**Name: Dennis Yeung**

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**Course Instructor: Ben Burns**

**A Strategic Ministry Plan for the Church and Community**

**Mail Box: 198**

**Marriage and Family: Comprehensive Strategic Ministry Plan for the Church and Community**

Goals and Principles of Gospel-Centered Marriages and Families

1. Through marriages and families we experience the reality of the issues of sin.
2. The Biblical messages of how sin affects interpersonal relationships will be fully understood.
3. We will understand more fully the significance of the covenant relationship between Christ and the church through the covenant relationship between husband and wife.
4. Husband and wife will cherish their life-long commitment to loving each other.
5. Husband and wife will appreciate the joy and mystery of the union with Christ through their sexual relationship with each other.
6. Husband and wife will cherish their children as the fruit of their love and solid demonstrations of the biblical truth that Two Have Become One.
7. Husband and wife will honor the kingdom plan of discipleship within the family.
8. Husband and wife will view their work in their extended family as one of the most important and strenuous missions of evangelism.
9. We will honor the civil significance of wedding ceremonies in the church community.
10. Proper parenting will be the main strategy in dealing with people’s behavioral issues.
11. Husband and wife will love and respect and work with one another in all aspects.
12. Regarding issues that husband and wife disagree on, husband will love his wife and listen to her carefully, try his best to honor her preferences and opinions with out of love, make a decision and then hold himself responsible for the decision. Wife will try her best to give the best advice possible and then let him make the decision with the understanding that he will be held responsible for the decision before the Lord.
13. The church community should understand that as a result of sin, broken relationships may happen in marriages and families. The church community should try their best to help sinners repent and restore their relationships with people and God.

Church-wide Strategies

1. In a regular Sunday Service there will be a family time in which parents and children will sit together, singing and praying and learning together. The pastor will preach the Biblical principles on marriages and families and expose the unbiblical practices regarding marriages and families in the community. More pictures, videos and PowerPoint presentations will give a sense of urgency.
2. The pastor will try their best to illustrate the teaching points in all his/her sermons with marriage-based and family-based daily examples.
3. The church should reduce the number of activities that target different age-groups separately, like men’s prayer meetings, women’s bible study groups, children’s games, etc. so that more whole-family activities can be arranged, e.g. family game night, family communion, visiting nursing homes, etc.
4. During a long holiday, there will be a retreat in which family members can interact more in a cabin. The topics of the retreats will follow a sequence that systematically addresses different issues on marriages and families.
5. During the after-school hours, the church premises are open so that children and parents or grandparents may come back and interact with one another, supervising kids in doing homework and having some family fun. Wi-Fi will be available for families to hang out longer in church. Helpful materials (books or DVD’s) will be available for checking out. Good movies or documentaries regarding marriages and families will be shown in the media room. Model families will be invited to show up as often as they can to minister to members’ needs.
6. Model families will be encouraged to open their houses as often as possible to invite weaker families to visit them and share their joys and wisdom.
7. The Sunday school will use materials that stress character development (like the VeggieTales) and the importance of godly marriages and families (the materials made by Focus on the Family).
8. All Sunday school teachers will follow certain instructions to create an environment that will enhance emotional growth. The essentials will include: (1) allowing freedom but stressing responsibilities; (2) open expressions are encouraged; (3) a vocabulary of emotional expressions are taught and used as frequently as possible; (4) not being over-protective nor over-solicitous; (5) teaching new skills continuously.

Support and Educational Programs for the Surrounding Non-believing Communities

1. The whole church is encouraged to participate in support and educational programs for the surrounding non-believing communities.
2. Christian families are invited to come and we believe that their enthusiasm in helping the non-believing families will actually improve their own family experiences because a common vision will bind them together.
3. Most of the useful skills for a happy family are also useful for Christians to improve their family life. Members of the church will be taught that many research findings are not found in the Bible but are scientific. They will help everybody in living a healthy life.
4. A monthly workshop will be available for people in the community to attend. All the topics will be related to parenting so that the whole family can come, e.g. ‘why children misbehave’, ‘how to encourage my kid’, ‘give the children more responsibilities’, ‘change the I-messages’, etc.
5. A weekly article will be posted to the church’s website addressing the contemporary issues facing marriages and families, e.g. cyber temptations, bullying at school, sexual needs, the use of drugs, violence and abuse, divorce, etc.
6. Small booklets will be made available for the church members to share with members of the community. The booklets may cover things like ‘a list of words that encourage people’, ‘a list of words that discourage people’, ‘three different parent-child interaction patterns’, etc.
7. The church will make a You Tube show to illustrate with stories the seven different roles of parents, i.e. the commander-in-chief, the moralist, the know-it-all, the judge, the critic, the psychologist and the consoler. Members are encouraged to view the show and invite their friends in the community to watch it with them and discuss how a parent should balance different roles.
8. Church members are encouraged to try to help some families with difficult relationships with their family members. A handbook with useful information will be given to them. The information may include things like [Stopping confrontations with family members: (1) avoiding the first impulse and do the unexpected; (2) diverting yourself; (3) disputing the belief; and (4) reminding yourself with a mirror note ‘watch your tone’].
9. Members are told to inform their community friends that when they cannot afford to get help from professional counselors or when professional counselors are not able to help them, they can consider coming to church to seek spiritual help. A small booklet or a short video illustrating how prayer and the scripture can address the issues of emotions or relationships will be made available for church members to help their friends. Local successful stories are included in the book/video too.