

BUILDING HOMES OF HOPE AND WHOLENESS

FAMILY MINISTRIES TRAINING PROGRAM FOR LOCAL CHURCH LEADERS

LEADER'S GUIDE

**Family Ministries Department
North American Division of the Seventh-day Adventist Church**

Mission Statement

Our mission of evangelism is to provide resources, training, and networking opportunities that will instill hope and bring wholeness to families within the territory of the North American Division.

Vision Statement

Reaching Families for Eternity

Produced by the Family Ministries Department
North American Division of the Seventh-day Adventist Church

Authors: Drs. Claudio and Pamela Consuegra
Managing Editor: Brad Forbes
Designer: Claudia C. Pech Moguel

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www.adventsource.org

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Foreword

Dear Family Ministry Leaders,

We are delighted that you have been chosen by God to lead out in this important ministry in your local congregation. The fact that you are reading this is a testament to your desire to be faithful to His call.

The purpose of Family Ministries is to support families in a growing, joyful, and loving relationship with Jesus Christ. Our departmental mission statement reads, “Our mission of evangelism is to provide resources, training, and networking opportunities that will instill hope and bring wholeness to families within the territory of the North American Division.” You will notice that each chapter in this resource guide will introduce various elements needed to build homes of hope and wholeness, in fulfillment of that mission.

In addition, our departmental vision statement is, “Reaching Families for Eternity” and indeed that is also our desire — that we endeavor to have all our family members in heaven with us and that also includes our church family. Your dedication to fulfilling this vision statement will have a lasting impact on families as you realize that evangelism, at its best, occurs within the context of family.

So, where do you begin as you start to focus on family ministries? Look at this counsel: “Our work for Christ is to begin with the family, in the home... There is no missionary field more important than this” (White, *The Adventist Home*, p. 35). Yes, all too often we think that we must go to a faraway land to be a missionary when the truth is that the starting point is in the home.

In Jesus’ great and final commission, He directed His followers: “Go and make disciples...” (Matthew 28:19). God intended the family to be a natural setting for carrying out this directive. “As workers for God, our work is to begin with those nearest. It is to begin in our own home. There is no more important missionary field than this” (White, *Child Guidance*, p. 476).

Again, thank you for your active commitment to strengthen the family ties within your local congregation and community. May God be with you as you fulfill this sacred calling.

Yours because of Him,

Drs. Claudio & Pamela Consuegra
Family Ministries Directors
North American Division of the Seventh-day Adventist Church



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How to Use This Resource

The purpose of this resource is to train Family Ministries leaders of local churches. All too often we are asked to undertake a ministry that is new to us and further education and guidance is needed. This tool will help you to provide training so local church leaders will have a greater understanding of family issues and dynamics.

This resource was developed as a direct response to surveys conducted among the Family Ministries leadership team. This training resource, as requested, meets the following criteria:

- One-day Training
- Interactive
- Concise
- Practical
- Certificate Issued Upon Completion

One-day-Training — You will notice that there are six modules in this guide. Each module should take approximately one hour to present (including the group activities). So, it is very doable to schedule one day for this training and still allow time for short breaks between each session as well as a lunch break.

Interactive — A key to maximizing this resource is to utilize all the group discussion and activities that are contained within. This is to be an interactive training tool and much of the learning will take place as your group engages in these activities. We have attempted to keep the information in each module concise so you should have plenty of time for group interaction. So, don't skip the activities and discussion.

Concise — This resource is a basic introduction that touches the key points needed to understand healthy family dynamics and is not meant to be an exhaustive resource. Please look at it as the beginning point as you start leading your church in this very important ministry.

Practical — Once you have completed the one-day training, you can use each topic as a stand-alone seminar in your own church. We hope this encourages you to get started teaching the church members and the people in your communities.

Certificate of Completion — At the close of the training, each participant will receive a certificate. All you need to do is use the certificate provided on the resource USB drive provided with this guide, fill in the participant name and date and add your signature as the presenter.

Remember, you are the resource person for the church when it comes to family ministries so the better equipped you are, the better you will be able to minister to those in your conference, congregation and community. As stated earlier, this tool is only the beginning, therefore, it is our prayer that each director will continue the journey of learning and take advantage of the additional resources that are listed to expand understanding of each topic. May God bless you as you go forth to follow His call!

A Word for the Trainer/Leader

We are delighted you are leading the training of local church Family Ministries leaders. The work that you do in your field may be extensive and your contact with the local church very limited, so training local church leaders is crucial in order for them to have an ongoing ministry to the families in their church and community.

While we are providing some suggested responses, we suggest you encourage the participants to respond and provide their own ideas and allow for flexibility as various groups will come up with different answers. Do not allow the possible or suggested responses we provide here to limit you as they are only given as samples to help if group discussion is slow or minimal.

Since you are the trainer/leader, we are providing you with this additional guide to help you be as prepared to lead your group as possible. We encourage you to make good use of this resource by making it:

- **Personal** — As the instructor for this course, we encourage you to make it personal. Include your own stories, illustrations, and examples when appropriate. You don't need to read everything in the participant's guide word for word; rather, explain the concepts in your own words and feel free to pause for any questions or clarifications the participants may have.
- **Clear** — We wrote the program concise enough so you should be able to cover each of the six topics, including the group activities, within an hour or so. However, try not to rush through the material in order to cover it all. It is more important that the participants learn a few concepts well than if you cover everything so quickly that they fail to grasp the concepts. So, make sure you understand the main concepts, explain them clearly, and ask the participants for feedback as to their understanding.
- **Visual** — You have a PowerPoint presentation included with this guide. The suggested answers we have provided are on each of the chapter PowerPoint presentations. Therefore, we encourage you to NOT advance to that slide, and the suggested responses, until after the participants have had a chance to share and discuss their responses. Feel free to use these PowerPoints as you see fit, add and edit to fit your presentation style. We have only provided them as an added resource to use, if desired.
- **Experiential** — Because there are different avenues of learning, encourage participants to write the responses in their books. Allow and encourage participants to ask questions and provide answers, but make sure you manage the discussions appropriately, so you don't run out of time. Also, the participants have a sketch of a house at the end of each chapter. During your closing activity have you participants write in each of the elements of a Home of Hope and Wholeness that have been covered in that chapter.

To help you identify scriptural principle and different group activities we have placed a graphic alongside each activity.



SCRIPTURAL PRINCIPLE—Please take the time to emphasize the scriptural principle at the beginning of each session. It sets the proper context for the entire topic being discussed.



SUGGESTED OPENING ACTIVITY—This can be used as an icebreaker and to give extra time for everyone to arrive before you begin the actual presentation and training.



GROUP ACTIVITY—The group activities are not optional; they are a vital part of the program. Encourage everyone in the group to participate in them and please do not skip any activity that has this symbol.



SUGGESTED CLOSING ACTIVITY—This is optional, depending on how much time you have left at the end of each session. Remember to provide a few minutes break between sessions for people to stretch, use the restroom, or get a snack or a drink (if you are providing that for them).

Our prayer is that God will use you to convey the concepts included in the participant's and in this leader's guide clearly and effectively and that through your presentation they will be inspired and encouraged to go back home to lead and guide the families in their church and community with the message of Hope and Wholeness.

A FIRM FOUNDATION

Presenter Notes

Introduction



OPENING ACTIVITY

In order to help facilitate group participation, you may begin this icebreaker by asking for short responses to the following:

1. Who traveled the farthest to get here today?
2. Did any of you have any difficulties on the road?
3. Did any of you get lost?
4. When you're lost, are you more likely to stop and ask for directions, or drive around until you find your way? How about your spouse?

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Scriptural Principle

“Therefore, everyone who hears these words of mine and puts them into practice is like a wise man who built his house on the rock. The rain came down, the streams rose, and the winds blew and beat against that house; yet it did not fall, because it had its foundation on the rock”
Matthew 7: 24–25 (NIV).

Our scripture verse reminds us that our homes must have a strong foundation otherwise, they will crumble when the storms come. And, make no mistake about it, every home will experience storms, sooner or later.

Every builder will tell you that the most important component in a stable building is the foundation. It doesn't matter what the rest of the building looks like if the foundation is not solid. Any mistakes made in the foundation will only get worse as you go higher up in the construction process. Even the untrained eye will clearly see defects as the building gets higher and higher, if the foundation is weak.

In the parable of the wise man who built his house on the rock, Jesus describes the storms of life as a matter of fact. He does not say “IF” the storms come but rather, “WHEN.” We can be sure that the storms of life will come and that our home's foundation will be tested. There's no getting around it. The question

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ACTIVITY #1

Make a list of all the verses in the Bible that you can think of that speak of ways we are to relate to our family members. It's OK if you don't know the exact reference for now. Just list them. For example: "Husbands, love your wives." Ephesians 5:22.

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Other examples may include but are not limited to the following:

- "Love your neighbor as yourself" (Matthew 22:40).
- "Love your enemies" (Luke 6:27).
- "In humility consider others better than yourselves" (Philippians 2:3).
- "Live at peace with everyone" (Romans 12:18).
- "Submit to one another out of reverence for Christ" (Ephesians 5:21).
- "Rejoice in the wife of your youth" (Proverbs 5:18).
- "Wives, submit to your husband as to the Lord...Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her..." (Ephesians 5:22-25).
- "Husbands...be considerate as you live with your wives and treat them with respect as the weaker partner and as heirs with you of the gracious gift of life..." (1 Peter 3:7).
- "These commandments that I give you today are to be upon your heart. Impress them on your children. Talk about them..." (Deuteronomy 6:6, 7).
- "Fathers, do not exasperate your children, instead, bring them up in the training and instruction of the Lord" (Ephesians 6:4).
- "Listen, my sons, to a father's instruction; pay attention and gain understanding" (Proverbs 4:1). "Children, obey your parents in everything, for this pleases the Lord" (Colossians 3:20).
- "Honor your father and your mother..." (Exodus 20:12).
- "You shall not commit adultery" (Exodus 20:14).
- "You shall not covet your neighbor's wife" (Deuteronomy 5:21)

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ACTIVITY #2

If possible, divide into four groups, with each group having as its assignment the reading and study of one chapter of the book of Ruth. Each group is to list all the family-related issues they can find in the chapter. In other words, what issues/challenges did the family encounter in that chapter? And, then, think about all the ways that the church could minister to families going through those same issues today.

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Ruth	Issues Facing Family	Ways to Minister to Families Facing Similar Situations Today
Chapter 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Famine- No food • Relocation • Immigration • Death of Spouse/Widow • Children Married Non-believers • Death of Children • In-law Relationships • Debt • Return to Homeland • Grief/Loss • Low Self-Worth in Naomi 	Note: Ministry methods will vary. Allow for ample time to discuss possibilities for each family dynamic/challenge. <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px; display: inline-block; margin-top: 10px;">PPT</div>
Chapter 2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Single Parenting • Hunger • Search for Food • Daughter-in-law/Mother-in-law Relationship • Child Providing for Parent 	
Chapter 3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Depending on Another for Help 	
Chapter 4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Marriage/Wedding • Birth of Child • Grandparenting 	

Do you see why the book of Ruth is one of our personal favorites to use in teaching family dynamics? Many individuals can find themselves in the book of Ruth and take comfort that their life experience is not unique. As we share about the hardships and trials that Naomi faced others can relate, identify, and come to understand that they are not alone in the challenges they face.

Through famine, immigration, death, and loss, God was still present with Naomi and Ruth as His plan was unfolding. That grandson, named Obed, whom Naomi held in her arms was in

Presenter Notes

the direct lineage of Jesus. What an encouraging story of resilience, trust, and God's leading we can share with others!

Commitment

A successful marriage and family life do not always have to do with our circumstances, but it does have a lot to do with making a life-long commitment to God, to our spouse, and to our family. It involves making the decision to take the word divorce out of your vocabulary and replacing it with the word commitment. And, this commitment extends to your children as well.

You may say that you are committed to your family. However, where do they actually fall on your priority list? Where does your career/work rate in comparison? And, what about your use of technology? You see, it's easy to say we are committed but our behavior tells the true story of our commitment.

Go ahead, take out your calendar. Most of us have our calendars and appointments on our phones. As you look at your appointments for the next month you may see things such as: committee at work, dental appointment, kid's soccer practice, church board meeting, appointment at car garage, etc. Wait!

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ACTIVITY #3

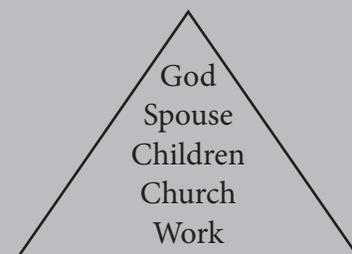
Take a moment to think about your life today.

1. Make a list of the ten most important things (and people) in your life.
2. Then, on the pyramid below, place the top five in order from the most important (at the top) to the least important (at the bottom).
3. Examine your priority pyramid. Does it reflect your faith in God? Does it reflect your commitment to your family?

- Allow those presents to write their own list. Some examples could include:

God	Wife	Family	Children	Extended Family
Work	Money	School	Career	Church
House	Investments	Cars	Vacation	Travel
Friends	Ex-spouse	Stepchildren	Neighbors	Coworkers

- Once they have made their own list, you may ask for some volunteers to share what is on their list.
- Now you can ask them to pick the top five from their list and write them on the pyramid in order of importance. One suggested order might be:



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those strategies is evangelistic in nature. Yes, your family is one of the most powerful evangelizing teams in the world!

Presenter Notes



SUGGESTED CLOSING ACTIVITY

You may do this if time allows. Ask those in attendance to answer these questions:

1. Considering the parable of the man who built his house on the rock and the one who built on the sand (Matt 7:24–27), is your family foundation on solid rock, or on sand but with a nice view?
2. What might you have to change in order to shore up the foundation?
3. How can others help you in the process?
4. When you consider your life and family today, is your pressing need to learn more, or to practice daily what you have already learned?

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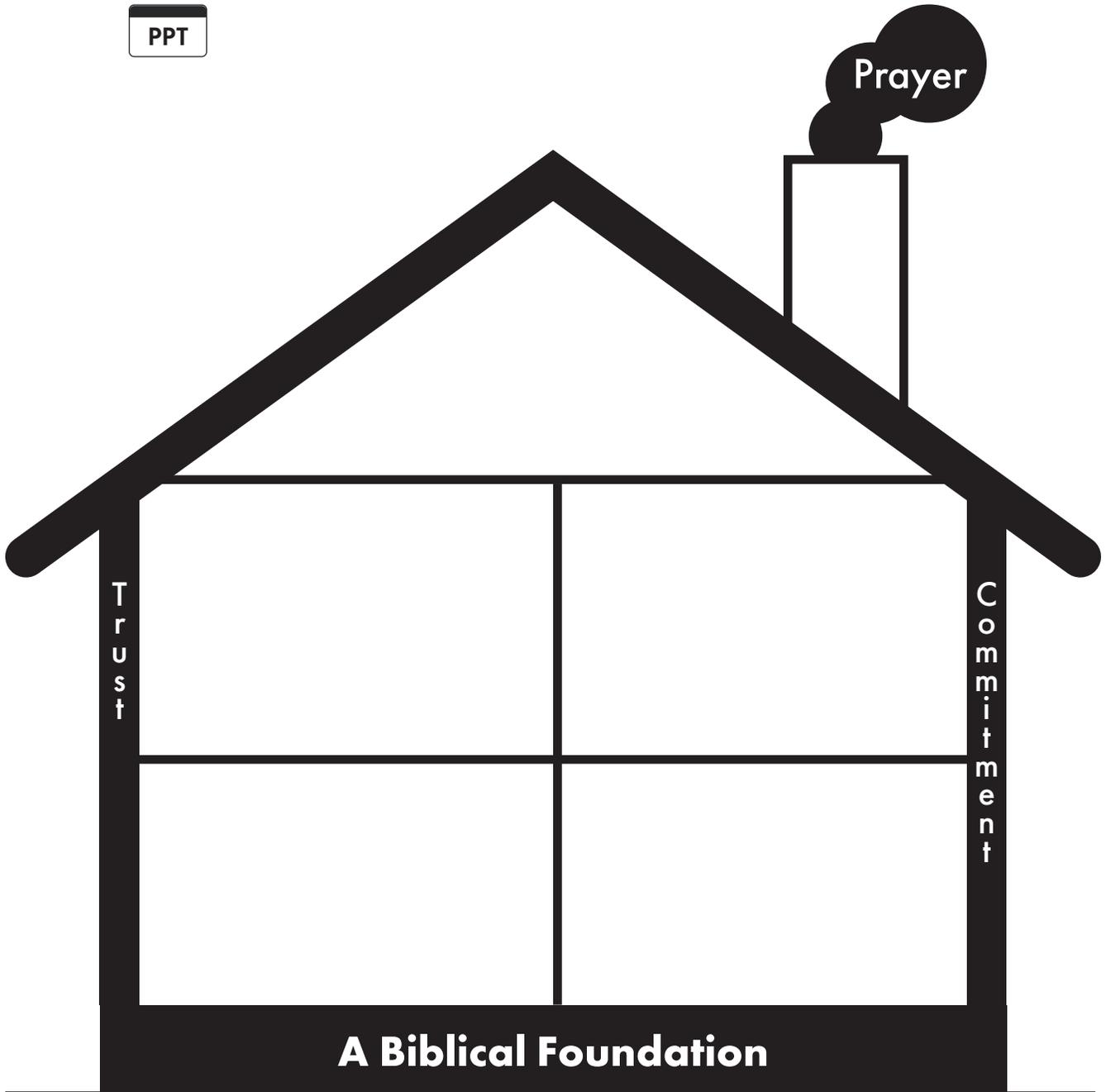
Wrap-Up

So, what does the solid foundation of a home look like? It is one that rests upon strong biblical principles and one where faith is evident to all you come in contact with. In summary:

- Build your home upon THE ROCK!
- Commit your marriage and your family to God and make Him a priority in your life.
- Make sure your priority to your family is evident in the way in which you live.
- Trust in the one who is in the boat with you!
- Pray for wisdom in all the decisions you make.
- Live in such a way that your home reflects Jesus to others!
- Make sure others see Jesus in your house!

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