

## Shepherding Families

Trinity Fellowship Church, Fall 2008

### Developing a Family Purpose Statement

It is helpful to have a family purpose statement (sometimes also referred to as a family mission statement) to provide the guidelines that each family member needs to understand their place within the family (“organization”) and how the parents (“leaders”) define success. The intent is to distill down the characteristics and goals you want your family working towards. It’s very likely you set goals today for yourself and for your kids – both long and short term:

- I want to lose 10 pounds by summer
- Let’s get a babysitter and go out on a date every week
- I’m going to get up 20 minutes early and spend that time studying God’s Word
- You kids have 10 minutes to pick up this room!

God certainly has a purpose for us! He declared the primary goal in Luke 10:27:

"You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart,  
and with all your soul, and with all your strength,  
and with all your mind;  
and your neighbor as yourself."

The family purpose statement should be an extension of that – it’s the “master plan” or “master vision” for your family. Have you ever sat down and thought about each of the family members and what God might have had in mind when He put you all together? A family purpose statement is simply a paragraph that summarizes what you hope to accomplish in the next several years while everyone is under a single roof. It acts as a daily reminder of the important goals that you don’t want to lose sight of in the hectic pace we keep today.

Depending on the age of your children, consider involving them in the process of creating your purpose statement. The conversations your family has in developing this are just as important as the written form. This is an opportunity for everyone to talk about what matters most to them as you live and work together as family. Once you have written down your family purpose statement, place it in a visible location in your home to remind everyone what you are striving for!

### Starting out [“Our purpose as a Family is ...”]

There are a variety of ways to put this together – use the following information and worksheet together as you see fit to craft your own family’s purpose statement. There is no right or wrong way to this – the intent is to list specific goals for the family, and each member in that family that we desire to achieve together for God’s glory. Start by writing an overall purpose statement for your family – make sure it reflects the morals and values you desire and expect. For example: “Our purpose as a family is to glorify God through the choices we make individually and as a family, striving to show love in every situation.”

To help with this, use the following worksheet to brainstorm with each member of the family.

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## Understanding the purposes

Jot down brief answers to the following questions and share among the family. These are intended as starting points – feel free to adjust or add to the questions in order to visualize your family goals. Give examples for children so they can understand what the question is asking.

1. What are the most important qualities and values we have as a family?

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2. How can our family inspire one another to love the Lord?

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3. What do we want our family to be known for, how do we want others to describe our family?

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4. How can our family fulfill the Great Commission of spreading the Gospel?

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5. How will our family reflect Godly values?

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6. Years from today, what accomplishments do you think would give you the greatest satisfaction?

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### Organizing the family purpose statement

Take the answers from the worksheet and collect them together – combine similar ideas and sort out ideas, some are fundamental foundations to the purpose statement and some will be goals we will use in crafting our individual detailed plan. Go through Scripture and select passages that summarize each answer – it's important to ensure that each goal is Biblical.

After you have agreed upon the main points, start working on the paragraph that will serve as your purpose statement. It should be meaningful and easy to remember. For smaller kids, a fun way to put it together is to turn it into an acrostic based on your last name:

Serve God in all things we do

Meet challenges and adversity with Love

Invite others into our lives so we can share God's love with them

Teach our children the Truth of the Gospel

Help others

### Setting Goals

Once the family purpose statement is complete it is helpful to set goals. These goals form the detailed plan that enables each member of the family to contribute to the purpose statement. For goals to be achievable and practical, they need to be:

- **Specific** – describe in details what you want to accomplish. Use terms that can be easily evaluated.
- **Measurable** – give specific milestones or even target dates for the goals. It needs to be something you can evaluate and ensure you are heading in the right direction.
- **Achievable** – set goals that are realistic but challenging. Ask God to help you to have the strength and wisdom to work on each goal.

Carefully consider each goal and make sure they meet the following criteria:

1. Is it Biblical? Do I have a verse or moral reason to support this goal?
2. Does it fit our purposes as a family?
3. Does it bring glory to God, or glory to us?

### Remind yourself daily!

Post your goals in a place where you can see them regular and pick a goal to work on weekly, or monthly. Let others in your family know which goal you are working on so they can encourage you!