

# LIGHT

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## RELIGION IN LIFE

### A CONFERENCE ON COURTSHIP, MARRIAGE AND THE FAMILY

If you have read the facts listed in the middle of this page you are probably convinced that it is time for those of us with Christian ideals to do something constructive to meet the challenge which is before us.

Here is a program for the local church. It may also be done in co-operation with other churches. It is only a suggestion for action and should be modified and adapted to the local situation.

#### Group Divisions

The following groups are suggested for the Conference; they are determined by the individual's area of interest rather than the conventional criteria, such as age, sex, etc.

##### I. Children's Hour

This group is a necessary and essential part of the Conference so that parents can attend the forums of their choice. The conduct of this group will be left completely to the discretion of the local church, it may be a study course, a story hour, or handwork period.

##### II. Dating and Courtship

Young people of various ages will comprise this group. It is possible that for some discussions the boys and girls might meet separately. This division would be determined entirely by the group itself and the subjects under consideration.

##### III. Preparation for Marriage

This group will be reserved for the couples who are approaching marriage. While it is not a prime prerequisite that they be "engaged," some care should be taken to restrict this group to those whose immediate interest qualifies them for the study of preparation for marriage.

##### IV. Adjustments in Early Marriage

It is a fact today that the largest number of divorces occur in the third year of marriage. One cannot draw too many dogmatic conclusions from this evidence but it is quite certain that the first three or four years of marriage are crucial years of adjustment between husband and wife. In this group such adjustments will be discussed.

##### V. Problems of the Expanding Family

With the coming and development of children in the home, the family is thrust into new areas of adjustment. Distinctive relationships emerge and with them are problems to be solved and decisions to be made. The objective of this group will be to meet the needs thus created by the growth of the family.

#### LOOK AT THESE FACTS

In the past ninety years while the population has increased 251% in America the divorce rate has increased 2000%.

In 1880 one divorce was granted for every twenty marriages; in 1947 one divorce was granted for every four marriages.

In Florida, during the twelve months of 1948 there were 17 divorces for every 21 marriages. In the state of Tennessee during the same period there was one divorce for every two marriages.

A recent study has shown that in the past few years there have been more desertions and mutually agreed-upon separations than divorces.

During one year of the war, Dr. Morris Fishbein estimated that there were 3,000,000 births and 1,000,000 abortions.

Approximately 300,000 illegitimate babies are born each year now in America; of these at least 50,000 are born to young girls still in high school or of high school age.

There are at least 250,000 new cases of syphilis every year in our country and more than 1,000,000 new cases of gonorrhea. Only about 30% of the former and 25% of the latter cases are discovered and treated.

##### VI. Adjustment of the Contracting Family

Few couples are ever fully prepared for the rather sudden adjustments that are necessary when the children leave home and the climacteric or change of life begins. This group should be attended by those who are approaching this period as well as those already involved in the processes of a contracting and changing family relationship.

##### VII. The Unmarried

For many and varied reasons some

people do not marry. They are often forgotten in the emphases such as are given in a conference like this. They too face problems. They too need the counsel of the church. Those who are interested in such a group are welcome to this conference. Provisions will be made for their interests. The organization of this group will be determined by the response of those interested.

#### Leadership Personnel

1. Minister (Two or more may be required).
2. Physician (a Gynecologist or Obstetrician would be preferred).
3. Pediatrician
4. Psychiatrist
5. Psychologist
6. Lawyer
7. Social Worker
8. Superintendent of Education
9. Teacher of Home Economics
10. YMCA or YWCA Secretary
11. Sociologist
12. Scout leader.

This is perhaps the most vital aspect of the Conference planning—its leadership. The committee in charge of preparations will have to exercise careful judgment in its selections. The first prerequisite for the leaders will be that they possess Christian character. It would be tragic indeed for any person thus selected to presume to speak as a Christian while at the same time, by personal conduct and ideals, to be otherwise.

It should be understood at the time of the enlistment of the personnel that the services requested cannot be compensated by an honorarium. It is expected however that any traveling expense will be taken care of by the church. A gracious gesture of appreciation can be made through some small useful gift to those who give their time in service.

It is entirely possible that all of the suggested leadership personnel may not be available in every local situation. Changes in the program are always possible in order to compensate. To meet

certain specific needs with expert advice, however, it might well be worth while to ask someone to travel even a considerable distance in order to participate. It should also be noted that these specialists do not participate every night, instead only one or two nights for the most part. Several ministers can be used as the outline suggests.

### Suggestions for Advance Preparations

1. Prepare announcements and invitations which can be taken home by the children of the elementary departments of the Sunday School and of the Training Union. These announcements should be planned to acquaint the parents with the general program which will begin the following Sunday.

2. A thorough analysis of the plans and purpose of the Conference should be made at a meeting of the teachers and officers of the Sunday School. Or, if possible, it would be well to call for a special meeting of all of the Deacons and officers of the church. In this way the leadership of the entire church can be acquainted with the plans and objectives of the Conference.

3. Registration Day should be set at least one week in advance in the Sunday School and Training Union. At this time those who register for the Conference may obtain their books or pamphlets which can be read prior to the beginning of the forums. It should be explained that these books will not be studied during the course as is usually done, rather they will be utilized for the purpose of laying a foundation and to stimulate questions which should then be brought up for discussion in the forums.

The pastor will find this registration quite useful. He will be able to make suggestions to those whom he knows are confronted with problems as to which group will benefit them most. He will further know from the registration and from his experience in pastoral counseling those people who have not registered but who ought to take advantage of the week. Thus he will have a full week between registration and the actual beginning of the Conference to advise and counsel with his people in relation to their personal needs.

4. Department superintendents should be asked to prepare special programs for presentation on the opening Sunday of the Conference. These programs should deal with the theme of the Home and the Family.

Special programs in all activities of the church to feature the emphasis of the Conference.

#### Morning Worship

Subject: "The Home in a Disordered World—A Challenge to Christian Action."

#### Evening Worship

Subject: "Youth—The Hope of Tomorrow's Home and Church."

#### Youth Fellowship

Film, fellowship and refreshments for young people and their leaders.

### Daily Schedule

#### MONDAY-FRIDAY

2:00-5:00 P. M. Personal counseling by appointment. Call the Church office.

7:30-8:55 P. M. Group Discussion Period.

9:00-9:30 P. M. Assembly (all groups).

The following topics are suggested for discussion in this assembly program:

Theme: "The Christian Interpretation of the Meaning and Function of Marriage."

1. The teachings of the Old Testament concerning marriage.
2. The teachings of the New Testament as to the meaning and function of marriage.
3. The Christian answer to the problem of divorce.
4. The teachings of the Bible concerning the relationships of parents and children.
5. The ministry of the church to the home in our day.

The "lecture" aspect of this entire program should be brief with opportunity for questions and answers.

#### GROUP II DATING AND COURTSHIP

Theme: "Better Living Today for Better Homes Tomorrow."

A discussion of boy-girl relationships with a careful study of those values which make for better Christian relationships and successful family living. For the sake of continuity there should be no change from evening to evening in the leadership of this group. The following questions will suggest something of the areas for discussion. It is to be noted, however, that the immediate interests of the group should ultimately determine the topics to be considered.

1. How do you know its love?
2. Petting, wise or otherwise?
3. Have you ever really looked at yourself?
4. Does religion make any difference?
5. Is beauty only skin deep?
6. What qualities of character and traits of personality do you think are most important?
7. How shall we think about sex?
8. What shall we do with our parents?

## Conference Program

### SUNDAY

### GROUP III PREPARATION FOR MARRIAGE

#### MONDAY

A Panel Forum (with Groups IV, V and VI)

"Community Resources for Better Family Living."

#### Suggested Topics:

1. Child Welfare
2. Prevention of Delinquency
3. Public Health
4. Family Service Agencies
5. Domestic Relations Counseling Services
6. School, Church and the Home

#### Panel Leadership:

1. Minister
2. Social Worker
3. Lawyer
4. Secretary of YMCA and YWCA
5. Superintendent of Education
6. Scout Leader

### TUESDAY

Topic: "Finances and the Family"

This discussion should consider such practical matters as: How to plan and operate a budget, the wise purchase of insurance, buying for the home, meeting emergencies, saving for the future, etc.

Leader: Social Worker and/or Teacher of Home Economics.

### WEDNESDAY

Topic: "The Wedding and Honeymoon"

1. Cost of the Wedding
2. Wedding Etiquette
3. Significance and Meaning of the Ceremony
4. Plans for the honeymoon

Leader: Minister

### THURSDAY

Topic: "Legal Aspects of Marriage"

A consideration of such matters as who may and who may not marry, the advisability and advantage of blood test laws, the legal grounds for divorce, common law marriage, the legal requirements for the adoption of children, etc. A progressive leader might guide the discussion toward needed legislation to improve current conditions.

Leader: Lawyer

### FRIDAY

Topic: "The Pre-Marital Examination"

A discussion of the value of a thorough pre-marital examination. The purpose of this discussion should be to acquaint the participants with the examination, to alleviate any fears and remove any misunderstandings and misconceptions which might be held by those anticipating marriage.

#### Suggested topics:

1. Health and Heredity.
2. Can We Have Children?
3. Anatomy of Human Reproduction.
4. What Does the Examination of the Woman Include?
5. What Does the Examination of the Man Include?

Leader: Physician

# GROUP IV ADJUSTMENTS OF EARLY MARRIAGE

## MONDAY

Forum: (Same as Group III) "Community Resources for Better Family Living"

## TUESDAY

Topic: "Psychological and Emotional Factors in Early Marriage"

1. Balancing the Budget
2. Tensional Outlets—What and Why?
3. Psychological and Emotional Aspects of Pregnancy.
4. The Role of Religion

Leaders: Minister, Psychologist or Psychiatrist

## WEDNESDAY

Topic: "Planning for the Family" A discussion with a physician on such matters as:

1. Anatomy and Physiology of Human Reproduction
2. Pregnancy
3. Sterility
4. Planned Parenthood
5. Sex in Marriage

Leader: Physician

## THURSDAY

Topic: "Opportunities with the Growing Child"

This should be a consideration of the problems of growing children interpreted in terms of the opportunities which parents will have in these problems to build toward better family-group integration and nurture.

1. What to say when the child asks questions about God.
2. How best to teach the value of honesty, truthfulness and obedience.
3. Ways to guarantee emotional security in the child.
4. How and what shall we teach in the home about sex?

Leaders: Pediatrician, Minister, Child Welfare Worker.

## FRIDAY

Forum topic: "Spiritual and Emotional Needs for Dynamic Christian Family Living."

The objective of this discussion should be to evaluate and analyze those factors which give to marriage and family life an unshakable foundation and to discover the distinctive role of the church in creating and sustaining a harmonious family relationship.

1. The Meaning of Christian Love.
2. Cultivating Christian Graces.
3. Religious Education in the Home.
4. Family Worship.
5. The Family Counsel.
6. Planning for Creative Fellowship.

Leader: Minister

# GROUP V THE EXPANDING FAMILY

## MONDAY

Forum: "Community Resources for Better Family Living" (with Group III, IV and VI)

## TUESDAY

Topic: "Changing Relationships of the Growing Family."

This discussion should center around the changes which take place in the relationships between parents, between parents and children, and between the children themselves as the family increases in size.

### Suggested topics:

1. Psychological and Emotional Factors in Pregnancy.
2. Parental Fixation.
3. Sibling Rivalry.
4. Favoritism.
5. The Child's Need for Security.
6. Parents and Problems of Dating "Teen Agers."

Leaders: Psychologist, Pediatrician, Minister

## WEDNESDAY

Topic: "Planning for the Family."

Combined session with Group IV under the leadership of a Physician (see topic schedule on Group IV).

## THURSDAY

Topic: "Opportunities with the Growing Child."

Combined session with Group IV.

## FRIDAY

Forum: "Spiritual and Emotional Needs for Dynamic Christian Family Living."

# GROUP VI THE CONTRACTING FAMILY

## MONDAY

Forum: "Community Resources for Better Family Living."

## TUESDAY

Topic: "The Change of Life."

This forum should present an opportunity for those approaching the climacteric together with those who are already experiencing it to discuss the changes, the new adjustments and processes which take place during this period.

### Suggested topics:

1. Does Life Begin at Forty?
2. Physiological Changes of Men and Women at the Menopause.
3. Glands and You.
4. Duration of the Climacteric.

Leaders: Physician, Minister

## WEDNESDAY

Topic: "The Art of Being Good In-Laws and Understanding Grandparents."

These are questions that require serious and careful discussion. Many marriages can be made infinitely more happy by understanding the following:

1. Why Are "In-Laws" a Problem.
2. How to "Cut the Apron Strings."
3. The Role of Co-operative Grandparents.

Leader: Minister, Family Welfare Worker

## THURSDAY

Topic: "Emotional Adjustments and Needs of the Contracting Family."

1. Starting the "Second Honeymoon."
2. Mental Hygiene for the Climacteric.
3. Psychic Disturbances.
4. The Art of Growing Old.

Leaders: Minister, Psychiatrist

## FRIDAY

Forum: "Spiritual and Emotional Needs for Dynamic Christian Family Living."

# Books—Pamphlets Reprints

The following suggestions are for reading and study materials in the various groups. All or part of them can be used. They can be distributed in a packet one week before the Conference or given out from night to night during the week.

The sources of the materials are listed with the prices for single copies and quantity lots. The office of the Social Service Commission will be glad to assist in securing all necessary materials.

(In the following listings the initials refer to addresses which will be found on the back page.)

### Group I

No materials are suggested for this group. It is felt that each church will make its own provisions for a story hour, nursery facilities, etc. so that parents with children may attend the Conference.

### Group II

#### DATING AND COURTSHIP

##### Young Men and Young Women

Getting Ready to Fall in Love, Roy Dickinson, 10c AP; Things That Count in Courtship, Roy Dickinson, 10c AP; Petting—Wise or Otherwise, E. L. Clarke, 25c AP; Understanding Sex, Lester Kirkendall, 35c RA; If I Marry a Roman Catholic, 5c CMH.

##### Young Men

From Boy to Man, 10c ASHA; The Word You Can't Say—Masturbation, H. Lees, 10c AMA.

##### Young Women

Health for Girls, 10c ASH; Answers to Practical Questions on Menstruation, Margaret Bell, 10c AMA.

### Group III

#### Preparation for Marriage

Preparation for Marriage, E. R. Groves, \$1.50 EBC; Petting—Wise or Otherwise, E. L. Clarke, 25c AP; Betrothal, Paul Popenoe, 10c ASHA; The Doctor Talks with the Bride, Lena Levine, MD, 10c PPFA; Building Your Marriage Evelyn M. Duvall, 20c PA; Sex Education for the Married Couple, E. H. Mudd, 15c AMA.

### Optional

When You Marry Duvall and Hill, \$3.00 AP; Harmony in Marriage, L. F. Wood, \$1.00 RTP.

### Group IV and V

#### Adjustments of Early Marriage

Problems of the Expanding Family Marriage and Sexual Harmony, Oliver Butterfield, 50c EBC.

### Pregnancy

Abortion—Crime and Social Failure, 5c PPFA; Prenatal Care, 15c CB; How Does Your Baby Grow?, Free GBF; Reward, 5c MCA; Prescription for Living, 5c MCA; More Helps for Childless Couples, 15c AMA.

**Child Care**

When You Adopt a Child, 10c CB; Home Play and Play Equipment, 10c CB; Your Child from One to Six, 15c CB; Your Child from Six to Twelve 15c CB; Guiding the Adolescent, 15c CB.

**Sex Education**

A Formula for Sex Education, 5c ASHA; Answers to Practical Questions on Menstruation, Margaret Bell, 10c AMA; Sex Education of the Pre-School Child, Harold Jones and Katherine Read, 15c AMA; Sex Education for the Ten Year Old, Marjorie Bolles, 15c AMA; Sex Education for the Adolescent, George Corner and Carney Landes, 15c AMA.

**Church and Family (Optional)**

Home Life, A monthly magazine. BSSB; Building a Christian Home, Martha Boone Leavell, BSSB; Opening the Door for God, Herman Sweet, \$1.00 WP; Religion's Responsibility in Marriage and Parenthood, 10c PPFA; Home Dedication Service, Free SSC; Your Child and God, Robbie Trent, BP; The Church and Family Life, Joe W. Burton, 25c BP.

**Group VI****Adjustments of the Contracting Family**

The Climacteric, E. R. Groves, (Reprint) 5c SSC; Sex Education for the Woman at Menopause, C. J. Hartman, 15c AMA; The Doctor Talks About Menopause, 5c PPFA.

AMA, American Medical Association, 535 N. Dearborn Street, Chicago, Illinois; AP, Association Press, 347 Madison Avenue, New York, N. Y.; ASHA, American Social Hygiene Association, 1790 Broadway, New York 19, N. Y.; BP, Broadman Press, Nashville, Tennessee; BSSB, Baptist Sunday School Board, Nashville, Tennessee; CB, Children's Bureau, Federal Security Agency, Washington, D. C.; CMH, Commission on Marriage and the Home of the Federal Council of Churches, 297 Fourth Avenue, New York, N. Y.; EBC, Emerson Book Company, New York, N. Y.; GBF, Ger-

ber Baby Food Company Fremont, Michigan; MCA, Maternity Center Association, 654 Madison Avenue, New York; PA, Public Affairs Pamphlet No. 113, Public Affairs Committee, 122 East 38th Street, New York 16, N. Y.; PPFA, Planned Parenthood Federation of America, 502 Madison Ave., New York 22, N. Y.; RA, Research Associates, 228 So. Wabash Ave., Chicago 4, Ill.; RTP, Round Table Press, New York, N. Y.; SSC, Social Service Commission of the Southern Baptist Convention, 2825 Lexington Road, Louisville 6, Ky.; WP, Westminster Press, Philadelphia, Pa.

**AUDIO-VISUAL AIDS**

The following listings are suggestions for supplementary materials. The films may be secured either from a local film distributor the State University audio-visual center, directly from the producers, or from the Department of Visual Education of the Baptist Sunday School Board. Recordings have been produced by the Radio Commission of the Southern Baptist Convention and may be obtained from 427½ Moreland Avenue, N. E., Atlanta, Georgia.

**FILMS****The Problem Child—16 mm sound (27 Minutes)**

Distributed by Pet Milk Co. Research Division, St. Louis 1, Mo. Free

An aid to help parents supply the essentials of growth which all babies need during the first two years. The film begins with a discipline problem and which the parents of two-year old Sandra have taken to a doctor. At the conclusion of the interview they leave the doctor's office much relieved and with greater understanding of their daughter's need.

**Human Growth—16 mm sound color (20 Minutes)**

Order from your state university Audio-Visual Center or from Audio-Visual Center, Indiana University, Bloomington, Indiana.

Opening with a family scene in which a boy and girl briefly discuss the mean-

ing of adolescence, shifts to their classroom where the class prepares to see a film on human growth and reproduction by means of animated diagrams, is shown in its entirety, and the teacher encourages questions and discussion by her class and the actual audience of this film.

**Know Your Baby—16 mm sound color (11 Minutes)**

A young couple prepare their two small children emotionally for the arrival of a third and then devise a routine for the baby which will help it to grow to happy childhood and balanced manhood. Discusses feeding, clothing, sleeping, and bathing routines and the reasons for them.

**A Criminal Is Born—16 mm sound (20 Minutes)**

An effective film dealing with the problem of "parental delinquency" and its promotion of juvenile delinquency.

**Plain Facts—16 mm sound (12 Minutes)**

A film which sets forth the plain facts about the venereal diseases. May be shown to mixed audiences. Produced by the American Social Hygiene Association. Consult your local Health Department or write American Social Hygiene Association, 1790 Broadway, New York 19, N. Y.

**SLIDES AND FILM STRIPS****Do You Know Your Adolescents?****—Sound**

Prepared especially for the use of parents of adolescents, to help them find a solution to the problems which they face in their own homes. Presents four typical family situations to begin a group discussion—Choosing a Vocation, Puppy Love, Youth Friendships, and Why Go to Sunday School.

**Is Your Home Fun?—Sound**

This film strip shows two types of home life. One of the families portrayed is a grim, serious one, in which all of the finer things of life are overlooked; the other family is one in which all of the members take time to develop and enjoy human values.

	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
Group III	"Community Resources for Better Family Living"	"Finances and the Family"	"The Wedding and the Honeymoon"	"The Legal Aspects of Marriage"	"The Pre-Marital Examination"
Group IV		"Psychological and Emotional Factors in Early Marriage"	"Planning for the Family"	"Opportunities with the Growing Child"	"Spiritual and Emotional Needs for Dynamic Family Living"
Group V		"Changing Relationships of the Growing Family"			
Group VI		"The Change of Life"	"The Art of Being Good In-Laws"	"Emotional Adjustments and Needs of the Contracting Family"	