

Chapter 1 : THIS is what a vibrant parish looks like - Not Strictly Spiritual | Not Strictly Spiritual

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Church Ministry Structure and Organization Introduction When believers in Christ join together as a congregation to do the work that Jesus commissioned the church to do: How can ministry best be organized to allow the church to function and fulfill its purpose? This article is intended to present general principles that can be adapted to fit the unique character of a local church and to also give a fresh perspective on approaching ministry. We will now look at some of these concepts by starting with the head leadership of the church and working our way down. Without Jesus as the head of the church, it will not be able to function or accomplish its mission. Underneath the Head Shepherd, there is a group of under shepherds overseers, elders or pastors who are the spiritual leaders of the church. This group of spiritual leaders can be composed of some individuals who have dedicated their livelihoods to ministry and others who do not and make a living elsewhere. Their primary focus is to oversee the spiritual aspects of the church. We can see with the early church in Acts 6: Now in these days when the disciples were increasing in number, a complaint by the Hellenists arose against the Hebrews because their widows were being neglected in the daily distribution. Therefore, brothers, pick out from among you seven men of good repute, full of the Spirit and of wisdom, whom we will appoint to this duty. But we will devote ourselves to prayer and to the ministry of the word. This allows the spiritual leadership to not become preoccupied by these other things that need to be taken care of in the church. There is a natural tendency to get pulled into focusing on the physical world around us and end up neglecting the more important spiritual matters of the church. If we want to form the structure of ministry around how it functions, we need to discover the basic functions of the church. Looking at the Great Commission in Matthew These four general areas are listed in the table below: These four relationships can be indicated by four directional words describing the direction of the relationship to the church. The church reaching out to those outside the church. The church reaching in to those inside the church. The church reaching up by communicating and giving to God. Praising, Prayer, Worship Down-Reach: God reaching down by communicating and giving to the church. Bible Study, Preaching, Teaching, the Holy Spirit All of these relationships work together in balance and are necessary for each other to function properly. People come into the body of Christ through evangelism and then through equipping, encouragement, and growing in their relationship with Christ they then go out and evangelize to others who are then brought into the discipleship process Matthew With each of these four relationships, ministry teams can be established under the church leadership to help ensure that each one functions properly and that no area is neglected or out of balance. Sub-teams can also be established under each of these four core ministry teams to deal with more specific areas if necessary. Maybe naming the ministry teams Up-Reach or In-Reach, for instance, or some other fitting name would help the team to keep focused on their purpose. The following figure illustrates the In, Out, Up and Down-Reach relationships and how each are related to one another. Group and Area Ministries It is easy to see how many ministries in the church would fit under one of those four areas. But, consider, for instance, the youth ministry of a local church. At first you might think it would just belong under the Down-Reach or equipping function of the church. But, a youth group also reaches out to unsaved youth, encourages and keeps each other accountable, and worships and prays to God at youth group meetings. This is an example of a group ministry which includes all four areas or functions of the church about as equally. There are two ways that ministries in the church can be oriented: Group ministries are concerned with ministering in all areas of the church to a specific group of people. The groups are composed of people with a common characteristic or interest, many of which are based on age or gender. Each person in the church can be covered by more than one group, and each group can minister a little differently in each of the four areas to a particular people group. It is important with group ministries to make sure you do not create too many groups that are functioning separately by themselves. Try to keep groups that are similar together so that they will work better being with other teams that are related to it. For example, you could have a main Family

ministry group with sub-teams for marriages, single parents, divorced, and grief support. Area ministries, on the other hand, are concerned with ministering in a specific area to all groups within the church. Each of these area ministries is primarily focused on its particular function Up, Down, In or Out that the team deals with, but they will also include a little from the other areas as well since no area can be completely separated from the others and work effectively. In addition to each area ministry working generally with the church body as a whole, they also work with and assist each group ministry in helping them to minister in that area. For instance, an evangelism or Out-Reach team works with the church as a whole in evangelism efforts, as well as working with group ministries such as the Youth, Women, and Men in helping them evangelize their particular people group. With some ministries it might be more difficult to determine whether it would be best to base the ministry under an area ministry or have it function as a group ministry. For example, if you have a ministry that is functioning primarily as a once a year outreach to a particular people group and it does not include a significant amount from other areas, such as holding bible studies or accountability groups throughout the year, it may be best to base that ministry under the Out-Reach team. Even though the ministry deals with a specific people group, it is not focused on ministering in all areas to that group. However, if over time the ministry grows to include the other areas or functions about as equally as outreach, then you could move it out from under the Out-Reach team and make it a group ministry. To help you consider which way would work best for a particular ministry, you might try thinking of a pie with four slices: Ministry Teams

Now that we have the group and area ministries established, we can look at how these ministries function internally within themselves. The leadership of each ministry can be composed of several different leadership structures depending on how large the ministry is or how much work is involved. Some ministries, particularly smaller ones, could be led by just a single leader. You could also include a co-leader to take on the responsibilities of the ministry when the leader is unavailable or to help share the work load. If a ministry is larger, and you have three or more leaders, you could make group decisions for the ministry. At the group leadership level the group can still designate a head group leader that can be given executive authority by the group to take care of certain decisions that need to be taken care of before the group is able to meet again for example, if something breaks down and needs fixed right away. The group leader would only be able make decisions that are within the limits that the group had previously granted them. The group could also give authority in a similar manner to other group members at times to oversee details for a special project or responsibility. For some ministries, the group leader or single ministry leader could also be a staff member or pastor, such as in the case of a youth pastor or worship pastor. A ministry team leader could in some cases also act as a liaison or representative for that ministry by also being a member of the ministry team above them. In addition to ministry teams working within their own areas and groups, there are many times when different ministry teams work together on special events or ministry efforts. In these cases, one of those ministry teams can be designated as the primary overseer for that ministry effort or event. This can usually be the ministry team that deals with the largest portion of the joint ministry or handles the primary focus of the event. This primary overseer handles how the overall ministry effort or event will look and fit together, in addition to handling their own specialized part in it. The other ministry teams involved would be responsible to the primary overseer relating to that joint ministry effort. Sometimes, with a larger joint ministry, a special ministry team made up of members of the various ministry teams involved could be established instead of designating one of the teams to be the primary overseer. Another situation where ministry teams work together involves the support or service ministries in the church which are based as ministry teams under the head physical or service leadership. These support ministries, if they would function separately by themselves apart from the rest of the church, would not have any spiritual significance. But when they are joined together with supporting the other ministries in the church, they take on a spiritual purpose. These ministries are responsible directly to the head physical or service leadership, but are also responsible to the leadership of each ministry they support while dealing with that particular ministry. In some cases, these support ministries could just be based under a certain ministry if they primarily, or almost exclusively, deal with only that ministry. A technical ministry, for instance, could be overseen exclusively by a worship ministry if it does not deal with any other ministries in the church on a significant basis. Both the spiritual and physical focuses present in the

head leadership of the church are also evident within each other ministry in the church, but usually these ministries do not have two separate groups within that ministry to focus on the spiritual and physical sides of ministry. The physical service aspects within each ministry many times work simply as a joint part of that ministry, but in cases where a service ministry also supports many other ministries in the church, they can be based under the direction of the head physical leadership of the church. Conclusion Hopefully, some of these concepts will help give you ideas as to how ministry structure might be improved in your church to help you accomplish the mission and purpose God has given the church. There are many other issues to consider in the ministry of a local church, but hopefully these concepts have helped you to look at ministry in a new perspective. Most importantly, remember to seek God in prayer, spend time in His Word, and listen to the Holy Spirit as to how He wants you to best structure ministry for your church.

Chapter 2 : How to Write a Church Ministry Proposal | Bizfluent

A couple of singles came to my office one afternoon with a deliberate request in mind: "Brian, we would like you to lead the singles ministry." I gave them my "I feel your pain" look and said, "I wish I could" (yes, a big fat lie), "but I'm too busy with all my other responsibilities."

John the Baptist Church in Madison, Alabama, was an active and vibrant parish. Clearly they get it: John the Baptist Church, the people are being fed, and not just tiny scraps but endless buffets of spiritual goodness from what I saw on my recent visit. The bulletin alone is enough to make that clear. Page after page of activities and devotions and opportunities for people of every age and background. And at every Mass, when the children brought up donations for the food pantry as part of the offertory, I kept waiting and waiting for the lines of kids to end, but it seemed to go on forever. As I listened to the announcements at Mass, as I looked around at the physical structure of the church, as I listened to the pastor and the associate pastor at Mass and watched them laugh and visit with their parishioners in the vestibule after Mass, I have to admit that I felt some pangs of jealousy. Can I commute from New York to Alabama every week? Do you know what I think makes this parish work so well? You cannot look at this parish and try to pin it down or label it, which is probably why I felt so at home there. From the obvious focus on Eucharist — the tabernacle at the center of the altar, the post-Communion prayer that weaves together Thomas Aquinas and the Baltimore Catechism in order to focus parishioners on the reality of what they have just experienced, the Adoration that occurs every single day in the little chapel after daily Mass — to the welcoming and easy-to-sing contemporary music and the inclusion of children and the casual rapport between the priests and the people. It all worked like a well-oiled machine, and as I watched happy faces streaming in and out of Mass after Mass, I thought: This is a parish that gets it. This is a parish that understands its people. Confession is available three times a week. A clear recognition that not everyone can go to Mass at 9 a. And those confessionals are active. Father Phil, the pastor, told me he was in the confessional on Saturday from 2: And Father Joy, associate pastor, was hearing confessions at the same time. And on and on. If any pastor wants to see a successful parish in operation, stop by St. John the Baptist one Sunday and be amazed.

Chapter 3 : What Does Your Church Look Like? Part 3 of 5 | Dr. Jim Wall Ministries

Singles ministry is a perpetual revolving door. The dynamics of the group change as individuals find partners, date and then leave the group when they no longer perceive themselves as "single."

Oliver I grew up in a quiet neighborhood in southern California where the two-parent family was the norm. I could fill an entire article with facts and figures to document the alarming decline and disintegration of the family. In unprecedented numbers our families are changing: If this disintegration was taking place primarily in the homes of unchurched families, it would be tragic enough. The real tragedy, however, is that the divorce rate is as high among evangelical couples as unchurched couples. A casual view of history reveals that as go marriages, so goes the family; as go families, so goes the community; as go communities, so goes the nation; as go nations, so goes civilization. The Bible tells us that in the beginning God created the family. In His infinite wisdom He chose the family to serve as the cradle for personhood. The quality of family life influences every other part of our life. The quality of family life also has a powerful impact on the believability of the gospel message. The two are interdependent. When love is seen the message is heard. Throughout Scripture, God provides instruction related to marriage, the family, and parenting. Relationships are a core part of who God is and who He would have us to become. In Genesis we see God in relationship with himself; God in relationship with man; male and female in relationship with each other in marriage; parents and children in relationship in the family; groups of families that made up the 12 tribes of Israel in relationship with other tribes. In the Old Testament there are numerous insights into the nature and function of the family. The Hebrew family was noted for its unity. This cohesiveness developed quite naturally, as the nature of that society placed children and parents in close contact. The majority of activities centered around the home and often included children, parents, grandparents, and other relatives. Many functions performed by social service agencies or the local church today were performed by the extended family in biblical times. The Hebrew home was the primary educational, recreational, and social center for the children. Religious education was centered in the home. As a result, parents spent time with their children—working, teaching, communicating, and playing. This interaction helped produce a family unity that made it possible to pass on values from parents to children, from generation to generation Psalm Education takes place in the schools. The majority of social and recreational activities take place outside the home, usually with nonfamily members. Even the bulk of religious education is left to the church. What Is A Family? When most people think of the typical American family, they picture a man and a woman who get married, have children, and live together for a lifetime. This is referred to as the biological or nuclear family. In the past, most families knew their neighbors and lived close to relatives. These relatives made up an extended family and included grandparents, uncles, aunts, cousins, or other adult siblings. The extended family served as supportive roles for the nuclear family. In addition to the traditional two-parent families we have single-parent families, extended families, adopted families, childless families, and reconstituted or blended families. The role of the extended family and the neighborhood community has significantly decreased, if not disappeared. The dual-parent or single-parent family is faced with a much more complex and difficult task. Over the last several decades we have come to an increased awareness of the impact of families on personality development. It would be difficult to overstate the immeasurable influence of early life experiences on the passage of children through adolescence into adulthood. In an unhealthy family, the members are spiritually, emotionally, and relationally undernourished. This malnutrition produces many devastating effects. Children raised in unhealthy families are much more likely to experience difficulty, or an inability to form long-term relationships. They have a hard time trusting and forming strong commitments and are afraid of intimacy. They struggle with emotional stability, communicating clearly, effective conflict resolution, as well as difficulty with believing and trusting God. The home is the window through which children get their first glimpse of God. It is also where they get their first glimpse of who they are and what they are worth. Children discover their value and worth in the mirror of those around them by how much they are looked at, listened to and touched, by what their parents say to them and about them in front of others, and by how much time their parents make for them. Is there a

difference between a family in which everyone is a Christian and a Christian family? It takes more than every family member being a born-again Christian to make a Christian family. A Christian family is a family where relationships with each other are patterned after the way God communicates and relates to His children. It is a place where truth is lived out, not merely talked about. It is a family in which biblical truth is both taught and caught. A Unique Opportunity For The Church Given the significance God places on healthy relationships, a logical question is, What is the role of the church in building strong marriages and families? One vital life sign of a healthy church is the health of its marriages and families. The church has been called to be a lighthouse, the source of solutions for what ails a lost and dying society. A strong marriage and family ministry serves as salt and light in a world characterized by confused, disoriented, and disintegrating families. It says that truth works, truth makes a difference. By offering tools, resources, support groups, and programs it also says that we care about our community. People turn to the church during significant life events such as baby dedications, baptisms, marriages, and death. Ministers perform approximately 75 percent of marriages in the U. The most frequently presented problem is marital difficulty. Where Do I Start? Given the fact in eternity past God decided to create us in His own image and designed us to be in relationships; given the importance of the family for personal growth and development; and given the significant opportunity family ministry provides us to communicate help and hope to a hurting world, where can you begin? Here are a few simple steps that will get you going in the right direction. Instead, begin by establishing a prayer team. Ask them to begin to pray, on a daily basis, for what God might want to see take place in your congregation. A Solid Biblical Base Scripture makes a strong case that ministry involves caring for the whole person—the spiritual, physical, emotional, and intellectual needs. To ensure the long-term effectiveness of any family ministry, it must be bathed in prayer; rooted and grounded in Scripture; supported by a solid biblical and theological foundation; and the vision must be clearly articulated, owned, and supported by the staff and congregation. While insights from the social sciences including psychology, sociology, and education can be helpful, it is essential that Christian family ministry be grounded in the clear teaching of Scripture. The resource list at the end of this article contains several books that provide help in this area. Review Existing Resources Since our time and resources are precious, it makes good sense to see what is already being done in this area. What are some existing models of family ministry? What are the questions we need to ask? What has worked well in congregations similar to ours? Conduct a Needs Assessment Develop an adequate understanding of the composition, needs, and interests of the congregation and the community. This includes taking a look at the demographics of the community, the demographics of the church, population growth rates, ethnic composition, age breakdown, average income, and unemployment. Another important question is: Are there any regularly scheduled classes or programs that provide people with biblically based principles on relationships, premarital preparation, parenting, divorce recovery, singles, marriage enrichment, dealing with grief, or addictions? A church can also conduct a need assessment survey of its congregation. Assess Strengths, Opportunities, and Challenges Based on the needs assessment, you will have a clear sense of the community God has called you to serve, the composition of your own church, existing resources in your church and community, as well as the perceived needs of the various age levels of your congregation. Make a list of the existing strengths and resources, the opportunities for ministry in your own church and in your community, and some of the challenges you will face in allowing God to work through you to take your family ministry to the next level. Develop a 3-Year Plan This is the most important and, in some ways, the most difficult step. In this step, build on what you are already doing that has been helpful and add to it as you have leadership and resources. Since a meaningful family ministry will eventually include children, youth, single, divorced, widowed, and married adults, you will need to determine one or two target groups; goals for the first year; and additional goals for years 2 and 3. Develop a strong education and enrichment program; teach biblical relationship principles across the life span; provide mandatory premarital preparation including the use of mentor couples, provide post-wedding care, classes for first-time parents, or classes for couples who are becoming empty nesters. Incorporate training in spiritual formation and growth throughout all of these programs. In my ministry of over 30 years, I have yet to see a couple with severe marital problems who have had a strong, consistent family and couple prayer time and devotional life. Another essential part of a 3-year

plan is to cultivate, cultivate, and cultivate leadership. This starts with you. Who you are in your own relationship with Christ is the most important component of family ministry. Helpers of families must first help themselves, then they can model what they teach and explain the difference Jesus Christ can make in a marriage and family. The reality is that healthy leaders, healthy couples, and healthy families attract others that they can help to grow and mentor who in turn will become effective leaders. Take some first steps. Besides, if you believe that power is perfected in weakness 2 Corinthians Conclusion Share this article with others in your congregation. Begin to pray about what God might want to do in your life, your marriage, your family, and then in your congregation. Perhaps you might want to meet with some fellow pastors and see what God might want to do in your community. Then, as God leads, start with the first step. At The Center for Marriage and Family Studies CMFS we work with a handful of churches each year to help them develop a 3-year plan that fits the specific needs of their congregation. Perhaps there are ministries close to you that are equipped to help you in this way.

Chapter 4 : What Does Inclusion Look Like in Church? | HDC

Ideas for Women's Ministry it will generate some ideas for how we might make women's ministries more effective. Mostly, I'd like to hear your ideas. single, struggling with infertility.

Single-Minded Devotion to God John 4: For whatever the Father does, the Son does likewise. Just as I hear, I judge; and my judgment is just because I do not seek my own will, but the will of the one who sent me. The gifted men listed in Ephesians 4: The goal is to bring all believers to the unity of the faith and the knowledge of the Son of God, a goal that is further defined as a mature person who attains to the measure of the full stature of Christ—Christ-likeness in character. Since becoming like the Lord Jesus is the measure of maturity, growth in single-minded devotion which so completely characterized His life is certainly a necessary ingredient in spiritual growth and a measure of maturity. The Lord Jesus invested His life in training men to become disciples who would be fully devoted to Him, to His commission to spread the gospel to a lost world, and build men and women in Christ. But just who is a disciple? Is being a disciple synonymous with being a believer? Is the term ever used of unbelievers? Are there various kinds or degrees of discipleship? Dwight Pentecost calls the curious, the convinced, and the committed. But in the narrower sense, as used by the Lord in His ministry, to be a true disciple meant to be fully committed in order to follow and learn from Him. It meant a life of devotion to Christ, self-denial, and obedience to His Word. To this sense of discipleship which He defined as true discipleship John. These, however, are not to be considered conditions of salvation. Rather, they are a summons to deeper levels of faith and commitment. Discipleship then, as illustrated in the life of Peter, denotes a new direction and a journey, not a state or an arrival. As spelled out in the epistles, discipleship is the process of experiential sanctification whereby the believer, in following and growing in the Lord, is transformed into the mature image of Christ by the Spirit of God 2 Cor. In the synoptic gospels Matthew, Mark and Luke the emphasis is on the costliness of following the Lord as a disciple. Another key question is what is meant by the term commitment? Ultimately, as Luke 14 and Romans It means putting Him first and thereby seeking first the kingdom of God, i. Fundamentally, a single-minded devotion to God is a matter of faith or implicit trust in God. The Lord teaches us in Matthew 6: The basis for this command was the fact of their redemption out of the land of Egypt, a land of polytheism where people worshipped many gods—the corn god, the fertility god, the storm god, etc. It was not enough to worship one God. They worshipped all the gods in order to have help in all areas of life. You need no god but Me; therefore you are not to be betrayed into looking for any god but Me, but you are to serve Me, and Me alone. In other words, in the first commandment God told Israel to serve Him exclusively, not only because they owed it to Him, but also because He was worthy of their entire and exclusive trust. They were to bow to his absolute authority over them on the basis of confidence in His complete adequacy for them. And, clearly, these two things needed to go together; for they could hardly have been whole-hearted in serving him to the exclusion of other gods if they had doubted His all-sufficiency to provide whatever they might need. Based on the all sufficient and finished work of Christ, God has done the most for us which guarantees His complete adequacy for whatever He may call us to here in this life. The result is that when faced with difficult, costly choices, the partially-devoted or double-minded believer can never make the right choices whereas a single-minded devotion of commitment gives one the freedom to make the right choices through a new set of heavenly and eternal values, priorities, and pursuits. Precisely, what does a single-minded disciple look like. He or she is one who is committed to walking through this life as a pilgrim, as a mere temporary resident, as one who is willing to travel light with a light grip on things. And as the Savior leads or guides, he or she is one who is willing to do what the double-minded person refuses to do—give up material wealth and the security it often provides along with possessions, prestige, comfort, and other things the world treasures and pursues. With his treasure in heaven and his eyes on the Savior, the devoted disciple does not labor for treasure on earth, or for a high standard of living, but may, as the Lord may call on him do, live without position or power or possessions or popularity. Some important questions to ponder: See 1 Corinthians 6: What is there in my life that hinders my availability to the Lord, i. What about our private time alone seeking to know the Lord more

intimately? Following are some key verses that might help us here Matt. But single-minded devotion is also an evidence of maturity and insight to what is truly meaningful and has eternal ramifications in life. Commitment, then, or total devotion to the Savior is also an evidence of a maturing faith that has come to grips with the reality of eternal treasures cf. An important questions to reflect on is simply this: No one is able to serve God and possessions. A question, then, that deserves serious reflection is: These studies were developed in a team training environment where men were being trained for their role as church leaders, as fathers, and as effective members of a society that desperately needs to see what authentic, biblical Christianity looks like. So, exactly what does a mature Christian look like? A mature Christian is a believer whose life begins to take on the character of Christ-likeness. But what exactly is that? What are the specific qualities that mark out a person as Christ-like? This is the focus and point of this study. The qualities that should characterize Christian leaders are also the marks of spiritual maturity as described in the Bible. While all of the qualities that will be discussed in this series are not unique to Christianity and are often promoted and taught in the secular world, many of them are, by their very nature, distinctive to the Bible or biblical Christianity. Thus, the characteristics that should mark out a Christian leader are also the marks of biblical maturity which are in essence the product of true spirituality. In fact, biblical spirituality can be described by the term maturity since Christian maturity is the result of growth produced by the ministry of the Spirit in the light of the Word over time. What is the broad definition of being a disciple of Christ? What is the narrow definition? According to Luke 14 and Romans Describe, in your own words, what is fundamental to having a single-minded devotion to God? In light of these fundamentals, how would you describe your devotion to God? Describe the occasions in which you find yourself focused, driven, immersed, or devoted to your job, your hobby, your recreation, or any other interest other than God. Do you find yourself dividing your time between God and your worldly desires? If a believer lacks commitment to a single-minded devotion to God, what happens to his ability to serve the Lord? Describe, in your own words, what a single-minded disciple looks like. What would you have to do to become a single-minded disciple? What would you have to give up? What would you have to accept? What are some of the motivations for commitment according to 1 Corinthians 6: Is commitment an evidence of maturity and insight to life? Why does the Lord mention family in two passages Matthew Where are you in the matter of commitment or devotion to the Lord? What is there in your life that hinders your availability to the Lord drives, goals, treasures, values, fears, longings, understanding, unbelief, lack of faith, etc. Please refer to Matthew 6: How much private time do you spend getting to know the Lord intimately?

Chapter 5 : Church Ministry Structure and Organization

I'd like to sketch out what I think a church with a strong marriage ministry would look like, and then I'd invite you to share your thoughts, in the hope that this could be a resource page or a springboard for discussion for churches that want to be more intentional about supporting the marriages.

Jul 26, Passage: As we open to Ephesians 4, through His servant Paul, our Lord Jesus Christ explains the purpose and plan for His Church, and where each of us should seek to be today. The result is that: Spiritual Maturity But all of this is for what purpose? Look at Ephesians 4: The church exists to bring believers to Christ glorifying spiritual maturity, so that we no longer what? We do not want to perpetuate youthful behavior in all of its struggles. Our goal is that spiritual children be always moving towards spiritual maturity in their perspectives, choices, desires, and direction. Please stand with me and in Ephesians 4: And He Himself gave some to be apostles, some prophets, some evangelists, and some pastors and teachers, 12 for the equipping of the saints for the work of ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ, 13 till we all come to the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to a perfect man, to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ; 14 that we should no longer be children, tossed to and fro and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the trickery of men, in the cunning craftiness of deceitful plotting, 15 but, speaking the truth in love, may grow up in all things into Him who is the headâ€”Christâ€” 16 from whom the whole body, joined and knit together by what every joint supplies, according to the effective working by which every part does its share, causes growth of the body for the edifying of itself in love. The greatest service we can offer our young people is to show them how they ought to be when they grow and mature in Christ; and reminding them that they will never be the godly person in the future what they are not becoming today. Spiritual life is all about Biblically prompted choices. Where are your choices pointing you today? That is the Biblical method we will use first for Men, and then later for Women. What behavior is displeasing to God that we are to avoid, not pursuer as our personal behavior, and most importantly in the long runâ€”never perpetuate by marrying someone who acts that way? That takes us to Proverbs, and a look at what God says to look for in a man. This is what God says that a man who pleases Him acts and looks like, and similarly what a man who displeases Him looks and acts like. This is actually the next quality on our prayer card on how to pray for those we love. Note the way God communicates the maturity of wise choices. The whole book of Proverbs is presented as a father Solomon explaining to his son Rehoboam what he learned from his father David, see Prov. And on we could go in 5: When children are small and in our homes, in our Sunday School classes, in our youth groups: When they get older and go away to work and school, this is what we prayerfully remind them about, and ask God to do in their lives. How you feel, how you serve, how you live most moments of your lifeâ€”all are tied to the person you decide to share your life with in marriage. And, when that marriage is not working, even if you break the covenant and divorce, that marriage partner will impact the rest of your life: The outlook for a joy filled lifelong marriage is bleak without the Lord! To help us, God has left a colorful guide to marriage; it is a timeless list of personalities to avoid at all costs, and personalities to be attracted toward. This list is in the Bible. In Proverbs there are over verses that actually declare what good men and women, boys and girls look and act like, and what the immature, unspiritual, and ungodly opposites look and act like. Have you refreshed your understanding of what the Lord in His infinite wisdom has said about this very practical and relevant area? So for us this list would express what we should be and what we should avoid. For most of us, most of our life will be spent in marriage [1]. What do you want most of your years of life to be like? Do you want them to be hard times of tension, agony, frustration or pain? Or do you want them to be joyous and satisfying and the best years of your life? The list is timeless, and can be your guide to a joyous Biblical marriage. How about taking a look at some of those verses with me today? Here is the list: Immature and ungodly men are: This is one whose mouth is familiar with words that are off color, smutty, innuendo, vulgar, and crass. Remember that Jesus said that what comes from our mouth has already filled our hearts and is just flowing straight from our hearts! God says avoid this type of man. A wicked person easily mocks discipline, they mock humility, they mock respect and they mock authority. This type of man has no direction, no purpose, no

goals, no plans, they are just wanderers through life looking for and finding bad stuff. What turns their head? A lustful man chases anyone for merely external appeal, looks for cheap and quick thrills; and will only grow more lustful, more unsatisfied, and more ungodly. You can spot this type of fellow because he always clown around, always wants attention, always seeks to dominate conversations, always seeks to catch the spot light, shows off, brags, takes needless risks, always daring others, never respects authority. In fact, God says a foolish child is a child who cannot control themselves when outside the reach of their parents. Your child should sit with you until they are mature enough to sit alone without disturbing others by talking, writing notes, giggling, poking, and drawing others attention away from the teacher, the pastor, the leader, or the ministry. This is the fellow who lays around, avoids work, loafs, sleeps in, over eats, over sleeps, always late, always behind—and can always justify and excuse his behavior, or blame it on someone or something else. This type is mean to animals, mean to people, hurts with words, often angry. This is the red faced, hot worded, hasty and physical person who shoves, pushes and easily fights with those who get in his way. They have no song from the Lord on their heart; anger and self-centeredness are their habits. They are drawn to the gross, the violent, the borderline; they are un-shockable, un-embarrassable, unfeeling, and uncaring. They are fighters, argumentative, brash, harsh and hurtful. They never get enough, never have enough, always want more, and even then—that is never enough. They are listless, restless, and helplessly held by their desires. In summary, the verses God shares with us from His heart of wisdom in Proverbs describe the type of man not to become, the type of boy not to give your heart to, and the type of behavior to ask God for grace to repent of every time it shows up in your life. God says avoid immature and ungodly men who are: What will you be? If you are interested, the Lord also lists what to pursue, or look for, or be as far what God looks for positively in a man. This is what you should want to be, what we should want to be around, what we should be drawn toward: Spiritually Mature men are: The Lord has already told us in James 3. He is characterized as pure, peaceable, gentle, and easy to talk things over with, full of mercy and wanting to do good. The Sermon on the Mount says it all. Happy are the pure in heart, Happy are the meek, Happy are the humble, Happy are the peacemakers, Happy are the righteous seekers, and Happy are those who are hungry for God. And on that point, parents are you aware that your teen-aged children sit week after week whispering, passing notes, laughing, and doing everything but paying attention? They should sit with you until they are mature enough to act honorably and respectfully out of your presence. This man is straight—in his talk, walk, habits, and convictions. You know who he is and where he is going. Hitler surrounded himself with men who were evil, and cruel. Together they made the darkest blot yet seen in history. Stay away from those who delight in cruel words, attitudes, and actions. What we plant we reap. Sow secret sins and they come back at harvest time. Sow in godliness and life gets sweeter and sweeter. There is no clearer indicator of what a man will be like than his goodness level. Is he drawn toward what is good or evil? Few people turn out very far from where they are headed right now. Change your direction, turn toward the Lord who is good if you are not facing Him and headed toward Him today. Rooted in righteousness As Psalm 1 and Jeremiah Righteous in every day life An animal might have been his transportation—so the Lord should be evident in your car. How you drive, keep up, and decorate your car declares a lot about you. Also an animal might have been his work. God says righteousness invades all of life even the barnyard or work. A righteous man exhibits the Lord in how he treats the indefensible, the weak, and the common. Another fruit of God living within is self-control. A fool lets it all out, vents, rages, and carries on. The prudent man knows how to respond in hard, difficult or shameful times. Proverbs describes the lazy man. That is a study in itself. How much heartache would be avoided if a lazy man was not an option. Laziness seems to only grow. The surest sign of danger in a man is when you detect that he is full of himself. He talks about himself, shows himself off, promotes himself, and on and on he goes. Brashness, overconfidence, and foolhardiness are not noble virtues.

Chapter 6 : Singles Ministry Do's and Don'ts - blog.quintoapp.com

The goal of singles ministry is not to ghettoize the singles or play matchmaker but to equip single adults to be strong in their faith and to play an active role leadership in the church, and to help churches recognize single people for their contributions of financial resources, time, and talents to the church.

We now have a group of knitters and crocheters who meet twice a month, and since we started we have completed, blessed, and given away over prayer shawls. They have been sent out to 30 states and 3 countries. Those 18 squares were stitched together to create a wall hanging that we presented to our church during a worship service when it was dedicated by our pastor and all of our congregation. The ministry makes shawls and lap robes which are a comfort to receivers, symbolizing caring and peace to those in pain, but also, joy and delight to those experiencing new beginnings. Additionally, after the Sandy Hurricane on the east coast in , the ministry came forward by making and sending knitted baby sweaters to the United Methodist Committee on Relief. Pictured here are members and friends of the NCUMC Prayer Shawl Ministry as they express their gratitude to Cathy Nickalou Smith for her hard work and dedication and for creating a lasting ministry for the Nevada City community and beyond. Peter in Richfield, MN A banner made in celebration - "each strand of yarn is representative of our accomplishments. We always happen to have a box of leftovers, sometimes so many that we can make another prayer shawl. The seed for this idea was planted when I attended a blessing of the "shawl of shawls" at the Basilica of St. Mary in downtown Minneapolis. They had a rectangular piece with a wide "swoop" of yarn that fit on the front of the altar. In sharing the idea with my pastor he came up with the banner idea which was a better size Much to my pleasure and surprise that first gathering in October was the beginning of a very successful ministry. Now, in , our Prayer Shawl Ministry is still going strong! We are blessed to have 25 knitters, crocheters and weavers, some members of our church and others from the community outside our church. We come together every Thursday to create not only prayer shawls, but lasting friendships. In addition to our weekly gatherings, we look forward to an annual getaway week-end each spring. It was at one of these retreats that our Traveling Shawl was created. To celebrate our birthdays, each knitter worked a few rows into the shawl using a yarn color corresponding to her birthstone. The result was not only a beautiful shawl but one that is passed from member to member, either to console or to celebrate, as the occasion arises. There are presently 17 active volunteers. Many parishioners have contributed to the ministry through prayers, cards and letters, and donations. This church has been a loyal supporter. Thank you, thank you, thank you for being a part of the Prayer Shawl Ministry.

Chapter 7 : What Does a Servant Look Like? Part 2 - Listen to Make It Clear with Dr. Stan Ponz, Nov 9,

Dear Women's Ministry: The world can give me cute cupcake designs and decorating tips, scrapbooking parties, casserole recipes, and other ways to pass the time.

The world can give me cute cupcake designs and decorating tips, scrapbooking parties, casserole recipes, and other ways to pass the time. But truly, with my respect and love, may I be honest? If I wanted to be educated on strategies for decorating my home inexpensively from *Winners*, I would just, you know, go to *Winners*. We are hungry for authenticity and vulnerability, not churchified life hacks from lady magazines. Some of us are drowning, suffocating, dying of thirst for want of the cold water of real community. Is womanhood only about wifehood and motherhood? What about those among us that are not wives and mothers? We are—or should be—diverse image bearers of a Divine God. We are seeking deep spirituality. We are seeking fellow travelers. We are hungry for true community, a place to tell our stories and listen to another, to love well. But above all, point me to Jesus—not to the sale at the mall. You know what I would have liked instead of decorating tips or a new recipe? I would have liked to pray together. I would have liked the women of the church to share their stories or wisdom with one another, no more celebrity speakers, please just hand the microphone to that lady over there that brought the apples. I would like to do a Bible study that does not have pink or flowers on the cover. I would have liked to sign up to bring a meal for our elderly or drop off some clothes for a new baby or be informed about issues in our city where we can make space for God. I would like to organize and prioritize, to rabble-rouse and disturb the peace of the rest of the world on behalf of justice, truth, beauty and love. Please, may we be the place to detox from the world—its values, its entertainment, its priorities, its focus on appearances and materialism and consumerism? So here is my suggestion: We want to change the world. We run marathons to benefit our sisters, not so that we can lose weight. We have more to offer to the church than our mad decorating skills. We want to give and serve and make a difference. We want to be challenged. We want to read books and talk politics, theology and current events. We want to wrestle through our theology. We want to listen to each other. We want to worship, we want to intercede for our sisters and weep with those who weep, rejoice with those that rejoice, to create life and art and justice with intention. Let us RISE to the questions of our time. Let us MOVE the mountains of fear and intimidation. Let us be women who Love.

Chapter 8 : What Does Your Church Look Like? Part 2 of 5 | Dr. Jim Wall Ministries

"As a single, it was just like, heck, let's get after it. I grew, God helped me get the language, helped me get a ton of relationships with it. I grew, God helped me get the language, helped me get a ton of relationships with it.

Reflections at the Crossroads of Faith and Disability. What he reflects on in this post is especially relevant and timely for all of us who work with, support, and care deeply for individuals with developmental disabilities. When it comes to people with developmental disabilities, integration into typical environments is always the best option. One look at where people with developmental disabilities have lived over the past few decades demonstrates a decided shift away from institutions and, more recently, even group homes. A similar move has happened in public school classrooms. The number of self-contained special education schools and classrooms is a fraction of what it once was. The future and the present, for that matter belongs to more independent and integrated environments. Still, some specialized and dedicated activities remain and most people would agree that they are, in no way, viewed as problems to be solved. These programs offer people an opportunity to experience success, camaraderie, joy and interaction. As people of faith, this issue should grab our attention because the same philosophical discussion is going on in our ministries. Where is worship for people with developmental disabilities most meaningful and inclusive? Does it happen best when people participate as an integrated part of a congregation that earnestly announces its welcome and acceptance of all people, regardless of ability? Or, is it more likely to happen in an environment specifically designed to accommodate different styles of expression or learning? As the reach of both types expands, the question "integrated, congregation-based ministry, or a dedicated, disability-friendly ministry" becomes more and more important to consider. Understandably, people with disabilities and their families have learned to be wary of programs that seem to separate them from their non-disabled peers. The hymnals are opened, but I cannot read. The congregation is told to rise, but I am able to do so only in spirit. An atmosphere of quiet is expected, but I am unable to control the sounds I make. The sermons invite sustained attention and depth of thought, neither of which is counted among my gifts. I am present here, but am I truly included? Then, there are the alternative, specialized or dedicated ministries designed specifically for the needs of people with intellectual and developmental disabilities. In the Christian tradition, there are several examples of organizations designed for this purpose, and their success is impressive. In every case, soft or loud, active or passive, the word is proclaimed, prayers find voice, and praise is freely expressed. These are not environments merely of welcome and accommodation. Differences are celebrated here and participants, the only ones truly qualified to judge, call them what they are: The paradox, that the most inclusive environment for an individual may be one that happens apart from the congregation, is an important dialogue into which we are all called. And we ought not be satisfied with easy answers. So, what are your thoughts?

Chapter 9 : Developing A Family Ministry For Your Church

And He Himself gave some to be apostles, some prophets, some evangelists, and some pastors and teachers, 12 for the equipping of the saints for the work of ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ, 13 till we all come to the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to a perfect man, to the measure of the stature of the.

Shingles , or herpes zoster, occurs when the dormant chickenpox virus, varicella zoster, is reactivated in your nerve tissues. Early signs of shingles include tingling and localized pain. Most, but not all, people with shingles develop a blistering rash. You may also experience itching, burning, or deep pain. Typically, the shingles rash lasts two to four weeks, and most people make a complete recovery. Doctors are often able to quickly diagnose shingles from the appearance of the rash. First symptoms Early symptoms of shingles may include fever and general weakness. You may also feel areas of pain, burning, or a tingling sensation. A few days later, the first signs of a rash appear. You may begin to notice pink or red blotchy patches on one side of your body. These patches cluster along nerve pathways. Some people report feeling shooting pains in the area of the rash. During this initial stage, shingles is not contagious. Blisters The rash quickly develops fluid-filled blisters similar to chickenpox. They may be accompanied by itching. New blisters continue to develop for several days. Blisters appear over a localized area and do not spread over your whole body. Blisters are most common on the torso and face, but they can occur elsewhere. In rare cases, the rash appears on the lower body. The same virus causes both shingles and chickenpox. Scabbing and crusting Blisters sometimes erupt and ooze. They may then turn slightly yellow and begin to flatten. As they dry out, scabs begin to form. Each blister can take one to two weeks to completely crust over. During this stage, your pain may ease a little, but it can continue for months, or in some cases, years. Once all blisters have completely crusted over, there is low risk of spreading the virus. The belt can cover a wide area on one side of your midsection. Its location can make tight clothing particularly uncomfortable. Ophthalmic shingles Ophthalmic shingles affects the nerve that controls facial sensation and movement in your face. In this type, the shingles rash appears around your eye and over your forehead and nose. Ophthalmic shingles may be accompanied by headache. Other symptoms include redness and swelling of the eye, inflammation of your cornea or iris, and drooping eyelid. Ophthalmic shingles can also cause blurred or double vision. Widespread shingles According to the U. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention CDC , about 20 percent of people with shingles develop a rash that crosses multiple dermatomes. Dermatomes are separate skin areas that are supplied by separate spinal nerves. When the rash affects three or more dermatomes, it is called disseminated, or widespread zoster. In these cases, the rash may look more like chickenpox than shingles. This is more likely to happen if you have a weakened immune system. Infection Open sores of any kind are always susceptible to bacterial infection. To lower the possibility of a secondary infection, keep the area clean and avoid scratching. Secondary infection is also more likely if you have a weakened immune system. Severe infection can lead to permanent scarring of the skin. Report any sign of infection to your doctor immediately. Early treatment can help prevent it from spreading. Healing Most people can expect the rash to heal within two to four weeks. Although some people may be left with minor scars, most will make a complete recovery with no visible scarring. In some cases, pain along the site of the rash can continue for several months or longer. This is known as postherpetic neuralgia. However, the CDC cautions that shingles can return multiple times in some people.