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**A STUDY OF THE PASTOR AS EDUCATOR
IN THE HOMES OF HIS PARISH**

**A Thesis
Presented to
the Faculty of the Department of Christian Education
Asbury Theological Seminary**

**In Partial Fulfillment
of the Requirements for the Degree
Master of Religious Education**

**by
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May 1952**

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CHAPTER I

THE PROBLEM AND DEFINITIONS OF TERMS USED

The task of the minister is often considered to be preaching and administering the sacraments. However, as Theodore Cuyler says, "The work of every minister is twofold; it is partly in the pulpit and partly out of the pulpit."¹ The greatest part of Paul's recorded work was other than public preaching. The recorded words of Jesus include only one long discourse and a few shorter ones but the accounts of his personal visits, personal conversations and labors of love with the sinning, the sick and the suffering are quite extensive.² If the pastor is to follow the example of Christ (John 10), he must be a shepherd to the people of his church and parish as well as a disciplinarian, an organizer, an administrator, and a leader.

Since the church is largely made up of families, the home is the church's prime responsibility. Certainly, the modern American family is in need of help.

Christian family life has never been more disturbed than it is today. Old patterns of conduct and systems of values no longer hold the home together. New ways

¹ Theodore L. Cuyler, The Young Preacher (New York: Fleming H. Revell Co., 1893), p. 15.

² Ibid., p. 16.

of family living are not yet established.³

If this is true of Christian families, it is true to a greater extent of families which have not received proper spiritual guidance and education from the church. A few statistics should help to prove the validity of the preceding statement.

The divorce rate, steadily rising since the middle of the nineteenth century (in 1880 there was one divorce in twenty marriages), has reached an all time high of one divorce in four marriages.⁴ Another way of stating this is that in 1890, as nearly as could be computed, there were 0.54 divorced persons in 100; in 1949 the number had risen to 2.82, an increase of 521 per cent.⁵ "Indeed, the rate has risen so high that, with the extension of average life expectancy, divorce has temporarily replaced death as the main way in which marriages end."⁶ Kingsley Davis says that this does not mean a corresponding number of broken homes as

³ George A. Warner, Jr., "The Family in a Troubled World," The Pastor, 15:20-21, September, 1951.

⁴ Light, a bulletin of the Social Service Commission of the Southern Baptist Convention, Vol. II, No. 5, May, 1949.

⁵ Kingsley Davis, "Statistical Perspective on Marriage and Divorce," The Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science, Vol. 272 (Philadelphia: 1950), p. 19.

⁶ _____, "The American Family: What It Is--and Isn't", New York Times Magazine, September 30, 1951, p. 41.

desertions and separations have been somewhat displaced by divorce and remarriage.⁷ However, a recent study made by Dr. W. F. Ogburn, Professor Emeritus of the University of Chicago, has shown that there have been more desertions and mutually agreed upon separations in the past few years than divorces.⁸ Ray Abrams says that

If we were to add to the divorce rate the desertions, the separations, and those who would like to sever the marriage bonds but for one reason or another do not, the sum total of marital disorganization would be at least two or three times that represented by the divorce statistics.⁹

Writing in the Woman's Home Companion, Albert Deutsch says that more than six hundred thousand families with more than one million children are receiving Aid to Dependent Children grants totalling about five million dollars per year.

Children under sixteen are eligible for aid if they are deprived of parental care and support because a parent dies, is physically or mentally incapacitated or leaves the home--through desertion, divorce or hospitalization. To receive aid the child must be living with one or both parents or with a close relative.¹⁰

That the modern American family is in need of some stabilization seems apparent. One more evidence of such need

⁷ Ibid., p. 42.

⁸ Light, op. cit.

⁹ Ray H. Abrams, "The Concepts of Family Stability," The Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social, Vol. 272 (Philadelphia: 1950), p. 5.

¹⁰ Albert Deutsch, "Our Neediest Children," Woman's Home Companion, January, 1952, pp. 28 ff.

is cited here. In studying the case histories of drug addicts, an almost unvarying pattern is found. Most of the juvenile addicts come from families in which there is no proper parental control or training in decent personal habits. Rarely do children coming from a normally balanced family in any income bracket become addicts.¹¹

Families need the guidance and education which the church offers. The pastor as the leader of the church has the responsibility of seeing that it functions properly in the guidance and education of the families which make up the parish. He has certain direct responsibilities to the families as well.

I. THE PROBLEM

Since there is so clearly a need for religious education in the homes of America and since part of the pastor's task is that of shepherd and religious educator, it was the purpose of this investigation to discover what the pastor's responsibilities are in relation to religious education in the homes of his parish; what he is doing to discharge these responsibilities, and what he should do.

II. DEFINITIONS OF TERMS USED

Pastor. In this study the word pastor has been used

¹¹ Harry J. Anslinger, "The Facts About Our Teen-Age Drug Addicts," Readers Digest, 59:137-140, October, 1951.

instead of the word minister. As Erdman has said, of all titles given the ministerial office, the most poetic, popular, beautiful and comprehensive is that of pastor or shepherd.¹² It can be traced to the Old Testament where Jehovah is called the shepherd of His people.¹³ The dictionary defines shepherd as "figuratively, one intrusted with the religious guidance of others."

Teacher. The teacher, according to the Dictionary of Education is

a person who because of rich or unusual experience or education or both in a given field is able to contribute to the growth and development of other persons who come in contact with him.¹⁴

Educator. While used somewhat synonymously with the word teacher, the word educator carries with it the connotation of a teacher with the added responsibility of helping to prepare others to teach.

Education. The term education as used herein will have a more specific meaning than merely "the development of abilities, attitudes, or forms of behavior, and the acquisition

¹² Charles R. Erdman, The Work of the Pastor (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1928), p. 3.

¹³ Holy Bible, Psalms 23:1; 80:1; Isaiah 40:11.

¹⁴ Carter V. Good, editor, Dictionary of Education (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Co., 1934), p. 409.

of knowledge, as a result of teaching or training."¹⁵ More specifically, it is God-centered. Mark Fakkema says that education as a mental process concerns itself with the interpretation of related facts. In interpreting the facts in any given field they should be seen not only in their horizontal relation, one to another, but in their vertical relation to God. All other education is inadequate "for not to know things in their vertical relation is not to know their true origin, their preservation, and their real purpose."¹⁶ And further, God-centered education is possible only in Christ.¹⁷ The word education unless otherwise indicated will refer to this 'God-centered' education.

Home. The word home as herein used denotes the fixed dwelling place of a family. While it is "the most essential relatively stable central institution of face-to-face human relations. . ."¹⁸ and is ideally "the place with the refreshing and encouraging social atmosphere, cooperative management

¹⁵ Howard C. Warren, editor, Dictionary of Psychology (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Co., 1934), p. 88.

¹⁶ Mark Fakkema, "How to Educate Children Mentally," Evangelical Home Maker's Guide, Series C (Chicago: Van Kampen Press, 1948), p. 8.

¹⁷ Holy Bible, John 14:16; 15:5.

¹⁸ James M. Baldwin, editor, Dictionary of Philosophy and Psychology (New York: Peter Smith, 1940), p. 142.

and daily cultivation of the more intimate human interests and values. . .¹⁹ homes are not always ideal.

Family. Unless adjectivally qualified, the family will refer to the members of a household whether one or both parents, the children and other relatives living in the quarters.

Parish. The word parish will be used to denote the congregation of the local church and the unhurched homes in the locality covered by its activities.

III. ORGANIZATION OF THE THESIS

The chapter entitled "The Pastor as Educator" includes a short discussion of education in the church, its aims and objectives, and the place and responsibility of the pastor as educator. In the chapter "The Relationship of the Pastor to the Homes of His Parish" an attempt has been made to give a brief picture of the contemporary home and an overall picture of the pastor's relationship to it as found in this study. Chapter IV deals more specifically with the pastor's functions as educator in these homes as ascertained by survey techniques. In Chapter V, ways of enlarging and improving this ministry are suggested. The final chapter is for the purpose of summarizing and presenting conclusions.

¹⁹ Loc. cit.

IV. METHOD OF PROCEDURE

In addition to the use of an extensive bibliography of books, magazines, and pamphlets; and letters written to various religious organizations and leaders requesting suggestions and materials, questionnaires were sent out to pastors and to homes in the parishes to ascertain what is being done by pastors and to obtain suggestions as to what might be done in Christian home education.

CHAPTER II

THE PASTOR AS EDUCATOR

Importance of Christian education. If the church today is less effective than it should be in helping society, part of the responsibility for this ineffectiveness rests upon its educational system. The indictment has been made that Protestant churches have "reared a generation of religious illiterates."¹

Christian education is important. Teaching-- a form of communication--and revelation were interwoven in the Master's relationship with His disciples. While neither teaching nor revelation can be substituted for each other, Christian education is essential as a means of communicating the Christian Gospel from one generation to another. Even as past generations would have had no knowledge of it had it not been transmitted, "so the present and future generations will remain ignorant of it unless Christian people accept the responsibility of Christian teaching."²

Aims and objectives of Christian education. In

¹ Arthur W. Hewitt, Highland Shepherds (Chicago: Willett, Clark and Company, 1939), p. 36.

Christian Faith and Life, A Program for Church and Home (Board of Christian Education of the Presbyterian Church in the U. S. A., 1947), p. 5.

education, the aim is not merely to convey a body of facts but to prepare the individual for complete living; it is, theoretically at least, concerned with the totality of personality. According to II Timothy 3:16,17, "All scripture" (the basic textbook of Christianity) "is given. . .that the man of God may be perfect, throughly furnished unto all good works." It seems evident that the church must be an educational institution in the fullest sense.

If any program is to be effective, it must have some clear cut objectives. Vieth gives five purposes of objectives. They give direction, proper sequence, furnish a guide to activity, a guide to the selection of materials and form a standard for measuring the effectiveness of the program.³

The International Council of Religious Education, under its inclusive policy, has worked out a set of objectives which many religious educators have accepted. Stated briefly they are:

1. A knowledge of God which is true to Christian teaching and a growing consciousness of fellowship with this Christlike God.
2. A knowledge and understanding of Jesus which will lead to personal commitment to him, and to his way of life.
3. An attitude toward life which is warmly and positively Christian.

³ Paul H. Vieth, Objectives in Religious Education (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1930), p. 20.

4. A growth in Christlike habits.
5. The ability to live as a Christian in society.
6. The ability to participate actively in the church fellowship.
7. A knowledge of the Bible which is dynamic and which leads to zest for continuous Bible study.

And recently there has been officially added an eighth:

- 8.⁴ The establishing and sustaining of Christian families.⁴

This most recently added objective is of vital importance and until Christian educators, especially pastors, become duly impressed with its significance and endeavor to do something about it there will remain much to be desired in the field of Christian education. This could well be the key to the whole problem of the weakness and ineffectiveness of the church's program.

Bower and Hayward have stated the objective of the church thus:

... complete Christian living which includes personal acceptance of Christ as Savior and his way of life and membership in a Christian church, the Christian motive in making all life-choices, and wholehearted participation in and constructive contribution to the progressive realization of a social order controlled by Christian principles.⁵

⁴ Frank A. Lindhorst, The Minister Teaches Religion (Nashville: Abingdon-Cokesbury, 1945), p. 11.

⁵ William C. Bower and Percy R. Hayward, Protestantism Faces its Educational Task Together (Appleton, Wisconsin: C. C. Nelson Publishing Co., 1949), p. 61.

While the latter part of this objective seems to be somewhat idealistic, it is a statement of social responsibility. However, none of these objectives are adequate in themselves. They must be superseded by the dynamic objective given by the Master Educator. He knew why He came, namely, "that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly."⁶ Stated simply, the great objective of Christian education is the realization of a new creaturehood in Christ and preparation to implement the Great Commission.⁷

Responsibility of the pastor. The pastor teaches religion. He cannot do otherwise. Every contact he makes with people of any age will influence them. From his attitudes and actions they learn something of his philosophy of life, his faith in God--or lack of it--and something of the aims and purposes for which he is working. Almost everything the pastor of a church does has educative significance.

The minister is the key person in the local church. "By virtue of his position, the pastor in charge of a church is the key figure in that church's program of Christian Education."⁸ He is the head of the staff, the one who sees the whole program in all its aspects. This program quite

⁶ Holy Bible, John 10:10.

⁷ Ibid., Matthew 28:19,20.

⁸ Robert Glenn Massengale, "The Pastor and Christian Education," The Pastor, 14:6,7, September, 1950.

naturally includes the social, community, and home life of the people of the parish.

The pastor is called to serve the entire constituency. Thus it is his responsibility to make each segment of the congregation conscious of its part in the total program; it is his duty to explain to his people to what end their corporate energy should be directed and why. But before he can do this he himself must have an overall picture of the work to be done. He must have definite goals and objectives.

Fallow suggests four minimum requirements for the pastor as educator: he must understand the purposes and methods of Christian education; he must give leadership in formulating and executing the local program of Christian education; he needs to employ creative and democratic means for working with his people; and he should himself be a teacher as well as a preacher.⁹ In addition to this list of essentials, he must know the Lord in personal fellowship and daily prayer. He must know himself, his own weaknesses and strong points; he must know the needs of his people; he must know church history in general and the history of his own local church in particular.¹⁰

⁹ Wesner Fallow, "The Roles of Ministers and Directors in Christian Education," Religious Education, 45:41-7, January, 1950.

¹⁰ J. Clark Hensley, The Pastor as Educational Director (Kansas City, Kansas: Central Seminary Press, 1946), p. 51 f.

Always the pastor's question should be, whether in the worship service, in the classroom, in home ministration, in recreation or in whatever phase of his work he may find himself engaged, "Just what religious values am I seeking for the group in this enterprise?"¹¹

The pastor must be a psychologist to be an educator. He must know his people and in everything he does have them in mind, understanding what they are like, how they will probably react in situations; what methods will most likely cause their reactions to be favorable in the development of Christian living.

To regard the pastor as educator does not change the basic purpose of the Christian ministry which is "to seek and to save that which was lost"; rather it includes in such a ministry the ministry of teaching.

The busy pastor must not be so busy as to neglect the homes and individuals of his parish. This personal ministry is especially significant in the present day. The pastor must relate himself to the various groups in the homes of his parish. His responsibility as educational director in the church includes the important task of education in the home. In this study an attempt is made to show how he can effectively accomplish this vital part of his task.

¹¹ Ibid., p. 222.

CHAPTER III

THE RELATIONSHIP OF THE PASTOR TO THE HOMES OF HIS PARISH

A brief survey of the contemporary home shows its need for stabilization. The pastor as representative of Christ and the church in the community should be in the position to help the family to become a creative force for good in society.

The contemporary home. The home "the center of all time and the symbol of eternity,"¹ is the basic unit of society. Since this is true, it is imperative that there be 'unity within the unit' if society is to stand. The truth of the statement made by Fallaw that ". . .individualism is replacing familism as the dominant characteristic of the home"² is apparent in many homes today. What is causing this individualism, this disunity, this disintegration of the family and the home?

Numerous and rapid changes in education, in science, and in industry in recent years have had a profound effect on the home.

¹ Martha Boone Leavell, Building A Christian Home (Nashville: The Sunday School Board of the Southern Baptist Convention, 1936), p. 13.

² Wesner Fallaw, "The Home and Parent Education," Orientation in Religious Education, Philip H. Lotz, editor (Nashville: Abingdon-Jokesbury Press, 1950), p. 236.

The changed status of woman, with the result that her life is no longer centered almost solely around the home and the church; the increased urbanization of the population resulting in smaller and more congested living quarters, smaller families, heterogeneous cultures, and the lowering of standards and controls; the fact that both parents are often employed and away from home much of the time; increased mobility; commercial recreational establishments; a higher standard of living; war--these and many other factors have played havoc with the familiar family type found fifty years ago. This is not to say that all these changes are bad in themselves, but it must be admitted that there is something to be desired when it can be said that "the American home is under an oxygen tent, sick almost to death."³

From a recent survey taken in a midwestern school, of the 660 children included in the survey 221 were from broken homes. From 1900 to 1940, there was a 73 per cent increase in population, a 121 per cent increase in marriage and a 37 $\frac{1}{2}$ per cent increase in divorce.⁴ J. Edgar Hoover has listed seven bad influences which are jeopardizing family life today: neglect, broken homes, unhappy homes, bad example, lack of discipline, doting parents and outside influences such as

³ Hazen Werner, "Everything All Right at Home," The Christian Home, 8:2-4 ff., March, 1949.

⁴ Loc. cit.

the movies, the radio, and crime-books.⁵

Groves says that the broken home will always be a problem to be dealt with but whether there are few or many of these homes the success with which they are handled will be primarily determined by the soundness of society and the efficiency of its relief organizations.⁶ This seems to complete the vicious circle: society will be only as sound as the basic unit of that society and the basic unit depends upon the soundness of society for its permanency of organization.

This comment by Groves leads to the statement by Fallaw as to the significance of the fact that "social scientists give little or no place to the church as an agency to be counted on for strengthening family life and elevating it to an ethical and religious level."⁷ If it be true that the church has failed in this capacity to such an extent that it can no longer be considered as a possible source of help, there is grave need that it be awakened to its responsibility.

There are various causes for broken homes such as

⁵ Charles C. Selecman, Christian Nurture in the Home (Nashville: The Upper Room, 1948), pp. 22 ff.

⁶ Ernest R. Groves, The American Family (Chicago: J. B. Lippincott Co., 1934), p. 282.

⁷ Wesner Fallaw, The Modern Parent and the Teaching Church (New York: The Macmillan Co., 1947), p. 164.

divorce, death, religious differences, racial and cultural differences, separation, the absence of one parent, constant migration, depression, war. Whatever the cause, there is danger to the security of the home.

A broken family does not necessarily become unstable or unwholesome, but it does encounter extraordinary hazards, and the outcome of its trying experience depends upon the character of the family members, the former standards and practice of the home, and the amount of assistance it receives when it requires help to meet its ordeal.⁸

Beaven⁹ suggests that since support from without seems to have been removed, the family must be held together from within. Need for economic support is no longer an adequate stimuli for staying together as a family. There is no social compulsion as formerly when divorce was almost considered grounds for ostracism. The restraint of religious and moral teaching is insufficient. And certainly the legal aspect, which makes divorce so simple, is no aid in welding the family together. "Only when the members of a family experience in their daily lives the sobering restraining, moralizing, and purifying influences of religion,"¹⁰ can that home be considered to be secure.

⁸ Groves, op. cit., p. 281.

⁹ A. W. Beaven, The Fine Art of Living Together (New York: George H. Doran Co., 1927, p. xiv.

¹⁰ Grace Sloan Overton, The Home in a Changing Culture (New York: Fleming H. Revell Co., 1935), p. 71.

The Christian home. A family may be religious and yet not be Christian. These two terms are not synonymous and a distinction should be made. However, for this study the terms have been used somewhat interchangeably and when the word religion is used it is to be understood as referring to Christianity, unless otherwise specified.

Martha Leavell suggests four things religion does for the home. It simplifies the problems; sublimates the home activities--"whatsoever ye do, do all to the glory of God" (I Cor. 10:31); it flavors the interests of the home, establishing a taste for the good and discarding the bad; and finally, it standardizes the home relationships, furnishing a Guide Book and in addition, power from above to follow the way mapped out in the Book.¹¹

What is a Christian home? It is a home in which the Spirit of Christ abides and in which the members, having been led to experience the revitalizing power of that Spirit in the New Birth, join together in a cooperative, democratic way learning to live abundantly and serve unselfishly.

Ten marks of a Christian home as given by Hazen Werner include these factors: respect for the sacred worth of every person in the home; spiritual unity sufficient to transcend differences; a growing spiritual life and consciousness (this spiritual life should be a natural part of family living); a

¹¹ Leavell, op. cit., pp. 26 ff.

higher level of living for every member of the family; a home of creative, happy living- not forced and artificial; romance kept aglow by spiritual renewal; a home that sees itself through the eyes of God; a family that prays; a genuine democracy of home life; and a consciousness of an eternal bond.¹²

The time to establish a Christian home is at its very inception. When two young people decide to become one they should put Christ in their plans. Then after the home has been built on a firm foundation there must be a daily dedication of it to Him.

Parental responsibility. Parenthood is a great responsibility. It would be well for every parent to read a challenging booklet written by Oscar E. Feucht, entitled So You Are a Parent. He points out the sobering fact that the child after he has been born will live forever.

As you train your child, remember that when God commands parents to bring up their children in the nurture and admonition of the Lord (Eph. 6:4), He gives them a full-time assignment.¹³

Parents should have a vital faith in God; an experience of salvation; strength in body, mind and soul; and consecration to the task. They must be examples. The

¹² Hazen G. Werner, The Marks of a Christian Home (Nashville: The Upper Room, 1946), pp. 4-17.

¹³ Oscar E. Feucht, So You Are a Parent (St. Louis, Missouri: Concordia Publishing House), p. 7.

atmosphere of the home will be made more Christian by having in it good pictures, mottoes, books, etc., but unless members of the family see Christianity lived out before them the created atmosphere may seem forced and artificial.

The more experiences a family can share together and the stronger the bonds between the members of the family, the richer the family life will be. In the growing family, the task of raising children and preparing them for the task of finding their own way in life and of making the best contribution possible toward a more Christian society should prove sufficient challenge to bind the parents together; and as the children grow and see the devotion of their parents to each other and to God, they in turn will be challenged to form Christian homes of their own.

The sad fact remains that there are a negligible number of such homes to be found in our so-called Christian society. As Grace Overton says:

If we as Christians were as serious as the Communists, the Nazis, and the Fascists, in training for what we believe in. . . we would raise a generation ready to become active Christian citizens.¹⁴

The pastor: his responsibility. Part of the responsibility for this deficiency can be placed upon the church and upon the official representative of the church--the pastor. The pastor cannot afford to think his task complete

¹⁴ Overton, op. cit., p. 139.

when he has conducted the worship service on Sunday and perhaps a midweek service. Besides being the preacher, he is "a shepherd, a community leader. He is the official representative of his denomination in the community and is the priest as well as the prophet in corporate matters."¹⁵ Again, let it be said that almost everything the pastor of a church does has educative significance.

His personality. The pastor to be truly effective must have an understanding heart. He must be a Spirit-filled, God-called man seeking not his own will. He must have love for people; if he does not love people, he should not enter the ministry. Another trait which it is imperative that he possess is common sense. Though he be sincere in his motives and intentions, if he does not exercise this quality, he will in all probability be doomed to failure. He must not be a "social moron."¹⁶ He must be a gentleman in every sense of the word.

His life is an open book read by all men of his community. It cannot be other than clean and wholesome if he is to be the representative of Christ to his people. His example will perhaps have as much or more influence than

¹⁵ Harold C. Mason, "The Director of Christian Education," The Christian Minister, 1:15-17, January, 1950.

¹⁶ Arthur W. Hewitt, Highland Shepherds (Chicago: Willett, Clark and Company, 1939), p. 196.

all his preaching and teaching.

His relationship to his people. What should be his mission in the homes of his parish? As Jowett has said, there will be no change in mission, merely a change in sphere --from the church to the home. He is still a messenger bearing the Good News. His task will not be less important though perhaps more difficult: a sermon is easier than a conversation.¹⁷

The pastor should know the people in their homes. He should make an effort to remember names and faces. His must be a genuine and sincere interest, love and concern. He will need to learn the facts about the parish, but he must not listen to gossip.

In too many parishes it is true that the pastor feels that the young peoples' problems are too involved, the old people are uninteresting, sick people should be left to the physician and problems of the unmarried are dangerous. The result is that

our clergy have baptized the babies with pious words, married the young with little counsel, buried the dead with little hope and stood helplessly before the bereaved. It is safe to say that eighty-five to ninety per cent of the clergy today are doing little effective pastoral work or personal counseling of any kind.¹⁸

¹⁷ J. H. Jowett, The Preacher His Life and Work (New York: George H. Doran Co., 1912), p. 77.

¹⁸ Russell L. Dicks, Pastoral Work and Personal Counseling (New York: Macmillan Co., 1945), p. 4.

The pastor's plans must include all the people of his parish: the sick and sorrowing, the aged and infirm, the newcomers, the unchurched and unsaved, the young and old. He must not neglect the uncongenial, the unpromising. He must make the little folks feel that they belong. He dare not overlook the shy adolescent; the young people absorbed in school interests; those about to establish homes or already adjusting to marital relations. He must be comforter, peacemaker and counsellor.¹⁹

Is this task too comprehensive for one man? Louis and Malcolm Sweet have pointed out two unfavorable effects neglect of pastoral service will have: It will build up a barrier between the preacher and his people which sometimes hardens into opposition and it will almost inevitably bring about a lack of aim and definition in preaching with regard to human need.²⁰ Church members can give unvaluable aid but the task of the pastor is his and his alone.

This ministry should certainly be an integral part of the larger educational program of the church. How the pastor functions in education in the homes of his parish through visitation, through study groups, through the worship service

¹⁹ The Christian Mission Among Rural People (New York: Rural Missions Cooperating Committee of the Foreign Missions Conference of North America, 1945), p. 211.

²⁰ Louis M. Sweet and Malcolm S. Sweet, The Pastoral Ministry in Our Time (New York: Fleming H. Revell Co., 1949), p. 30.

and the church school, etc., is discussed in another chapter.²¹

²¹ *Infra.*, Chapter IV.

CHAPTER IV

HOW THE PASTOR FUNCTIONS IN THE EDUCATION OF THE FAMILY

The supreme objective of home instruction in religion is to bring persons to a saving knowledge of Jesus Christ, a realization of the perfection of His life, His teachings, His ideals and His personality. Could this be accomplished, many of the problems of the home would be resolved. However, there would still be the need for Christian nurture.

Feucht outlines seven points in what he calls a blueprint of action for a program of Christian family life education.

1. Thorough Christian indoctrination for young and old.
2. Premarital and postmarital counseling.
3. Adoption of some type of Christian home standard or charter.
4. A practical program of service, especially to new families when they move into a parish and to parents after the birth of a child.
5. Using youth and adult organizations to train for Christian family living.
6. Short courses of study in youth and adult classes.
7. Greater home-church co-operation.¹

¹ Oscar E. Feucht, A Family Life Program for the Parish, (St. Louis: The Lutheran Church--Missouri Synod, n.d.), p. 7.

In an attempt to ascertain what is being done at present; how pastors are functioning as educators in the homes and what the members of these homes desire that the pastors do further, a survey was made.

Questionnaires to pastors. Fifty-four questionnaires were sent to pastors of various denominations. In the replies at least nine denominations from thirteen states and Canada were represented. The majority of the pastors represented small churches, many of these in rural communities. Only three of the forty-three pastors replying had a Director of Religious Education in their churches. Thirty pastors considered themselves to be educational directors, eight of them with reservations. Five answered negatively; one stated that his wife served in that capacity; another, that the associate pastor did this work.

Questionnaires to home makers. A similar questionnaire was prepared to be sent to homes. Sixty-one of these were sent to homes in as many different parishes. These homes were chosen on the basis of being representative Christian homes. Most of them are in small communities and one or both of the parents are members of the church. Replies came from homes representing at least twelve Protestant denominations and one from a home in which the mother is Catholic. These homes are located in twelve states and Canada.

The pastor and education in the home. In answer to the specific question: "How do I act as educator in the homes of my parish?" one pastor replied that the pastor educates through the example of his own home. Four of the pastors mentioned visitation. "In calling I endeavor to get close to all members of the family in order to understand possible problems. Then as opportunity presents itself I try to make helpful suggestions." One pastor said that every family has its individual problems and by continued visitation the pastor gains the confidence of the family and can thus become counsellor and helper.

Another answered that he educates through the church school, emphasis in the worship service, discussion and counselling; and still another, by giving out ideas, plans, suggestions and information by word, tracts, books and other literature. "I have class discussions on Christian Education and give my best in leadership." Some of these answers reveal that the pastor realizes that part of his work with the family is done through the church program.

Through the church program. There are numerous groups and organizations within the church which have been formed to meet the needs of the various types of individuals who constitute the body as a whole. The Sunday school is ordinarily divided into age groups. The young people have their societies; the women have their societies. (In all too many

churches the men of the congregation are somewhat neglected.) Many churches now have the Daily Vacation Bible School to further care for the religious educational needs of the children.

In view of these many loyalties and interests, someone has said that "Christian education, through its departmental program, has divided the family and has put little in its program to weld the family as a unit."² This is not a plea for the elimination of the departmental program but rather to so integrate it with the total program of the church that when the family members come together either in the church or in the home they have something to share.

The complete educational system of the local church should be unified under the supervision of the pastor. Frequently the people, and often the pastor himself, fail to realize that he is general administrator and supervisor; that it is his task to see that the literature used is of the best quality available; that the teachers, officers, and leaders are qualified both spiritually and educationally; and that the organizations are run efficiently and to the best advantage. Resentment may be the result if the pastor fails to use diplomacy in assuming his responsibility; or disintegration and ineffectiveness, if he shirks his

² Frank A. Lindhorst, The Minister Teaches Religion (Nashville: Abingdon-Cokesbury, 1945), p. 91.

duty.

Lindhorst suggest a number of things which are necessary for effective cooperation between pastor and people. The pastor must be sure that his workers know and understand the goals for which they are working. He needs to develop true friendship with his workers but avoid favorites or overfamiliarity. He should encourage workers to make their own contribution in thoughts and plans. He should show appreciation for good work and thus encourage the individual to grow. He should try his utmost to discover and utilize the talents of his church members.³

Through the leadership in the various organizations of the church, the pastor can make contact with the family unit and can inject ideas which may directly or indirectly serve as guides to family living.

In visiting the different groups, he should not go as a stern supervisor to see what is or is not being done, but make it clearly understood that he desires to become acquainted with, and show that he is interested in, both the parents and the children.

As the pastor listens to the discussions he will discover the points of similarity or dissimilarity in the thinking of the various groups. He will thus become better equipped to formulate a program which will help in the

³ Ibid., pp 102 f.

Christian education of the family in terms of united interests. This can be done, though not without effort and cooperation, if the objectives and aims of each organization in relation to the other organizations are clearly and specifically stated and kept before the leaders. It is vitally important that there be no conflict in these objectives but clear evidence of a common purpose.

The members of the family must be made to realize that they are not being further divided because of participation in different organizations but that all the organizations are working toward the same goal--that of a compatible Christian family having as its larger goal the realization of a Christian society.

Perhaps a partial solution to the danger of fragmentation through divided interest would be special family nights or days or special recognition of the family group by the church. Twenty-four home makers revealed that they did have, to a greater or less degree, something like that in their churches. Special communion services where the family is urged to come as a unit; special family nights during revival meetings; fellowship suppers and social times were some of the activities mentioned. Concerning one particular church which did observe a family night, the point was made that these affairs were strictly social and while they were good in themselves it might be better to spend

some of the time in the study of family problems.

The worship service. As has been stated, the primary objective of Christian education is to relate the individual to his Maker through a vital Christian experience. This often comes as a direct result of a sermon, although there may be many factors which have contributed indirectly.

The much debated children's sermon has its place. Pleune suggests that the children's sermon should not be considered merely as an end in itself but as a means of making parents realize that the minister is desirous of sharing their task in the home and of giving further assistance.⁴

Series of sermons with emphasis on the home, in conjunction with related activities in the other organizations often prove effective. After such a concentrated emphasis, Lindhorst proposes the use of a check-card similar to the following:

Seeing the need for providing devotional practices in my (our) home, I (we) have decided to make our home life more nearly Christlike by

Saying grace regularly at meals.

Spending a few minutes daily in family devotions.

Watching my (our) conversation to keep it clean, constructive, and void of unkind remarks about others or about the church.

Reading my (our) church paper regularly.

⁴ Peter Pleune, Some to be Pastors (Nashville: Abingdon-Cokesbury, 1948), p. 164.

Providing wholesome recreation in the home for all members of the family, and remembering to follow such an experience with devotional closing.⁵

In connection with the question of special sermons for the family, one home maker suggested that there were few such sermons, except for Christian living and Christian growth while sometimes scriptures were given in prayer meeting on such matters as choosing mates and divorce. Another stated that there were sermons on children obeying their parents and parents having worship with them. Still another observed that the pastor of their church did have special sermons always bringing out in them the relationship of the home, church and community. One of the pastors dedicates each third Sunday to the family.

Worship services should call forth greater consecration, decisions for life work and other aspects of the Christian life. Further, worship services should teach specific things. The minister through the worship service should instill in all present a reverence for God and for His house. If the pastor can cause the parents to realize the significance of this it will be much less difficult to impress it upon the children. Children and young people are easily led and to a great extent do what they see others do. Because of this fact, another prerequisite for the Christian home is that the parents accompany, rather than send, their children

⁵ Lindhorst, op. cit., p. 46.

to church.

For the most part they (the educational plans and procedures of the church) have been pulpit-centred, ritual-centred, or church school-centred. They have not been family-centred, and so they have missed much of their power and parents have overlooked a major part of their calling.⁶

Through study groups. The idea of the Hebrews was that the parent be educated and in turn educate his child. (Deut. 6:6 ff.) But not only must the parent be educated, technically speaking, in the law and the prophets, in church ritual and customs, etc.; he must be trained for his task as a parent. By the way parents act their children will know whether or not they believe in God.⁷

It is a fact well-known and acknowledged that attitudes are more often acquired through association than as a result of direct, deliberate teaching. It is essential that parents realize the necessity of being equipped educationally, morally, and spiritually to lead their children.

The main objective of the church, with respect to the parents' class, should be to find out with parents where their limitations lie in their responsibility as religious teachers in the home, and so plan with them how to correct these limitations.

⁶ L. Foster Wood, "Family Life Education," Religious Education, 45:212-214, July-August, 1950. p. 213.

⁷ Ethlyne Babcock Staples and Edward D. Staples, Children in a Christian Home (Nashville: Abingdon-Cokesbury Press, 1948), p. 10.

⁸ Wesner Fallaw, The Modern Parent and the Teaching Church (New York: The Macmillan Co., 1947), p. 72.

Nothing less than enlistment of parents to teach in the home--by example more than precept--and regular training periods for equipping parents for their job as Christian teachers will suffice.⁹

In the planning of study groups as in other activities of the church the pastor should act as supervisor.

Sometimes there is a lack of understanding and sympathy between the various age groups. Instead of trying to smooth over these apparent conflicts, it is the privilege as well as the duty of the pastor to organize groups bringing together the conflicting ideas. Through panels, forums, discussions and other methods these differences may often be cleared up.

Parent-teacher groups in the church school may be formed in which parents find out what their children are being taught, and if the teachers are as efficient as they should be, learn educational methods which may be used with much benefit in the home.

Hazel Thomson writing in The Christian Minister says,

If I were a minister I would organize a class for teaching love, courtship, and marriage. And I would begin with the teen-agers. Christian homes are at stake unless the church comes into grips with delinquency and broken homes. I would also conduct a class for parents on child training. The church must counteract the many fallacies in modern child psychology.¹⁰

Concerning the question of study groups, one home

⁹ Ibid., p. 73.

¹⁰ Hazel Thomson, "If I Were a Minister" The Christian Minister, 1:18-19, January, 1950.

maker replied that instruction was given to both groups. (This reply came from the only Roman Catholic home maker included in this survey.) Another said that the pastor holds study groups on "Family Living." Several mentioned young people's meetings. One said that while they had no study groups in their church she thought they would be helpful. Another replied that parents' study groups are what the church needs. "After all the most important job a parent has is training children in such a way that their lives will be complete and worthwhile (physically, mentally and spiritually)." Another stated that they had training courses (teaching) on holiness. "Sometimes some of the problems are touched on in Sunday school classes," said another. One home maker included two sets of questions used in their adult study group. They included such questions as these:

How is racial tolerance learned by our young people?

How can we better plan for the use of the family car on certain nights?

How often should a child be permitted to go to the show?

Is the instability of the family a sign of family failure? (Juvenile delinquency, adult crime, alcoholism, mental breakdown)

Which types of radio programs are helpful and which types are harmful to family life?

These and many more very pertinent questions have been discussed in parent study groups in this particular church.

The pastors answered almost as sketchily as did the

home makers on the question of study groups. Fourteen of them said they had parent study groups; sixteen, young people's groups; five, periods when parents and youth could talk over their problems together. However, most of the pastors said they had no set periods outside the regular meetings of the Sunday school, Womans' Society, Youth Fellowship, etc.

The questionnaires showed the apparent need felt by both parents and pastors for more study groups. Some 'further suggestions' given by the home makers included having study groups for young people, dealing with the problems of courtship and marriage and for young parents. Another suggested the study groups for young people "inasmuch as young people today are marrying outside the church and so many are marrying non-Christians and are finding out in many cases that it does not work out." The Roman Catholic mother suggested regular instruction in the many phases of family life for the family as a whole. She felt that the study for parents and for youngsters separately is fine but if the parents and children attended special classes in a group the effect would be lasting and surely beneficial.

One parent said he felt that this is a topic (young people's study groups on courtship and marriage) that is woefully neglected in our country churches. Another said that he and his pastor have discussed study groups on home life

but decided it would not get cooperation from the people. Perhaps the pastor should educate the people to see the need for such groups.

In addition to the types of study groups already mentioned, one naturally thinks of the pastor's responsibility in relation to teacher-training groups and preparatory membership classes.

Through counseling. Closely allied to the study group method though on an individualized scale is the comparatively new but highly significant method known as pastoral counseling. More and more ministers and educators are realizing the importance of counseling. Classes in counseling are being set up in colleges and seminaries. Many books are being written on it. It is a much talked-about subject which is being practiced with varying degrees of success.

It is often easier to give advice to a group than to an individual. This perhaps accounts for the fact that in many cases there is less effective ministry through individual counseling and visitation than through the pulpit presentation of the gospel. However, all who need help may not be seeking advice so much as a sympathetic listener. Unfortunately, sometimes the pastor's personality is not such as to attract people to him for counsel, advice or even 'sympathetic listening.'

. . .a pastor whose sermons reveal experience with life, a humble spirit and an understanding heart, from whom people feel they can reasonably expect sympathetic help in analyzing their problems and not just denunciation or excommunication. . .¹¹

is the kind who will cause people to come to him for help.

All members of the family should feel free to go to the pastor with their problems with the assurance that confidential matters will not be revealed but that the pastor has the best interests of the individual and the family at heart.

Since individuals usually come to the pastor voluntarily for counsel, it may be assumed that they come for the purpose of being helped and may reveal hidden desires, possibilities or talents which otherwise might not be discovered. If the pastor is alert as he should be he will grasp these opportunities to locate and encourage development of talents and leadership and potential power for the good of the church and the home as well as the individual.

If the pastor has the confidence of those who come to him, his counseling can prove to be one of the means of educating the homes of his parish in the ways of Christian living.

In answering the question concerning personal counseling, the majority of the home makers seemed to feel that the pastor is quite ready and willing to serve in this

¹¹ Albert W. Palmer, The Minister's Job (Chicago: Willett, Clark & Co., 1937), p. 30.

capacity. In two cases the answers were negative; five gave no answer and two thought it a very negligible part of his work. One said that anyone felt free to go to their pastor or ask him to come to the home. Sometimes the pastor sees problems and goes to the person in Christian love. Another suggested that his pastor had the personality which made one feel he could always go to him. The Catholic home maker said they are always urged to go to their pastor with any problem--no matter what the nature. He weighs the pros and cons and gives counsel accordingly.

The pastors, as a rule, said they had no special period for counseling but were available at any convenient time. More of them stated that young people and young adults, especially those contemplating marriage, came to them more frequently than any other group. One pastor said that people outside his church came to him most frequently for counsel. However, he felt this was because the problems of the people within his membership could be discussed during his visits in their homes.

Another pastor enclosed a copy of a letter which he sometimes sends to couples planning to be married who are too far away to come to him personally. This very inclusive and beneficial letter was divided into five parts and is briefly outlined below:

1. Marriage is 'holy' matrimony--a spiritual

undertaking.

2. How well do you know each other?

A. No extreme differences

B. Do not harbor resentments but do not be finding fault continually. Keep differences in the open.

3. Who is 'Boss'?

A. The bank account

B. Live within the income

C. Do not share your home unless absolutely necessary--especially with another couple not your parents.

4. Children?

A. Sex-life

i. books suggested

ii. seek physician's counsel

5. Faithfulness and complete trust foundational

A. Devotional life

i. pray together

ii. join and support a church

This same pastor gives each couple whom he marries a letter "mostly devotional in nature making an appeal for the establishment of a Christian home at the very beginning of their married life" to be read later when the two are alone, while traveling or before retiring.

Through visitation. As in modern education, the pastor's program must be flexible enough to allow for the

unexpected or to take care of felt needs which may arise. Yet he will need to budget his time to some extent and one important section of this budgeted program will be visitation.

The pastor most recently mentioned felt that while a number of individuals did come to him for counsel, usually with problems in their personal spiritual life, he made his greatest contribution while visiting in the homes, where problems are mentioned and considered.

Instead of waiting for his parishioners to come to him as in counseling, in pastoral visitation the pastor goes to his parishioners. This has its advantages in that he can reach a larger percentage of his people. Not only can he reach a larger group of his own people but he can often reach the unchurched--a group not ordinarily reached in any of the ways previously mentioned.

In visitation, the pastor should be able to depend upon members of his flock to cooperate with him and thus lessen the load. However, visitation should not be done carelessly or church visitors chosen promiscuously. Here is a very dangerous place for zeal without wisdom.

The good pastor will get acquainted with and show an interest in all members of the family. Home visitation affords a good opportunity for doing this. Of course, with the complexity of modern living it is often difficult to

find a time when the whole family will be together.

The objectives in pastoral visitation have been given as:

To guide progressive religious development within the family by counsel, demonstration, distribution of literature

To assist in meeting crises of family life: death, illness, estrangement, poverty

To share special occasions with the family: wedding anniversaries, home dedications commencement, etc.¹²

To achieve the first of these objectives the pastor may aid in the establishment of a family altar, personal devotions, grace at meals, the habit of recognizing and using good music and good literature.

One pastor stated that many people in the country and small towns have opinions and ideas that need to be brought up to date and the pastor is the one to give information. The pastors in the main seemed to realize their duty and privilege, while visiting in the home, to be one of spiritual instruction and suggestion--ways of establishing the family altar; suggested reading matter for devotions and child interest; discussion of problems of the Christian life; sharing with people the importance of the church to the total family life.

It is during these periods of visitation that the

¹² Home and Church Work Together, Educational Bulletin No. 423 (New York: International Council of Religious Education, 1940), p. 48.

pastor has great opportunity to guide the thinking of the family along the line of spiritual growth. It is customary to expect to think along spiritual lines while in church but it will be fine indeed if the pastor can bring the family to realize the importance of following in the home the instruction of Paul when he said, ". . .whatsoever things are true . . .honest. . .just. . .pure. . .lovely. . .of good report; if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, think on these things."¹³

In achieving the second objective, 'To assist in meeting crises' the pastor has the privilege as well as the responsibility of being of service. This service is rendered through the sermon and through the church; but personal contact at the place where the crisis is most likely to occur--in the home--will often be much more meaningful.

The third objective involves the sharing of special occasions. Again, the pastor can imbue special occasions such as birthdays, dedication of the new home, and various anniversaries with spiritual significance that will do much to strengthen the home ties. This does not mean that he will obtrude upon the intimacy of family gatherings or that he will abuse his welcome. He will use tact and wisdom, but will not ignore the opportunities these occasions afford to educate his parishioners in the meaning of making every phase

¹³ Holy Bible, Philippians 4:8.

of living Christian.

The questionnaires disclosed little activity in this particular area on the part of pastors other than in their performance of the marriage ceremony. A few of them did mention the fact that they had at times dedicated new homes.

Pastoral visitation makes for better relations between the pastor and every member of his parish--the young, the old, the sick, the shut-in, the unchurched. It also helps the pastor to see the needs of his people, and it better prepares him to meet these needs through his pulpit ministry.

Hewitt says of pastoral visiting that it widens the pastor's scope; it rightly motivates his preaching.

Unless he is an outcast from the city of God, he will grow to love his people if he visits them; and when he really loves them all selfish or mistaken motives will fade away before his earnest desire to preach the things which will be helpful to them.¹⁴

It prunes his sermons; it humanizes his preaching; it will serve as a major source of sermons; and it will be a means of making friends.¹⁵

The question of pastoral visitation was one which elicited more comment than any other.

Varying with the size of the church, fourteen of the

¹⁴ Arthur W. Hewitt, Highland Shepherds (Chicago: Willett, Clark and Company, 1939), p. 185.

¹⁵ Ibid., pp. 184 ff.

pastors had as their goal for visiting each home a minimum of once a quarter. Eleven stated that they visited as time allowed and needs demanded; nine, once or twice a year; and three, once or twice a month.

However, a number of the home makers did not feel that the pastor spent enough time visiting. Eight of these, at least, voiced the opinion that the pastor called only when there was sickness or trouble; that his calls were only casual calls or were too infrequent. When asked to make further suggestions of what should be done, fourteen suggested more regular visitation; at times when all were likely to be present; into all homes; "visitation other than when you're sick." One suggested having prayer during these visits. One home maker whose home is evidently rather influential in the community said the pastor visited their home but neglected others and further suggested that the pastor do less institutional visiting and make more contacts with less prominent members of the church. Another suggestion was that the pastor visit all homes in the community with the help of church workers. Said another home maker, "Although we are close neighbors, good Methodists and friends he has yet to make a call on our home. This seems so strange to me because it makes the minister seem so distant and unfriendly." Still another desires that the pastor "just visit us in his everyday clothes once in a while and get acquainted with the

problems of rural people, in other words mix freely with his parishioners." Another suggested that the pastor needs some system of visitation so that all members are contacted often.

Those who answered that they felt that the pastor did visit sufficiently seemed to feel this was one of the most vital contributions he made to their family life; "his visits were always a source of inspiration for every activity of life."

In connection with visitation, one home maker suggested that the pastor should be very careful in repeating, in his sermons, sick room or home conversations and private interviews which might cause hurt.

Through the community and other agencies. The pastor is a servant of the community and should show concern for everything that tends to make the community better. He should visit the school officials, the librarians, the civic officials and others working with constructive community agencies, not for the purpose of offering adverse criticism but to become acquainted and make himself available.

After the pastor has acquainted himself with the religious, moral, economic and industrial conditions of the community he is in position to serve the community and through this service the families of the community. This he may do through an expandable program, civic organizations, radio, and the use of the newspaper.

Answers to the question of media used to reach the families of the parish indicated the church letter to be the most widely used. One pastor said he employed every medium within reach and found the newspaper and radio to be very cooperative.

Some of the pastors felt that they could contribute much through the Parent-Teacher Association, through scout work and other civic organizations and could in this way reach many unchurched people as well. One home maker said that their pastor at Parent-Teacher Association meetings suggested good literature for the home.

By example. While there are innumerable ways in which the pastor can serve as educator of the families of his parish perhaps one of the most efficacious is that which he does most unconsciously--in his own home.

. . . apt to teach; 4. . . One that ruleth well his own house, having his children in subjection with all gravity; 5. (For if a man know not how to rule his own house, how shall he take care of the church of God?)¹⁶

The somewhat trite expression "what you do speaks so loudly I cannot hear what you say" is very applicable here. The pastor's home should be a demonstration of kindness, respect for personality, warmth of hospitality, and democratic living.

That the pastor's home and personal life is influential

¹⁶ Holy Bible, I Timothy 3:2b, 4,5.

in the education of the homes of the parish is maintained by a number of home makers. One said their pastor had helped their home by living a Godly life. "Seven in the family [of the pastor] are real Christians, working for the Lord." Another statement was: he was helped by the pastor living a Godly life and preaching the full truth.

Another writer said, "Our pastor's home is an example of consistent Christian living and he preaches as he lives. Our parish accepts strong spiritual preaching and is happy under his ministry."

A home maker said: "They kept our child when the parent was ill; when father died they kept all three. They have shown the love of Christ more and more; and proved always to be our friends."

Replies as to what the pastor has done that has especially helped the homes other than those already mentioned included again and again the help rendered during visitation especially at the time of sickness.

Making all members of the family feel important was another frequently mentioned item. One home maker wrote, he has a "personal and sincere interest in all members of my family;" he "keeps us posted and corresponds with my son in Japan." "He makes the teen-agers feel important in the church which will help hold them," replied another. From another came this reply: "He stresses that life in the home is most

important; he preaches in such a way that young people want salvation; he has a way with them that makes them want to do better; he talks to them, not over their heads."

In one church the pastor's wife conducted a Junior choir which increased the attendance of children at the Sunday morning service. The pastor of this church taught a young people's class which, in the summer, met each Thursday at his home for games, refreshments, and a time of devotions. This type of thing helped to strengthen the young people in their faith.

Another pastor included a news sheet in the church bulletin which was mailed regularly to each family. Films, such as "The Rim of the Wheel" which shows the tensions of modern day living and the way in which to relieve these tensions, were shown by another pastor.

Five replies to the questionnaire contained no answer to the question, "What are some things your pastor does that have especially helped your home?" One contained the terse but sincere clause "Can't think of any." Another stated "nothing that I can think of." Another replied simply "Nothing."

The pastor most certainly has a great responsibility and limitless opportunities in his relationship to the homes of his parish.

CHAPTER V

IMPROVING THE EDUCATIONAL WORK OF THE PASTOR IN THE HOMES OF HIS PARISH

One of the results of this study was the discovery of how the pastor may become more proficient as an educator in the homes of his parish. A number of methods named in this chapter have been used to good advantage by pastors or were suggested by them, or were suggested by home makers. Still others have come as a result of research in other areas.

Discovering the needs. One method which the pastor may use to obtain data concerning his flock is the use of a carefully formulated questionnaire. Of course, this questionnaire, while distributed to every home in his parish, is for the pastor's use alone. This must be clearly understood in order that he get an honest, unbiased picture.

In answer to the question as to whether they had used such a questionnaire, twenty-nine pastors said 'no'; five replied 'yes.' Three said they had but not regularly. Four pastors said they had not done so but thought it a good idea and hoped to in the future. Another said he had used talent questionnaires but this question had "opened a new field of possibilities" to him.

The pastor who is really concerned in his parish has

a compassion for his people and discovers methods which will be effective in meeting situations. He has his eyes open for new ideas and helps. In his visiting he may learn of some interesting method of conducting family worship; of some useful literature; he may see something which especially attracts him as being worthwhile. With the permission of the family, these discoveries may be described in the church bulletin or pastoral letter or incorporated in his sermon.

Stimulating family-consciousness. Family-consciousness could be stimulated through the use of a self-analysis chart such as the one prepared under the auspices of the Board for Parish Education of the Evangelical Lutheran Synod of Missouri, Ohio and Other States. This chart "is to help parents locate and define weaknesses in the conduct of their home and undertake improvements in specific areas of life in the home."¹

Four pastors said they had distributed a chart of this nature; three others had, but only once. Thirty-three said they had not. Of these, one intends to do so, another believes it to be a good idea where it can be accomplished, and a third said he had not prepared any nor been aware of any on the printed market. Another pastor said his preaching ministry is intended to accomplish this.

¹ A Self-Analysis Chart for the Home (The Board for Parish Education of the Evangelical Lutheran Synod of Missouri, Ohio, and Other States, n.d.), n.p.

The chart mentioned is divided into four major sections. Each section is subdivided into small groups and each of the smaller groups contains a number of statements to be checked. It is briefly outlined as follows:

- I. The Ideal Christian Home
 - A. Relationship of Husband and Wife
 - B. The Devotional Life
- II. The Home as a School
 - A. The Children
 - B. The Youth
 - C. The Example of Parents
 - D. Culture and Amusements
- III. The Home and Church Relationship
 - A. Church Attendance
 - B. Educational Agencies
 - C. Church Work
- IV. The Home and Social Relationships
 - A. Neighborliness
 - B. Community²

Such a self-analysis chart as the one described is quite inclusive and if conscientiously checked would prove quite challenging. The pastor is the logical one to initiate this procedure and should be prepared to aid the families in the areas in which deficiencies are felt. In this as in other matters the people must feel that they can safely confide in their pastor and that their conversations will be kept perfectly confidential if they so desire.

Preparation for personal counsel. In seeking personal counsel, while all members of the family should feel

² Loc. cit.

free to go to the pastor with their problems, the youth trying to make a decision as to his life-work, the child or young person who feels that he is misunderstood by his elders, the adult who feels a need for help and guidance in family problems, perhaps the most important individuals as related to the home-family situation are the young adults. This includes young people with courtship problems, those contemplating marriage and those already married.

There are many books available which should serve as guides in dealing with many of these situations. In this as in other phases of the ministry, the pastor must be discriminating and choose only those books or portions of books which would lead to desired decisions.

One booklet of this type has been prepared by the Commission on Marriage and the Home of the Federal Council of the Churches of Christ in America called Premarital Counseling, A Manual of Suggestions for Ministers. It contains an outline for counseling in this field, raising many thought-provoking questions. Another booklet of this type, by Hazen G. Werner, The Pastor and the Pre-Marriage Conference, is published by the Tidings Press of Nashville, Tennessee.

The pastor should familiarize himself with good, wholesome books on marriage which he can readily recommend to couples or individuals coming to him.

The families serve others. As the families become

established and a feeling of security is gained, and as they become an integral part of the church family, they should be made to feel responsible for other homes in the parish.

One home maker suggested among other things that the pastor might give "talks on how families, as units, can help other families." One tangible way to discharge such responsibility is through visitation. The pastor as educational director might institute a class in home visitation.

From a questionnaire it was learned that in one church there was a Sunday school teachers' visitation campaign to attempt to interest each family member in some part of the work of the church such as the cradle roll, Youth Fellowship, etc. Still stressing the importance of visitation, this layman stated, "I believe that more homes are helped by visitation campaigns either by church lay workers or Sunday school teachers headed by the pastor if laymen will cooperate. We shouldn't be too busy to witness for Christ in such a way as home visitation affords, but it seems that there are few willing to take time or else they have nothing to share."

There are many booklets available to the pastor in directing the thinking of those in his visitation class. One such booklet is Home Visitation in the Interest of Children, a sixteen page booklet put out by the International Council of Religious Education. Another is Visiting in the Home, also published by the International Council. These

booklets offer many worthwhile suggestions as to method.

Literature for the family. In guiding the spiritual development of the family good literature is important.

Twenty-four of the home makers responding to the questionnaire answered that their pastor suggested good literature for the home; two replied 'some.' Nine were unable to answer which seems to indicate that these pastors, if they were able, did not make a point of recommending such literature. One said, "Yes, and he is always urging us to read; gives good suggestions on any line we desire." Another said they had bought and profited by much of the literature their pastor recommended. Yet another said the pastor of his church kept good literature in the lobby of the church at all times free or for a small fee. Another replied that the pastor does recommend good literature but "to get people to use it--a great problem." Another questionnaire revealed that the pastor's wife takes this as her special project.

The Christian Home, a periodical published by the Methodist Church, was mentioned a number of times as being an excellent source of helpful information. In one church, members of the young adult class are furnished this periodical without cost to them and in another church it is free to parents.

A very excellent source of assistance to the family

is a carefully selected library containing books pertaining to every phase of home life. While this in itself would require much time and involve expense, it would be of immeasurable worth, especially if those who particularly need such assistance could be stimulated to utilize it.

Most of the pastors seemed aware of a need for such a library but a number of them said that they have no library, or one which is inadequate, in their small churches. One said they had started a library recently and they would place books of this nature in it as opportunity and finances permitted.

Further suggestions. Two or three home makers suggested that the pastor stress the family sitting together in church or worshipping as a unit. Still another suggestion was that families, instead of persons from various groups, be in charge of certain church events.

Some pastors suggested the use of films and other visual aids on family life. However, as one stated, the cost of this type of thing is still prohibitive for extensive use.

A pastor prints a little leaflet each month called "The Voice" which contains items of interest and inspiration and is distributed throughout the parish. This same pastor uses a tape-recorder to take the services of the church to the sick and shut-in.

One church feels the need for good, clean recreation as well as spiritual food. They were planning for their young people some sort of cultural and recreational program such as a trip to a nearby city for a concert, followed by recreation or a social time afterward in some home. The purpose of this was "to meet the need of legitimate recreation for young people and to develop a taste for good things." This, while not specifically designed to meet the needs of the whole family would serve in part to strengthen the future home by working on one phase of the problem as stated by a pastor, that of "training youth in Christian Home ideals before they reach the age of marriage."

One pastor enclosed a church bulletin which contained the order of service for the annual bride's service. This included a regular marriage ceremony as a part of the service in which the oldest couple, in point of married years, retook the vows. The pastor's sermon was entitled "I Flight Thee My Troth."

In one church a School in Christian Living was held for six nights. This school was for everybody with classes in home and Christian living.

Another pastor stated rather bluntly that "the Church of today has no moral standards or 'code of conduct.' People can belong to the Church and do what they want in the way of worldly things. . . She has lost her Spiritual power."

He seemed to feel, and rightly so, that a spiritually powerless church has little to offer a family as a challenge for Christian living.

Several of the home makers were aware of this fact also and a number of them, when asked what their pastor could do further, said that he could preach the whole gospel, hit sin hard, stress salvation and holiness.

On the other hand, another pastor said succinctly, "As I see it, the whole experience of the family is treated with the attitude 'it's nobody else's business' that the pastor and the church are too much like the ambulance--they only get to the scene after the home has been wrecked. Of course, there is the other side of the picture--who is there who can compute the good which is done? Just as in the case of mental therapy, who can compute the health which is brought to disturbed minds through the proclamation of the 'good news'? The pastor and the church might join the chorus of the ambulance driver, undertakers and hospital staff in the refrain: 'fortunately there are no more wrecks than there are under the circumstances!'"

"It takes time to overcome the indifference and lassitude of parents and the neglect of the home on the part of parish leadership."³ "To aid fathers and mothers to become

³ The Committee on the Study of Christian Education, V The Family (Chicago: International Council of Religious Education, 1946-1947), p. 19.

intelligent and skilfull parents is a task of startling and thrilling magnitude."⁴

The danger lies in the temptation to regard Christian family life education as something extra which we add to the regular program. Instead, it should be something which we do along with what we are already doing. It is not a new chore. It is a short cut to better results in church work. To save the child you must save the home!⁵

⁴ Ibid., p. 20.

⁵ Oscar E. Feucht, A Family Life Program for the Parish, p. 12.

CHAPTER VI

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

The pastor as representative of the church has as his task the education, or at least the supervision of the Christian education, of the homes in his parish. Yet whether through lack of cooperation between the church and the home or because of a need for an enlarged vision on the part of pastor and church, Christian education in the home does not seem to be as extensive and intensive as might be desired.

There is an increasing awareness of the urgent need and a rising hope that more and more stress will be put upon the home and what can be done to stabilize and Christianize it.

The pastor has the privilege and responsibility of ministering to the needs of the home through organizations within the church, through the worship service, through study groups, through the comparatively new field of pastoral counseling, through pastoral visitation and community agencies. Perhaps one of the most effective ways in which he can educate the homes of his parish is through the example of his own home life.

While it is important that the pastor become acquainted with and show an interest in every member of the family, the parents and the young adults are two groups

which above all must not be ignored. The church and pastor must enlist the aid of the parents since they are the ones who will ultimately determine what the home is to be. Perhaps they will not consciously teach religion but through their lives the children will come to see whether or not they have a faith in God.

The other group, the young adults, should be enlisted for the great task of building the home Christian even before they have established a home. The pastor has a great opportunity of working with them through study groups but even more effectively through personal counseling.

The pastor must have the confidence and trust of his people in order to do his best work. He must also be awake to new methods and procedures which can be used to advantage in his own particular parish to save the home--the hope of society.

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APPENDIX

QUESTIONNAIRE SENT TO THE PASTORS

Do you have a director of religious education in your church?
(yes, 3; no, 40)

If not, would you consider yourself as an educational director?
(yes, 26; no, 4)

How would you answer the question which makes up the title of this thesis: How do I act as educator in the homes of my parish?

A. Do you have:

Special sermons on the home and family? (yes, 24; no, 2)

Family days or nights or special recognition of families?
(yes, 24; no, 2)

Study groups?

Parent (yes, 16; no, 5)

Young Adult (yes, 16; no, 5)

Times when parents and children or youth can discuss problems together (yes, 5; no, 7)

Periods of personal counseling

Who comes most for counsel?

Young people to discuss problems of marriage, etc.
(19)

Parents (14)

Others _____

B. Do you ever distribute questionnaires to discover needs in the homes of your parish? (yes, 5; no, 29)

C. Do you ever distribute at meetings self-analysis charts for the parents to check to note their own deficiencies or strong points? (yes, 3; no, 30)

D. How often do you try to visit in each home? (once a year, 3; twice a year, 6; four times a year, 13; others varied)

E. Do you give special attention to marriage ceremonies, home dedications, special occasions, anniversaries, etc.? (yes, 22; no, 2) In what way?

F. Do you have or know or are there in the church library good, fundamental books which could be recommended on:

marriage, parenthood, Christian homes, etc.? yes, 26;
no, 5)

- G. Do you use the medium of radio, newspaper, civic organizations, letter, etc., to especially reach the families of your church and those who are unchurched? yes, 22;
no, 2)
- H. Kindly state any of your procedures or activities having to do with Christian Education which are not listed in this questionnaire.
- I. What further suggestions do you have of things you do or that pastors might do for the strengthening of the Christian home, either through the church and its organizations or through other agencies?

QUESTIONNAIRE SENT TO THE HOMES

- A. Do you feel that your pastor stresses the home as a unit
 Enough (30) Not enough (11)
- B. Does he show an interest in all members of the family?
 (yes, 37)
- C. Does he offer constructive help (always in this questionnaire in relation to the family) through:
1. Special sermons or series of sermons?
 (yes, 29; no, 3; occasionally, 6)
 2. Special services--family night, etc. (yes, 5; no, 7)
 How?
 3. Study groups? How?
 For young people (problems of courtship, marriage, etc.)
 For parents
 4. Personal counsel? (yes, 15; no, 2) How?
- D. Does he have available, or can suggest, good literature on the home?
- E. What are some things your pastor does that have especially helped your home?
- F. What would you suggest that your pastor do to further help your home and other homes in the community?