

**Social Issues and Evangelism:
Interactive Biblical Study for Congregation Involvement**

THY 551 Social Issues in Mission
MACO – July 31, 2009
Peter Keyes
Dr. Jeanne Burger

Table of Contents

Introduction	3
Description of the need	4
Description of cross-cultural consideration	5
Goal	5
Objectives	6
Outline of the Bible study schedule	8
Resources	9
Budget	9
Action steps with timeline	9
Evaluation	12
Bibliography	13
Appendix A	14
Appendix B	16
Appendix C	17
Appendix D	18
Appendix E	19
Appendix F	20

INTRODUCTION:

Week after week, in the message of our sermons, we were admonished to share our faith in Jesus Christ with those who do not know of Him, as we work and as we play, in the routine of our day-to-day existence. However, when I asked the devote members of a Bible class if they had shared their faith with any non-Christians in the past month, their response was that they didn't know of any non-Christians. This response led me to ask, "Do you think that all of the people living in our community are Christians?" Their answer was, "No, but we don't interact with any non-Christians that we know of. All of the people we spend time with are Christians." I then asked if any of the people participated in volunteer services in the community that could be considered social ministries. After some thought, different people shared that they served with Meals on Wheels (a program to deliver a daily hot meal to a shut-in), RSVP (a program to help people complete their taxes), United Way (a program that provided various benefits and fund raisers for people who had been hospitalized, and events that raised money to find the cure for cancer, heart disease, diabetes and a number of other programs).

These people were involved in the community but had not made the connection between their involvement in community programs and their responsibility to proclaim to others their faith in Christ. Their understanding (or misunderstanding) of evangelism was that they had to share the gospel in such a way that someone would be brought to faith by what they said. Because of this "understanding" they were held back from sharing their faith because they were afraid they might say something that was theologically wrong. In response to this fear, my goal has been to help the members of my classes find non-threatening ways to engage others in conversations about God's love and the fulfillment of that love in Jesus Christ.

DESCRIPTION OF THE NEED:

Many of the people within our congregations believe that they have been redeemed by the blood of Christ and will be saved from eternal damnation when Christ judges the world. They also believe that the Word of God is the truth and that it has the power to save sinners. They acknowledge that they are to be Christ's messengers and proclaim the message of the Good News of Christ to the unbelievers within their community. Actually, they acknowledge that someone who is a Christian is to be Christ's messenger and proclaim the message of the Good News of Christ to the unbelievers within their community. This someone is most likely to be the Pastor or perhaps some other paid staff person at the church. Only a few have taken the commandment to proclaim Christ to the people in their community seriously. The rest feel unprepared and unqualified to share their faith in public.

These same people, do however, get involved in the affairs of government and participate in other social services programs. But they fail to see the connection between these programs and their "calling" as children of God to be doing "good works" as a witness to God's love and presence in their lives. This disconnect between their actions and the mandate to show others God's love through Christian works of love leaves their witness to Christ half-told.

Ronald Sider stated, "Christian mission works best when evangelism and social concern come together in the name and power of Jesus" (Sider (1993), p183). We have, in many ways, failed to realize the power of Christ in the mission mandate we have been given. Christ sent us out by His authority (Matthew 28) and promised to be with us "as we are going." It is His mission that we are on and it is for His sake that we engage in both the proclamation of His Good News and the acts of showing others love in His name. Sider admonishes us by stating, "If Jesus spoke the truth, if the Bible is God's Word, then every Christian congregation should be

wholistic. Every Christian congregation should be equipping its people for the work of evangelism, praying constantly for the salvation of sinners, and regularly – month by month – experiencing the joy of welcoming new believer into the circle of Jesus’ redeemed community. Every Christian congregation should also be immersed in service to the hurting and broken in their own community and around the world” (Sider, p195).

It is the intent of this Bible study course to engage the participants in a deeper understanding of their “call” to proclaim God’s love by their words and their deeds. The participants will grow in their faith through the study of God’s Word, through the interaction and fellowship with others in the class, and through the opportunities to share their faith with those that they are showing God’s love.

DESCRIPTION OF CROSS-CULTURAL CONSIDERATIONS:

This course will address social concerns within the community in which the participants live, work and / or attend worship. The cross-cultural considerations will be addressed as we look at the community as a whole. If we recognize concerns and barriers related to race or language, these will be discussed and possible solutions will be suggested for future ministry development. Each concern that we identify will need to be weighed against the potential assets and resources of the congregation. They will be the ones to decide the future direction of their ministries to the community. My encouragement to them will be to continue to seek God’s guidance and direction on these matters.

GOAL:

To develop a Biblical study focusing on the relationship between social issues and evangelism that will encourage the participants to develop a holistic Christian outreach lifestyle to witness to the love of Christ by both their works and their words.

OBJECTIVES:

1. To write materials for a twelve-week practical and interactive Bible study on the topic of social outreach that can be used in multiple congregations or settings as one component of a larger program to equip leaders for outreach.
 - a. The course would be twelve weeks in length.
 - i. The first session is devoted to introductions.
 - ii. Six sessions of Bible study.
 - iii. Four sessions of planned social ministry activity experiences.
 - iv. The last session is for reflection and celebration.
 - b. Note: The course could be condensed to eight weeks.
 - i. The four planned social ministry activity experiences would then be completed on another day of the week during the six weeks of Bible study.
 - c. Note: The course could be taught as a stand-alone course or as part of a series of courses related to outreach leadership development under the ministry title of BOLD Christian Outreach Ministry.
2. To give participants an opportunity to explore six Biblical principles for Christian involvement in social ministry as a witness to the love of Christ.
 - a. Each Bible study session will focus on one of these principles.
 - i. Introduction: Christ as our example – healing, feeding, accepting, proclamation, & witness.
 - ii. Call to be a witness for Christ in word and deed.
 - iii. Call to be in service to others.
 - iv. Call to be in fellowship with others.
 - v. Call to be educated and to educate others.
 - vi. Call to worship God and be an encouragement for others.
3. To give participants opportunity to explore personal responses to these six Biblical principles for Christian involvement in social ministry as a witness to the love of Christ.
 - a. Each Bible study will end with participants identifying personal responses to Christ's love.
 - i. Response to being called a child of God.
 - ii. Response to call to be a witness for Christ in word and deed.
 - iii. Response to call to be in service to others.
 - iv. Response to call to be in fellowship with others.
 - v. Response to call to be educated and to educate others.

- vi. Response to call to worship God and be an encouragement for others.
4. To foster an imagination for social ministry within the participants of the course.
 - a. The course will create an atmosphere where participants are encouraged to openly engage in conversations to develop their interest in social ministry.
 - i. Participants will share their stories.
 - ii. Participants will explore and challenge their preconceived biases.
 - iii. Participants will experiment with social ministry responses.
 - iv. Participants will seek God’s direction for their role in specific social ministries.
 - v. Participants will develop a Christ like attitude toward those in need.
 5. To give participants the opportunity to experiment with a variety of social ministries.
 - a. The course will provide the opportunities to engage in hands-on ministry at strategic community based social ministries.
 - i. Participants will engage in four different types of social ministry activity.
 - ii. Participants will have the opportunity to experience the different needs of the individuals in each of these social ministry settings.
 - iii. Participants will reflect on these social ministry experiences and relate these experiences to the ongoing Bible study.
 - iv. Participants will engage in conversations about the real needs of the people in the community and the Christian responses to those needs.
 6. To move the participants to develop a plan of action to become involved in ongoing social ministries within their community.
 - a. Participants will be introduced to the “Human Care Ministries Manual” produced by Board for Human Care Ministries / The Lutheran Church – Missouri Synod.
 - i. Present overview of Human Care Ministries Manual.
 - ii. Highlight Chapter Three: Measuring Ministry Needs.
 - iii. Highlight Chapter Four: The Planning Process.
 - iv. Set date and time for continuing this conversation.
 - v. Commit to developing a social ministry plan of action.
 7. To develop an awareness of how God is continuing His Biblical narrative in the lives of the class participants.
 - a. Request each participant to make a commitment to spend at least fifteen minutes in daily devotions and reflective prayer, journaling their thoughts and insights from this time in the presence of God.
 - i. These thoughts will be shared each week as part of the trust and relationship building experience within the group.
 - ii. These thoughts will guide the participants to discover their personal calling and passion for carrying out God’s missional work in the area of social ministry and evangelism.
 - iii. The collective interests of the group will guide them to develop specific corporate social ministry outreaches within the community.

- iv. The participants will come to understand how God has prepared them for the task of proclaiming His message of salvation by word and deed in future ministries through the reflection on His presence in their life experiences.
8. For each participant to encourage others in the congregation or community to go with them as they serve in social ministry and to take this Bible study course – briefly being able to share some of the valuable insights they have learned.
 9. To identify one leader within the congregation to teach this course on an ongoing cycle.

THE BIBLE STUDY EXPERIENCE - COURSE OUTLINE

- Week One: Introductions – survey of attitudes – expectations of participants.
- Week Two: Bible study – Christ as our Head, Members of His Body.
- Week Three: Bible study – Witnesses for Christ in Word and Deed.
- *Week Four: Ministry activity – To gain a first hand experience of the life of the handicap, the aging, and those who have limited mobility living in assisted living facilities. We will prepare an appropriate devotion, sing, play games, and spend time interacting with the residents at a local care center.*
- Week Five: Bible study – In Service to Others.
- *Week Six: Ministry activity – To give witness to the God of creation, we will pick up trash along a highway or a public park, or sweep the sidewalks in the business district of our town, or plant flowers for the town to beautify our community. (Other options might be substituted based on the suggestions of the participants as they take ownership of this course.)*
- Week Seven: Bible study – In Fellowship with Others.
- *Week Eight: Ministry activity – To encourage the development of relationships with members of the community, we will volunteer to serve at our local soup kitchen, or collect food for our local food shelf, or prepare and serve an “all-you-can-eat sweet corn & brat picnic for the neighborhood, or host an evening of games for the children of the community.*
- Week Nine: Bible study – Education: To know the scriptures concerning Christ’s power over Satan and the evil of this world and examples of how we might teach these principles to the people of our community.
- *Week Ten: Ministry activity – To understand how our environment is shaped by the influences of Satan and sin, we will walk through the community with news lenses looking for the evidence of sin and try to identify specific root causes for what we have seen. As a group we will discuss possible ways we can attack these root causes and bring healing to our community in the name of Christ. The outcome of these conversations will guide the group to develop future social ministries for their congregation.*
- Week eleven: Bible study – Worship: Strengthened by His gifts to Encourage Others.
- Week twelve: Celebration – Retake survey of attitudes – evaluation of program.
Future planning – where do we go from here?

Class Structure:

- 5 minutes – Opening prayer & devotion.
- 15 minutes – Sharing reflections from personal daily devotions.
- 50 minutes – Study of Bible verses.
- 20 minutes – Accountability partners sharing & prayer.

*Class members will take turns providing opening devotions and prayer.

RESOURCES:

- † Personal Bible.
- † Pens or pencils, note pads or spiral notebooks.
- † Three ring binders for materials.
- † Copies of handouts.
- † Reserve room for class for two-hour block – one night per week – twelve weeks.
- † Snack food & drink (coffee or water).
- † Copy of Human Care Ministry Manual.

BUDGET: (Assuming twelve in class)

† Three ring binder for each participant.	\$1.50	X	12 participants=	\$18
† Printing handouts per participant.	\$1.00	X	12 participants=	\$12
† Snacks and coffee.	\$5.00	X	8 weeks =	<u>\$40</u>
			Total	<u>\$70</u>

* Participant enrollment fee @ \$6.00 X 12 = \$70 expected in income to cover expenses.

ACTION STEPS WITH TIME LINE

- † Six months prior to starting this course meet with the pastor of the congregation to explain the focus of the BOLD Christian Outreach Equipping Ministry, the specifics of this course in relationship to the BOLD ministry, and the overall benefit to the congregation and the community of implementing the BOLD ministry.
- † Ask the pastor to get permission from the governing board to present this same information to them.
- † Meet with the governing board to present the concept of BOLD Christian Outreach Equipping Ministry, explain the relationship of BOLD to this Biblical study, show how the congregation will benefit by engaging in this study and layout the total cost of the BOLD program to the congregation. Seek the approval of this board to contract with me to lead the congregation in this study and related outreach equipping experiences.
- † After approval has been granted, allow eight weeks of lead-time before scheduling the start of the course.
- † Get the class schedule posted on the church calendar and reserve the classroom to be used – ASAP.

(Counting down to the start of the course) –

- † **Week eight:** Create enrollment form and begin to promote the Bible study within the congregation through the use of the bulletins. Post enrollment in the bulletin.
- † Call and extend personal invitations to potential participants in the study.
- † Make arrangements with the care center for the first ministry activity visit.
- † **Week seven:** Continue to promote the study. Encourage early supporter to recruit their friends.
- † **Week Six:** Make contact with town and or highway departments to get permission to conduct service projects for the second ministry activity. Continue to recruit participants.
- † **Week Five:** Contact local food shelf or soup kitchen for possible open dates to help with their distribution. Look into alternate ministry opportunities as a back up plan. Continue to recruit participants. Co-ordinate appeal with pastor's message to heighten the awareness of the need in the minds of the people.
- † **Week Four:** Review materials and update Bible study. Continue to build anticipation for the study. Tie up any loose ends in coordinating the ministry visits.
- † **Week Three:** Purchase supplies for the workbooks in bulk to save on cost. Assemble participants study guides. Prepare extra copies for late enrollees. Continue to recruit and update congregation on status remaining openings for participants.
- † **Week Two:** Walk through the community and record observations in preparation for the last ministry activity. Spend extra time praying for the congregation and the community to get heart prepared to lead congregation to seek God's direction for social ministry.
- † Meet with pastor to clarify and answer any questions that might have risen by either of us. Spend time in prayer with him for this ministry adventure.
- † **Week One:** Confirm enrollments. Review lessons. Reassess needed resources that might have been over looked. Encourage enrolled participants to invite friends to come and build excitement and anticipation in those who have committed to be part of this experience.
- † **First Class:**
 - 5 minutes – Opening prayer & devotion.
 - 15 minutes – Introductions – expectations participants have for taking the course.
 - 20 minutes – Survey of attitudes. (Wheat Ridge materials. Appendix A)
 - 20 minutes – Briefly present overview of the course and materials.
 - Share my expectations of the participants.
 - † Be in class every week.
 - † Set aside time every day for daily devotions & prayer.
 - † Engage in the materials – Bible readings, articles, or ministry assignments.
 - † Commit to lead the opening and closing devotions and prayer.
 - Share what participants can expect of me.
 - † To be prepared for the class each week.
 - † To keep the class on schedule – start and end on time / cover material according to scheduled outline.
 - † To involve all class members in the conversation.
 - † To value participants wisdom and opinions.
 - † To challenge the class to grow.
 - 20 minutes – Chapter One: Getting Started (Read through.)
 - Responding in Love: Theological Guidelines for Human Care Ministry
 - Human Care Ministry as Response

(Human Care Manual (2000) - Appendix B & C)

10 minutes – Have participants pair up with someone that they don't know very well and spend the last ten minutes sharing prayer requests and taking turns praying for each other.

Assignment: Work through Appendix B & C – look up the scriptures referenced.

† **Week Two:** Bible study – Christ As Our Head, We Are the Members of His Body.

5 minutes – Opening prayer & devotion.

15 minutes – Sharing reflections from personal daily devotions.

60 minutes – Study of Bible verses – Ephesians 4:1-16; Mark 1:14-45; Mark 2:1-12; John 15:5-17; John 17:17-23

10 minutes – Accountability partners sharing & prayer.

Assignment: Work through Appendix D – look up the scriptures referenced.

† **Week Three:** Bible study – Witnesses for Christ in Word and Deed.

5 minutes – Opening prayer & devotion.

15 minutes – Sharing reflections from personal daily devotions.

60 minutes – Study of Bible verses – 1 Peter 1:1-16; Luke 10:2-9, 16-22; Luke 14:12-24; Luke 18:18-30; James 2:14-19; James 3:5-18; Romans 1:16.

10 minutes – Accountability partners sharing & prayer.

Assignment: Work through Appendix E – look up the scriptures referenced.

† **Week Four:** *Ministry activity – To gain a first hand experience of the life of the handicap, the aging, and those who have limited mobility living in assisted living facilities. We will prepare an appropriate devotion, sing, play games, and spend time interacting with the residents at a local care center.*

† **Week Five:** Bible Study – In Service To Others.

5 minutes – Opening prayer & devotion.

15 minutes – Sharing reflections from personal daily devotions.

60 minutes – Study of Bible verses – 1 Corinthians 9:19-23; Galatians 5:13-26; Galatians 6:1-5; Revelation 7:13-17; Luke 10:25-37; Mark 10:43b-45.

10 minutes – Accountability partners sharing & prayer.

Assignment: Work through Appendix F – look up the scriptures referenced.

† **Week Six:** *Ministry activity – To give witness to the God of creation, we will pick up trash along a highway or a public park, or sweep the sidewalks in the business district of our town, or plant flowers for the town to beautify our community. (Other options might be substituted based on the suggestions of the participants as they take ownership of this course.)*

† **Week Seven:** Bible Study – In Fellowship With Others.

5 minutes – Opening prayer & devotion.

15 minutes – Sharing reflections from personal daily devotions.

60 minutes – Study of Bible verses – Psalm 73:28; John 13:34; Acts 4:19-22; Ephesians 5:8-21; Ephesians 3:14-21; Philippians 2:1-11; I John 1:1-2:6.

10 minutes – Accountability partners sharing & prayer.

† **Week Eight:** *Ministry activity – To encourage the development of relationships with members of the community, we will volunteer to serve at our local soup kitchen, or collect food for our local food shelf, or prepare and serve an “all-you-can-eat sweet corn & brat picnic for the neighborhood, or host an evening of games for the children of the community.*

† **Week Nine:** Bible Study – To Know the Scriptures Concerning Christ’s Power Over Satan and the Evil of this World and Examples of How We Might Teach These Principles to the People of Our Community.

5 minutes – Opening prayer & devotion.

15 minutes – Sharing reflections from personal daily devotions.

60 minutes – Study of Bible verses – Isaiah 25:8; Matthew 9:18-35; Luke 7:11-15; John 11:17-44; John 5:22-30; 1 Corinthians 15:20-25; Romans 3:10-28.

10 minutes – Accountability partners sharing & prayer.

† **Week Ten:** *Ministry activity – To understand how our environment is shaped by the influences of Satan and sin, we will walk through the community with news lenses looking for the evidence of sin and try to identify specific root causes for what we have seen. As a group we will pray for God to show us possible ways we can attack these root causes and bring healing to our community in the name of Christ. The outcome of these conversations will guide the group to develop future social ministries for their congregation and community.*

† **Week Eleven:** Bible Study – Worship: Strengthened by His Gifts to Encourage Others.

5 minutes – Opening prayer & devotion.

15 minutes – Sharing reflections from personal daily devotions.

60 minutes – Study of Bible verses – Isaiah 50:4-6; Matthew 6:25-34; Mark 6:7-13; Mark 13:10-11; Luke 11:9; 1 Corinthians 4:7; Philippians 4:19; 2 Peter 1:3-10; 1 Peter 4:7-11.

10 minutes – Accountability partners sharing & prayer.

† **Week Twelve:** Celebration – Retake survey of attitudes – Evaluation of program.

Lay ground work for future planning – where do we go from here?

5 minutes – Opening prayer & devotion.

15 minutes – Sharing reflections from personal daily devotions.

20 minutes – Survey of attitudes. (Wheat Ridge materials. Appendix A)

30 minutes – Evaluation of program. Lay groundwork for future planning
– where do we go from here?

– Human Care Ministries Manual: The Planning Process

20 minutes – Accountability partners sharing, fellowship & prayer.

EVALUTION:

I plan to use an evaluation tool that I found on the Wheat Ridge Ministries web site to evaluate attitudes of the participants in two categories related to healthy involvement in congregation and community prior to taking this course. This evaluation will be taken again following the course and participants will be able to compare changes (if any) in their attitudes toward social issues in either their congregation or the community. The tool is called Congregation LIFE Check-up (1) & Community LIFE Check-up (2) developed by Augsburg Youth & Family Institute. (Appendix A, p14-15) In addition participants will be able to evaluate the course in terms of use of time, Scripture references used, application to their personal situation and growth experienced as a result of the course.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Augsburg Youth & Family Institute, 2211 Riverside Ave, Minneapolis, MN 55454-1351

Board for Human Care Ministries, Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod. (2003). Human Care Ministries Planning Manual. Available as a pdf file at:
http://www.csp.edu/maco/courses/551/human_care_ministries.pdf or
<http://humancare.lcms.org/DC/manual>

Jordan, Clarence. (1993) *Sermon on the Mount* (Rev. ed.). Valley Forge, PA: Judson Press.

Roxburgh, Alan J. & Fred Romanuk. (2006). *The Missional Leader: Equipping Your Church To Reach A Changing World*. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass

Sider, Ronald J. (1993). *Good News and Good Works: A Theology For the Whole Gospel*. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books

Sider, Ronald J. (2008, January-February). Response to Ralph Winter. *Mission Frontiers*, 30(1). p6.

Wheat Ridge Ministries. (2000). *Health Ministry Self-Study for Congregations*. Available as a pdf file at:
http://www.wheatridge.org/site/c.khLSKZPDLof/b.2151293/k.6563/Health_Ministry_SelfStudy.htm (Question regarding the Health Ministry Self-Study for Congregations may be directed to Brian Becker, Vice president, Wheat Ridge Ministries at 1-800-762-6748 or via e-mail at brian@wheatridge.org)

Winter, Ralph D. (2007, September-October). The Future of Evangelicals in Mission: Will We Regain the Vision of Our Forefathers in the Faith? *Mission Frontiers*, 29(5), p6-15.

WORDsearch, Bible Explorer and Lessonmaker. (2009). *WORDsearch* Thompson Chain-Reference Bible Library CD-ROM. Austin, TX: WORDsearch Corp.

Appendix A

Congregation LIFE Check-up (1)

Age _____ Sex: _ M _ F

Are you a parent of children at home? _ Yes _ No

Project LIFE strives for all areas of life to be in balance and Christ-centered. The following tool is designed to check the balance of a congregation. Please rate your congregation balance by checking the box on the left and right columns that you feel accurately reflects each area. The left column represents “how your congregation is doing now” - the right column reflects “how important you feel this area is”. The right column will help you prioritize during future action planning.

Our congregation is doing something about this...

I feel this area is...

_____ Not Noticeable _____ Very Noticeable

_____ Not Important _____ Very Important

1 2 3 4 5

1 2 3 4 5

-----	Members say intentional prayers aloud for people in specific need in worship.	-----
-----	People are comfortable expressing personal need for help at the church.	-----
-----	Conflict is managed effectively.	-----
-----	Leadership is open to new and creative ideas for effective ministry.	-----
-----	Learning about the relationship between faith and health.	-----
-----	Welcomes and invites people of various ethnic and economic backgrounds into the faith community.	-----
-----	Awareness of a church environmental policy.	-----
-----	Concerted effort to provide nutritionally sound options at events serving food/beverages.	-----
-----	Awareness of how faith is lived out in one’s career choice.	-----
-----	Provide counseling or referral for people who are troubled.	-----
-----	Worship engages people where <i>they</i> are	-----
-----	People are fulfilled, satisfied, and celebrating life.	-----
-----	Active involvement in community problem solving and service	-----
-----	Facilities of the church are totally accessible to all people.	-----
-----	Offers learning opportunities in primary life skills (friendship, sexuality, singleness).	-----
-----	Facilitates development of interpersonal communication skills to foster meaningful relationships.	-----
-----	Leadership provides spiritual guidance and meaning for life.	-----
-----	Present structure enables people to function well together in ministry.	-----
-----	Members can articulate vision and mission of the church.	-----
-----	Motivate and educate individuals to make choices which improve quality of life.	-----
-----	Corporate worship involves and engages children, youth, and aged as well as the middle-aged population.	-----

Community LIFE Check-up (2)

Age _____ Sex: _ M _ F

Are you a parent of children at home? _ Yes _ No

Project LIFE strives for all areas of life to be in balance and Christ-centered. The following tool is designed to check the balance of a community. Please rate your community balance by checking the box on the left and right columns that you feel accurately reflects each area. The left column represents “how your community is doing now” - the right column reflects “how important you feel this area is”. The right column will help you prioritize during future action planning. Community can be defined as any and all of the surrounding areas where people are living out their faith.

Our community is doing something about this...

I feel this area is...

_____ Not Noticeable _____ Very Noticeable

_____ Not Important _____ Very Important

1 2 3 4 5

1 2 3 4 5

- | | | |
|-------|---|-------|
| ----- | Offers the forum and services to deal with relational/emotional problems in a healthy manner. | ----- |
| ----- | Provides opportunities and facilities for people to gather and celebrate special events. | ----- |
| ----- | Community members can articulate vision and goals of the community. | ----- |
| ----- | There is an awareness of community belief systems. | ----- |
| ----- | Community agencies work together to provide continuing education opportunities for all age groups. | ----- |
| ----- | Leadership is open to new and creative ideas for change and growth | ----- |
| ----- | Welcomes and invites people into the community as builders rather than outsiders. | ----- |
| ----- | People are fulfilled, satisfied, and celebrating life. | ----- |
| ----- | People are proud to live here. | ----- |
| ----- | Families manage conflict effectively. | ----- |
| ----- | Has organized efforts to solve community problems. | ----- |
| ----- | Churches enhance quality of life in the community. | ----- |
| ----- | Spiritual needs of people are met by existing programs/ministries. | ----- |
| ----- | Has support groups for people going through life transitions | ----- |
| ----- | Provides career counseling, vocational training, and referrals for job placement. | ----- |
| ----- | Has adequate parks, side walks, or trails for walking/jogging/biking. | ----- |
| ----- | Has an organized network (known to all) in case of emergency and a system of immediate response. | ----- |
| ----- | Has been designed with the safety of the residents in mind--adequate lighting, traffic signs, crime prevention, and so forth. | ----- |
| ----- | All buildings and services are totally accessible to all people. | ----- |
| ----- | Has a convenient and effective recycling program. | ----- |

Appendix B

Responding in Love:

Theological Guidelines for Human Care Ministry

1. Theological Direction

What we do grows out of what we believe. Consequently, the following statements seek to define and direct human care ministry in relation to the heart of our Lutheran faith, the Gospel of Jesus Christ and its essential partner, the Law of God. It is as people of the Church that we address these issues. By virtue of our Baptism, we have been united with Jesus Christ and with one another in His body, the Church. As members of that body, we have been called to and equipped for Christ-like service to one another and the world.

2. Definition

Stated most simply, human care ministry is the love of God reaching out through His people, the Church, ministering compassionately to the entire spectrum of human need-- spiritual, physical, emotional, social and economic. It is loving care for people on the part of those who by faith have received the saving and enabling care of a loving God. The scope of human care ministry is broad, encompassing all that Christians do to prevent and relieve human distress and to promote human development and well-being. Its focus, however, is narrow in that whatever is undertaken is based on the redemptive work of Jesus and endeavors to communicate Him to others as meaningfully as possible through the help extended.

3. Indispensable Aspect of Mission

Divine love has as its purpose not only to rescue us from sin and judgment but also to refashion and empower us for loving service to others. As He helps us in our needs, God enlists us as His instruments to help those around us. We cannot exempt ourselves from this helping role. To be helped, in this sense, necessarily involves becoming a helper. Inseparable from the call to salvation is the call to service, of which human care ministry is a vital part. LC I 189-95.

4. Priority

Human care ministry is the companion and complement to the verbal communication of Christ. It may not be regarded as an optional or marginal activity of the church. When we Christians are serious about helping others, we stimulate interest in and add credibility to our spoken and written testimonies to Christ. When the world is unimpressed by what we say, it may be because our actions do not illustrate or support our words. Human care ministry should have high priority on the Church's agenda.

5. A Result of the Gospel

It is as important to distinguish human care ministry from the Gospel as it is to relate it inseparably to the Gospel. The Gospel is always and only the message that God, in love, has reconciled fallen humanity to Himself through the incarnation, crucifixion and resurrection of His Son. Those who accept this love by faith necessarily respond with love for their fellow human beings.

As Christians confront the diverse needs of other people, they are moved and guided by God's love toward the thoughtful and vigorous action that is human care ministry. The Gospel is the cause. Human care ministry is the result.

Christians intent on meeting human need sometimes incorrectly equate human care ministry and other efforts at human betterment with the Gospel. For example, the Social Gospel movement tended to identify progress toward a more humane and equitable society with the Gospel. Liberation Theology regards rescuing the victims of political and economic injustice as an essential element of the Gospel. In both cases, the Gospel is being confused with things which may be, in part, a result of the Gospel.

6. Relation to non-Christian Endeavors

Christian human care ministry offers some services that also are provided by non-Christian agencies--counseling, adoption, refugee relief, etc. Professional techniques, standards and resources of non-Christian origin not in conflict with our Christian faith also may be employed. Financial support may be accepted from the general community as long as it places no restraint on our Christian witness.

7. Uniqueness

However, there are also unique aspects to Christian human care ministry that should be cherished, cultivated and expressed. It consists both of the motivation behind the services offered (the Gospel) and the moral values (based on God's law) that shape methodologies and goals and establish limits. Pressures to compromise the Christian character of human care ministry must be recognized and resisted wherever and whenever they appear.

Appendix C

Human Care Ministry as Response

1. Response

Human care ministry is a response, not something that we initiate or generate out of our own interests or resources. It originates outside us. It occurs as we are confronted and affected by others.

2. Response to God

It is a response to God. Authentic Christian human care ministry grows out of awareness of, respect for and trust in the God who has revealed Himself in Jesus Christ through the Scriptures and Sacraments. It is response to a Person, to who He is and what He says and does. As such, it is characterized by warmth, commitment and vitality. It is a personal response in the context of the most important of all personal relationships.

3. Response to God's Love

It is a response to God's love. It's not His power or His wrath or His wisdom, but rather His love that stimulates and sustains Christians in the exercise of human care ministry. This love is expressed in three magnificent forms, each of which evokes distinctive attitudinal and behavioral responses. Every expression of God's love is as unconditional as it is unmerited.

1. (a) Creative love-The Father in love created human life in all its dimensions and wills that it be cherished, protected and brought to its fullest potential. Social institutions and structures as well as individual human beings are His good gifts for the well-being and fulfillment of people. Our planet and all creatures in it-the entire universe-have been prepared by Him for our care, use and enjoyment.

Concern and respect for our fellow human beings as well as for the environment grows out of the grateful realization that they are products and objects of the Father's creative love. Gen.1; Ps.104; Col. 1:15-17. SC and LC II 9.

2. (b) Redemptive love-Divine love does not fail even in the face of human corruption and rebellion. Because of sin, everything human-even the natural order-is under God's wrath. However, His will to help, His love, transcends that wrath. His Son, Jesus Christ, in an act of sacrificial compassion, joined our human race, experienced the pain and stress of our fallen condition and finally absorbed in His own person the concentrated

Page 3 HUMAN CARE MINISTRIES MANUAL of 8

<http://humancare.lcms.org/DC/manual/m1.htm> 10/3/2003 punishment of all human sin. His love has provided forgiveness, life and salvation for all sinners as well as the prospect of the final and complete restoration of our sin-spoiled environment. By faith, which His Holy Spirit awakens, we are able to claim the benefit of His redemptive love. The value of every human being is enhanced immeasurably by Christ's extravagant investment in that person. The heart of our motivation for Christian human care ministry is the atoning love of Jesus Christ. "We love, because He first loved us," 1 John 4:19; Rom. 8:18-25. AC II, III; AP IV; SC and LC II 25.

3. (c) Sanctifying love-The Holy Spirit lives and works within every true believer through the means of grace. By His transforming influence and power, He enables us successfully (but not perfectly) to resist the power of sin, which will continue to trouble us as long as we are in this world. In addition, He refashions our attitudes and actions after the image of Christ.

On the basis of His sanctifying love, we are confident that we can grow and improve and be effective as we carry out the ministry He has assigned to us. Similarly, trust in His sanctifying love makes us optimistic about the potential of others to be liberated from the evils that beset them, to be changed from unbelief to faith, from rebellion to obedience, from bondage to freedom, from degradation to dignity. "By the power at work within us (He) is able to do far more abundantly than all that we ask or think," Eph. 3:14-20; 1 Thess. 5:23. "If a man be in Christ, he is a new creature," 2 Cor.5:17.

AC XX: 27-39; SC and LC II 34.

4. Response to Human Need and Potential

Human care ministry is also a response to human need and potential. Our love answers to God's love. As we turn to Him, grateful for His love in all of its aspects and eager to please and serve Him, He directs us to our fellow human beings. He needs nothing from us. They need much. His promise is that whatever we do for them, we do for Him! In assessing the needs of our fellow human beings--because we are informed and transformed by God's creative, redemptive, and sanctifying love--we look beyond the bare necessities. We recognize the marvelous possibilities even in a fallen world, for individual human development, fulfillment and happiness as well as for social progress. We recognize our privilege and responsibility to help others realize more of their God-given potential. The most urgent human need and most significant human potential have to do with a saving relationship to God and eternal life in His presence. While addressing other needs and potentials, we do so from the perspective of these ultimate concerns. Matt.25:31-46; John 10:10; Rom. 12: James 1:27-2:17; 1 Peter 4:7-11; 1 John 3:16-18. LC II 63-65.

HUMAN CARE MINISTRIES MANUAL <http://humancare.lcms.org/DC/manual/m1.htm> 10/3/2003

Appendix D

Human Care Ministry in Relation to the Gospel

1. An Aspect of Discipline

The mission of the Church is discipling the nations. This mission is carried out as the Church presents Jesus Christ to people by both word and deed even as our Lord made Himself known by what He said as well as by what He did: by healing, feeding, accepting (Mark 1:14-45; John 17) as well as by proclamation and witness (Matt. 28:19-20).

2. Relation of Word and Deed

Five distinct but inseparable elements of the church's mission are: witness (marturia), service (diakonia), fellowship (koinonia), education (didaskalia) and worship (leitourgia). The unifying factor of these elements is Jesus Christ, who is their source and center. He is present and active and made known as His people carry out the various aspects of their ministry. All five elements include both word and deed. The verbal communication of Christ makes explicit what may only be implied in loving deeds and relationships. Unspoken testimonies to Christ through caring deeds provide vital preparation and support for the spoken Word. Without deeds, our words about Christ may seem abstract and unconvincing. Without words about Christ, our loving deeds may be ambiguous and misunderstood. 1 Cor.13; 1 Peter3:1-16; Luke 10:8-9. See also James references above. LC II 9.

3. Essential Element of Mission

Human care ministry (diakonia, service) is an essential element of the church's mission. It is the Church meeting diverse human needs with Christ's own compassion. At every organizational level, the church must stimulate, equip and support members for significant involvement in this aspect of their mission. A vital aspect of discipling is preparing Christians to carry out their ministry of human care. Discipling involves not only converting people but also educating and equipping them for service, helping them to become functioning and effective members of His body (didaskalia, teaching). Matt.28; Eph. 4:4-16; 1 Cor. 12; 1 Thess. 3:11-13; Heb. 10:23-25.

4. Response and Extension

The Gospel provides both motivation and content for human care ministry. This ministry is the Church's response to the proclamation of the Gospel, especially as it is experienced in worship with Word and Sacrament (leitourgia, worship). It is also the extension of Christ's saving and serving love through His people to one another and to the world. What we have to give people in need is not only our own concern and help, but Christ. John 15:1-17.

5. Strives to Include Verbal Witness

Human care ministry is done with the hope and expectation that it will create opportunities for the verbal sharing of the Gospel of Jesus (marturia, witness). To be authentic and effective, such sharing must be done in a sensitive and nonmanipulative manner, relating Christ to the perceived needs and life situations of the persons addressed. With an accompanying explicit verbal witness to Christ, human care ministry renders its most valuable service. Eph. 4:29; 1 Thess. 2:1-13.

6. Valid and Essential in Its Own Right

Human care ministry is valid and necessary even when opportunities for verbal witness to Christ are not present or utilized. However, the Church should carry out human care ministry in such a way as to create and take fullest advantage of opportunities to communicate Christ in both word and deed to those who are being served. 1 Cor. 13; James 2:18-26.

7. Should be Done by the Church

The context for human care ministry is the Christian community (koinonia, fellowship). Because that is true, wherever possible it should be done by those who are the Church and have a common, consistent and informed understanding of the Church's teachings. Christ can be communicated most clearly and effectively by those who know and trust Him and whom His Spirit is guiding. Eph. 4:11-16.

8. The Approved Interpretation

Human Care ministry reflects the understanding and interpretation of the Gospel held by the sponsoring church.

9. Doctrinal and Ethical Agreement

In cooperative human care ministries involving other Christian bodies, agreement on matters of faith and practice that pertain to elements of the shared ministry (e.g., pregnancy and marriage counseling) is essential.

10. Cooperation Without Compromise

The Church may work with or give support to secular and other human care efforts, unless by so doing, it confuses or weakens its witness to Christ's love.

HUMAN CARE MINISTRIES MANUAL <http://humancare.lcms.org/DC/manual/m1.htm> 10/3/2003

Appendix E

Human Care Ministry in Relation to God's Law

1. Root Problem

The root problem beneath all human disorder and misery is the total depravity of man since the fall, evidenced in his continued inclination to revolt against God, to exploit other persons and to destroy self and the environment. This is manifest in defiant rejection of the Creator and His good will and results in increasing bondage to Satan and divine condemnation. Of himself, man is unable to escape from sin and its consequences. Gen. 3-4; Rom. 5-8; Eph. 2:1-3.

2. Describes and Prescribes What is Best

God's Law is His will for man. It describes attitudes and behaviors that best serve the interest and well-being of human creatures. For their own good, God requires human beings to obey His Law. Ps. 119.

3. In the Heart and in Scripture

In fragmentary and distorted forms, God's Law is "written in the hearts" of all people. In clarified and authoritative forms, it is revealed in the inspired and inerrant Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments. Rom. 2:12-16; Ex.20:1-17; Matt.5. Ap IV 5-8.

4. Prepares for the Gospel

The chief purpose of God's Law is to expose and condemn human sinfulness in order to prepare people for His forgiving and transforming love, which is offered in the Gospel of Jesus Christ. Only those who understand their problems in terms of God's Law (cf. C. 1. above) can fully appreciate the ultimate solution which God has provided in His Son. Rom. 3:19-20; Gal. 3:19-22. SA-III II 4-5, FC SD v.

5. Moral Guidance for Christians

While the Gospel provides motivation and content for human care ministry, God's Law provides direction. To the true believer who is forgiven by faith in the Gospel and who, therefore, is undergoing spiritual and moral transformation through the indwelling of the Holy Spirit, God's Law also provides essential moral guidance. This distinction between the Gospel as motivator and the Law as guide is essential. To seek to motivate Christians with the Law is both incorrect and ineffective. When confronted with important life decisions, the Christian should be referred to appropriate elements of God's Law and assured of their validity, authority and relevance. The Christian engaged in or contemplating behavior contrary to God's will needs to hear the warning and condemnation of God's Law. Matt. 5:17-48; 1 Cor. 14:33-34; Eph. 6:1-4, LC Pref. 17; FC SD vi.

6. Relevance to Non-Christians

Although the non-Christian lacks the motivating presence and power of the Holy Spirit, he also needs and can benefit from the testimony of God's Law. For his own temporal well-being and that of society (cf. C.2. above), he should be encouraged to order his life according to God's will. This is possible to a limited extent on the basis of reason and self interest (civil righteousness). Most importantly, as the opportunity arises he should be made aware of his inability to measure up to God's expectations and, therefore, of his need for pardon and power through Christ. Rom. 2:1; Tim.1:8-11. Ap II 12, XVII 4-8.

7. The Church's Ministry of Law

An essential aspect of the Church's ministry is the affirmation and application of God's Law for its intended purposes to both Christians and non-Christians. The application of God's Law, like that of the Gospel, must be done in a sensitive manner. The one who proclaims the Law must identify himself as a fellow sinner who is also fully dependent upon Jesus Christ for righteousness. He also may testify to the helpfulness of God's Law as a guide for his personal life.

8. Authoritative Ethical Norms

Although some Biblical ethical norms are historically and culturally conditioned, others are absolutes and, therefore, universally binding. A vital and challenging task in the contemporary church is helping Christians identify and apply Biblical ethical norms. We are faced with growing numbers of moral issues unknown in the Biblical era (e.g., nuclear warfare, in vitro fertilization, massive environmental pollution). Furthermore, there are cases in which Biblical norms and values appear to conflict with one another (e.g., telling the truth at times may harm or destroy others, or helping one person or element in society may hinder others). The ethical task is fraught with ambiguities despite the many clear and binding ethical norms revealed in Scripture.

9. To Be Conveyed in Human Care

The human care ministries of the Church are done with integrity and faithfulness and are best able to meet the needs of people as they convey with conviction God's Law as well as His Gospel.

10. The Approved Interpretation

Human care ministry reflects the understanding and interpretation of God's Law held by the sponsoring church.

Appendix F

Ministry to Social Structures: Relating Christian Values to Social Regulation and Policy

1. How Christians Determine What is Right and Wrong

Moral judgments of Christian individuals and groups are to be based on the knowledge of God's will as revealed by the Holy Spirit through Scripture, interpreted and applied with the help of reason, exemplified in the life of Christ. Christians often disagree in their moral judgments.

2. Christian Ethical Motivation

Love for God and people engendered by the Gospel motivates Christians to conform to God's will. To love is to care, and to care is to help. In addition to private response, there are also vast opportunities to help people through development of legislation and public policy. LC I 141-60.

3. Dual Role

In a democratic society, Christians have privileges and responsibilities of rulers (to shape regulations and policies) as well as those of subjects (to obey). Faithfulness to our calling involves conscientious functioning in both roles. Rom.13:1-10; 1 Peter 2:13-17. AC XVI.

4. Norms for Social Regulation and Policy

Society is regulated by the natural knowledge of God's Law (Second Table) as known and applied by reason-not by the Gospel or by distinctively Christian values.

5. Motivation for Obedience to Social Regulations

Non-Christian citizens are motivated to conform to laws and regulations of society by various forms of individual or collective self-interest and civil righteousness. Christian citizens are to be motivated to conform to them by love for God and people, engendered by the Gospel. Rom. 13:5-8.

6. Direction of Christian Social Influence

Christians should work through the political process to try to bring the regulations and policies of society into greater conformity with God's will, for example, to promote justice, peace, compassion, decency and sanctity of life. There are cases in which the political process fails to deal adequately with grave social evils. In such an event, Christians must aid the victims of these evils, protest the evils through responsible dissent and work for remedies through continuing political involvement. Motivation for this is to be love for God and people engendered by the Gospel. Micah 6:8. AC XVI, XXVIII 12-8; LC I 240- 53,III 71.

7. Means by Which Christians Seek Support

In addressing the secular community, Christians should appeal to the natural knowledge of the Law, reason and self-interest, not distinctive Christian values.

8. Lack of Christian Consensus

Units of the Christian community (individuals congregations, districts, denominations, etc.) do not often attain consensus on public policy issues, ethical questions or the manner in which social regulation and policy should respond to them. No unit of the Christian community can speak for the entire community.

9. Preparing Christians for Social-Political Involvement

Christian communities should stimulate discussion and reflection on the relation between Christian ethical values and social regulation and policy and motivate Christians to participate actively in the social-political decision making processes. They should strive to attain consensus on these issues. When attained, the consensus should be expressed and advocated for the guidance of individuals and groups in their communities.

10. Uniting for Action

Christians should unite individually and collectively for political action with other like-minded citizens--Christian and non-Christian--to accomplish the changes in social regulation and policy to which they are committed.

© The Board for Human Care Ministry invites you to duplicate or otherwise copy the material on this page for use by your congregation. This document may not be reprinted for publication or sale without express consent of BHCM.

“Mission” and “evangelism” express the outward impulse of Christianity. The gospel of Jesus Christ, by its very nature, refuses to be bottled up. It must be shared. Mission and evangelism are closely related; mission is generally the broader term, within which evangelism is included. Others, while viewing evangelism as the primary task, include other activities such as social responsibility in their understanding of mission. They often describe this as “holistic mission.” Still others include the different aspects of Christian involvement and service, including evangelism, as equally important parts of the church’s mission. To be sure, Christians must fully obey the call of Christ to service, whatever activities one includes under the term “mission.”