

# FreedomFOCUS

“...to turn them  
from darkness  
to light...”

July—August 2007

NEWSLETTER

[www.indianabcc.com](http://www.indianabcc.com)

## God's Priorities for Blessing the Family



Unfortunately many families have difficulty keeping their priorities in order. The family schedule is often busy, produces stress, and does little to strengthen the

family's relationship with God and one another. Consider revisiting three biblical teachings that outline God's priorities for blessing your family.

### 1. Make Jesus Christ the Lord of your home.

As Christian parents, we all hope that our children will grow up to be warriors for Christ. But, what is the price to pay? One of the most important factors in making Jesus Christ the Lord of the home is that the father must turn his heart towards home (Malachi 4:6). A father must humbly submit himself to Christ to be a meek leader of his wife and children. He cannot let other people and responsibilities get in the way. Keeping his priorities in order will require some tough choices, such as forgoing a job promotion to maintain his marriage and family relationships. If a father abdicates his God-given responsibilities as leader of his home, he makes his family vulnerable to other influences, and Satan will gain the advantage. As a father surrenders himself to Christ, he learns to make decisions based on the principles of the Bible rather than on his own understanding (Proverbs 3:5-6). This will be evident as he loves his wife, as he gathers the fam-

ily for prayer and Bible reading, and as he takes the initiative to involve his family in a local church. He must understand that he is living for eternal purposes and that his decisions will impact future generations.

### 2. Maintain Marriage Oneness

Many couples I counsel have little idea how Satan can bring destruction to their children by the lack of marital oneness in their relationship. When a husband and wife fail to walk in the blessing of oneness that God desires, the children are put in the middle of the parents. Consequently, life and activity revolve around the children while the couple grows emotionally, spiritually and physically distant. These children will grow up wounded and have divided loyalties.

During the winter encampments of the Revolutionary War, General George Washington would look forward to the time when his wife Martha would visit for a few months. Martha's arrival always brought joy to her husband. He would express his heart to her. He would voice his complaints about the conditions of the army and discuss his frustrations with Congress. She would listen attentively. In 1777, Martha Washington brought great calm to her husband and at Valley Forge; with men dying by the day, his own generals plotting against him by night, he needed her. The Washington's had little time for one another as the crises of the winter escalated. To give themselves time, the general decided to have a one hour breakfast with his wife each morning at precisely 7 a.m.. The husband and wife

## Upcoming Events

### August 30 & September 27 Church-Connect Luncheon

Join us for lunch at noon. This is an informal way for us to get to know you and learn how we can partner with you and your church in discipleship ministry.

Bob and Barbara Newman have an outreach ministry to the Spanish speaking community in Indianapolis after serving for several years to the Spanish-speaking world overseas. Reflecting on his own experience in attending the Church-Connect Luncheon, Bob feels it is valuable for every pastor and church leader to attend because it "introduces them firsthand to a biblical and balanced perspective in principles of spiritual warfare which are so necessary to effective counseling."

### November 2 IBCC Fall Praise Banquet

Mark your calendars now for our annual Fall Praise Banquet at the Indianapolis Training Center. This will be a great opportunity to reflect on what God has done in and through the IBCC ministry over the past year. We will provide more information as the time gets closer.

had their morning meal in their bedroom on a small table in front of a window. The general issued orders that he was not to be disturbed-by anyone-during that hour each morning. What a great example of a couple sharing oneness for us to consider.

To have God's blessing in the home, a husband must be a loving servant leader to his wife and be in tune with what is going on in his wife's world (1 Peter 3:7). The wife must honor, serve, and support her husband as her best friend, especially in difficult circumstances (Proverbs 31:10-11). This kind of marriage will help children be secure and will develop in them a positive attitude toward marriage.

### 3. Accept the Biblical Responsibility of Relational Discipleship of Your Children

Discipleship is a relational concept. It starts with loving our children unconditionally as God loves them. Our children experience unconditional love when we as parents accept them in the midst of their failure. Another key element to building relationship with our children is to enjoy being with them in what brings them joy.

A couple of months ago I was counseling a father

and his disrespectful teenage son. I asked the father if he ever spent time with his son doing what the son enjoyed. He told me that he takes his son to baseball games. "Do you like baseball?" I asked the son. He said, "It is ok." I then asked him what he *would* like to do with his dad. He said with excitement, "Paintball!" I discussed with the father what a help to their relationship it would be if he would take the time to play some war games with his son. A couple of months later I talked with them again; their relationship had greatly improved after some time together and a couple of paintball outings! Discipleship is just the beginning of discipleship.

When you have your children's hearts, you can be of assistance in their relationship with their Heavenly Father. Your example is very crucial to this process. Read books that build character and include God's working in people's lives throughout history. Spend time with them in Bible study, Scripture memorization, prayer, and family worship. Avoid long theological lectures. Your consistency in these relational activities while enthusiastically sharing with one another what God is doing in your lives, can make a profound difference!

*Rev. Jeff Pokone*

## How IBCC is Partnering with Churches

**I**t is the mission of the Indiana Biblical Counseling Center to assist local churches through the ministry of discipleship counseling. We desire to be a three-fold resource to churches by providing: 1) information on how to biblically address common conflicts in homes today; 2) special seminars or training sessions in effective counseling, and 3) in-office counseling for struggling congregants.

Over the past ten years, IBCC has served over one hundred pastors and churches. Reflecting on his connection with the Indiana Biblical Counseling Center and how it has impacted his ministry, a pastor from a small town in Indiana gives the following testimony:

*"I first learned of the Indiana Biblical Counseling Center seven or eight years ago as I was just beginning to pastor a small church in rural Indiana. For such a small church, there were plenty of issues, both in the church and in the local community – marital conflict, substance abuse, suicide, etc. A respected friend told me about a training event sponsored by IBCC. While I was not able to attend, his referral and the subsequent recommendation of others kept me mindful of this ministry resource.*

*Some years later, I was able to attend several events, including a week long seminar, where I heard Rev. Pokone speak and heard the testimonies of several counselees who had received help through the ministry of Rev. Pokone and IBCC. Eventually, I was*

*able to have him speak to my congregation. Many who have had negative experiences with counselors were apprehensive at first, but after hearing him, said they were helped by his message.*

*As I have listened to Rev. Pokone share at various events, I am encouraged as he, with discernment, courageously and yet sensitively presents biblical truths in response to difficult life issues. I consider him a co-laborer. He strengthens my hands, many times reinforcing the messages I've shared publicly and in personal counseling.*

*Rev. Pokone recognizes his limitations and powerlessness to change others. He rather brings them face-to-face with biblical truths which, being applied to their lives, will make them free. The ministry of IBCC is one of discipleship, teaching and equipping others to follow Christ. Rev. Pokone is able to say things that I as a pastor could not say. Those I have referred or exposed to the ministry in some way, have expressed an appreciation for the help.*

*I thank God for IBCC. I'm grateful for the sacrifices of Rev. Pokone and his staff. I'm pleased as I see the fruit of the ministry (changed lives). As a man, I enjoy the personal fellowship with Rev. Pokone brought about by his love for the Lord. I am encouraged by his availability and his desire to help those who are hurting or who struggle with some sort of bondage. What a necessary ministry!"*