

DIRECTIONS

for Foursquare Christian Educators

Winter 1988

National Department of Christian Education and Foursquare Publications
International Church of the Foursquare Gospel

Volume 2

The Christian Home

"The big hand is on the 4 and the little hand is on the 3 — so, of course I run out side! See, everyday at this time dad gets home from work. My sisters and I run out to greet him because he usually has a little brown sack hidden behind his back with "treats" in it for us. He would always try to make us guess which hand the surprise was in. Mom stands at the screen door, apron around her waist and a baby propped on her hip, smiling at the loving family "tradition" being played once again in her front yard where tricycles had been left abandoned in a hurry."

Even though I grew up in a "typical" family — a dad, mom, brother, sisters and a dog — I recognize that the children and teenagers I minister to today may not be able to relate to a setting like the one I just described.

The American family is changing. Today, the "typical" family may consist of a single parent, a step-parent, a blended stepfamily, as well as a two-parent family.

Consider the following statistics reported by numerous magazines and newspapers:

- Approximately 50% of mothers with children under the age of one work outside the home. More than 75% will be in the labor force by the year 2000 if the current trend continues.
- Only 7% of families are structured with supportive father and homemaking mother
- One marriage in two ends in divorce.
- 480,000 children were born to teenage mothers in 1984. This statistic has increased each year.
- At least 50% of all children born today will spend part of their lives in single-parent homes.

"Although the family is being altered, it remains a strong and influential institution. 'Despite any claims to the contrary,' reports a major study on the family by Ethan Allen, 'there has not been proof that the family as a living institution is in decline, or is any weaker today than a generation ago.' The report concludes that Americans aren't giving up the family tradition — just the traditional family."¹

As a pastor, Christian Education Director or Sunday School Teacher, how do we minister to the whole family today? How do we minister to children who are growing up in such unique home situations? What can we do to help singles, step-children, step-parents, single-parents, and the divorced?

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In this issue of DIRECTIONS, we want to nudge your thinking about the christian home and family, mention a couple new resouces available for family members, and give you some suggestions and ideas to promote the christian home and family.

Serving Him, Our Father,

Elizabeth Ewens

¹ The Youth Ministry Resource Book, edited by Eugene C. Roehlkepartain, Group Books, Loveland, Colorado, 1988

From A Leader's Perspective

Imagine for a moment (come on - just take a minute and do this!) how visitors and new members perceive your church's philosophy and support of the family.

Objectively re-evaluate what you can perceive to be true in your church. After reading the statement below, circle a number to the right which measures the statement given.

	Weak		Good		Strong	
1. The pastor's/leadership's home as a model of a christian home?	1	2	3	4	5	6 7
2. Is there an attitude of balance in serving and being involved? (Is there too much pressure and intensity that may produce guilt? or is there the other extreme of passivity?)	1	2	3	4	5	6 7
3. Are there ministries where one can learn						
A. to strengthen a marriage?	1	2	3	4	5	6 7
B. to be a better parent?	1	2	3	4	5	6 7
C. to walk strong as a single saint?	1	2	3	4	5	6 7
4. Are activities offered that involve whole families ?	1	2	3	4	5	6 7
5. From a family perspective (whether a single-member family or a household of six) do you think any situation can be nurtured at your church?	1	2	3	4	5	6 7

Notes to myself for future thought:



"I have a great idea! Let's reverse things. Today you be grouchy at church and charming at home"

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Report On The Family

In 1987 *Better Homes and Gardens* magazine conducted a survey on family spirituality and beliefs with approximately 80,000 of its readers. A narrative and statistical report of that survey appears in the January, 1988 issue of *Better Homes and Gardens*.

The religious affiliations of those responding to the survey included. Protestant 71%, Jewish 1%, Catholic 15%, Other 2%, No religious affiliation 9%, Married 83%, Have Children 87%, College Educated 77%, Median Income \$38,333

Survey Questions:

1. When the respondents were asked how important is it to you that your spouse and children share your spiritual/religious beliefs, the results were most revealing.

74% felt it was "very important", 13% felt it was "somewhat important", with only 5%

feeling that it was "not important" for their spouse's to share spiritual/religious beliefs

2. Which of the following activities are most important in your family's spiritual development?

Following moral principals	73%
Attending organized religious services	70%
Being members of a church or temple	58%
Reading scriptures	57%
Sharing your belief	57%
Praying together	54%
Contributing time/money	53%
Working towards inner sense of peace	46%
Participating in scripture study or discussion groups	42%
Reflecting on the meaning of life	31%
Watching or listening to broadcast religious services	20%
Being politically/socially active	18%
Seeking oneness with nature	15%

3. How often do you attend religious services?

Once a week	39%
More than once a week	36%
Seldom/never	14%
At least once a month	7%
On major holidays and holy days	3%

4. What do you want most out of a religious organization?

Spiritual development	80%
A loving, caring group of friends	65%
A path to salvation	46%
Self and/or societal improvement	35%
A sense of serenity	30%
Ceremonial support for baptisms, bar mitzvahs, weddings, funerals	27%
Intellectual stimulation	27%
The meaning and/or comfort of ritual	14%
Do not belong to a religious organization	8%

Taken from *Christian Leadership, Families and Spirituality* Special Report by *Better Homes and Gardens* by Alvin Lewis, pages 3-4, April 1988

Resources

For Dads

An excellent bimonthly publication just for fathers is **From Paul Lewis to DADS ONLY**. Each issue of this 8 page newsletter contains handy tips on fathering, family life, servant leadership, parenting, being a husband and lots of practical ideas.

Individual subscriptions are \$24.00 per year (in the U.S.) and includes two semi-annual "DAD TALK" feature audio cassettes. Bulk subscriptions are also available. Contact:

Family Development Foundation
DADS ONLY Newsletter
P.O. Box 340
Julian, CA 92036

For Single Mothers Raising Sons

That's the name of a new book full of practical advice from a mother who raised two sons alone. This book is for every mother that has asked, "How can I be sure my son will grow up to be a normal, healthy man without a father at home?"

The author, Bobbie Reed, Ph.D., deals with such subjects as discipline, sexuality, custody battles, instilling values, and offers encouragement for the single mother.

From Thomas Nelson Publishing. Released in April 1988. Trade paperback, \$6.95 at your local Christian bookstore.

For Families

Our **Family's First Bible Story Book** by Ethel Barrett will have children and adults alike enjoying Bible stories - dramatically told as only Ethel Barrett can! Perfect for family devotional times, this volume is not only filled with full-color illustrations, but Bible land photos emphasizing that these are real events that happened to real people in real places. Two ready-to-make finger puppets are included to help tell the life-application stories included in this book.

Available from Foursquare Publications. Hardback, \$14.95

For Parents and Teenagers

Dr. Jay Kesler has edited *Parents and Teenagers*, a culmination of personal interviews and discussions with more than 50 of the most respected Christian leaders across the country, who share first hand advice concerning the unique responsibility of raising a teenager. Arranged in an easy-to-find, easy-to-read, topical reference format, this book is complimented by helpful charts, handy lists and honest answers.

Available from Foursquare Publications. Hardback, \$17.95.

Who are our children's role models?

By the time the average child enters first grade he or she has watched more than five thousand hours of television and has observed the actions and words of hundreds of people. What has the child seen and learned about what it means to be a man or woman, a dad or mom?

Promoting the Christian Home

1. Celebrate the Family!

Designate a month to Celebrate the Family!

- Teach on family issues.
- Have the children come in during a portion of the worship service so families can worship together.
- Take polaroid pictures of families and arrange a bulletin board Celebrating the Family!

2. Family Awareness Week

- Encourage families to have another family over one evening to play a table game, share family photo albums or make decorations for the holidays.
- Offer a Resource Display. Contact your local Christian bookstore and ask them to come and display resources for families. Set up a table in the fellowship hall, extra classroom or entryway. Display new books, music tapes, children's videos, family games that teach Christian values or scriptures and devotional resources.
- Remember that singles are families, too!

3. Family Adventure Day

- Plan a Saturday or holiday for everyone to go to the fair, local amusement park, picnic area, or a ball game. Watch for special events being announced for the upcoming holidays.

4. Have an Open House Sunday

- Allow parents to go to class with their child to visit for a short time. Some parents may have to "rotate" to cover each child's class.
- Encourage parents to get to know the teachers and what they are teaching in the classroom.
- If your Sunday School uses the take-home paper offered with most curriculums, allow the teachers to instruct parents in how to best use this paper in the home to reinforce Bible truths and Christian values.

5. As we approach the Holiday Season ...

- Plan for the family in scheduling holiday activities.
- Are all age groups being included (singles, elderly, etc.) in the planning process? The holiday season is usually the hardest time for those without immediate family in the area. The church family needs to cover them, especially now.

*From our family here, in the
Department of Christian Education
and Foursquare Publications,
we wish each of you the most
fulfilling times with your family
and friends during this holiday season.*

A Word From Rick

"DADDY, YOU DIDN'T LISTEN"

There was a burst of tears and frustration in the voice when those penetrating words were spoken to me. My first reaction to my 11 year old daughter was that I had wounded our relationship and with the fact she was wrong and I was right. After all, I'm her father and she was just overreacting to the circumstance. At that moment in this communicative battle, the Holy Spirit reminded me she was right & I WAS WRONG. Indeed, I had heard, but I did not listen. Those that are so close to us can be saying the same thing. You hear me, but you are not listening.

A gripping account of how hearing with the intent to listen brought forth vision and hope for Blind Bartimaeus is found in the Gospel of Mark. He was desperate to see, and in that desperation, the first principal that stands out was that, "when he had heard that it was Jesus, he began to cry out and say, 'Jesus, thou son of David, have mercy upon me'." One of the many beautiful truths of this miracle was that Bartimaeus had not only heard of Jesus and listened to his cry, but that he also received his sight and a new way of life.

There are those we serve, whether in our own family or the world, that are crying to be heard and listened to. Thank you for joining with me in determining to listen. It will make a difference in those who we are called to hear.

In His care,

Rick



Rick Wulfestieg
National Christian Education Minister

Inside Our Foursquare Family

Hesperia, California. On Saturday, September 24, 1988, over 100 people from several different churches in the High Desert Division met at the Hesperia Foursquare Church for *A Training Conference for Teachers and Workers*.

Mary Lou Canata, the Southwest District Christian Education Representative, put together a team of seven teachers who



Conference participants enjoying a tasty break between the workshops.

offered 15 different workshops. Rick Wulfestieg, the National Christian Education Minister, addressed the general session after Mary Lou and her son, Tommy (a puppet!) finished entertaining the delighted group. Doug Borroughs, Manager of Foursquare Publications and pastor of the Studio City, California Foursquare Church, taught workshops addressing the needs of youth. Other workshop teachers were Fran Rottman, Ruthellen Crawford, Joan Haskins, and Elizabeth Ewens. Oh, and of course, Mary Lou Canata (who, for this writer, is synonymous with Christian Education). Workshops ranged from ministering in the playpen to recruiting techniques.

Pastors Ken and Jeanne Bland, with their staff, hosted a most beneficial day for all who attended. Along with all the varied workshops offered, Foursquare Publications offered a display of youth products and education materials for parents and teachers. Many positive, encouraging comments were shared by those who attended.



Mary Lou Canata and Rick Wulfestieg

United States of America. Psssst....we want to warn you that the bears are coming!

We suspect that in the early Spring of 1989, bears will be invading Foursquare Churches across the country. That's right! Bears bearing good news.

It's the **GOOD NEWS BEARS CLUB!** We will be introducing our new Foursquare Club program for children ages 3 through 12. This activity-oriented club program will offer t-shirts, sweatshirts, badges, buttons, and the GOOD NEWS OF JESUS! Honey Bears, Teddy Bears, Cinnamon Bears, Son Bears, Grizzly Bears, Koala Bears and Running Bears will be coming together to memorize scripture, read the Bible, learn about Jesus and have fun doing it all.

Watch for further developments of this grizzly invasion!

DIRECTIONS FOR CHRISTIAN EDUCATORS is published quarterly by the National Department of Christian Education in Los Angeles, California, as a resource for Foursquare Christian Educators. A copy of this publication is supplied without charge to each Foursquare Church.

If you would like to receive bundle (5 or more) copies of this newsletter to distribute in your church, please contact us. For a small charge to cover shipping, we would be glad to assist you in this.

If you would like to make a contribution to our **INSIDE OUR FOURSQUARE FAMILY** section, or have any suggestions regarding the contents or issues to be addressed, we would appreciate hearing from you.

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