUSING

THE POWER OF CHRISTIAN LOVE TO OPERATE WITHIN ITS PARISH FAMILIES

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A. Introduction -- A Family Centered Program

In the first chapter, an investigation into causes of family in-
stability revealed many disintegrating forces at work. While only
representative problems were discussed, it became clear that these
disintegrating forces were of a double nature. Material causes and
environmental influences were at work, such as the amount of family
income, premarital training, religious, social, and cultural back-
grounds, health, and the like. But involved in all of these were
psychological factors of emotional immaturity, selfishness, impatience,
worry, and others, deeply rooted in the personalities of the parents.
These latter factors are often the underlying causes of family trouble,
the other causes being occasions for conflict. If family stability
is to be assured, then, it is necessary that these underlying emotion-
al attitudes shall be right.

Chapter II showed how Christian love is a creative force, stim-
ulating right attitudes in interpersonal relations, correcting and
dissolving negative attitudes, and creating and developing emotional
maturity and mental health. Thus Christian love becomes a major unify-
ing force and a basic stabilizing power in family life.

This present chapter is now concerned with effective opportunities

open to the Protestant Church through which it may be able to make Christian love operative within the family so that stability may result. It is not concerned with plans and techniques, but it does include the question of responsibility and of the effectiveness of the Church's ministry in this connection. Before dealing with the avenues, then, through which the Church can bring Christian love into the home, notice will be taken of its awareness of responsibility. For the effectiveness of its ministry is dependent upon the extent to which it utilizes these avenues, and the degree of utilization will depend largely upon how aware the Church is of its right and responsibility to enter the lives of its community families and to foster within them the stabilizing power of Christian love.

1. Aware of Family-Related Individual Needs.

Any program of the Church in seeking to foster love in the home will necessarily have to take into account the needs of each member of the family. The members of the family are so closely related that a deficiency in the emotional maturity of one will have its effect upon the others. Again, the emotional and mental health of the individual is dependent to a large degree upon the attitudes, activities and relationships of all the family members. As Johnson points out,

> The family is an interacting unit of persons who learn to live together in varying conditions. . . The major problems of timidity and aggression, dominance and submission, conflict and harmony, rivalry and teamwork, deceit and honesty, freedom and responsibility are all present in the dynamic interpersonal relationships.[1]

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1. Johnson, op. cit., p. 121

A haphazard program of the Church, then, cannot be as effective as can one which is directed toward discovering the needs of the individual members and bringing to the individuals, and especially into the family, that which can meet these needs. If the patterns of society are cut in the home, the effective program of the Church will be one which assures a correct cutting of the pattern.

Commenting on the Church's responsibility along this line, Wesner Fallaw says,

> It is the job of the church through whatever school it can devise, separated from the state, to enlist parents and church school teachers in a mutual endeavor to give the family a Christian quality of life.[1]

He indicts that Church program as helpful but inadequate which employs adult Bible classes and parents classes, the Sunday church school, and other activities to reach the individual instead of focusing to reach "the family as a whole -- so that individuals may have both the support of the church and the home for practising Christian faith." [2] He declares that Protestant Churches have "lagged in their opportunity for guiding the religious development of their people by effecting a working relationship with family units."[3] He also says, "What seems to be needed within the modern church is not so much a matter of more organization as a better use of present organizations.[4] He would make that use one in which the purpose is to reach the whole family. This

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1. Wesner Fallaw: The Modern Parent and the Teaching Church, p. 25
2. Ibid., pp. 67-77
3. Ibid., p. 18
4. Ibid., p. 84

is in full agreement with the present tendency of those concerned with people's needs to recognize the necessity of dealing with the whole family. C. F. McNeil, Director of the School of Social Administration at Ohio State University, commenting on the results of the St. Paul family unit study which showed that there is "a growing recognition of the basic concept around which all social services are centered, namely the family", says,

> ... treatment to individuals of a family is secondary to the impact upon the family of the deficiency which made necessary the work with the individual. It forecasts basic changes in the community organization of our discovery, referral, diagnostic treatment and service facilities.[1]

2. Aware of the Church's Responsibility to Bring Stability to its Community Families.

The Christian nature of the Church determines its responsibility to the world. It has received its commission to evangelize the world from Christ Himself.[2] W. H. Greever summarizes it thus,

> That commission is comprehensive in projection -- to include all mankind, of every race and generation; -- and in program to provide for all spiritual needs of Christians, -- instruction, worship, fellowship, discipline, edification, and cooperative service.[3]

He also observes,

> ... because the Christian religion provides for man's eternal welfare, it provides the only solution for his temporal problems and the only basis upon which a temporal society can be built in which goodwill, peace, justice, love, mercy and unselfish service can be maintained. The only pure, unselfish concern for

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1. C. F. McNeil: Services to the American Family in a Scene of Change, in Proceedings of the Biennial Convention, Lutheran Welfare Conference in America, 1951, p. 24
2. Matthew 28:19-20
3. W. H. Greever: Human Relationships and the Church, p. 21

temporal human welfare comes from the Christian religion through the Christian Church.[1]

This last quotation in the light of what has already been said about the stabilizing power of Christian love helps to emphasize the responsibility of the Church (thinking now in terms of the local Church) to reach all the families of the community in which it ministers. Only if the Church does so can these values mentioned be imbued into the temporal society. Since the patterns of man's social communications are shaped in the family, the patterns of society itself are shaped in the family.[2] It becomes necessary for the Church, therefore, to be aware of its mission to the whole of society, and to realize that unstable homes pour negative social attitudes, influences, and activities into society through personalities whose negative patterns of social living have been determined by the absence of Christian love.

3. Aware that the Church has the Necessary Means in the Gospel.

It was noted in Chapter II that Christian love springs from a response to God's redemptive love. This new power of love is released when the individual experiences forgiveness of sins through Jesus Christ.[3] If love is to operate in men's lives it is necessary that the Gospel of redemption has first been brought to their hearts, and that they have responded positively to it in a commitment of their lives to God.

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1. Ibid., p. 20
2. Johnson, op. cit., p. 121. Cf. Building Spiritual Foundations in the family, op. cit., pp. 14-15, 18-19
3. Ante, pp. 34,35

Any program of fostering Christian love in community homes must, therefore, proceed on this basis. Divorced from this motivating power to love found in the Gospel message, no program can produce love, since love is God's creation in the hearts of those who accept His love, His salvation, in Christ.

> Mere conformity by non-christians to Christian standards in
> manners and practices may be an involuntary testimony to the
> social value of the Christian religion, but produces no essen-
> tial change in non-christian society.[1]

This is because such conformity to manners and practises is devoid of the creative power of love which motivates men's lives only after they have been transformed by the creative love of God. It follows, then, that bringing God's transforming power of love to individuals as it is contained in the Gospel message must be the first concern of the Church's ministry if it is to foster the stabilizing power of Christian love.

When God's love has achieved the first positive response in the individual, however, Christian love must continue to be nurtured and developed. As Wieman says,

> Complete commitment to the Creativity of God . . . cannot be made
> through one final act. Commitment is progressive. We grow more
> through committing ourselves more. Through greater growth there
> is more to commit.[2]

To foster love the program of the Church must be one of stimulating and encouraging continued surrender of the individuals to God and to the creative power of His love.

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1. Greever, op. cit., p. 19
2. Wieman, op. cit., p. 217

Christian love must be guided in its development. If God's love is to be imitated as the standard and ideal of the Christian's action,[1] the Christian needs to have the ideal constantly held before him and to gain ever new insight into what is involved in the imitation. It is the Church's ministry to ever make clearer this meaning of love in its application to daily experiences and problems so that it may be correctly expressed in the family relationships. That expressions of love are learned and developed by interaction and worship has been emphasized by Johnson and Wieman in particular, who were freely quoted in the previous chapter.

To summarize, the Church's ministry in fostering love must (1) contain the Gospel message of redemption through Christ in order to bring an experience of God's love to the individual; (2) encourage progressive commitment of the individuals to the creative love of God; and (3) interpret the practical meaning of love for everyone in all the experiences of daily life.

The entire content of the above means for fostering love is in the Gospel. ". . . the Church, under divine Commission, is empowered by divine provision to fulfil its mission in the world." No other means are needed, none other is effective, for "this divine provision is wholly adequate for the explicit mission of the Church."[2]

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1. Ante, p. 36
2. Greever, op. cit., pp. 21-22

B. Cooperation with Existing Social Agencies to Meet Causes of Instability.

While the means for fostering the stabilizing power of love within the family relationships is contained solely in the Gospel, the Church has a responsibility to seek the alleviation of distress of families as a part of this ministry. At least four reasons related to fostering love may be given: (1) Material causes must be recognized as contributing to instability. Even though they may not alwasy be the basic cause of family problems they nevertheless furnish the occasion for the expression of dangerous negative attitudes. (2) The Church itself must express Christian love and would fail to do so if it overlooked circumstantial problems of the families within the area of its minstry. (3) Adverse outward circumstances must often be removed before people will be responsive to the Church's spiritual ministry of fostering love. (4) To show concern, sympathy, and a willingness to do something about obvious problems is an act of love which has in it the power to create love.

(1) Material causes must be recognized as contributing to instability. This was a conclusion of the investigation in Chapter I. Where the regenerating power of the Gospel of love has not done its work, eliminating external causes of family problems will not make unnecessary the efforts of the Church to evoke a positive response to God. It might open the way for this ministry, as will be seen shortly. But when these material problems exist in a home where creative love is at work, alleviating them as much as possible will, if nothing more, at least be an encouragement to the expression and development of love.

(2) The Church itself must express love simply because the Church is Christian. It is the agency for God's outflowing love, since it is made up of those who have responded with positive commitment to His creative love. As such it must imitate God's mercy as expressed in Christ and taught by Him -- releasing the captives, setting at liberty the bruised, feeding the hungry, clothing the sick, or ministering wherever the distress or whatever its nature.[1]

(3) Adverse circumstances, and often antagonisms, some deep-rooted, must frequently be removed before people will respond to a spiritual ministry. It is obviously difficult to convince people who are in suffering and want, for example, that God is a God of love. A health situation could conceivably hinder a positive response, too. Or a personality fault might cause resistance to any approach a Christian might make. For instance, Seward Hiltner points out that a pastor is to a person what that person rightly or wrongly projects him to be. "An alcoholic may fight a pastor because he associates the pastor with the father who dominated him in his childhood."[2] Under such circumstances where the skill of the Christian counselor is refused it may be necessary for another counselor from some counseling agency or service to bring about an adjustment in order to make possible a receptivity to the Church's ministry.

(4) An act of love toward a family by using the skilled services

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1. Cf. Luke 4:18; Matthew 25:35-40
2. Seward Hiltner: Pastoral Counseling, p. 118. The author has made the quoted statement in a different connection, however.

of a social agency, and which might lead to solving a circumstantial
or personality problem, might well open the way to awakening a re-
sponsive love to God.   Such an act is proclaiming the message of
God's love even though it isn't vocal. It has been previously shown
that love creates love. As love reaches out to others in the commun-
ity "it represents God's love to man inviting his response in deeds
worthy of repentance."[1]

For these reasons it is imperative that the Church shall seek
to use such agencies as can give help in solving problems for which
they are peculiarly fitted in its efforts to create love in the homes.
Neglect would obviously weaken the effectiveness of its ministry, for
words of love without deeds of love would naturally appear hypocritical.

There are many agencies, denominational, interdenominational, and
secular, which are concerned with solving family problems. These are,
roughly, two main types, those seeking to give material assistance,
and those giving guidance and counseling services. However, the trend
has been of recent years to combine the two in actual practice, so that
when material assistance is given concern is shown at the same time for
any need for counseling service, or vice versa. The two go hand in
hand. Shelby M. Harrison, chairman of the Central Department of Re-
search and Survey, National Council of Churches of Christ in the U.S.A.,
calls attention to this development. He states that social work has
been growing up, having moved from almost exclusive material relief

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1. Johnson, op. cit., p. 46

work to "work aimed to restore and promote normal living."[1] ". . . as a rule, material relief is provided as part of a larger program which aims at the ultimate rehabilitation of the disabled individuals."[2] This recognition of the needs of the whole man by social work obviously gives the Church an excellent opportunity for cooperation and for making use of what social work can offer[3] since the Church, too, is concerned with the total personality.[4]

1. Help from Denominational Agencies.

Churches look upon their own social agencies as "the healing and helping hand of the Church, that brings the Gospel to the hearts of her members, and the pleading hand of Christ, extended by the Church, through welfare agencies, to those outside its membership and influence, to come and share the blessings of the Gospel which only the Church has."[5] As such, these welfare agencies are a part of the ministry of the Church in fostering Christian love in the homes. By making use of the services of these agencies, then, the local Church is not only taking advantage of their specialized skills and equipment,

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1. Shelby M. Harrison: A Strategy for Protestants in Social Welfare, mimeographed, p. 8
2. Ibid., p. 12
3. Lewis Joseph Sherrill: Family and Church, p. 250
4. C. E. Krumbholz: Social Welfare in the Protestant Denominations, mimeographed, p. 4
5. Edward G. Goetz: Community Service, in Proceedings of the Regional Meetings in 1950, Lutheran Welfare Conference in America, p. 58. While this is given as the attitude of one denomination, it reflects, we believe, also the general attitude of the Protestant Church as a whole in its desire to give spiritual content to its social work. Cf. Harrison, mimeo., op. cit., p. 3; also Krumbholz, op. cit., p. 4

but is itself extending its ministry in scope and effectiveness.[1]

Protestant Churches considered together present a program which includes practically every type of social work found in the general Community." The many areas of work done by the denominational social welfare agencies, and the extent of this working arm of the Church, reveal the vast resources upon which the local Church can draw. Child care institutions and agencies provide shelter, protection and education for orphans or dependent and neglected children. Study homes, with casework placement of children in foster homes, together with day nurseries, nursery schools, and using casework to assist in the adjustment of the child and his family, and secondary schools for under privileged children -- all these are in the picture. A large number of Church hospitals are developing social service departments with medical or psychiatric social workers. Chaplains with special clinical training in counseling are being more and more used in treatment of mental and physical ilnesses. Family casework and counseling services are developing on an ever growing scale, employing professionally trained social workers for counseling and referral services.[2]

2. Help from Interdenominational Agencies.

There are few interdenominational agencies, as such, for interdenominational work so far has taken mainly the form of cooperation, in

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1. Harrison, op. cit., mimeo., p. 8
2. Beverly M. Boyd: Protestant Social Work, reprinted from Social Work Year Book, 1949, pp. 6-11

some cases federation, of social agencies on a local scale and in the
larger cities. These provide probational parole service for Protes-
tants from courts and training schools in the areas, cooperating with
the court and school social workers in joint plans for those concerned.
In Chicago, Cleveland, Los Angeles, and Washington the local Church
federations employ social workers to cooperate with workers of the
general community agencies on all cases involving Protestants. These
federations also provide casework and counseling service for the
clergy to use in dealing with family problems or for direct service
to parishioners, providing also referral to appropriate community
agencies. The National Council of Churches of Christ offers to insti-
tutions and agencies field service, surveys and bulletins.[1] It pro-
vides no marriage counseling service itself, but seeks to promote
marriage counseling with materials and by encouraging conferences and
training schools on family life and counseling.[2] The Church Confer-
ence on Social Work meets annually and has among its objectives to
promote cooperation between Protestant agencies, as well as,

> To promote continuous exploration of the church's function as
> a community agency having inclusive family participation and
> group programming at all ages; and to explore the church as a
> fellowship for nurture of normal development through preventive
> and remedial treatment by cooperation of qualified pastors and
> professional workers in family, medical, and psychiatric case-
> work fields, and of group workers in settlements and voluntary
> youth-serving agencies.[3]

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1. Ibid., pp. 11, 14
2. Mudd, op. cit., p. 59
3. Boyd, op. cit., pp. 14-15

3. Help from Secular Agencies.

There is an increasing tendency to assume "that supplying basic relief needs is the responsibility of government -- federal, state, local", and that "the role of the voluntary agency is to provide supplementary individual and demonstration services."[1] Whether this is good or bad, it furnishes not only the opportunity for cooperation but the need as well, since the Church is concerned that social work shall not be secularized.[2]

The growing opportunity for cooperation with secular agencies and services is seen in this developing recognition, also, that the total personality must be served. For these agencies are looking to the Church to supply certain of the personality needs. Harrison gives the following information,

> The first and self-evident area is ministry to the spiritual needs of those whose material and other needs are being met by public or private welfare agencies. Increasing numbers of social workers recognize the importance often in social case-work of strengthening the spiritual, and at times the moral, resources of individuals or families. Other areas are chaplaincy service in health and welfare agencies; court and probation work. They also realize that church leaders are the experts in spiritual and moral matters, and turn to them, or should do so, for help.[3]

The Church can stand ready to give this help, and thus to foster love in the homes on the local community level. Krumbholz says,

> The Churches must realize that in these days of Federal Security and other public relief programs, the Churches can apply themselves

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1. Harrison, op. cit., mimeo., p. 12
2. Krumbholz, op. cit., p. 4
3. Harrison, op. cit., mimeo., p. 9

more definitely to their emphasis upon spiritual service and character building.[1]

It will be necessary also for us continually to emphasize the spiritual content, as well as the religious motivation of social service in all our community programs.[2]

In the growing field of counseling service there is further opportunity for the Church to realize the objective of its ministry of love through using secular facilities which can supply special skills it may lack. Muss reports nine major national groups promoting marriage and family counseling of various types in schools, clinics, secular and religious welfare agencies, and the like.[3] Since these may reach into the local Church's community, because their work is extensive, they offer possible resources of help for the Church. She also concludes that "the majority of counseling on marriage adjustment is still being done as part of the daily routine of private practice of members of the various professions."[4] This latter suggests the local opportunities among local professional men which the local Church can explore and make use of in a spirit of recognizing what they have to offer. That each has something to offer is brought out by McNeil. He says,

> The minister, the physician, the personnel director, the attorney, the teacher, and others all play varying but important roles in providing the family with the kind of technical

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1. Krumbholz, op. cit., p. 3
2. Ibid., p. 4
3. Mudd, op. cit., pp. 45-72. She lists in Appendix A these nine national organizations (including two Jewish as one), and also the functioning services by States and their addresses, pp. 251-256
4. Ibid., p. 70

and spiritual advice needed to meet the problems of the day.
Our concern is, and should be, that the respective areas of
competency be known and understood. One of the most impor-
tant skills of the counselor is to understand when he is be-
yond his depth -- the general practitioner in medicine to know
when a specialist is needed, the social caseworker to know when
the skill of the psychiatrist must be called upon; the min-
ister to know when the social caseworker is the best resource
for the family.[1]

Regarding the need for increased cooperation between the Church

and social agencies, Harrison, in another mimeographed paper issued

by the National Council of Churches, reports the implications of what

took place at the Midcentury White House Conference. He says,

Social work needs religion's insights into the worth of the
individual and the high goals of life. Religion needs the skills
and tested techniques of social work in reaching high goals.
If these two great forces can be joined we shall be on the road
toward the solution of many of our major problems. The well-
tried ethics, the well-tried principles of the ages still
hold true. They must be reinterpreted and given practical
application together.[2]

He also adds in "Regligion and Social Work",

Organized religion, at the national leadership level, for the
most part has caught the vision, but it still has a long way
to go in carrying the vision to its widespread constituents,
and to those outside its membership who come under its edu-
cational influence.[3]

To summarize, the Church can bring its ministry into the social

work of secular agencies by supplying the spiritual side of the per-

sonalities in need -- Chapter II has revealed that a basic need is

the spiritual power and motivating force of Christian love -- and

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1. McNeil, op. cit., p. 23
2. Shelby M. Harrison: Impressions of the Midcentury White House Con-
   ference on Children and Youth -- Implications for the Church, p. 5
3. Shelby M. Harrison: Religion and Social Work, p. 15

it can make use of the services, skills and techniques of secular
agencies in this ministry. There is considerable room for greater
extension of the Church's ministry in this area.

C. Formal Worship a Most Effective Agent

The Church in its ministry of fostering Christian love in the
home has a most effective agent in its formal Sunday worship services.
This is because here the families listen to the message of God's love
in Christ presented in a special and direct way and explained in its
practical application to life and life's problems, and because here they
can give expression to their love to God in the fellowship of worship
with other families united in like expression.

1. The Message of God's Love in Christ.

As has already been mentioned and repeated, it is the message of
God's love in Christ which begets love in the individual. When that
message is truthfully and faithfully presented, then, those who hear
it are under the influence of that power which brings the response of
love. "It was God's good pleasure through the foolishness of the
preaching to save them that believe."[1] Russel H. Stafford emphasizes
that the Gospel of Jesus Christ the Son of God is Jesus in His own per-
son. He is the good news. The essence of evangelism -- of which
preaching is a part-- is to make people acquainted with Jesus Christ.
When this is done they "find out what it means to love God, in the

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1. I Corinthians 1:21

very act of spontaneously loving Jesus Christ who is one with God."
On the side of human relationships "the duty of loving our fellowmen
regardless of their merits is clarified as the spontaneous attitude
of those who share his spirit."[1]

With regard to the convincing authority of Biblical preaching
for those who listen, Ralph W. Sockman says the preacher

> is the interpreter of a Book which has convinced ages that
> it contains the Word of God, because it continues to find men
> as it did Coleridge, at the deepest points of experience.
>
> . . . The sermon is delivered from the sounding board of a
> Church which is the Body of Christ and has embodied the time
> tested experience of God's servants . . . The God of Abraham,
> Isaac, and Jacob, the God who comforted the persecuted Chris-
> tians in the catacombs, who . . . fired the conscience of
> John Calvin and warmed the heart of John Wesley -- that same
> living God keeps calling through his church; and though the
> preacher may be a most imperfect interpreter, his efforts
> at least let us know that God is calling.[2]

Although the Gospel is central in the sermon which seeks to in-
spire love in the hearts of the worshippers and guide them in its
expression, several methods of approach are possible. Sherrill sep-
arates them into two categories: (1) Those prescribing Biblical ideals,
motives and values, and (2) those which start with concrete situations
and problems in family relationships. He mentions a third function of
preaching, that of teaching the family how to think of itself in relig-
ion, citing, as an example, the first two chapters of "Christian Nur-
ture" by Horace Bushnell, which originally were sermons to "stimulate

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1. Russell Henry Stafford: His Supreme Task, in The Ministry, ed. by
   J. Richard Spann, pp. 54-65
2. Ralph W. Sockman: The Minister's Work as Preacher, in The Ministry,
   ed. by Spann, pp. 73-74

parents to a recognition of their role as teachers and to explain the
meaning of baptism of infants."[1]

Wayne E. Oates, assistant Professor of Psychology of Religion at
Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, sees a superb value in "thera-
peutic preaching", because it moves in harmony with the pastoral task
of individual counseling. It is "an inlet into counseling with indi-
viduals, an important source of precounseling contacts." Preaching,
he says, is a more powerful agency for "the ministry of comfort and
reassurance, instruction and interpretation" than is individual coun-
seling, "because it is done in the presence of the larger community of
worshipers." The parishioners are allowed to tell their side to the
minister in private conference.[2]

Oates finds a fourfold objective to "therapeutic preaching:

(1) the interpretation of human experience in the light of
Biblical truth rather than the exhortation of people to the
observance of certain moral precepts, as such; (2) the de-
velopment of personal insight into the motives of personal and
group action rather than the condemnation of this or that kind
of behavior; (3) the encouragement of the congregation toward
faith in God, in one another, and in themselves as means of gain-
ing control over behavior which they themselves discover to be
alien to the mind of Christ; (4) the growth of a sense of com-
radeship with God in Christ and the changing personality through
this "transforming friendship."[3]

It will be noted from what has already been said about Christian
love how it fits into this pattern: (1) It is self-evident that the

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1. Sherrill, op. cit., pp. 179-186. This chapter contains a consider-
able number of "cases" or examples of various types of preaching
for the family and their general success.
2. Wayne E. Oates: The Christian Pastor, pp. 65-67
3. Ibid., p. 67

interpretation of human experiences in the light of Biblical truth
must include the human experiences of response to God and the result-
ing love for men. (2) Such personal insight involves the kindness,
consideration, and understanding of Christian love. (3) Control over
behavior in accord with the mind of Christ means love. (4) This
"transforming friendship" necessarily must be one of love -- without
love the friendship would dissolve.

The effect of such "therapeutic preaching", says Oates, is to
produce "rest from tension through the resolution of conflict and the
relief from a sense of guilt." This kind of a sermon "qualifies as an
act of worship itself" since "the people of God are refreshed on their way."[1]

He continues to show how corporate worship which has in it the
message of God's forgiving love in Christ is itself a means of the uni-
fication of persons. One who is burdened with sin is self-centered
and lonely, isolated from those of his own community. If he is of
"those who are spiritual" he longs "for a sense of belonging to the
group whose approval is most important to the sinner." He longs also
for "restoration to God who insists upon clean hands and a pure heart."
In worship he realizes that worshiping together with him are others
who are sinful and depend upon God for forgiveness. Thus corporate
worship gives meaning to the private confession of sin; for "all sin
is a shared guilt as well as an individual responsibility before God",
but in corporate worship there is also shared "the common experience

. . . . . .

1. Ibid., p. 68

of the forgiving love of God." The end result is that public worship creates, conserves and multiplies the values of personal insight and social feeling.[1] Thinking in terms of the family having these experiences in worship, these values are identical to those of Christian love operating in its members.

2. The Expression of Love to God.

It has previously been observed that man's positive response to God is an expression of love.[2] It is the nature of love that it stagnates and dies if it isn't expressed.[3] In the worship service a person has opportunity to express his love by committing himself to God in prayer, praise and thanksgiving. These words of prayer, praise and thanksgiving may relate the personality of the worshipper "to God in such a way . . . that Creativity transforms the impulses and habits of the personality and lifts it to a new level of living."[4] Public worship, to fulfill the function of the ministry of creating such love, provides the opportunity for these words to do just this through its hymns and prayers of confession and petition. C. B. Eavey says,

> Worship is most helpful to the correction of wrong attitudes and to the stimulation of new and better ones. He who truly worships gets away from the imaginative unrealities of daily living and faces himself as he is in the sight of God. Confessing his wrongs, adoring and honoring his Creator, coming into the presence of higher ideals and rededicating himself to their attainment make for reorientation of life and the reorganization of energies for the realization of higher aspirations.[5]

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1. Ibid., pp. 71-72
2. Ante, pp. 33-35, 41
3. Johnson, op. cit., p. 105
4. Wieman, op. cit., pp. 203-204
5. C. B. Eavey: Principles of Personality Building for Christian Parents, p. 313

What has been said about the values of family worship[1] may be said of the values of public worship on a larger scale. In the Union College Character Research Project, directed by Ernest M. Ligon, the value of corporate worship in the minds of the leaders is indicated by the important place given in its program to developing traits of Christian faith and love by such worship. As reported by Johnson,

> Worship services are planned to express the attitudes learned during the instruction periods, led by the students themselves voicing the feelings of the entire group, leading to a climax of dedication when each one pledges himself to carry out his share of doing God's will in this Christian social action.[2]

Substitute in place of the worshippers at the Research Project the worshippers in a Sunday morning centrally-led worship conducted along the lines of similar expression, and we have one more indication of how the expression of love to God at a formal worship can be made a most effective agent in the Church's objective of causing love to operate in family life.

The social value of worship with respect to Christian love is pointed out also by Johnson. Social distance, he tells us, is a major barrier to Christian love. People, however, are drawn to those who are most like themselves, with whom they share the most in common. Thus within the family social distance is least. It also is decreased among those who do like work, as in business, labor or profession. So also,

> Worship is the ultimate outreach of love to God as the Father of every living creature. In worship a man feels his vital relatedness

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1. Ante, pp. 41-45
2. Johnson, op. cit., pp. 85-89

to God as his Father, by whom he is related to all men and
women as brothers and sisters. There is no longer social
distance in the spiritual unity of one family of God. Who
can hate the enemy he prays for or be indifferent to the
stranger he responds to as a brother? Worship expands the
extent and deepens the intent to be one family of heaven
and earth.[1]

3. The Whole Family Worshiping in Church.

There is a considerable variance of opinion as to the values

of smaller children attending the formal Sunday morning worship service.

In answer to the question concerning the age at which children should

be expected to take part in such worship, Mary Alice Jones suggests

that children will not find very helpful a service that is planned exclu-

sively for adults.

> But if the service is planned as a family service, with drama-
> tic elements, with portions of music, the responses, the Bible
> readings, and the sermon chosen with regard to the limitations
> and interests of the children, and if it is reasonably brief,
> the boys and girls will probably enjoy coming with their parents.
> Many ministers, with the cooperation of the children's leaders
> and of choirs, have planned such family services with excel-
> lent results.[2]

She also calls attention to the need of all children having some con-

tact with the worship of the Church family, even though the Church and

pastor may feel that the type of service they desire would exclude

children from regular attendance. Kindergarten and nursery children

may be made acquainted with the sanctuary "where Mother and Daddy go

to church" by visiting it once in a while with the teacher, or they

may stay occasionaly for the opening parts of the service before going

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1. Ibid., pp. 129-130
2. Mary Alice Jones: Guiding Children in Christian Growth, p. 60

to their rooms. Older children, though another worship is provided
them, may nevertheless on planned occasions worship with the entire
Church family. Even though they do not fully understand the service
or sermon,

> by seeing the men and women of the community worshiping together
> they may learn that it is important to worship God, and by feel-
> ing themselves a part of a great worshiping congregation, they
> strengthen their understanding that all men are brothers and God
> is the Father.[1]

Fallaw has much the same to say about the presence of children at
worship services, emphasizing that some churches have found it very
valuable to arrange for the entire family to take places side by side
with each other " in the sanctuary, and then going home together."[2]

A tract, "Should I Expect My Child to Go to Church?", in the
Christian Family Series of the Presbyterian Church, U. S., suggests
the feasibility and value of the child's attendance if rightly prepared.

A perusal of Sunday Church school materials of almost all denomin-
ations with a strong Church school emphasis reveals the importance
worship has in the classes of the younger children. It is rather uni-
versally stressed. If the other children do not as a rule worship in
the morning congregational service, some provision is generally made,
or ought to be (as noted above) for their separate worship.

The conclusion seems warranted that the values of family worship

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1. Ibid., p. 60-61
2. Fallaw, op. cit., p. 74

together depends mainly on the whole family worshipping in church so that they have the benefits of worship in common and are conscious of being a part of the Church family through their common experiences with God, whether they attend the same service at the same time in the sanctuary or not. The recognized benefits of sitting together and worshiping together in a common service may be superior, but very little has to be lost if plans are centered primarily upon the worship needs of the whole family as an integral unit and not as so many individuals. Then the values of receiving the message of God's love in Christ and of expressing in worship love to God become common experiences and common possessions.

D. A Planned Educational Program Using Every Avenue within the Congregational activity.

Fallaw reminds us that "the church needs to act upon the belief that through religious education persons will become Christians in faith and fact", which means " an understanding of a commitment to Jesus Christ."[1] His book is written on the thesis that a satisfactory program of education must incorporate the whole family as a unit, and not deal simply with individual children. And he says, "Christendom itself will suffer constriction unless the trend of its education improves."[2] A family-centered program was mentioned in the Introduction to this chapter as the means by which the Church can effectively cause

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1. Fallaw, op. cit., p. 10
2. Ibid., p. 86

love to operate within its families. To ignore any avenue by which this program may be so focused upon the family obviously is to curtail this ministry. The chief avenues open to the congregations educational program for realizing such a ministry follow.

1. The Family Altar.

The values of family prayer and worship were briefly discussed in Chapter II.[1] It was seen to be a unifying force inspired by love and at the same time an occasion for practising love to God and one another by which love might grow among family members. Its value for fostering love is thus apparent, and its promotion, therefore, becomes a responsibility of the Church in fulfilling its ministry of bringing stability through love to family life. The plans and techniques of such promotion will vary, and do vary, with local circumstances, naturally, but an avenue for promotion which should not be overlooked is through the educational work the Church does with the various age groups. The encouragement to its use as normal Christian practice can be made through the total family-centered educational program, which will be dealt with shortly.

2. The Church School.

In treating now the Church school, the Sunday school will be mainly considered, but the same opportunities exist in the released time school and the vacation school of the Church -- and perhaps to an even

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1. Ante, pp 43-46

greater extent in the Church sponsored elementary day school -- as exist in the Sunday school.

It is taken for granted that Churches will want to make their own selection for their Church school curriculum more or less individually, largely on the basis of denominational or co-operative interdenominational materials published. But that need not challenge their purpose to make use of the school as a means for bringing love into the lives of its children in a family-focused endeavor. The curricula themselves either contain the materials which can be used in this purpose or they are flexible enough so that this purpose may still be inserted without violence to the unity of the course. Or where this doesn't appear feasible, prepared curricula can give way so that such a focus might be given.

Fallaw maintains that the teacher who makes her own curriculum is superior to a teacher who is herself made by excellent courses of study. There is a tendency in later years, he says, for teachers to do just this, building their own curricula around their pupils needs, recognizing at the same time the desirability of a comprehensive program for the school as a whole.[1]

Because Christian love is creative interaction, that is, the living together in an interchange of the practise of love in life, the plans and teaching must be life centered. However, because love is not basically modes of living and practice, but has a divine source and

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1. Fallaw, op. cit., p. 41

flows out of the individual according to his relationship to Christ,[1] this personal relationship to Christ must be primary. True Christian love has no other source.

Jones states that one of the important tests for lesson materials is, "Do they help the child to understand the purposes of God as revealed in Jesus Christ, and to commit himself to the doing of the will of God?"[2] This is primary to learning to live in love. Johnsons says,

> In the Church school learning to love is the primary aim, more important than all else. . . To learn by doing we must have living adventures in loving one another as good friends who are finding better ways of expressing that love in kind deeds and unselfish service with growing understanding of what love means in our everyday life in everybody's world. Our church school aims are too verbal; they need to be actual and practical experiments in love as the central program of the Christian faith and life. They need to be graded progressively upward and outward with the enlarging social horizons of youth growing into love.[3]

Along the same line, and lending support to the Christ-centered teaching curriculum is also a reaction among some prominent religious educators to the use, which has been so prevalent, of the Sunday school mainly as a worship center. Fallaw has little use for it.[4] Dr. John W. Rustin, Minister of Mt. Vernon Place Church, Washington D. C., wants Churches to provide sound instruction in its Church schools instead of the Sunday school classes becoming "little churches as they have attempted, with special music and attractive speakers, to put on

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1. Ante, pp. 31-38
2. Jones, op. cit., p. 110
3. Johnson, op. cit., p. 136
4. Fallaw, op. cit., especially pp. 43-54. He is not, however, opposed to worship training, for which see especially p. 96

another little church service within the church."[1] Randolph Crump

Miller, Professor of Philosophy of Religion and Christian Education,

Church Divinity School of the Pacific, Berkely, California, seems to

intimate the same when he says that children worshipping in their own

room or chapel on their own level of creativity is throwing aside the

long life of the Church's tradition for childishness, and makes an

appeal for making the Gospel "story of reconciliation and redemption"

meaningful to the child -- to"stop prattling about the baby Jesus and

get down to work."[2]

Most Churches that are serious about using the Church school as

an agency in realizing their full responsibility to the family will

find obtaining an adequate teaching staff a problem, since they depend

upon volunteer teachers. A program of teaching teachers to teach in

terms of family life will be normally necessary. Conducting a program

of making parents teachers in the home, as Fallaw proposes,[3] might sug-

gest using parents as Church school teachers. The program of parent

training will be treated later. But the need for a co-ordinated edu-

cational program aimed at the family is apparent if the Church school

is to become an instrument of the Church's family mission. The sugges-

tions coming from leaders of Christian education that parents be invit-

ed to take part in the basic planning of the Church school curriculum,

as is being done in places, is a part of the program.[4]

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1. John W. Rustin: How One City Church Serves a Changed Neighborhood, p. 7
2. Randolph Crump Miller: Pastoral Psychology and Christian Education,
   article in Pastoral Psychology, October 1951, pp. 16-17
3. Fallaw, op. cit., esp. pp. 90-124
4. Jones, op. cit., p. 42

3. The Youth Groups.

Beginning with adolescent years, young people grow into a new re-
lationship to the home. Luella Cole in her chapter on "The Adolescent
and His Home"[1] describes this as basically one of growing independence,
which should be recognized and dealt with as not only a normal situa-
tion but also a desireable one. "Emancipation of the boy or girl from
home control and from intense parental attachment" by the end of the
adolescent period is a major objective.[2] "Adolescents are already be-
ginning to think about a home of their own."[3]

This condition calls for a modification of the method in the fam-
ily centered focus of the Church's educational program. The focus has
to be more upon one whose interests are in building his own home and
less upon his place in the parental home. As Fallaw observes, "The
time to prepare for church-family education with adolescents is dur-
ing their earliest years, and in the youth of their parents."[4]

This advance of the adolescents toward their own homes furnishes
the Church with different but not less important opportunities for
guiding them toward the expression of love in their own approaching
home life. Their interests, and their desires for enlightenment and
help lie in that direction. Cole shows a chart tabling the results of
asking 1000 children in three age groups -- (1) grades 7,8,9;

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1. Cole, op. cit., pp. 274-307
2. Ibid., 283
3. Ibid., 298
4. Fallaw, op. cit., p. 191

(2) grades 10,11,12; (3) college -- who were asked to list their problems. In the high school adolescent group there were 1,457 questions about courtship and marriage, the highest number of any types in any group. The next highest number was questions about self-improvement, with those about right and wrong, religion, God and the Church, and habits, following in this order. College students followed the same order except that questions about right and wrong were last in number.[1]

This furnishes not only a guide for subject material of interest to youth; it shows also that the area of their interests is one which gives the Church a golden opportunity on which to capitalize for teaching Christian love to them, especially with respect to its expression in personal relationships such as is needed for a stable home life.

Fallaw finds that social injustice is a particularly vital theme for adolescents.[2] He presents as his own experience a successful way of teaching it to them.[3] It is noteworthy that social justice and Christian love are like Siamese twins. Rustin reports phenominal growth of interest from "limping along, trying to attempt to have Sunday evening programs for our young people and young adults" to an enrolment in a short time of nearly five hundred members in a School For Christian Living. The courses provided were on subjects like "World Peace, Race Relations, Courtship and Marriage, Personality Development, Know Your Bible." The young adult department in the Church school grew

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1. Cole, op. cit., p. 407
2. Fallaw, op. cit., p. 178
3. Fallaw, op. cit., p. 178 ff.

from less than 100 members to over 600 in eight years.[1] Attention is
again called to the relationship of Christian love to the basic subject
matter of these topics. The conclusion that the Church has a fine
teaching opportunity for fostering love in these approaching home
builders is apparent. Johnson is convinced that

> The church has a special responsibility to sponsor youth
> fellowships that will bring adolescent boys and girls together
> in Christian adventures. These adventures will include high
> moments of worship to express new aspirations, affirm larger
> social visions, and dedicate their lives to unselfish service
> in realizing the love of a heavenly Father. They will include
> discussion of important issues of mutual concern, not the least
> of which are the questions of what to do on social dates, how
> to choose a life mate and prepare for marriage and parenthood.[2]

4. Adult Groups.

The parent is the central personality in a teaching program of
the local Church which has been co-ordinated for the sake of fostering
Christian love in the homes.

The practicability of having parents help plan the éducational
program for the children has been already mentioned. But if parents
are to do that most effectively they will themselves have to understand
the children and their needs from sound psychological as well as sound
spiritual bases, and to use sound educational approaches. Fallaw sees
parents classes in the past as "educationally alert and frequently
well informed", but not having defined very well for the parents "just
what the unique contributions of the church are in the area of parental

. . . . . .

1. Rustin, op. cit.,pp. 7-8
2. Johnson, op. cit., p. 137

guidance." If the public school is dealing locally with child guid-

ance for parents through parents' groups and its personnel guidance

system, the Church is free to face parents with Christian educational

guidance. If not, the Church needs to deal in parents' groups "with

child development in/terms of child psychology health, emotional and

social adjustment, child-adult relationships, child-child relationships,

intellectual and manual abilities." He believes the approach in such

classes of beginning with educational needs and moving on to religious

needs can be more successful than a Bible class meeting on Sunday

while the children are in their classes. The ideal parents' classes

would be organized to deal with child problems according to age levels,

thus offering progressive assistance to the growing child in the home.

He insists that nothing less will suffice than enlisting parents to

be teachers in the home and to provide for them training periods in

which they learn how to be Christian teachers in the home.[1] It is to

be noted that "emotional and social adjustment", "child-adult relation-

ships", and "child-child relationships", in particular, are from a

Christian standpoint problems of special importance to Christian love,

as was developed in the latter part of Chapter II.[2]

Parents thus equipped for being teachers of their children in their

homes become a source from which to recruit teachers for the children

in the Church school. Among adult groups, however, the Church which

is seeking to reach the children with its ministry might well include

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1. Fallaw, op. cit., pp. 70-73
2. Ante pp. 39-50

classes aimed particularly at emphasizing for teachers ways of re-
lating the expression of love to the children's dailing living. This
instruction to teachers would keep in mind the training parents are
receiving so that it could be of special help also in supplementing
the parents' guidance of the children in their homes.

Vital to this teaching ministry of the Church, of course, must
be the objective of the parents own full commitment to Christ so that
love can flow spontaneously from them in the various problems and ex-
periences in the home. For parents teach more by example than by pre-
cept.[1] If they are to teach children love they must live Christian
love, and if they are to live Christian love they must be committed
to Christ, through Whom God is love's source. Laying emphasis on con-
tent[2] has also tthis double purpose for parents: to bring them face to
face with Christ and with the necessity of their ever renewed commit-
ment to Him; and to give Christ-centered content to their own factual
teaching of their children, correlated with what the child is receiv-
ing in the Church school.

5. Social Activities.

Social activities range from the quiet fellowship of a literary
club to intense recreational play. Whatever they may be, they offer

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1. Cf. Cole, op. cit., p. 298. In "Parents' Questions" by the Child
   Study Association (Harper & Brothers, N.Y., 1936) p. 205, this ans-
   wer is given to a question, "What you yourself most deeply feel you
   cannot, if you would, fail to give your children."
2. For previous discussion about "content" see ante, pp 78-80

opportunities of varying value for the Church. The clubs or organiz-
tions already connected with the Churchwhich provide speaking, reading,
discussion, music, etc., can be brought under the scope and direction
of the Church's program of teaching the expression of Christian love.
They draw those people who are interested, and they have a recognized
place according to membership demands.

Social activity in the form of wholesome recreation is, according
to Rustin, important in the Church's purpose of leading people into the
abundant life. He feels that the Churchshould be concerned with the
whole recreational needs of the individual, and should use commercial
facilities like bowling alleys, gymnasiums, recreational centers under
Church guidance, as Mt. Vernon Place Church has done with a great deal
of success. He comments that it is easy for Churches to condemn young
people for attendance at unwholesome places of amusement, which an
attractive positive program of wholesome recreation could avoid.[1]

The values of recreation, especially for adolescent groups, are
recognized. Johnson more or less summarizes them as those overcoming
a sense of awkwardness, gaining social confidence, developing social
skills, and growing in appreciation of one another. He declares it is
unwise to leave adolescents without guidance or resources and expect
a constructive recreational program. In a directed positive program
there is psychological exploration which promotes a wide range of social
techniques and interests worth sharing. He says,

. . . . . .

1. Rustin, op. cit., pp 5-6

> Youth sees others in the light of multiple relations and situ-
> ations, hear their viewpoints, sense their reactions, and come
> to know their attitudes of character. . . There will also de-
> velop inner controls of ideals and purposes through these ac-
> tivities in youth fellowships that will provide a better guide
> for conduct and social attitudes than the weak and ineffective
> external safeguards of a censoring chaperone.[1]

One of his conclusions from an analysis of the Kinsey report is that

a more attractive recreation program is needed to bring boys and girls

together in wholesome social activities in order to channel and sub-

limate their growing sex interests "in co-educational group interaction

and fellowship."[2]

Because of the social relationships which directed recreation

tends to develop, the Church's opportunity to see that Christian love

has a chance to be learned and expressed through this avenue is also

apparent; and, in view of the Mt. Vernon Place Church venture (among

others which are observable), a directed program is feasible at least

under similar conditions.

6. Conclusion.

The Church which uses the opportunity afforded through a unified

program -- unified by the objective of creating homes built upon, and

sustained by, Christian love--can expect results. Fallaw observes that

parents themselves will be forced to learn to be Christian parents and

to grow in Christian experience through such a program.[3] He later adds,

. . . . . .

1. Johnson, op. cit., p. 139-140. Quotation from p. 140
2. Ibid., p. 141
3. Fallaw, op. cit., p. 204

Parents . . . will come to see that the church is not another
social insitution competing for the child's time -- but in-
stead it is a spiritual resource capable of giving the seek-
ing home a right spirit with which to deal with men and to
worship God. . . the church will be a means for the family's
<u>achieving a unity within itself</u> -- <u>with which to counteract
the divisiveness of modern society</u>. One of the welcome by-
products which may be expected from church-family education
is that of <u>a new unity for the family</u>.[1]

B. Opportunities for Church Related Families to Express Christian

Love to Others Outside the Family.

Opportunities for Christians to express their Christian love

through the Church is another way in which the Protestant Church may

nurture its operation in their lives. Just as love needs to be ex-

pressed toward God and toward members of the family in order to be real

love, so it needs to find a broader outreach into the community in

order to grow.[2] Johnson calls attention to the fact that this expres-

sion of love reaching out into the world and gathering in without re-

gard to race or station or person, began in the Church in the time of

the Apostles and has been so gathering ever since. Its purpose has

been to bring others into the Christian family. He says,

> The vital interest awakened in living as members of a local
> family is reaching out to be a genuine interest in all people
> as potential members of a large family . . . If the focus of at-
> tention is restricted to my house against all other houses in
> the world it may then narrow to myself against the other mem-
> bers of my household in the struggle of the ego to assert its
> claims above all others. In that case we lose the intent to
> share all values in one family, and each person retreates into
> his own little world to vegetate in his egocentric paradise,

. . . . . .

1. Ibid., p. 208. The original is not underlined.
2. Johnson, op. cit., pp. 101, 105-106, 128-130

which to his disgust becomes a private hell.[1]

If failure to express a love which reaches out to gather others in has such disastrous results upon the family, it is obviously a responsibility of the Church which seeks to nurture Christian love and thus to stabilize the home to provide directed opportunity for such expression within the sphere of its world mission. To reach out to the community unchurched and win them into the Church's fellowship of love, and to embrace the community unfortunates, whether child or adult, within the love-circles of the Church family, -- these are areas of opportunity the Church must use if the love of its own Christian members shall grow and not die. And in so doing, the obvious by-product will be to extend its own ministry to stabilizing the homes of those newly brought into its fold. "Building Spiritual Foundations in the Family" states, "Families are unified and benefited through sharing in Christian service", and gives several illustrations of Christian service to lonely people and to those of other nationalities, in which parents and children of one Christian family joined.[2]

The local Church reaches out through its union with the worldwide mission of its denomination, as well as through interdenominational mission activity, to bring people throughout the world into the circle of its love and Christian family. It does so largely through financial

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1. Ibid., pp. 129-130. The author writes this in connection with what happens when family worship is neglected, for family worship, he says, motivates the family to reach out to others.
2. Op. cit., pp. 27-28

support of the various mission and benevolent programs. Local coop-
eration with social agencies has been dealt with before, but not from
the viewpoint of them being opportunities for Christians to express
their love and thus insure love's presence and growth within them-
selves. Magnus A. Dahlen, Executive Secretary of the Board of Charities
of the Evangelical Lutheran Church, says,

> In the area of the unfortunate . . . this can be attained if
> we will only use the marvelous resources of the Church through
> its social service agencies, as we are at all times seeking out
> the lost, the last, and the very least of men not matter what
> may be the color of their skin or what condition they are in.
> This, of cours, calls for a great spirit on the part of the
> people in the congregation . . . We must seek to exercise that
> compassion which we ourselves so sorely need at the hands of
> our beloved Lord and Savior.[1]

Enlisting the financial support of Christians for the whole world
mission program of the Church becomes a means, then, by which, through
giving this opportunity for worldwide expression of Christian love,
the local Church fosters love within its own members.

F. Pastoral Counseling as a Most Effective Agent

1. General Responsibility, Opportunity and Effectiveness of Pastoral
   Counseling.

    The large number of emotional problems among people today stresses
the responsibility of the pastor to act the part of a counselor in this
ministry of creating family stability through Christian love. Russell
L. Dicks reminds us that one out of every three marriages ends in

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1. A personal communication to the writer of this thesis, dated Feb. 8, 1952

divorce, and that over fifty per cent of those who seek the doctor have no organic disease, while emotional problems are responsible for the suffering of many who have organic trouble.[1] David H. Bremer puts the estimate of all cases of illness which have psychogenic or emotional complications at 50 to 80 per cent.[2] Seward Hiltner adds to a similar statement of the situation this fact that there is a suicide on the average of every twenty-seven minutes. With regard to these mental and emotional disturbances he recalls that the two-fold command of Christ was to preach the Gospel and heal the sick, and he is convinced this entails a ministry to all kinds of illnesses.[3]

In the light of such conditions, Bremer declares that the Church cannot close its eyes to them or

> ignore its responsibility in the promotion and maintenance of mental health and stability . . . the church must be vitally concerned with the problem of mental health and seek to utilize to the fullest all available resources which will help to produce happy, emotionally balanced, and well-adjusted persons. Anything which effects the well being of the individual or society as a whole lies within the domain of the church's interest and concern. If the church has a message that is true and vital, and a ministry to millions who are suffering in body, mind and spirit, then ours is certainly a generation that needs to know about it and be drawn to it.[4]

The recognition which is being given by social workers, doctors, psychiatrists, etc., to the value of the pastor's counseling contribution further emphasizes the pastor's responsibility. Although, as

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1. Russell L. Dicks: Pastoral Work and Pastoral Counseling, p. 3
2. David H. Bremer: The Use of Mental Hygeine as a Tool of the Church, in Proceedings of the Regional Meetings in 1950, Lutheran Welfare Conference in America, p. 60
3. Seward Hiltner: Pastoral Counseling, pp. 15-16
4. Bremer, op. cit., p. 60

Hiltner points out, "the place of the pastor in relation to the psy-chotherapeutic team has not yet begun to receive the attention it de-serves", his importance has been increasingly recognized[1] due to the growing consideration of the individual as a non-departmentalized personality.[2] Bremer also notes this tendency to cooperate on cases between the professions,[3] as also do Krumbholz[4] and Harrison.[5]

The unique contribution of the pastor as counselor is two-fold: (1) His distinctive purpose, along with his unique Gospel message, in the total counseling situation, and (2) the scope of his counseling opportunity in his total pastoral relationship with his people.

(1) The pastor's distinctive purpose in the total counseling sit-uation is constantly being pointed out by writers dealing with pastor-al counseling. That the pastor is not an amateur psychiatrist is gen-erally recognized.[6] But counseling is just as much his privilege and responsibility as that of any of the professions. For counseling is an activity and not a profession, and belongs to all those who are seeking to help people.[7] He has the distinctive purpose in counseling, however, of leading and nurturing men into a vital relationship with

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1. Hiltner, op. cit., pp. 115-116
2. Dicks, op. cit., pp. 148-158
3. Bremer, op. cit., pp. 60-61
4. Krumbholz, op. cit., pp. 2-3
5. Harrison: A Strategy For Protestants in Social Welfare, p. 13
6. Cf. Hiltner, op. cit., pp. 82, 119-121, etc.; Dicks, op. cit., pp. 4, 5, 13, 14, etc.: Charles F. Kemp: The History and General Principles of Pastoral Care, im Pastoral Care, ed., J. Richard Spann, p. 20; and others.
7. Hiltner, op. cit., p. 95

Christ and into a Christian relationship with fellow men.[1] Every

problem people have appears to him in the light of that objective,

which makes it possible for him to be interested in people first and

problems second. Dicks says,

> Our point of view is: your problem is no great concern to me
> aside from you and what it means to you, for I am not inter-
> ested in which or how many of the commandments you have broken;
> I am interested in what the breaking of them means to you. In
> the same way I am interested in what you are facing and what
> you have been through in terms of your own spiritual condition.[2]

Bremer describes this basic difference of pastoral counseling

from that of other professions in a similar vein. He says,

> Not only is the pastor concerned with the immediate situation
> of individuals, but with their ultimate destiny as well, hence
> his task is less narrow and specialized than that of the physi-
> cian and social worker. Unless the pastor recognizes the unique
> nature of this function and seeks to develop and utilize the
> spiritual resources of religions, his attempt to minister to
> people in need is apt to result in a second-rate type of social
> work or the practice of amateur psychiatry.[3]

Thus, counseling the people in the various problems they face is

to be regarded as "rungs in a long ladder which leads toward the gen-

eral aims of the church and pastor."[4] While these problems represent

the fruits of sin, the pastor is concerned not only with the fact of

sin but with the motives and purposes behind the sin,

> He is not satisfied, for example, to know merely that a person
> is irritable and that this quality tends to cut the man off from
> other people and from God. He wants to know what lies back of
> that particular irritability, for he assumes that God's Holy
> Spirit and God's promise of salvation are potentially there,

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1. Ibid., p. 19.; Dicks, op. cit., p. 14
2. Dicks, op. cit., p. 83
3. Bremer, op. cit., p. 62
4. Hiltner, op. cit., p. 19

waiting to break through if the bonds are cut.[1]

So if the pastor's counseling is to be most effective in reaching these ultimate goals, hindrances in the form of mental and emotional disturbances must be removed. This, as just noted, may be the immediate purpose of counseling. But where these problems are deep, the pastor may not have adequate skill to deal with them satisfactorily, and so needs to refer the patients to those more specialized in dealing with them.[2] And as Oates states, he needs to know his own limitations.[3]

(2) The scope of the pastor's counseling opportunity in his total relationship with his people makes possible the second unique contribution the pastor has to make as counselor. He can reach his people where the problems are and can detect them and promote occasion for dealing with them before they become serious.[4] This is because of his intimate relationship with them as pastor -- an emotional relationship which is all-important in effective pastoral work.[5] Otis R. Rice says of this total relationship,

> The minister as counselor is not a unique role divorced from other facets of his variegated calling. For he is a counselor in his preaching, in his teaching, in every phase of his pastoral ministry: as priest, confessor, community leader, and as intelligent Christian friend.[6]

Hiltner devotes two chapters in his book, Pastoral Counseling, to the

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1. Ibid., pp. 17-18
2. Ibid., pp. 98-121; cf. Dicks, op. cit., pp. 152-172; Oates, op. cit., pp. 140-150
3. Oates, op. cit., pp. 140, 146-147
4. Dicks, op., p. 113
5. Ibid., pp. 27-34
6. Otis R. Rice: The Minister as Counselor, in The Ministry, ed., by J. Richard Spann, p. 94

total work of the pastor as presenting opportunities for establishing a unique pre-counseling relationship.[1]

Because the pastor has these two unique contributions to make, not only his responsibility but also his opportunity for effectively fostering love in the family relationship is established. Kemp says,

> People will come to him whether he wants them to or not. If he is a true pastor, if he loves his people and if they belief in him, they will bring him their problems. They may come to the study or the parsonage . . . stop him on the street . . . linger after a Sunday morning service . . . it may be any one of a hundred other situations, but if he knows his people they will come.[2]

How, at least in part, this whole counseling process fosters the stabilizing power of Christian love effectively is related by Carroll A. Wise. He sees such love as a preventive and curative power, but says that it does not help to tell people they should love, since that is what they want more than anything else. Fear, guilt and hate within the personality inhibit and paralyse this power from operating. Good counseling first makes love implicit in the relation ship between the counselor and the counselee. The counselee senses this love in the form of understanding and acceptance, and as he accepts it and becomes able to express a similar attitude toward himself and others, it becomes a potent curative factor in his personality. Counseling also helps eliminate fear, guilt and hate inhibitions to love which have been picked up in childhood. It also gives insight into one's hatreds, though

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1. Hiltner, op. cit., Chapters VI and VII. Cf. also Oates, op. cit., Chapter IV, the Total Task of the Pastor.
2. Kemp, op. cit., p. 21. Cf. an even fuller description of opportunity because of pastoral relationship by Bremer, op. cit., pp. 61-62

it doe$\not$not in itself remove the power to hate. But it does bring the capacity for aggressiveness under the control of the capacity for affection. Counseling also helps people to overcome selfishness and to love others as they love themselves.[1]

2. Family Counseling.

In the light of what has just been said, family counseling by the pastor is seen to be one of the very effective opportunities for fostering love in the home. As was noted, the unique relationship between the pastor and his people makes it possible for him to detect problems before they become serious. This is especially true with regard to his calling in the homes of parishioners where the alert pastor "will uncover some of these difficulties before the marriage is seriously threatened."[2]

Bremer follows the same line of though and adds,

Pastoral visits in the home affords the pastor opportunity to assist his parishioners in developing healthy family relationships. . . Thus counseling with members of the family he can help to relieve tensions which otherwise might lead to marriage difficulty. . . He is in a unique position to recognize the emotional forces that are at work within the family group and help channel these forces into creative expression. . . the pastor can take steps toward restoring healthy relationships between husband and wife, or between parents and children, while the difficulty is still in a formative stage.[3]

Making family calls is especially important in view of the

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1. Carroll A Wise: Pastoral Counseling -- its Theory and Practice, pp. 149-155.
2. Dicks, op. cit., p. 115
3. Bremer, op. cit., p. 65

difficulty many people have of coming for help to someone they know well both because of the intimate nature of marital counseling and because of guilt feelings which they have. Dicks calls it a matter of saving face. Nevertheless, he declares that a pastor will have marital counseling to do if he has shown understanding of the problems underlying marital discord.[1]

If a stable happy marriage is to be achieved, the purpose of counseling in the family relationshipps must be, as Wise points out, not just to keep the couple together and prevent divorce, but to help people work out basic Christian attitudes "toward life in general and toward marriage in particular."[2]

3. Premarital Counseling.

One of the ways of getting at marital problems before they arise is by premarital counseling. Bremer says,

> Premarital counseling offers the pastor an opportunity to help young people contemplating marriage lay solid foundations for the establishment of a home in which love and understanding, acceptance of responsibility, cooperation, and intelligence are reflected in a healthy happy family group.[3]

Johnson also observes that premarital counseling helps bring success to the marriage venture "by facing honestly the problems of marriage, making needed adjustments promptly, and opening lanes of continuous growth thereafter." He goes on to say that the pastor "is in a

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1. Dicks, op. cit., p. 121
2. Wise, op. cit., pp. 190-191
3. Bremer, op. cit., p. 66

strategic postion to become such a counselor" because of his acquain-
tance with the families and background in which the young people have
grown up, having been able to observe them in their relationships with
others socially and in their expression of ideas and attitudes at var-
ious stages of their growth.[1]

Dicks calls attention to the great need for premarital counseling
because our young people are so poorly prepared for marriage that
"some pastors feel the clergy must assume major responsibility in the
field if the church is not to fail its people in the area of the home."[2]

The need for making such counseling as is begun in the premarriage
interview only initial in a long process of contact and counsel between
the pastor and the home is an important emphasis by a large proportion
of those who write about this phase of pastoral work.[3]

Regarding the extent to which the Church and its pastors are mak-
ing use of the family counseling opportunity, Dicks says that "if we are
to make an impact on the marital situation in the future we must do
more by way of preventing trouble than we have been doing."[4] And
Johnson believes people must be better educated to "realize that after
the engagement is annouced, the next step is for the couple to call on

. . . . . .

1. Johnson, op. cit., p. 158
2. Dicks, op. cit., p. 117
3. Cf. Sherrill, op. cit., p. 236, who also reports that the Federal
   Council's conferences (1937) on the family was convinced premarriage
   interviews should be followed up by the minister. Cf. also Dicks,
   op. cit., p. 119; Robert W. Burns: Young Newlyweds, in Pastoral Care,
   p. 96; Samuel McCrea Cavert: The Church Faces the World, p. 88.
4. Dicks, op. cit., p. 119

the pastor", because "Churches are not yet entirely awake to the
unique service pastors can give in marital counseling.[1]

G. Summary

If the Protestant Church on the parish level is to effectively
cause the power of Christian love to operate within its families it
needs to promote a family centered program in its total parish activi-
ty. In order to have such a program the Church must regard the needs
of the individuals as needs related in family life, and consider the
family as a unit, not as just so many individuals. The Church has the
necessary means for this ministry in the Gospel, and has various op-
portunities through which it may seek to bring the message of the
Gospel and its creative power to its people. The opportunities are
also a responsibility to use them as agents in realizing this ministry.

Denominational, interdenominational and secular welfare agencies
offer opportunity for cooperation with the Church, both as the Church's
expression of love, and by furnishing services, skills, and techniques
through which the Church may foster love.

Formal worship is an effective agent because in worship the par-
ishioners both hear the creative message of God's love interpreted to
them in terms of their daily experiences, and they are given an oppor-
tunity to express love to God in corporate prayer, praise and thanksgiving.

. . . . . .

1. Johnson, op. cit., pp. 159-160

A family centered educational program which is correlated with, and made a part of, the Church's Sunday school, youth, adult and social programs, becomes effective as an avenue for fostering the stabilizing power of Christian love. This program is unified by the objective of creating Christian homes sustained by Christian love.

Because love dies if it is unexpressed, and grows and is nurtured by expression, to provide opportunities for Church related families to express their Christian love, through community service and financial support of the Church's connection with world wide mission activity, is both a responsibility and an opportunity.

Pastoral counseling is one of the very unique opportunities for causing Christian love to operate within family life. The pastor stands in a strategic relationship to his parishioners because of the opportunity for preparation of the counseling situation, as well as for its follow-up. He has also a chance for cooperating with other counseling services who through specialization deal more effectively with deeper emotional blocks to receiving the Gospel and its creative power. The Gospel is the pastor's unique and effective resource in dealing with personality problems. Family and premarital counseling are real opportunities, and the responsibility of pastor and Church.

Though the Church is making use of these avenues and agents to some extent, a much more general, intense and effective use could be made of them.

The very presence of such an overwhelming number of emotional and mental hygiene problems, which mean family instability in varying degrees, leads to the conclusion, too, that the Church has a bigger task before it than it is accomplishing, and that it is not, therefore, using its means as effectively as it might to bring the stabilizing power of Christian love into operation in family life

CHAPTER IV

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

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A. Restatement of Problem

The purpose of this thesis has been to investigate the present ministry of the Protestant Church in fostering Christian love as a stabilizing power in family life. It has sought to answer such questions as, "Is there a need for such a ministry? Is love an effective stabilizing power in the light of the family problems which contribute to instibility? Does the Protestant Church have the opportunity and the responsibility for such a ministry? Is it making effective use of the means at its disposal?

B. Summary

In order to discover the nature of the problems involved in the disintegration of families, the first chapter investigated some of the problems which seemed to be representative, and the factors involved in them.

The particular problems chosen were the economic problem, the problem of rearing children, the problem of morals, and the problem of interpersonal relationships within the family. Included in the latter were the problems of personality maladjustments, different cultural, racial and religious backgrounds, sexual incompatibility, in-laws, and parent-child conflict.

-102-

It was noted that circumstances such as those relating to health and adverse environment might be causes which when removed permit the problems to automatically dissolve. But it was found that involved in almost all of these problems were such negative factors as emotional immaturity, incorrect attitudes, selfishness, inconsiderateness, and other forms of personality maladjustments, which progress toward the dissolution of the family. Needs for stabilizing family life, therefore, lie in a power which can maintain the opposite positive factors.

The purpose of Chapter II was to show that Christian love is a creative power which stimulates and develops these necessary qualities of personal interrelationships and thus brings stability to families in which it operates.

The meaning of Christian love was first analyzed and this love was found to have its source in God. God has first loved us and expressed that love through His Son Jesus Christ. The character of that love is summed up in "forgiveness". When men experience this forgiving love of God they respond both with love toward God and with love toward their fellow men. Love to our fellow men is the love of God flowing to them through us who have ourselves experienced that divine love. It manifests itself in the imitation of God's love and mercy in the form of forgiveness, kindness, unselfishness, patience, and seeking one another's welfare and happiness.

In the second part of the chapter, the way in which Christian love

worked its practical application to family life was studied. This revealed that such love brought unity to the family through the common experiences of returning love to God in worship and through expressing the same love in the mutual relationship of the family members. It further united the family in a common purpose for living, namely, that of serving others. Christian love thus stabilizes the home by stimulating and developing positive factors in interpersonal relationships and unites the family with the bonds of common experiences.

Chapter III proposed to examine the opportunities which the Protestant Church has to foster this stabilizing power of Christian love within the family. The need for the Church to be aware of the requirements of the individuals as integrated parts of family life was noted as necessary if the Church is to be effective, and of its responsibility to all the community families within its area of influence. Emphasis was also laid on the fact that the Church has the means of producing and fostering love in the Gospel message of God's forgiving love in Christ, and that any effort or program for realizing its mission must proceed from this basis.

Among the opportunities which the Church has, cooperating with existing social agencies was found to be an effective avenue. These agencies not only provided an opportunity for the Church to express its own Christian love in action as a form of the Gospel message, but also to use their services and techniques for a more effective spiritual ministry directed toward particular problems of the relationships within the family. The general feeling of leaders in these fields

is that the Church has greater opportunity open to it than it is using.

Next, the effective way in which formal worship offers opportunity for fostering Christian love was noted. Families united in common worchip hear the message of God's love emphasized and explained for practical guidance in daily living, find the problems of fear and guilt solved in forgiveness, and are given opportunity to express their love to God in prayer, praise and thanksgiving -- which expression permits love to develop.

Another opportunity for the Church to realize its mission of stabilizing homes is its parish educationalprogram. It was found that a program unified by the objective of creating and maintaining homes established on the principle of love, could be very effective. The family altar, the Church school, the youth and adult groups, and the various social activities afforded avenues for fostering Christian love by means of a program aimed at the total family relationship. Considerable need for improvement in the effective use of these avenues was noted, together with the fact that it is a responsibility of the Church to make more effective use of them.

The Church's responsibility for giving Christian families an opportunity to express their love in community service and in support of its world mission, since love developes when expressed and dies when unexpressed, was emphasized.

Finally, pastoral counseling as an effective agent of the Church was dealt with. It was found that the pastor stands in a strategic

relationship to his people which gives him a unique opportunity to
deal with problems of the family and to lead its members into the ex-
pression of love. Especially is his opportunity for fostering stable
homes through premarital and marital counseling excellent. But the
possibilities in this field remain yet to be fully used. The large
proportion of emotional problems in general and of divorce in particu-
lar reveals a situation which still needs to be met.

C. Conclusion

There is a need for solving the problems of the family by dealing
with the factors involved in the emotional and mental health of the
personalities with regard to their interpersonal relationships. Chris-
tian love is a basic effective force in promoting the positive qualities
necessary for healthy interpersonal relationships and resultant family
stability. Because the Protestant Church has been entrusted with the
Gospel message of God's love in Christ, which alone creates a responsive
love in those who receive it, it is the responsibility of the Church
to use these means in the most effective way possible in order to bring
about a positive personal response to Christ. Christian love follows.
Here the Church must guide and nurture.

Because the Church has the means for fostering love, and because
it has opportunities to do so, it can effectively reach families and
stabilize homes.

The Church, however, has not made as effective use of its means

and opportunities as are available to it. It needs to become more family-centered in its emphasis, to be more fully aware of its ministry of building a stable home life, and to bring the Gospel of God's love to us in Christ into every family situation. A more effective ministry of fostering love within the families under its area of influence will bring a greater stability to the whole picture of American family life.

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