

The Relevance of Our Augustana Heritage to the Crisis in Marriage and Family: Part Two

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Introduction with a Brief Background on U.S. Culture and the Reformation Situation – Before we discuss six issues in the current crisis a brief summary of six contributing factors to this societal crisis will be stated to set a context, a background for the six changes we describe as contributing factors. Those factors do not in themselves constitute a sufficient explanatory system nor are they insurmountable obstacles in overcoming the crisis. None of them is entirely unique to the last half of the twentieth century though each became prominent in a new way in the last half of the last century and impacted on the institution of marriage and family and contributed in noticeable ways to “the culture of divorce.”

First, the post WWII dramatic growth in income and wealth in the U.S. led to affluence for large numbers and the focus on possession of “things” or materialism, spurred by advertising, grew apace.

Second, the large migration from rural to urban areas that picked up in the forties and sped ahead in the fifties moved the great majority of Americans away from small communities where standards of accountability were effective because of actionable social pressures. They moved to an impersonal, mass society, characteristic of large urban areas where personal connections were limited in the “lonely crowd” and community conventions were set by the entertainment services through movies and the “soaps” on radio and T.V. These were not bound to the morals and mores of churches, parents, or the leaders of a community, but emerged from fictional characters created, in many instances, to draw attention by breaking away from established morals and mores.

Third, increasingly individualism advanced and communal identity receded. Family connections with relatives dwindled, and traditions or the “old ways” of communal living gave way to “new ways” picked up from the media. People were both tied to the social conventions found in the media and at the same time sought differentiation in some noticeable way from “the crowd.”

Fourth, the acceptance of casual sex became a staple in Hollywood and later on T.V. and in the sixties became another way of revolting, particularly with college-age groups, against the “Established Culture.” The Counter-Culture Movement was rightfully allied with the civil rights movements to overcome prejudices against blacks and other minorities and to establish equal rights for women in the public arena, but that movement’s casual view of sex was inherited from the artistic *avante garde* and the media. The arrival of the HIV virus and the aids epidemic as well as the maturing of the Baby Boomers has curtailed many of the counter culture sexual mores but “hooking up” and other practices such as computer porn and telephone porn indicate a cultural preoccupation with commercialized sexual expressions.

Fifth, the growth of married women in the public work force during and following WWII has advanced so that a sizable majority now work outside the home. Inevitably, this brings new stresses into family life while at the same time it undoubtedly assists in making more opportunities available for the family. It also creates another arena of social interaction between men and women and makes economically possible a separation from a marriage deemed by one or both parties to be a mistake.

Sixth, psychotherapy as a profession developed in the early 20th century and the emergence of the mass society particularly after WW II in the U.S. produced a growing need and desire for its services. A panoply of approaches and methods of psychological counseling has developed, some more successful than others for particular problems. Prominent among them is what has been called “the therapeutic attitude” which seeks to free the self from external obligations which may have come from parents, other people or religion in order to allow the individual self to express itself genuinely in a relationship. This popular therapeutic attitude on the one hand can free the individual from some negative attitudes and mistaken guilt complexes by affirming that they are worthy of acceptance as they are, and on the other hand, fail to provide them with standards they can “own” which enable them to live successfully in a marriage or as a positive contributor to a community. The unconditional positive self-regard of post-Freudian therapy may lead to self-autonomy, freedom from anyone else’s standards, but without a social ethic with a high regard for truth, justice, and love fails to prepare its clients with the ability to live happily and meaningfully in a marriage or close community both of which require ethical standards for successful participation.

While these six descriptive statements of likely contributing factors to what has been called “The Great Crash” in the institution of marriage in the sixties and seventies may help to explain how the crash may have occurred, they do not offer in and of themselves a way of restoring the institution of marriage. The Amish and some other groups who seek shelter from the movement of history in separated enclaves are able to preserve small communities, largely untouched by the big movements of the larger society, but they become living museums, oddities, not a controlling force to guide the larger society. What the remainder of this essay attempts to provide is an application of Martin Luther’s theology of marriage to six key issues in the current crises of marriage and family along with the views of sociologists and social critics who seek to understand the issues and what is needed to overcome them. The contention of this essay is that Luther’s theology of marriage and family is currently relevant and is confirmed in large part by the studies of the social scientists and societal analysts. With this short U.S. cultural background, this essay now moves to a short background in the Reformation changes in marriage and family and the theology of Luther that reformed them and its applicability to five current issues having to do with marriage and family.

Part II will deal with the relevance of Luther’s theology to the current crisis in marriage and family. Following a brief introduction, six issues in the current crisis will be addressed: (1) cohabitation prior to marriage, (2) the dwindling meaning of marriage, (3) divorce, (4) father absence, (5) family roles and governance, and (6) same sex unions.

Each issue will be presented followed by what Luther has to say about it. Current research and analysis will be cited allowing the reader to evaluate the relevance of Luther's view on five of the six issues.

Major changes initiated by the Reformation in marriage and family life have made a difference in courtship, marriage and family life in the 16th century and beyond. What the record shows is that Luther's thinking about courtship, marriage and family went through development from his 1519 treatise "On Marriage" until his treatise "On Marriage Matters" in 1530. Many of the elements of Roman Catholicism were still there in the 1519 treatise "On Marriage." By 1520, however, marriage had been more fully integrated into his evangelical theology and no longer was considered a sacrament. Clerical celibacy had been repudiated as well. This is clear from his "On the Babylonian Captivity of the Church" of 1520, and his "Address to the Christian Nobility of the German Nation" in 1520. The 1522 "On Married Life" further defined his views on marriage. In 1524 Luther decided to marry and that decision was provoked not by his sexual eagerness, nor by a passionate love affair. The need to find husbands for nuns who had left a convent just happened to present a situation that forced a personal decision on his part.

While Luther was not driven to change his theology on marriage because of uncontrollable sexual passion, he was not unacquainted with the power of sexual drive. What Luther had discovered about chastity in monastic living is that it was often the exception rather than the rule and that many sexual practices that went on in monasteries were demeaning and guilt producing. In his treatise "On Monastic Vows," of 1521 he repudiates monasticism as God's will for the great majority because so few seem to be gifted to abide by the rule of chastity. Further, salvation, he had discovered, came not by merits but was a free gift of God. Marriage, not monasticism, was ordained by God. Luther came to the realistic and evangelical conviction that marriage is not only ordained by God and has His approval and blessing, but unless one has a special calling and gift of continence is the state in which humans belong. It is the proper status for most, the institution through which life is renewed with each generation and is the most important of all social institutions because it carries on God's creation through which His ultimate purpose will be revealed, and also because the nurture in family lifts up the values on which the other institutions depend. Luther's understanding of marriage embraced the natural, the social and spiritual aspects of life.

With this short background, the changes Luther brought about in courtship, marriage and family in the 16th century can be summarized. The fundamental change was in the elevation of marriage and family over monasticism as the place where God's will is to be done. In spite of the Roman Catholic Church's declaration of marriage as a sacrament, it did not give it a higher religious and social status than monasticism through which its treasury of merit was stocked. Marriage in medieval Europe played second fiddle to monasticism in spiritual desirability. This changed in the Reformation. Marriage and family was lifted up as most God pleasing. In another change Luther rejected marriage as a sacrament because it was an ordinance of the created order existing prior to Christ, and placed marriage and family vis-à-vis its civil status under the regulation and protection of

government authorities. This did not mean, however, that marriage and family were de-linked from the Gospel.

In Luther's evangelical theology, marriage and family became an estate of faith through its linkage with the triune nature of God and the union of Christ and the church. The union with God in Christ was to be given expression in the Christian's vocation in marriage and the family. Life in marriage and family was to be characterized by loving purpose, distinctive roles, equality and mutual support as in the Triune God. In Christ the life of marriage and family was to reflect the character of God in whose image we are created. Self-giving to one another is to be the distinctive mark. Luther did not believe that the administration of marriage law belonged under the jurisdiction of the Church. This separation of powers followed Luther's two kingdom theology. Lutheran legal scholars and theologians, never the less, assisted in developing the laws which were to govern domestic affairs under civil jurisdiction. Through Luther's doctrine of the calling or beruf, civil and Christian righteousness in marriage and family life were linked. In Luther's judgment the institution of marriage and family would be benefited by the protection, regulation and support provided for marriage and family by civil authority.

One other issue Luther had with the Roman Catholic administration of marriage had to do with secret engagements/marriages. In the medieval Roman Catholic Church, marriage was defined as the act of pledging or vowing lifelong, exclusive sexual commitment to each other. It did not require witnesses or a public ceremony or announcement. This led to many difficulties. Girls were often led to bed but not to the altar and this often ended in battles between men over who had received the first promise. To resolve these problems Luther insisted on making public the couple's pledge to one another to clarify who was already removed from courtship eligibility. This also was to serve as a period for special preparation of the couple for marriage. It was a reform incorporated into the courtship and marriage pattern in Lutheran countries and was later adopted also by the Roman Catholic Church during the Counter-Reformation. These introductory paragraphs have answered in a general way the difference Luther's theology and structural reforms made in response to the crisis vis-à-vis courtship and marriage at the time of the Reformation. The character of Luther's theology on marriage and family will become more specific as it is addressed to six issues in the current crisis.

ISSUE ONE -- During the last thirty-five to forty years the practice of men and women living together prior to marriage, and in most instances prior to public engagement has become common. The "National Estimate of Cohabitation" research estimates about half of women between 25 & 34, have lived with an unmarried partner.¹ This practice emerged during a decade in which casual sexual relationships represented an alternate culture on sex, marriage and family different from the established culture. The rationale frequently given for this practice is that it provides a trial period to test compatibility. Research on the attitudes of high school youth shows a continuing high level of endorsement of this practice. The "Monitoring the Future Surveys" conducted by the Survey Research Center at the University of Michigan found that the statement "It is usually a good idea for a couple to live together before getting married in order to find

out whether they really get along” was answered in the positive in 1995 by 62% of boys and 54.6% by girls.²

In Luther’s era this corresponds in part to the situation generated by secret engagements and marriages. He addresses the matter in several of his writings. The first section of “On Marriage Matters” of 1530 is mainly devoted to helping pastors deal with issues of conscience related to commitments prior to marriage. The customs and laws of that time were different from the present so the complications related to sexual engagements prior to marriage are also different but the point Luther makes about the importance of a registered public commitment prior to sexual intercourse remains. His experience in giving counsel to troubled individuals and couples had driven him to this position. He writes, “Here I want to show what impelled me, even before I had considered these causes, to advise and act against secret engagements. It often happened that a married couple came to me (not counting those who came to others all over the world) one or both of whom had previously become secretly engaged to others, and now there was misery and distress.”³

His views on the advisability of waiting upon public commitment prior to sexual intercourse is clearly stated in the following sentence. “Marriage which is open, public and based on God and honor is to maintain its integrity and right against the stolen, treacherous, disobedient marriage hidden in corners, so that henceforth girls and women will beware of lying with a man in secret and not believe the fine words of the seducer so easily and thoughtlessly.”⁴ It is because Luther firmly believed that it is God’s word that binds a couple and not only the couple’s taking each other for their own that he sought to ban secret engagements.⁵ It was also to uphold the honor of the life-long vow without which the sexual relationship of a man and woman becomes brutish.⁶

After almost half a century during which patterns of courtship and marriage have changed, social scientists have been able to assess the results in terms of numbers, attitudes, and consequences. The National Marriage Project, a nonpartisan, nonsectarian and interdisciplinary initiative located at Rutgers University, the State University of New Jersey in its The State of Our Unions report on the Social Health of Marriage in America gives the following general assessment. “In their twenties, young people are likely to enter a cohabiting partnership as a first living together union. Cohabiting unions are short term. Either they break up or, more likely, lead to marriage. Pregnancy and childbearing might occur at almost any point in this mating sequence.”⁷ The report goes on to distinguish between prenuptial and couples without a date for marriage. “Prenuptial co-habitors seem to look a lot like married couples in the level of commitment, happiness and frequency of conflict. Non-nuptial co-habitors, however, are significantly more likely than married or prenuptial cohabiting couples to experience domestic violence, to be sexually unfaithful, to have lower expectations and levels of commitment.”⁸

When research focuses on more specific factors, however, the differences become clearer. For example, George Akerlof in an article in the Economic Journal entitled “Men Without Children” maintains on the basis of research that men settle down when married but do not if not married and tend to get involved in much more anti-social and

destructive behavior.⁹ Steven Nock writing in the American Sociological Review in an article entitled “The Consequences of Premarital Fatherhood” maintains that having children out of wedlock does not lead to settling down like marriage does. In other words the lack of commitment negatively affects not only the male co-habiter because of the continuance of riskier behaviors but offers no security to the female co-habiter and the child of their cohabitation. Another factor to consider is that two thirds of children entering step families do so in the setting of co-habitation.¹⁰ Larry Bumpass, et al., in an article in Demography entitled “The Changing Character of Stepfamilies: Implications of Cohabitation and Non-marital Childbearing,” maintains that the adjustment for children in step-families is more complicated and frustrating than in most other arrangements.¹¹ Other studies on the social behavior of co-habitors discovered that co-habitors drank more and used marijuana and cocaine more than those who made the choice to marry or to live singly.¹² These studies also found that the responsibility for one another taken by married couples is greater than in cohabiting couples.¹³ Brother Martin’s experience that non public engagements led to “misery and distress” and should be rejected as a suitable pattern for successful courtship is not substantively different from what the record on current cohabitation customs appears to indicate.

ISSUE TWO -- A report of the National Marriage Project in a section entitled “What’s happening to Marriage” includes the following statement. “As an institution marriage has lost much of its legal, religious and social meaning and authority. It has dwindled to a ‘couples relationship’ mainly designed for the sexual and emotional gratification of each adult. Marriage is also quietly losing its place in the language. With the growing plurality of intimate relationships people now tend to speak inclusively about ‘relationships’ and ‘intimate partners,’ burying marriage within this general category. Moreover, some elites seem to believe that support for marriage is synonymous with far right political or religious views, discrimination against single parents, and tolerance of domestic violence.”¹⁴

Luther would have a field day with this. It is doubtful he could retain composure in a response. As the record shows, he was not concerned with being politically correct. Of course, marriage is a couples relationship. It involves a sexual relationship and that takes two. But, he would ask, what about all the other connections? Each did not appear out of primeval ooze fully developed. Each had a mother and father. Each was nurtured for years by someone. Most have siblings. Almost everyone on earth lives in a community that includes others beyond the immediate family. Most have persons who have invested deeply in the development of each member of the couple and are eager to have the family line continue. Most families are negatively or positively affected by what happens in a couple’s marriage relationship. To consider marriage in isolation from community is to deny the interwoven character of human life, its ecology. Human community can degrade by actions that serve the pleasure of those immediately involved and take no thought to the consequence for others. Luther believed the world was created with that kind of interdependence. Reciprocity is the meaning of the Golden Rule. “Do unto others as you would have them do unto you.” Isolating the foundational institution of human community from its larger community as if it was not interrelated or dependent upon others is denying reality. Is this not the non-sequitor the Apostle Paul’s illustration of the

parts of the body shows when he asks, “Can the hand say to the arm, I have no need of thee?”

Breaking this issue into its component parts and securing Luther’s response goes like this. In respect to the meaning of marriage dwindling to a couple’s relationship, mainly designed for the sexual and emotional gratification of each adult, Luther’s response can be found in his “Sermon on the Estate of Marriage” of 1519. He writes, “Now there are three kinds of love: false love, natural love, and married love. False love is that which seeks its own, as a man loves money, possessions, honor, and women taken outside of marriage and against God’s command. Natural love is that between father and child, brother and sister, friend and relative, and similar relationships. But over and above all these is married love, that is, a bride’s love, which glows like a fire and desires nothing but the husband. I want neither your silver nor gold; I want neither. I want only you. I want you in your entirety, or not at all.”¹⁵ Since the Fall no human love is absolutely pure, but a relationship mainly designed for the sexual and emotional gratification of each adult appears to be closer to Luther’s definition of false love since it limits the relationship mainly to each getting sexual and emotional satisfaction and falls short of loving each other in his/her entirety, “for better or worse, richer or poorer, in sickness and in health until death do us part.”

In his exposition of the Epistle of St. Peter 3:7 Luther is interpreting how spouses should hold each other in honor. He writes, “Both should conduct themselves in such a way that the wife holds her husband in honor and that the husband, in turn, gives his wife the honor that is her due. If this were observed, peace and love would reign. Otherwise where this understanding is lacking, there is nothing but aversion in marriage. For this it happens that if a man and a woman take each other solely for the purpose of sensual pleasure and are intent on having happy days and sensual pleasure, they find nothing but heartache.”¹⁶ What Luther is saying is that defining marriage mainly for sexual and emotional satisfaction misses the larger aspects of marriage and the higher meaning of love and apart from the larger understanding and the higher love, the narrower understanding and erotic love is insufficient to sustain its expectations. Self-seeking love with expectations of unending happy days lives in an illusory world and is lacking the greater understanding of the higher forms of love.

Another aspect of the dwindling definition of marriage is its separation from its relationship to the community. By limiting it to the self-satisfaction of the couple, it ignores the living connections to family, society, the human race, and the Source of our being. Luther states the relation of a parent to a situation in which a secret engagement has stolen a daughter away into a relationship that promised only bad times and a broken heart. He writes in defense of a father’s action to block such an engagement, “Who would approve my action if after I had reared my daughter with so much expense and effort, care and danger, zeal and toil, she would receive no better than if she were a cow of mine?”¹⁷ Parents have a deep investment in their children and naturally that carries over into concern for their marriage.

In order to understand Luther's position on the "rights" of family and society vis-à-vis marriage it is necessary to understand how he kept the couples' rights in an interactive tension with the legitimate concerns of family and society. At the same time as Luther could rail against secret engagements of which the parents are unaware, he also held that forced engagements are not valid. He writes, "This power of compulsion is not a paternal power, but an unpaternal, tyrannical, criminal power, not much better than if a thief or robber took away your property...."¹⁸ As in so many things, Luther kept the opposite poles in a tension that respected all authentic claims. Our age, however, in which marriage dwindles for so many to a "couple relationship" mainly designed "for the sexual and emotional gratification of each adult" takes little interest in the families of origin or, for that matter, the long term future of the couple's relationship, not for the parents or for the children. Marriage has been made relative like the other "relationships" of which now it appears as a sub-type.

In terms of the element in the dwindling definition of marriage that makes marriage a subtype of "relationships" and "intimate partnerships," it must be asked what Luther says about this subversion? As usual, he is direct. At the end of "The Estate of Marriage" published in 1522 he writes, "To sum the matter up, whoever finds himself unsuited to the celibate life should see to it right away that he has something to do and to work at it. Then let him strike out in God's name and get married."¹⁹ Of relations that are sexual but without the commitment of marriage Luther writes, "It might well be called plunging into immorality rather than growing to maturity."²⁰ He goes on, "It is certainly a fact that he who refuses to marry must fall into immorality. How could it be otherwise, since God has created man and woman to produce seed and to multiply? Why should one not forestall immorality by means of marriage?"²¹ Luther was not only a realist about the power of sex and forthright about sexual morality, but was also clear about God's intention in the institution of marriage.

The attention now turns from what Luther thinks about this issue to what the analytical research of this dwindling of the definition of marriage tells us. Because the consequences of divorce will be addressed in a subsequent issue, the analytical research addressed at this point will not be the kind of narrow research which seeks to determine what the consequences of these changes are on individuals but the kinds of research done by analysts of society to show the interrelation of the dwindling definition of marriage to other trends in our culture. Perhaps the most embracing analysis of this type was done by Christopher Lasch in his book, The Culture of Narcissism, which represents his analysis of U.S. society in the 60's and 70's when these trends became clear. Building on the Greek myth of Narcissus who saw his own reflection in a pool of water and became consumed by the image of himself, Lasch maintained that American individualism was so advanced that it was crippling our marriages, our families, our communities, and our whole society. Robert Bellah, world recognized sociologist at the University of California in Berkeley, together with several associates analyzed U.S. society as they found it in the 1980's and reported their findings in the book, Habits of the Heart, Individualism and Commitment in American Life. What they discovered shows clearly that the dwindling meaning of marriage was part of a larger focus on individualism and a dwindling commitment to institutions.

Lasch's undergirding assumption in The Culture of Narcissism is that generalizing from individuals to groups is not possible because groups have a life of their own, but individuals, on the other hand, are formed by groups and psychoanalysis tells us something about "the inner working of society" by immersing itself in the individual unconscious."²² In other words, the psychic repercussions from the outside world appear within the individual psyche and behavior, so by studying the individual's psyche and behavior Lasch analyzes what it is in "the outside world" that is causing changes in the individual.

The clue to understanding what it is in the outside world that is causing individual narcissism is revealed in the subtitle to The Culture of Narcissism. The subtitle is "American Life in an Age of Diminishing Expectations." And what are these diminishing expectations? He writes, "Social conditions today encourage a survival mentality, expressed in its crudest form in disaster movies or in fantasies of space travel which allow vicarious escape from a doomed planet. People no longer dream of overcoming difficulties but merely of surviving them."²³ "Narcissism appears realistically to represent the best way of coping with the tensions and anxieties of modern life---these conditions have also transformed the family, which in turn shapes the underlying structure of family."²⁴

Applying this analysis of diminishing expectations to the relations between men and women particularly to the "dwindling of the meaning of marriage to a 'couples relationship' mainly designed for the sexual and emotional gratification of each adult" he notes, "The cult of intimacy conceals a growing despair of finding it."²⁵ And what is it that causes the growing despair of finding real intimacy? Lasch's analyses several developments that have led to diminishing expectations in sexual relations. The sexual revolution in conjunction with efficient contraceptives, legalized abortion and an acceptance of the body's instinctual reactions have weakened the cultural connections of sex with love, marriage and procreation. As he writes, "Sex valued for its own sake loses all references to the future and brings no hope of permanent relationships."²⁶ This lack of permanence in itself is a diminishing expectation. But there are other reasons for despair of finding real intimacy. The Masters-Johnson report on female sexuality which shows the female as sexually insatiable, capable of orgasm after orgasm tended to make men intimidated and led to agonizing over their potential inability to satisfy a woman's sexual desires. The fear of inadequacy has hindered the finding of real intimacy.

Another cause of the growing despair of finding intimacy is the contradiction in feminist expectations. A woman who joins in the movement to win equality for women cannot settle for less. Feminism's attempts to put relations between men and women on a new footing of full equality and tenderness inevitably introduces conflict into male-female relationships. Men tend to find the female demand for tenderness as threatening as the demand for sexual satisfaction. The thwarted passion of women which results from male unresponsiveness finds expression in rage against men. The accommodations that conflict resolution requires in dealing with this, fall short of achieving real intimacy. Among escapist activities are promiscuity which escapes from true intimacy by a separation of

sex and feeling. Lasch comments, “The progressive ideology of ‘non-binding commitments’ and ‘cool sex’ makes a virtue of emotional disengagement.”²⁷

Another escape from intimacy is the flight from sexual fantasy. Both men and women feel threatened by their instinctual desires “...in part because the collapse of authority has removed so many of the external prohibitions against the expression of dangerous impulses.”²⁸ And the reason they feel threatened is that the demands one’s fantasies impose on others justify others’ demands on them. The threats women fear is rooted in the past culture of discrimination and the violence women have experienced from men. Male fear, on the other hand, has less rational roots and Lasch believes, stems from “The devouring mother of pre-oedipal fantasy.” Lasch concludes, “The fear of women, closely associated with a fear of the consuming desires within, reveals itself not only as impotence but as a boundless rage against the female sex.”²⁹ More and more people have withdrawn from serious attempts to live together with the opposite sex and live alone, unfulfilled sexually.

Lasch’s descriptions of “The Flight from Feeling: Sociopsychology of the Sex War,” the title he uses to summarize what has been detailed above, represents a “catch-22” situation. The attempt to find true intimacy apart from the permanence of life-long commitment ends up in a flight from feeling which “tears the heart out of intimacy.”

Interestingly, Lasch’s analysis uses Freudian concepts to show the inability of permissive sex to achieve true intimacy. Ironically, it was the popular culture represented in movies and pop psychology which used Freudian concepts, rightly or wrongly, to justify permissiveness. Luther does not appear anywhere in Lasch’s study of The Culture of Narcissism, but his perception that “it happens that if a man and a woman take each other solely for the purpose of sensual pleasure and are intent on having happy days and sensual pleasure, they find nothing but heartache”³⁰ caught the reality of narcissism without the help of Freud. Luther’s perception in 1522 is as relevant in our current culture as it was in the 16th century.

In the book, Habits of the Heart, Individualism and Commitment in American Life, Robert Bellah along with four principal colleagues, attempts to define the America of the early 1980’s in similar fashion to the work of the French social philosopher Alexis de Tocqueville who travelled the United States in the 1830’s attempting to analyze American society particularly to determine the nature of Democracy in America, the title of the book in which he published his findings and conclusions. Like de Tocqueville, Bellah and associates concentrated on how private and public life work in the United States. The central problem they seek to explore is whether American individualism is threatening the survival of freedom itself, a possibility to which de Tocqueville gave expression in Democracy in America in the 1830’s. Like de Tocqueville they also single out work, family life, religious traditions and participation in politics to determine the mores or to use de Tocqueville’s words, “The Habits of the Heart” which form the American character.

Lasch’s method in The Culture of Narcissism was to use Freudian psychoanalysis to delineate the type of psychological dysfunction in the America of the 1970’s and work

back from that to the character of the culture which creates these dysfunctions in individuals. The underlying element in the culture he found to be causing personal dysfunction was the uncertainty of the late 20th Century world. Nothing seemed certain, not jobs, not the customs by which one measured propriety, not the authority of institutions, not the promises of governments and not even the promises of marriage. Narcissistic behavior described as looking out for yourself first, emerged as a coping behavior in this age of diminishing expectations. This he saw as the underlying condition behind problems of love, marriage and family.

Bellah and his colleagues used a different methodology. They used a combination of history, sociological surveys, sociological analyses, in-depth interviews with 200 persons, mostly middle-class and extensive dialogue within the research group to tease out the significance of their findings relative to their focus on whether American individualism in the 1980's was of such a character as to threaten American freedom itself. In some ways these two analyses differ in their methodology and in other ways they are similar. By using history to delineate the characteristics of America in key areas such as work, family life, politics, and religion in different eras and by using the changes in social structure over time, they start not with individuals but with the world out there and thus differ significantly from Lasch's methodology. In addition, they also use in depth interviews of a significant number of people from different walks of life and different areas of the country to find out "the habits of the heart" in the 1980's, their innermost feelings and judgments. In that way they share Lasch's methodology of starting with individuals, although they do not attempt to evaluate their findings using Freudian ideology. Instead they use the standard of whether or not the changes they found threatened the preservation of freedom, thus returning to the query that stimulated de Tocqueville. In essence, they were dealing with the age old problem of the relation of individual freedom to social responsibility. Their methodology was broader and their goal was more politically focussed on whether American democracy was in danger. Lasch's methodology was more limited, yet at the same time had a broader goal, namely to show the malaise resulting from the bankruptcy of modernity and the need to recover the "political and psychological treasury from which we draw the reserves...that we need to cope with the future."³¹

So what are the findings and the conclusions of Bellah and his colleagues on love, marriage and family as they found it in the 1980's? Ann Swidler, Bellah's colleague with chief responsibility for the findings on love, marriage, and family, summarizes the changes from de Tocqueville's claim that marriage and the family are defenses against individualism as follows: "The contrast between the family, where love is supposed to rule; and the world, where money rules, is, if anything sharper today than in Tocqueville's time...Free choice in the family, which was already greater in Tocqueville's day than it had been before, is now characteristic of the decisions of all members of the family except the youngest children. ---Men and women both want to preserve family values, but the justice of a fuller equality between the sexes is also widely recognized."³²

Swidler also finds two distinct views on the relation between freedom and responsibility which goes to the heart of issue two in this essay, as well as the political issue on which Tocqueville and Bellah, *et al*, were focused.. One approach is that of evangelical Christians who were among Swidler's interviewees. They tended to uphold the views associated with Luther and the Reformation although they tended to think of marriage using the Calvinistic language of Covenant. Marriage was thought of as a life-long commitment for better, for worse, for richer for poorer, in sickness and in health. There are Biblical reasons for divorce, but these do not include simply being dissatisfied or wanting a way to assert oneself. The other view she calls the therapeutic attitude "found among therapists and their clients, but also, at least in the middle-class mainstream, is much more widely diffused."³³

According to Swidler "The therapeutic attitude...begins with the self, rather than with a set of external obligations. The individual must find and assert his or her true self because this self is the only source of genuine relationships to other people. External obligations, whether they come from religion, parents, or social conventions, can only interfere with the capacity for love and relatedness."³⁴ Of the therapy involved in this approach Swidler says, "therapy can help individuals become autonomous by affirming over and over again that they are worthy of acceptance as they are. But the ultimate purpose of the therapist's acceptance, the 'unconditional positive regard' of post-Freudian therapy is to teach the therapeutic client to be independent of anyone else's standards."³⁵

It is obvious that these two sets of ideas clash at some points and agree on others. Swidler's interviews of Evangelical Christians seem to emphasize that the Christian view of marriage is that of assuming an external obligation which one keeps by an act of will. This misses the theonomous character of Christian life making it out instead as heteronomous, something imposed from the outside. That distinction is often missed by outsiders looking in upon Christian life and by those within the faith whose understanding is unclear or who have not experienced a deep consciousness of sin and the saving unconditional acceptance and forgiveness God has provided in Jesus, The Christ. In Christ the high commitment of marriage is made willingly, not imposed from the outside, but from the inside, and the character of the love in Christian marriage involves agape, philia, and eros, not eros, and philia alone. Marriage becomes a Christian vocation which includes sex, friendship and self sacrifice as well when it is called for. It is theonomous rather than heteronomous in Christ. It is bound and it is free as so well stated in the paradox "We are at the same time free lords of all subject to none and at the same time servants of all, subject to all."³⁶ The therapeutic view as expressed by some interviewees often recognized reciprocity in marriage, that it was a two way street and that giving as well as getting belongs to the character of marriage, but were identified as belonging in the therapeutic camp when in the judgment of the interviewees he or she would opt out of the marriage if costs involved seemed to threaten personal development and happiness. The therapeutic view of marriage only recognizes the legitimacy of the bond if it meets the needs of both parties as defined by each party. It is a view that is at bottom autonomous. Autonomous selfhood recognizes no higher authority, no overriding obligation other than self interest.

In the book's conclusion, Bellah himself draws together the findings. What he finds differs little from the conclusion of Lasch, namely, a world that lacks coherence, that has no integrating public moral philosophy, where science is fragmented into disciplines that find it difficult to relate to one another, where equity and justice no longer are defined by outcomes or substance but by procedures, where popular culture manufactures an illusionary world, where work alienates and provides no sense of contributing to the common life but is justified almost exclusively on the money it provides to follow one's private interests, where education emphasizes technical skills almost to the exclusion of the humanities, where the media offer sound bytes that break consciousness into scattered fragments and where the emergence and expansion of weapons of mass destruction and deterioration of the environment create a pervasive anxiety about a secure future. A world that doesn't seem to hang together and that can't offer security impinges on the home which previously was the haven in a heartless world. Marriage and family are still ideals but have suffered from the flight from community and from serious commitment to permanent unions. Autonomy, pursuing one's own interest, trumps the unity of family.

To their findings the Bellah group adds an essay on transforming this culture. Bellah sees hope for other cultural changes in the civil rights struggle against racism that appealed to Biblical and republican or constitutional traditions which have "stood us in good stead in the past and may still do so again."³⁷ He also sees the development of ecology, a vision of the interrelation of all things, as positive. It has shown that advanced or extreme individualism, which attempts to seek fulfillment apart from "belonging," apart from the recognition of obligation, of responsibility to the whole is self defeating, not self fulfilling. "Such a vision," he maintains, "is neither conservative nor liberal...It does not seek to return to the harmony of 'traditional' society, though it is open to learning from the wisdom of such societies...Such a vision arises...from the practices of life that Americans are already engaged in...Such a vision seeks to combine social concern with ultimate concern in a way that slights the claims of neither...Such a vision seeks the confirmation or correction of discussion and experiment with our friends, our fellow citizens."³⁸

The transformation of our culture Bellah and associates seek would appear to reverse the "dwindling of the meaning of marriage," because it seeks commitment to community, awareness of the interrelation of all things, the balancing of freedom with responsibility and looks to the Biblical tradition for guidance "because it has stood us in good stead in the past..." There is no question that Bellah and associates perceive American democracy today as endangered, as needing correction or transformation, as requiring the recovery of those virtues and sources of American life which can preserve our freedom by balancing individual freedom with social responsibility. Alexis de Tocqueville viewed religion and family in the U.S. in the 1820's as generators of the virtues and power sources needed to keep democracy from disintegrating into fragments in which each is pitted against the other rather than the whole working for each. Bellah and associates look for changes in religion and family that will return both as sources of virtue which in turn will return the balance between freedom and responsibility required for democracy.

These analysts uphold the importance of the tradition on marriage and family found in the faith and values of the Reformation and, in fact, in the Biblical tradition. It is a resource that has “stood us in good stead in the past and may well do so again.”

ISSUE THREE --- This issue can be stated as follows; it is the idea that it is better to discard a marriage with problems than to engage the issues openly with honesty, prayer, penitence, forgiveness, patience and with enough commitment to reclaiming the marriage’s vitality to seek professional help. Barbara Dafoe Whitehead, noted marriage and family expert, dates the big change on this issue as the period from 1962-1977. She writes, “In 1962, on the threshold of the divorce revolution, researchers asked women whether they agreed or disagreed with the statement that ‘when there are children in the family parents should stay together even if they don’t get along.’ Opinion was roughly divided, with 51% of the women disagreeing. By 1977, when researchers posed the question again to the same sample of women, 80% disagreed.”³⁹

There were two waves of thinking accompanying this change of view and what has been described as “The Great Crash,” the fact that “in the space of little more than thirty years, divorce went from being a relatively rare childhood event, affecting only a small proportion of all American children, to a collective childhood experience, involving a near majority of children.”⁴⁰ The first wave of thinking about this change tended to discount its impact indicating that earlier generations had known broken homes because of the early death of a parent. Also, many psychologists maintained that adults are emotionally fragile and thus needed divorce but children are much more capable of adjusting. Even when children pleaded for parental reconciliation, they held that those situations could be more easily treated than those of adults in a marriage with problems. By the last years of the 1980’s, the second wave of response began to come in based on longitudinal research and a different story began to unfold. Before that is addressed, however, Luther’s response to this issue needs to be heard.

To grasp Luther’s deep feeling about divorce and family break-up the following sentence from his 1520 treatise, “The Babylonian Captivity of the Church” is revealing. He writes, “I so greatly detest divorce that I would prefer bigamy to it...”⁴¹ This judgment about divorce later led him into confessional counsel to Philip of Hesse recommending a secret bigamy instead of a public marriage annulment, an act which followed Canon 1056 of canon law but contradicted Luther’s own negative judgments on secret engagements and marriages. William Lazareth in his book, Luther on the Christian Home, has this to say about Luther’s handling of his counsel to Philip of Hesse. “Undoubtedly this subterfuge was at least partially justified in Luther’s own mind on the ground that the polygamous practices in the Old Testament go uncontested in the teaching of Christ while divorce, on the other hand, is strongly condemned.”⁴²

Luther sets forth his judgments about divorce clearly in his 1522 treatise “The Estate of Marriage” and his 1530 treatise “On Marriage Matters.” In “The Estate of Marriage”, part two, he sets forth three grounds for divorce: impotence, adultery, and unwillingness. He also acknowledges a ground for separation on the basis of sustained incompatibility. The source for these judgments is that they have Scriptural precedent. The Scripture

allows divorce of those who are impotent from birth because when the Scripture says “Be fruitful and multiply,” it does not refer to them and those who have “been made eunuchs by man,” (Matthew 19:12), and do not have the capability of consummating a marriage and, therefore, the innocent party is justified in securing a divorce. The second ground is adultery. Jesus, in Matthew 10:3-9, deals with questioners who ask him whether a husband might divorce his wife for any reason. He responds by saying, “Have you not read that he who made them from the beginning made them male and female, and said, ‘For this reason a man shall leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, and the two shall become one’? What therefore God has joined together, let no man put asunder.” And when his questioners responded with the question of why Moses allowed a man to give a certificate of divorce his answer was “For your hardness of heart Moses allowed you to divorce your wives, but from the beginning it was not so. And I say to you, whoever divorces his wife, except for un-chastity, and marries another, commits adultery, and he who marries a divorced woman commits adultery.” Of this Luther comments, “Here you see that in the case of adultery, Christ permits the divorce of husband and wife, so that the innocent persons may remarry.”⁴³ He goes on to clarify further consequent action. He writes, “If the adultery is clandestine, of course, the husband has the right to follow either of two courses. First, he may rebuke his wife privately and in a brotherly fashion, and keep her if she will amend her ways. Second, he may divorce her, as Joseph wished to do. The same principle applies in the case of a wife with an adulterous husband. These two types of discipline are both Christian and laudable.”⁴⁴ He goes on to clarify this further. “But a public divorce, whereby one (the innocent party) is enabled to remarry, must take place through the investigation and decision of the civil authority so that the adultery may be manifest to all -- or, if the civil authority refuses to act, with the knowledge of the congregation, again in order that it may not be left to each one to allege anything he pleases as a ground of divorce.”⁴⁵ In response to the question, what is to become of the guilty party if he/she is unable to lead a chaste life, Luther’s answer is, that if the civil authorities choose not to punish the guilty, the adulterer “May betake himself to a far country and there remarry if he is unable to be continent.”⁴⁶ To those who might criticize him for such a suggestion Luther responds, “Between two evils, one is always the lesser...”⁴⁷ He adds one more comment, “the guilty one should still in Christian fashion be publicly rebuked and caused to make amends according to the gospel, after the manner provided for the rebuking of all other manifest sins.” Matthew 18:15-17.⁴⁸

The third cause for divorce is where one of the parties refuses to fulfill the conjugal duty or to live with the other. The deprived party is to warn the other two to three times and if the situation does not change, is to make the problem known to others and the guilty is to be rebuked before the congregation. If the refusal remains, the ground for divorce has been established. The Biblical basis is found in I Cor. 7:4-5 where Paul lays down the rule “Do not deprive each other, except by agreement.”

The fourth situation deals with separation, not divorce. This is the case where husband and wife cannot get along together for some reason other than the matter of the conjugal duty. Luther writes, “St. Paul speaks of this in I Corinthians 7 (10-11), ‘Not I but the Lord gives charge to the married that the wife should not separate from her husband. But

if she does, let her remain single, or else be reconciled to her husband. Likewise, the husband should not divorce his wife. Acknowledging that if either is not blessed with the grace to bear the ill behavior of the offending one, divorce should be pursued quickly before anything worse results but both must “remain unmarried” because “the conjugal duty has not been denied...”⁴⁹

What is clear from Luther’s treatment of the reasons for divorce in his 1530 treatise “On Marriage Matters” is that he subscribes to the Biblical ground for divorce, but his concern for reconciliation is stronger. He writes, “...the pastors should diligently see to it that the guilty partner (if the authorities do not punish him) shall humble himself before the innocent one and beg forgiveness. When this has been done, they are confidently to entreat the innocent party with the Scriptures, where God commands us to forgive, and on this basis press hard upon his conscience and point out what a grave sin it is not to forgive his spouse (if the latter remains unpunished and has not been expelled by the authorities) and take her back in the hope that she will amend her ways. For it can very easily happen to all of us that we fall, and who is without sin. John 8:7? And how would we have our neighbor act toward us if we had fallen? So we too are to act toward others and be strong, continuing to practice Christian love and the duty we have to forgive another if he mends his ways, and thus aid in restraining the law of divorce as much as we can.”⁵⁰

This is a very positive, redemptive, constructive approach to the issue of divorce. It acknowledges the Biblical guidelines for divorce as a Biblical basis for settlement of marital difficulties but at the same time strives with Christian love “to restrain the law of divorce as much as we can” and to deal with the problems of divorce not with rejection of the persons for “who is without sin.” It brings the Christian to the marital problems of others as if they were one’s own and with the spirit represented in the question, how would we have our neighbor act toward us, if we were in that situation?

One other Luther insight is valuable in assessing what Luther would have to say about issue three. It has to do with the confusion between conscience and law. Knowing that the complexity of marriage matters often led to the co-mingling of temporal and spiritual laws which confuses consciences, Luther advises that “if you find that a confusion of conscience is about to arise over the law, then tear through the law confidently like a millstone through a spider web and act as if this law had never been born.”⁵¹ Luther’s embrace of grace allowed him to deal with sin boldly. He goes on “...one should especially observe this rule ...when a thing has happened, and say, ‘What has happened, has happened; gone is gone; who can gather it together again as it was before, when it has been spilled? See to it that it does not happen again and forgive and forget what has happened to spare consciences.’”⁵² As William Lazareth writes in Luther on the Christian Home, “Where love and law do come in conflict, Luther insists that law come bow to the demands of love, it’s queen and mistress.”⁵³

So there it is. Luther follows Biblical guidelines vis-à-vis divorce. Divorce is possible under specific conditions. Nevertheless, Luther detests divorce.. Yet, he is not a legalist. Among Christians he is insistent that every effort be made to strengthen marriages

through the reconciling power of grace and the practice of Christian love. Sin is not to be hidden but faced and forgiven. Every effort should be made to insure that a couple is fitted for marriage and if the marriage develops problems, to redeem and rekindle the marriage. When marriages do break up, he is concerned to preserve the right to remarry for the innocent party and on the condition of removal and need, for the guilty party as well. Rejecting legalism he supports an evangelical ethic that adjusts to changing circumstances, preserving the loving purpose of God's will under the guidance of the Holy Spirit! This is an ethic that rejects self-centered relationships as inadequate for marriage and encourages the love for the other in his/her entirety. It also deals directly with failure in marriage by addressing it personally and publicly but also in a redemptive and constructive way.

Now to the response of the researchers. The conclusions of the second wave of research on the issue of whether to discard a marriage with problems or engage the issues in a sincere effort to reclaim its viability are quite different from the earliest research. The second wave of research had the benefits of examining the evidence that had accumulated over a couple of decades.⁵⁴

One of the most revealing and significant findings is that most divorces in the last thirty years in the U.S. 'terminate low conflict marriages that have some shortcomings but are still reasonably tolerable for spouses and far better for children than divorce.'⁵⁵ This information is particularly important to those who are committed to improving marriage and family life. It indicates that a program of marriage and family ministry which provides adequate preparation for marriage and family as well as a supportive environment has the potential for making a difference both in reducing divorce and in strengthening marriages and families. Another fact of importance in relation to efforts to strengthen marriages is that divorce after first marriages usually comes within the first decade. The median duration of a first marriage was 6.3 years for women aged 20 to 54 in 1990. The median duration of a remarriage was 4.5 years in 1992.⁵⁶ In earlier years the length of first marriages was almost double. The importance of these figures for programmers is that it allows programs for strengthening marriages to become more effective by focusing on the stress points and primary target groups.

The most telling evidence in support of efforts to strengthen marriage and family life with the goal of preserving, stabilizing, and enhancing marriages and families is the mounting information on the costs of divorce to the couple, the children, the extended families, the communities in which they live and the limitations it puts on our combined future. The costs of divorce are staggering. We are reminded by the negative consequences of divorce of the positive comments of theologian Paul Louis Lehmann on the purpose of the Commandments, who writes, "Catching up with Brother Martin brings us to the discovery of the structural realism of the Decalogue. This realism expresses and exposes the concrete purposes, directions, patterns and boundaries of human relations and interrelations, ...What God is doing in the world to make room for the freedom and fulfillment that being human takes."⁵⁷ What Lehman is saying is that Luther understands God's prescriptions as a road map for human fulfillment, a guide to keep us out of dead ends, away from self-inflicted wounds and saved from the consequences of poor choices

and placed instead on the road to fulfillment. The tally on the consequences of divorce reinforce this perspective vis-à-vis the Biblical injunctions on marriage and family life.

The second wave research has shown that non-married people, compared to the married, have higher rates of mortality, higher for women by 50%, and higher for men by 250%.⁵⁸ Nine out of ten married men at age 48 would be alive at 65 but only six out of ten men who had never married or were divorced or widowed according to studies by Lillard and Waite, “Till Death Do Us Part.” They also found that 92 % of forty eight year old married women lived to age 65 compared to 82% of divorced women.⁵⁹ In regard to mental health Carol Ryff and Corey Keyes authors of “The Structure of Psychological Well-Being Revisited” indicate that studies show that when people married their mental health improved.⁶⁰ Norval Glen in Closed Hearts, Closed Minds: The Textbook Story of Marriage shows that it is marriage itself which accounts for the difference in mental health between married and unmarried people.⁶¹

In respect to economic well being, studies by Joseph Lupton and James P. Smith reported in Marriage and the Economy, show that couples who stay married see their assets improve by 7% a year on average while divorced individuals have a net worth less than half that of the married.⁶² An indicator which links health and economic well being has to do with the possession of health insurance. An article by Betty Hahn on “Marital Status and Women’s Health” reveals that about half of divorced or widowed or never married women had health insurance but 83% of married women had health insurance.⁶³ It is also true that a high percentage of single mothers and children suffer considerable economic loss as a result of the absence of fathers. Frank Furstenberg and Andrew Cherlin in Divided Families, What Happens to Children When Parents Part, describe the problem as follows, “In 1988, 16% of all families with children under age 18 were poor by itself a shocking figure. But among female-headed families with children under 18, 45% were poor. In contrast, 7% of families headed by a married couple were living in poverty. In other words, families with children are more than six times as likely to be poor if they are headed by a mother alone than if they are headed by two parents.”⁶⁴

The impact of divided families on children has now been studied long enough to assess that impact with greater accuracy than was possible in the first wave of research. In Growing Up With a Single Parent, What Hurts and What Helps, Sara McLanahan and Gary Sandefur indicate that “Overall, the National Survey of Children confirmed the finding that divorce reduces children’s performance and social adjustment.⁶⁵ Vis-à-vis graduation from high school according to the National Longitudinal Survey of Young Men and Women, “the dropout rate is 29 percent for children from one-parent families as compared with 13 percent for children from two parent families.”⁶⁶ When that is cross referenced to income levels for those not completing high school it amounts to an almost guaranteed continuation at or below the poverty level. Further, “children born to an unmarried mother are 6 percentage points more likely to drop out of high school than children whose parents divorce.”⁶⁷ They conclude, “This analysis confirms our previous estimates and makes us even more convinced that loss of income -- or the lost resources for which income is a proxy--plays a major role in explaining why children in single-parent families have lower achievement than children in two-parent families.”⁶⁸ Apropos

the relation of economics to achievement earlier research on “I.Q. in the United States Class Structure” by Bowles and Gintis shows a dramatic relation. They compute that when statistics are controlled for ability, children from the top tenth of the income distribution have twenty-seven times the chance of those from the bottom tenth to end up in the top tenth as adults.⁶⁹

In addition to the economic and educational problems that come as a result of being raised in a single parent home there are other difficulties as well, For instance, the loss of parental involvement that tends to go with the departure of a father and the more limited time available by a working mother for supervision and counsel “can account for all of the increased risk of early childbearing among young women who experience a parental divorce during high school.”⁷⁰ The most frightening of the consequences the second wave research has discovered deals with the long term psychological factors. These are summarized in the following sentences taken from Judith Wallerstein’s and S. Blakeslee’s book Second Chances: Men, Women and Children a Decade After Divorce. “Only ten percent of children feel better about their lives after parental divorce. After five years about a third of these children were suffering from clinical depression; after ten years an unusually high number were underachievers; after fifteen years, disproportionate numbers were insecure and struggling to establish relationships.”⁷¹

The second wave research has been able to uncover the costs of divorce and it is not a pretty picture. Even the Biblical reasons for divorce while they offer a just basis for sundering a marriage do not avoid the consequences. Luther’s statement “I so greatly detest divorce that I would prefer bigamy to it,” is understandable when its consequences are evaluated. There are exceptions to the consequences described as the statistics indicate and obviously parents who after genuine efforts to restore health to the marriage find it necessary to divorce must make every effort to spare their children from negative consequences.

In the light of these findings, the state, the church and every other segment of civil society need to recognize the dangers to our future and the health, happiness and fulfillment of our citizens in “The Great Crash” that has occurred in the institutions of marriage and family and take actions appropriate to their capacity to contribute to the strengthening and support of marriage and family

ISSUE FOUR -- This issue apart from its generic character has become a major factor in dealing with significant matters in American society, such as, race, feminism, male identity and role, and violence. Stated boldly, the issue is the assumption that the father’s role in raising happy, healthy, well-balanced children is dispensable. This assumption was expressed in the law related to slaves which allowed male slaves to be sold separately from their families and has re-emerged in welfare law which excluded fathers from residence in homes in which the mother was receiving welfare aid to dependent children. It has also appeared in feminist literature in defense of the legitimacy and appropriateness of women becoming impregnated with the intent of having a child without the concomitant intent of that child having any contact whatever with that child’s biological father. The most public incident exposing the relation of feminism to this issue

focused on the then Vice President's comments on the T.V. show, "Murphy Brown". Expressions of the dispensability of the father in rearing children have appeared in articles recommending that women get out of marriages that have lost their luster and in some research on divorce early in "The Great Crash" starting in the late sixties. This issue is also related to broader societal concerns having to do with the definition of male identity and role ala, Robert Bly, the Millionman March, the Promise Keepers movement, etc. It also appears in efforts to limit violence within male-female relationships as well as within the larger community such as in uncontrolled youth gang warfare, school shootings, etc.

So how does Luther relate to these issues and what would he have to say about them? First, it is important to acknowledge differences. Divorce was not as extensive in Luther's day as it has become in the last thirty years in this society. Single motherhood, however, from the early death of husbands was more of a reality then than now. Patriarchy was far more engrained in the culture of the 16th century than in the 20th and 21st centuries and hence male identity and social roles were much clearer then than in our current culture. Work then tended to involve whole families more than has been true for the last century. Violence existed in Germany in the 16th century but was different in many ways. For all of those differences, however, there is much in Luther's writings and in the Table Talk ascribed to him that is relevant to fatherhood in the U.S. at the beginning of the 21st century.

First, Luther understood the orders of society, the family, the state and the Church to have their origin in God's will. Their authority derives from God and is not an accident of nature or history. He writes of the orders in "On the Councils and the Churches" and holds them to have separate functions which, however, are interdependent. Without the family there would be no people and no production; without the state there would be no good order and without the church no piety.⁷² Luther acknowledges that only those for whom the Bible reveals God's will understand that marriage and family constitute an institution ordained of God but also writes, "Heathen nations also have discovered that there is nothing more appropriate for man nor beneficial for kingdoms than this oneness of the life of married persons."⁷³ Thus, Luther not only appeals to Scripture as the authority for the institution of marriage and family, but also cites the experience of non-Christian cultures which confirm its value. The first response of Luther to the substance of issue four is that marriage is a God ordained institution involving a man and a woman with the intent and commitment for living together through thick and thin for as long as both shall live and includes the possibility of procreation and the loving care and nurture of their offspring. While believers understand this to be instituted and upheld by the Creator and Redeemer of the world, even non-believers have discovered from experience the importance of the institution of marriage and family for human fulfillment and the establishment of sound, successful societies.

In terms of the male role in family life, Luther upholds the head of household concept found in both the Old and New Testaments which has been typical and functional in primarily agrarian societies and in economies in which the husband has been the principal bread winner. What is unique to this role is his understanding of it as a "calling" from

God. Max Weber one of the greatest sociologist's of the twentieth century says this of Luther's concept of beruf or calling. He writes "...if we trace the history of the word through the civilized languages, it appears that neither the predominantly Catholic peoples nor those of classical antiquity have possessed any expression of similar connotation for what we know as a calling (in the sense of a life-task, a definite field in which to work) while one has existed for all predominantly Protestant peoples."⁷⁴ What is unique about Luther's use of beruf is that he applies it in dual fashion as a call to fellowship with God in prayer and worship and also as the call God gives each in whatever state or situation one is in to serve Him through service to others. Here is what he writes, "How is it possible that you are not called? You have always been in some state or station; you have always been a husband or wife, or boy or girl, or servant...Are you a husband, and you think you have not enough to do in that sphere to govern your wife, your children, domestics and property so that all may be obedient to God and you do no one any wrong. Yea, if you had five heads and ten hands, even then you would be too weak for your task..."⁷⁵

In the light of Luther's concept of the calling and his direct reference to the role of husband and father cited above, the idea that the role of the father is dispensable in raising children would appear to be rejected out of hand. He is the CEO of the family business, the religion instructor, the interpreter and enforcer of the law in the household, and the priest of the household in family study and worship.

To these citations should be added others to enlarge the picture and make more precise Luther's position. Regarding the importance of maintaining the authority of the father to exercise discipline in the household, Luther is quoted as follows in the Table Talk, "If the authority of the father is lost, the magistrate takes his place."⁷⁶ In other words it is the father's role to teach right and wrong in such a way that the child internalizes obedience to the law. Where children are raised without that character training, the family has failed in its function properly to socialize its children and they then became subject to correction by civil authorities. Where the mother is left to be the principal bread winner and the chief comforter and nurturer, it is extremely difficult for her to carry the gravitas, the threatening "other" role needed for correction when a rebellious will is presented by the child. Where the role is fulfilled by the father, the final voice in family affairs, the gravitas and threatening "other" aspects are a better fit. Mother then can continue to play the comforting and nurturing role without presenting a schizophrenic dual persona.

One of the current critiques of this traditional role of the father is based on a desire to "equalize" the roles of men and women and instead of maintaining distinctive gender roles to de-emphasize gender roles. Both men and women work outside the house and both are breadwinners. Both must share equally in housework and in nurturing the children. Both must exercise the democratically agreed upon discipline for doing wrong. This narrowing of distinctions in gender roles is called androgyny, and it is an attempt to redefine roles in marriage in a way that eliminates the distinctive but complementary gender functions of men and women following conception and delivery. One of the aspects of this movement for redefinition that has emerged out of the feminist movement

is that following conception, it de facto makes the father's specific role dispensable because in an androgynous household relationship, both perform the same functions.

One of the interesting aspects of Luther's view of the father's role is that it holds the father's disciplinary role in a tension which some interpreters view as "masculine strength and eagerness for engagement tempered by a feminine concern for nurture." In On Marriage Matters in 1530, Luther described paternal power in these words, "For paternal power is not given to fathers for their caprice or to do harm to their children, and anyone who uses paternal power in any other way or to the disadvantage of his children, forfeits it thereby and is not to be considered a father, but an enemy and destroyer of his own children."⁷⁷ Ian Siggins in the book Luther and His Mother captures the balance between the masculine and the feminine in the language Luther uses to describe Christ. He writes, "Luther felt absolutely no inconsistency in combining in Christ, the embodiment of human perfection, strength and tenderness, dominion and nurture, majesty and intimacy -- in short, all that collective and individual experience had identified as 'masculine' and 'feminine' characteristics. Moreover, if the dialectic of his early theology struggled to reconcile the 'no!' of the hidden patriarchal God with the 'yes!' of the gospel, in his mature teaching God encountered outside of Christ is not God as he really is: only the man Jesus is the Kern und Ausbund of God as he is. Thus the perfect coalescence of maternal and paternal roles that we find in Christ is also our access to the very being of God:...He is at once the father who chastises us and the mother who caresses."⁷⁸

It is not strange that Luther who found strength and tenderness, dominion and nurture, majesty and intimacy in the image of God revealed in Christ should seek to preserve that balance in the union of marriage in which there are distinctive roles and personas but unity in loving purpose and mutuality in all things. The unity of masculine and feminine in marriage is indeed like unto the unity of Christ and the church. There is no doubt that growing in Christ helps each person to reflect a greater balance between strength and tenderness in relationships with others and that is to be reflected in how each honors the other, making of marriage a true mutuality rather than constant conflict.⁷⁹ But limiting distinctive roles to conception and delivery and being interchangeable in all other roles as androgeny proposes appears to deny other gender specific characteristics belonging to masculinity and femininity.

The mother's role of comforter and nurturer is first of all biological and established in the child's relationship to the mother from the beginning of the infant's life. Even if the father takes his turn in bottle feeding and diaper changing, his role cannot claim equivalence to that of mother as the source of comfort and nurture. In most families the male is the most obvious source of protection from external and household threats and that is rooted in bodily strength and training. It is not a role most women aspire to. Preserving the distinctive roles of mothers and fathers does not, of course, mean that they cannot share as many duties as possible without erasing their distinctive roles. Such an arrangement could well be called complementary collaboration. Its advantage is that it allows sufficient collaboration to avoid overburdening either while preserving the distinctive contribution of each.

Following the second stage of research on the consequences of divorce on children and spouses and the similar impact on the children of unwed mothers cited in issue three, the concern about father absence has grown significantly in U.S. society. The research on issue four will not attempt to reiterate that information, but will focus on the special impact on black families, and on the cumulative impact of father absence on our whole society. In addition research on the role description for fathers in current society emerging from the men's movement will be cited.

The first report is A Statement from the 1998 Morehouse Conference on African American Fathers entitled "Turning the Corner on Father Absence in Black America." A summary of its conclusions begins by listing five convictions which are shared by all the conferees. The first indicates a shared concern about the national trend toward father absence but the second indicates the particular severity of this problem in the African-American community in which "70 percent of African-American children are born to unmarried mothers, and that at least 80 percent of all African-American children can now expect at least a significant part of their childhood years living apart from their fathers."⁸⁰ The third conviction of the group is "The evidence showing that children of all races and ethnic groups who grow up without their fathers in their lives face higher risks of problems that can keep them from leading healthy, caring and productive lives."⁸¹

In terms of the social impact on U.S. society of absent fathers the following sentences from the Introduction to the book, Fatherless America summarize the cumulative impact on U.S. society succinctly. "After the year 2000, as people born after 1970 emerge as a large proportion of our working-age adult population, the United States will be a nation divided into two groups, separate and unequal. The two groups will work in the same economy, speak a common language, and remember the same national history. But they will live fundamentally divergent lives. One group will receive basic benefits -- psychological, social, economic, educational and moral -- that are denied to the other....The primary fault line dividing the two groups will not be race, religion, class, education or gender. It will be patrimony. One group will consist of those adults who grew up with the daily presence and provision of fathers. The other group will consist of those who did not. By the early years of the next century (The 21st Century), these two groups will be roughly the same size."⁸² This information in and of itself simply puts what has been going on since "The Great Crash" in marriage and family life into a social context and shows its demographic character. To understand its consequence requires a return to the research cited in issue three. Two elements in that research of great importance for our society have to do with the impact of poverty on childhood development and the impact on deviant behavior and mental health that attend a high percentage of those with absent fathers. The increase in the number of children living in poverty as a result of divorce or being the child of an unwed mother combined with the statistical evidence regarding the limitations placed upon the ultimate achievement levels of children with the same native abilities that poverty imposes, helps us to see what has been lost by those affected by father absence. The statistics for increased incidents of anti-social behavior, depression, and the long term difficulty in establishing good relationships with others which has also been established as a result of father absence

points out other social and personal costs which those deprived of fathers bear and the rest of society bears with them.

The issue of father absence and its related issue of defining the role of fathers in the current American family has been addressed by individuals and groups seeking to write a script for the role of fathers in the new economic and social context in the U.S. to replace the patriarchal role which belonged to an agrarian and small town society. The role of the father as the good provider which developed in the early industrial era when the father's main function was to bring home a paycheck sufficient for the family to live on has also been superceded. In homes where father and mother work outside the house and household chores are shared, the new model emerging defines the father's distinctive role as that of coach and sponsor. The words used to describe this role are "instilling, advising, teaching, setting an example, preparing -- endowing children with competence and character by showing them how to live a certain kind of life."⁸³ It tends to be a role that focuses on preparing children for the future, for developing the capacities that will enable the children to cope with the challenges of adulthood.

This role reflects the fact that father's love is from the beginning other than mother's love which from the start is more physically attached and a source of comfort while father's love is more distant and contingent, needing to be won. While mother's love tends to be more concerned with a child's physical and emotional needs, father's love takes more interest in preparing the child for life outside the home by instilling self-reliance, the courage to take risks, and the skills needed to deal with challenges outside the home.

Interviews with those in groups seeking to advance a suitable script for what it means to be a man and a father in current society tend to fall back on the tradition stemming from the Judeo-Christian heritage and the democratic requirements for citizenship. Interestingly, the language of service emerges as the best definition capable of holding together the purpose, goals, and activities of the "good father." Luther's unique use of beruf, or calling, lives on in the emerging fatherhood movement. This speaks to the role the church has in preparing and motivating fathers to play those important fatherhood roles for their children.

ISSUE FIVE - This is a complicated issue. One aspect has to do with the respective roles of father, mother, and children in the household. Another aspect is whether, and in what respect the members of a family are equal. A third aspect has to do with the nature of the authority in the household and how it is exercised. It is the issue of family roles, values and government. The traditional form of family government has been patriarchy. It was the form of family governance typical in both the Judeo-Christian and Greco-Roman roots of our culture. It functioned well in primarily agrarian or small business economies. With the rise of industrialization, the father's role for most changed from ruler of an estate, farm, or business involving the whole family, to the father alone working away from home and bringing home a paycheck to a home governed internally largely by the mother. Social historians typically date the end of the patriarchal era to the late 18th and early 19th centuries. After that date in the U.S., children were usually allowed to make their own choice of marriage partner and occupation and wives tended no longer to be

subordinate but to a certain degree “separate but equal,” educated in female academies and active in female voluntary associations. Husbands still were accorded a status in public life not provided to women who did not get the right to vote until 1921 and generally were approached as the final decision-maker on issues of finance and property. Since World War II women have entered the work force in such numbers that now the majority work outside the home in the professions, political life, business and industry, and are gaining in numbers in top leadership. The old tradition of patriarchy in public life, while not completely dead, is shrinking.

Concomitant with the changing role of women in the public sphere is the emergence of movements to change the roles and governance relations of members of the family. The move to make equivalent all roles other than the role of male and female in procreation, in what some have labeled androgyny, is one approach. Another approach has been to start from a different point, namely, to acknowledge full equality but a differentiation in capacity to perform functions and differences in the circumstances related to the functions of each parent in the “outside” world. Starting there, they seek the best pragmatic solution without over-burdening either. Still others seek to abide by the traditional role functions with the mother at home and the father as the chief breadwinner.

On one side of changing roles and governance, for example, is the Family, Religion, and Culture Project located at the University of Chicago and funded by the Lilly Foundation. That study sought to develop a position it entitled critical familism which “promotes preparation for the support of the stable, egalitarian husband-wife partnership in which both partners have equal access to the privileges and responsibilities of the public and private-domestic world.”⁸⁴ It sought to preserve the roles of both husband and wife within the home in stable interaction while breaking from patriarchy which limits the mother to the home and vests final authority in the father, reducing the position of wife and mother to a subordinate level.

Holding to the position of patriarchy on the other hand are many conservative church bodies and independent, conservative family organizations. These conservative church bodies and independent evangelists tend to ground their adherence to patriarchy and the subordination of women on Biblical precedent. The basis conservative organizations provide for this endorsement of patriarchy varies from upholding male superiority for governance, to assertions about its track record as a system for marital happiness and success in raising children compared to other options and to a philosophical rejection of all forms of egalitarianism. So where does Martin Luther come down on this issue?

Luther was both a man of his time and a creative reformer whose ideas and new social structures opened up a new era. Along with Columbus, who opened up a new frontier for Europe, and Copernicus who opened up a new understanding of the earth’s place in the solar system, Luther’s Reformation of Christendom in the West and the new social structures he developed formed the new intellectual and social basis of the early modern era. In line with being both a man of his time and a reformer who laid the foundation for a new age, Luther’s understanding of authority in the household fits that model. On the one hand he accepted the patriarchal model of the tradition while expressing ideas which

fundamentally altered it, ideas which laid the groundwork for modern democracy both in civil and household governance. Luther in keeping with the New Testament held firmly to equality in our relationship with God. In Christ there is neither Jew nor Greek, male or female, bound or free, servant or master, all are one in Christ. Specifically in the context of the hierarchical, medieval Roman Catholic church which claimed exclusive control of the power of the keys to bind or free the sinner, Luther's teaching on the priesthood of all believers and his teaching on justification by faith alone were egalitarian. In reference to the relationship of husband to wife, Luther emphasized a love which had the character of agape, of mutual regard which thought of the beloved with an undivided oneness, different, equal, yet one.

Even when Luther interprets the society at large he thinks of it as bound together, inextricably linked by the very nature of creation. This is the concept of community that is reflected in the orders of creation and in his teaching on *beruf*, which envisions a cosmos of callings by which we are united with one another. This unity reflects a reciprocity regulated by justice even though it is motivated in the Christian by faith active in love. The language Luther uses to express the reciprocity of creation is that of necessity and obligation, "if this, then," not the language of promise. The language of marriage is based on promise. "Because I commit, therefore you have freedom and because you commit, therefore I have freedom within the space of our relationship." It is a relationship of love and is not a tit for tat, I'll do this for you, if you do this for me, arrangement. It is like unto the relation of Christ with the Church. Because He has given Himself for us, therefore we are free lords of all, but we are also constrained by that love to serve God in the way He wants to be served by faithfulness and worship, love and service in His Name. Because the couple have given themselves in marriage, the relationship is not first of all one of rights and obligations but one of love which freely assists the other in cooperative intent and spirit.

The concept of patriarchy as that of subjugated wife, cowering in fear, with frightened children clinging to her skirts, thought of as being inferior, incapable of exercising reason or management of the household, emotionally fragile, is not a description of the Martin Luther/Katherine Von Bora marriage nor of their household. Prior to marriage Luther's views were more traditionally patriarchal but were significantly modified by his marriage experience. Luther praised his Katy for her management of the household maintaining that but for her effective and efficient management of affairs, they would be penniless. So little does he regard male dominance in the household that at the wedding of Hans Lufft's daughter, he escorted the couple to the bedroom "and said to the bridegroom that he should be content with the general custom and be lord in his house whenever his wife is not at home!"⁸⁵ Further, he was an outspoken defender of women, contrary to the prevailing Greco-Roman view that a wife is a necessary evil. He denounced those who belittled women or lampooned them declaring such men to be scoundrels and degenerates who cared not even about their mothers or sisters.⁸⁶ Further in household discussions with friends and students, he spoke of Genesis 3:20, in which Adam "named his wife Eve because she was the mother of all living" and said of that "Here you have the ornament that distinguishes woman, namely, that she is the fount of all living human beings."⁸⁷ These are not words which demean women, subjugate them as inferior or justify

oppressive domination. These examples which clearly show an honoring of women together with Luther's rejection of those who viewed the father's authority over children as capricious, as cited in the previous issue, demonstrate that Luther's later view of patriarchy acknowledged women as strong, deserving of honor by all humanity and as joint heirs of God's love. Further, following I Peter 3:1-7, Luther's understanding of the relationship of male and female in marriage involves a deference by each for the other in consideration of the nature of the other's specific making. Patriarchy for Luther did not involve involuntary subjugation by either the wife or the husband. It did not demean the role of the wife and mother, but on the contrary elevated it as the fount of all human life. Marriage as an institution of God was conceived as having loving purpose, distinctive roles, equality and mutuality that involved deference to the special roles of the other.

What then is the basis of the New Testament patriarchy to which Luther subscribed? Luther made a clear distinction between person and office. As persons we have equal access to God in Christ since Christ died and was resurrected for all. There are no distinctions. We are equal. In the roles we fill in life, however, different gifts are required and some roles by their very nature involve the authority and responsibility to regulate others for the greater good of all. In the family by the nature of the mother's role, she is the nurturer, the comforter, the possessor of a natural bond of intimacy with the children. Unfortunately, this sometimes led to language such as "the weaker vessel" to refer to women which failed to give credit to their strengths. The natural role of the father is protector and provider for their seed that comes to fruition in the birth of their child. As protector and provider he is considered strong and benevolent and related to the outside world and hence, best suited to make those decisions that relate the family to that world. Within the family the natural source of nurture and comfort is the mother. Between father and mother the one with greater emotional distance from the child is the father and hence, he is best suited to exercise effective counteractive will to a rebellious child or youth. That role characterization of fathers, however, oft times failed to acknowledge the tender feelings and deep love fathers have for their children.

But what about the roles of mothers and fathers in the 21st Century where most mothers work outside the home and fathers take turns with mothers in bottle feeding, diaper changes, and food preparation. This is a world in which unemployment may come more frequently in jobs employing more men than women, with women increasingly being the primary bread winner, and having greater acquaintance with the people in the social structures to which families relate. In this kind of role reversal, would Luther recognize a matriarchal structure of authority for families as valid? It is a question more complex than it seems because community patterns differ, and role reversals require significant personal adjustments, but in Luther's understanding of relating responsibility and authority of function, there would be no reason why wives and husbands could not agree that final decisions on external matters would be made by the mother and internal matters related to what's needed at home would be made by a stay at home father. In matters of disciplining children, the matter is not as clear. The emotional attachment typically is closer to mothers even when children are bottle fed, diapered, and fed by fathers. And most mothers, even mothers in executive positions, have a "motherly attachment" to their children, though the bond with fathers can also grow deep.

What is clear is that Luther understood that times change. While he understood that the Bible was the Word of God, he also understood that the Levitical laws no longer carried authority. Further, as a reformer, he had the task of judging what parts of tradition deserved to be kept and what should be discarded. He did not shrink from judging the continuing validity of traditions. His reforms, however, were radical only in those things that contradicted the clear message of Scripture, and he was able to set forth basic Scriptural positions to guide reform. He counted on the guidance of the Christ who lived in him and the Holy Spirit who led the way into new truth to guide the church. Christians today have those same resources with which to face changing circumstances and enduring responsibilities.

Turning to researchers and analysts on this issue which has several aspects does not yield great clarity. For example, at one pole Steven Goldberg, Chair of the Department of Sociology at the City University New York (CUNY) and author of the book Why Men Rule, maintains on the basis of historical anthropology that men rule because it is their nature to do so, that primary hierarchies are always filled primarily by men, that the highest status roles are male and that dominance in male-female relationships is always associated with males. He acknowledges exceptions but maintains they are rare enough to prove the rule.⁸⁸ Close to the other end of the spectrum is the position taken by sociologist, Jessie Bernard in the book, The Future of Marriage, in which the author maintains that human nature is extremely malleable. Note the following, “It is true that some of the options proffered for the future by the avant-garde are contrary to the human nature characteristic of the century just past. But that was just the human nature characteristic of the last hundred years, and not necessarily of today’s or tomorrow’s. For each generation in every age develops the human nature it needs to live in its culture.”⁸⁹

It is within that assumption of there being no fixed human nature and the concomitant assumption that each generation develops the human nature it needs to live in its culture, that the book proceeds to describe the socialization of girls and boys, women and men needed to prepare them for autonomy, for egalitarian relationships, for the shared role pattern in the kinds of marriage now being forged. There it is, two university social scientists, masters of their scientific disciplines, maintaining diametrically opposed assumptions about patriarchy as a permanent social pattern.

One analyst attempting to come to grips with the negative consequences of new experiments with new formats for marriage has argued that it is not nature alone or culture alone that determines roles. David Blankenhorn, author of Fatherless America, maintains that fatherhood much more than motherhood is a cultural invention. It is such, he writes, because “Anthropologically, human fatherhood constitutes a necessary problem. It is necessary because, in all societies, child well-being and societal success hinge largely upon a high level of paternal investment: the willingness of adult males to devote energy and resources to the care of their offspring. It is a problem because adult males are frequently -- indeed, increasingly -- unwilling or unable to make that vital investment.”⁹⁰ He goes on, “Because fatherhood is universally problematic in human societies, cultures must mobilize to devise and enforce the father’s role for men, coaxing

and guiding them into fatherhood through a set of legal and extra-legal pressures that require them to maintain a close alliance with their children's mother and to invest in their children...Only an authoritative cultural story of fatherhood can fuse biological and social paternity into a coherent male identity."⁹¹ Blankenhorn's critique of the attempt to socialize men into autonomous, egalitarian, identical roles (with wives) as proffered by feminist attempts to change the marriage culture is that it fails to "fuse biological and social paternity into a coherent male identity."⁹² To establish his case he states, "In sum, over the past two hundred years, fatherhood has lost, in full or in part, each of its four traditional roles: irreplaceable caregiver, moral educator, head of family, and family breadwinner."⁹³ Blankenhorn further claims that fatherhood has been devalued by this loss not only in the home, but in the society and as a result a minimalist, de-cultured paternity has evolved which "necessarily fractures any coherent social understanding of fatherhood."⁹⁴ The result is "our cultural story no longer conscripts men into a uniform fatherhood service" so that men are "no longer unambiguously responsible for a fixed number of mandatory tasks."⁹⁵ The ambiguity of the current cultural script is further complicated by the playboy philosophy of pop culture that promotes the male fantasy of sex without responsibility. This furthers the disconnection between masculinity and paternity. Simply put, without a clear and positive cultural script which definitely links masculinity to specific roles in fatherhood, the contribution of fathers to marriage and family will continue to falter limiting both the well-being of children and societal success. Thus, whatever fails to distinguish male roles diminishes the strength of the cultural script, which in turn causes the contributions of fathers to falter limiting both the well-being of children and societal success. This is not a case for authoritarian father rule but it is a case for maintaining the protector, provider, moral educator and family spokesperson roles for fathers, not on the basis that men inevitably will rule but on the basis that men tend to stray if there is no coherent cultural script that ties paternity to masculinity. In the end it is both a nature and culture argument.

Another analyst attempting to evaluate what has happened to female roles and hence the cultural script for women, also moves away from androgyny and the more radical goals of feminism toward a more middle of the road position on the basis that several of the assumptions of modern feminism are false. The analyst is Danielle Crittendon, author of What Our Mothers Didn't Tell Us, Why Happiness Eludes the Modern Woman. She starts by asking the question, why after thirty years of following the goals of the feminist movement, happiness should continue to be so elusive for women. She does not turn her back on many of the accomplishments of the feminist movement, but seeks rather to change what doesn't work. She writes, "...that new freedom is a great accomplishment. Yet if we are to enjoy it, and not be defeated by it, we must learn to think in ways quite unlike the ways that feminism has taught us to think. We must reconsider some of the assumptions that have brought us to our current impasse."⁹⁶

What are the assumptions she now questions? The first is the ideology of her 1970's health classes that basically prepared girls to be safe while sexually active assuming that equality for women means making it possible for them to be sexually free. The result of sexual liberation, however, did not yield what women wanted. She writes, "Eventually most women want children and, with them, a committed husband and father."⁹⁷ But she

goes on, “The sexual revolution, from a male point of view, could be summed up as ‘You mean I get to do whatever I want -- and then leave? Great!’”⁹⁸ At the conclusion of her evaluation of the sexual freedom that accompanied the Counter-Culture Movement of the 60’s and has persisted she writes, “If women do, by and large, wish to reunite sex with love, to regain male commitment, and to restore trust and civility between men and women, the most appealing aspects of traditional morality-- then we are going to have to put up with some of its restrictions too,”⁹⁹

The second of the goals of feminism she has come to reject is the quest for autonomy, to answer only to oneself, to be completely independent. It has led to avoidance of permanent commitments. “The strange result,” she writes, “is couples who are willing to share everything with each other -- leases, furniture, cars, weekends, body fluids, holidays with their relatives -- just as long as it comes with the right to cancel the relationship at any moment.”¹⁰⁰ Much of the popular women’s literature is preoccupied with women’s autonomy. Crittendon claims that it amounts to a cultural snap shot of late 20th century middle class marriage. Women are so taken up by what they might lose in marriage, “that they no longer even bother to ask themselves what their husband’s give up, if anything.”¹⁰¹ It is their preoccupation with what they might lose rather than any sexist attitudes of husbands or real sacrifices, she maintains, that is the cause of their unhappiness. Autonomy, the desire to be completely independent, to avoid needing another, is in the end self-defeating, and unfulfilling.

The rationale often offered as the reason women must be autonomous is that in a world of fickle men, a woman without the ability to make it on her own will be lost, unable to survive with dignity. This lies behind the effort of feminism to promote women getting equal access to the public world, equal pay for equal work and the removal of the glass ceiling to executive advancement. This also is the reason for the feminist push for child care.

Crittendon does not turn her back on access to the public world or on equality for women in that world. What she does reject is the pressure the Movement puts upon women to place more importance upon “making it” in a man’s world than upon motherhood and child rearing. Sixty-five percent of mothers of pre-school children now work for wages. Most will be torn between being with their children and being on the job. Adequate child care is not the problem. Being away from their children is the problem. Here she faults feminism again. “Feminists tend to react angrily to this sentiment. It is odious, they say, to insist that mothers should be the ones who sacrifice their work for their children, and not fathers equally. It is disturbingly sexist to say that women are ‘better’ at caring for infants, or more suited to it, than men.”¹⁰² Rejecting even the best quality child care as an adequate or even desirable substitute for a Mother’s care, she says there are better solutions. Taking inspiration from Edith Wharton’s line, “I have sometimes thought that a woman’s nature is like a great house full of rooms,” Crittendon proposes reversing the trend to push marriage and children to the middle of adult life when a woman’s career is starting to go somewhere. She writes, “I wonder if we shouldn’t consider leading our lives the other way around -- modernizing, as it were, the traditional idea of getting married and having babies when our grandmothers would have, in our early twenties, and

pursuing our careers later, when our children are in school.”¹⁰³ A 2002 book by Sylvia Ann Hewlett entitled Creating a Life supports Crittendon’s thesis by citing the biological facts indicating the inability of modern science to extend fertility for women.

Where do you think Luther would come down on this issue were he giving counsel early in the 21st Century? Would it be at either extreme? Not likely, considering his high view of women and his appreciation for the uniqueness of men and women. Luther kept opposites in tension particularly freedom and responsibility, “We are free lords of all, subject to none, and at the same time, servants of all, subject to all.” For Luther the freedom that comes with the unconditional acceptance granted in forgiveness and in the promises to each other in the marriage vows is balanced by the commitment of service to one another experienced in Christ and in the bonds of marital love. Within those two relationships lies the freedom and commitment with which to work out pragmatically the issues of roles and governance. There, not in the unconditional acceptance of post-Freudian psychology that promotes autonomy or freedom without commitment, lies the recovery of enduring marriages and family nurture for fulfilling responsible living.

What the lack of clear cultural roles for men and women in U.S. society at the beginning of the 21st century forces upon institutions and individuals, however, is the critical need to spend considerable time in preparation for marriage in depth and over time. Marriage at heart is a different reality than a business partnership or a close friendship. Reducing it to a pre-nuptial contract to define the rights of each is to enter it on a legal reciprocity relationship, an “if this, then that” relationship, a conditional relationship rather than a relation built on the authority of promise which gives the freedom belonging to love which is a “because of my promise and your promise we have freedom within the relationship but also the commitment to mutual care, equality and distinctive roles.”¹⁰⁴ In this era of confusion about roles and expectations, The Christian Church has a mandate to focus on its discourse on marriage in sermons, preparation for marriage classes, family programs, women’s groups, men’s groups, confirmation and youth groups. The crisis in marriage and family life detailed in this essay, and the continuing relevance of Luther’s engagement with these issues in the Reformation of the 16th century, make a retrieval of our Lutheran heritage on marriage and family a current mandate for Lutherans.

ISSUE SIX – The most radical of the current issues related to marriage is the political/theological issue of same sex marriage. It has been debated in state legislatures and in Congress, raised as a wedge issue in election campaigns, and ruled on by the highest court in some states. Protestant church bodies in Europe and the U.S. have studied, debated, and ruled on the issue, some rejecting and some accepting either the blessing of same sex unions or marriage.

The ELCA has completed a two year study program on the issue and has decided against approving same sex marriage and the blessing of same sex unions. The debate, however, continues within church bodies. As inheritors of Swedish Lutheranism, the recent action of the Swedish state to accept the registration of same sex unions and the concomitant action of the church of Sweden to allow pastors permission to bless those unions after examining the faith and intentions of the partners is sufficient to place this issue on the

agenda of our Augustana Heritage Gathering in 2006. Within the context of examining current issues from the standpoint of what Luther could contribute to resolving the issues, I will attempt to intuit how Luther might deal with this matter by examining both the bold, almost radical, changes in the regulations and jurisdiction over marriage matters he introduced in the 16th century and the Biblical, theological and rational basis on which the changes were grounded.

When we consider that Luther's Reformation deposed the church from its governance over marriage matters in Lutheran lands on the historical basis that marriage as an institution had an ancient origin and was part of the order of creation, preceding both Israel and Jesus, and the theological basis that it was not a sacrament, since it did not possess the elements of a sacrament, those of us in the 21st century can better understand both Luther's courage and the level of social disruption the Reformation of the 16th century initiated. As a result, the responsibility of the state and the work of its courts grew rapidly. The political and theological crisis this evoked in 16th century Europe was every bit as disruptive as same sex unions/marriage is in the 21st century.

When Luther exposed the fact that few members of the monastic orders had the gift for celibacy and advocated that the monasteries be closed and its residents seek wives or husbands, he was urging that the most honored institution and way of life in medieval Europe be abolished. Luther's Reformation was disruptive, and deconstructionist. Likewise, when he dismissed the then understanding that a couple's secret commitment to life-long fidelity constituted "the marriage," he did so on the practical basis that too often fickleness vitiated fidelity and bitter arguments and serious trouble resulted. If a custom wasn't contributing to the proper ordering of society, he changed it. He demanded public declaration of engagement as the solution. Luther made changes to reorganize society, breaking existing patterns to restore order and health. From these examples it is clear Luther would not hesitate to change the guidelines for ordering society if of those changes were consistent with his Biblical theology and reason.

In intuiting how Luther would respond to the current crisis in church bodies on same sex unions, I will follow the theological guidelines I believe he used in making decisions that contradicted existing cultural norms. The foundations on which Luther re-constructed the understanding and administration of marriage in the 16th century emerged from Luther's interpretation of Scripture, both gospel and law. Building upon that foundation he used reason in its many forms such as insight into human experience, analysis of sexuality in its various expressions, common sense, and the reciprocity expressed in the golden rule. The following paragraphs will briefly describe four key elements we could assume Luther would be using were he in the situation of a Lutheran pastor in Sweden today making a decision on whether or not to bless a same sex couple that came to him to secure the church's blessing on their union.

First, the centerpole of Luther's theology is justification by grace alone. Christ bore the sins of the whole world on the cross. Grace was understood as a forensic declaration not as a spiritual power to assist individuals to do good works which will qualify them for acceptance to heaven. Further, his understanding of *simul iustus et peccator*, that we are

at the same time sinners and justified, was that we are all “by nature sinful and unclean.” In this life we all remain sinful and unclean, and therefore must always claim God’s grace. Sanctification, indeed transformation, occurs but in this life our sinful and unclean nature continues. *Simul iustus et peccator* is a correct understanding of our ontological being as Christians in the interim between the Christ deed on the cross and the consummation of this world and the world to come. “If we say we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us.” I John 1:8 Salvation depends on grace alone and that excludes every ethical element as the basis for fellowship with God.

Second, Luther’s approach to understanding the Ten Commandments as is evident from his introduction to them in the Small Catechism is that they are theonomous rather than heteronomous, that is, they are statements indicative of how life is to be lived to avoid chaos. This is a creational understanding of the commandments. They are useful in creating a well-ordered, fulfilling life, which is the will of God for us. “We are to so fear and love God that we...etc.” Those words of Luther used in the introduction to each commandments do not indicate a heteronomous imposition of a set of rules, which are conditions for acceptance by God, but constitute a guide to avoid trouble. Their purpose is constructive. They are guidelines to avoid chaos and its consequences.

Third, in reforming, that is reconstructing the structures of society in Lutheran lands in the 16th century Luther was realistic and practical as is clear from his realism about sex derived from his experience in monastic communities and his practicality in requiring public recognition of engagement instead of secret marriages of convenience under the pressure of sexual arousal, often subsequently repudiated.

Fourth, Luther believed that what we are called to do in the context of daily life as parents, children, students, workers, citizens, partners, etc. is where we are to serve God by serving the needs of people, society, church and the earth itself, taking up our cross, bearing the burdens of others and constructively contributing to Shalom, the cultural and social reality of good will, the wealth of shared individual gifts, peaceableness, the celebrating and sharing of God’s gifts of grace and providential care, honoring His name and doing His will. Luther views marriage as a holy estate and a Christian vocation.

Lastly, we must bring Luther up to date. What Luther did not know in the 16th century that we in the 21st century know, is the extensive evolutionary character of creation. Luther did understand that creation is continuous as a result of his Christian understanding of history, and he was aware of changes brought about by the process of breeding, though he was not aware of Mendel’s laws and the intricacies of the human genome. Nor, as far as we know, did Luther have direct experience in observing the development of a child with a same sex orientation so that he could understand sexual orientation as an autonomic rather than deliberative reaction. To get to the point, let us add what we now know about evolution and genetics and what he could have observed were he an observant parent of a child with a same sex orientation to what we know about Luther and his theology and put Luther in the position of a pastor in the church of Sweden in the 21st century who is counseling two members of his congregation, both of whom are devoted Christians and active members of his church who sense that the Lord

is calling them to commit their lives in service to one another in love and together to serve their neighbors through their work. They have registered their commitment to one another with the state and now are asking their pastor to bless their calling to serve one another in love and together to serve their neighbors.

Add one more bit of information for Luther to use in making his decision. Let us assume that he knows that permiscousness has characterized unrecognized/rejected and unregulated same sex behavior and that stabilization of life has been difficult for that subculture, that for lack of public ordering a somewhat chaotic subculture exists in our society and makes human fulfillment more difficult.

Knowing Luther's realism about sex, his theonomic, constructive understanding of God's law, his advocacy of the institution of marriage as an avenue of human fulfillment, his understanding of God's grace and his awareness of *simul iustus et peccator* and his concept of the Christian's calling, What decision do you think Luther would make in regard to blessing the civil union of his two same sex parishoners? The members of the ELCA remain divided. The Luther I know would test their love for one another and how they would relate the love of Christ they know as Christians to their love of one another and their desire together to serve human need and if he perceived their Christian calling as real, his answer would be a full-hearted affirmation of blessing their declared union.

CONCLUSIONS --

Two perspectives should help in understanding the importance of the continuing relevance of Luther's theology on marriage and family. The first perspective is related to truth claims. Wolfhart Pannenberg put it this way in his Ethics. "...the answers of religion are not all of equal value ...It must be shown to what degree the whole of human existence can find a more profound explanation in terms of the God of the Bible than it can find anywhere else. Only in this way can the assertion that the Biblical God is the true God be substantiated."¹⁰⁵ That Luther based his judgments on marriage and family on the understanding of God and His will revealed in the Bible and that those judgments are on target in dealing with today's issues as revealed by research and social analysis should serve to reassert the relevance of the Bible to reforming marriage and family life today.

The second perspective is related to the unique situation in which the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America finds itself at the beginning of the 21st century vis-à-vis the struggle to restore stability to marriage and family life. Strategically, if mainline religion embraces the effort to focus on strengthening marriages and family life, a majority of Americans according to their self designated religious allegiance will be related to church bodies actively involved in programs to help couples and families to cope with the problems in contemporary life which threaten marriage and family stability.¹⁰⁶ This could well be a turning point.¹⁰⁷ The ELCA's leadership role within the mainline churches has been established by its successful effort to achieve Christian fellowship and cooperation on the basis of a common understanding of the Gospel. The ELCA appears to be the church body with the most approved cooperative arrangements and programatic

agreements among mainline church bodies. It is presently poised strategically and tactically to make a big difference in the struggle to stabilize marriages and family life. What is needed is an aggressive church-wide emphasis by the ELCA to focus on strengthening marriage and family life within the ELCA itself and to promote cooperative programs to strengthen marriages and family life with those church bodies with which it has agreements. The Lord of history is calling.

¹ Larry Bumpass and James Sweet, "The National Estimates of Cohabitation", *Demography*, Vol. 26, 1989, pp. 615-625.

² David Popenoe and Barbara Dafoe Whitehead, "The State of our Unions, The Social Health of Marriage in America," 1999, A publication of the National Marriage Project located at Rutgers, The State University of New Jersey, cf. pp. 21,22,24. (received on the internet.)

³ Martin Luther, "On Marriage Matters," *Luther's Works*, Vol. 46, p. 270.

⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 284.

⁵ *Ibid.* p. 277.

⁶ Martin Luther, *Luther's Works*, "Sermon at the Marriage of Sigmund Von Lindenau," 1545, Vol. 5, p. 358.

⁷ "The State of our Unions," *op. cit.*, p. 5.

⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 5.

⁹ George Akerlof, "Men Without Children," *Economic Journal*, 108, 1998, p. 290. Appreciation is expressed to *The Case For Marriage*, by Linda Waite and Maggie Gallagher, Doubleday, N.Y., 2000, for assistance in discovering this and other sources for research through its excellent bibliography.

¹⁰ Steven Nock, "The Consequences of Premarital Fatherhood," *American Sociological Review*, April, '63, 1998, pp. 250-263.

¹¹ Larry Bumpass, R. Kelly Raley and James Sweet, in *Demography*, *op. cit.*, "The Changing Character of Step-families: Implications of Cohabitation and Non-marital Childbearing," 32: 1995, pp. 425-436.

¹² Jerald Backman; Katherine Wadsworth; Patrick O'Malley; Lloyd Johnson; and John Schulenberg in *Smoking, Drinking, and Drug Use in Young Adulthood*, Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, 1997, pp. 172,173

¹³ Lisa Berkman and Lester Breslaw, "Social Networks and Mortality Risk," Chapter 4 in *Health and Ways of Living: The Alameda County Study*, New York, The Oxford University Press.

¹⁴ *The State of Our Unions*, *op. cit.*, p. 3 of 24.

¹⁵ Martin Luther, *Luther's Works*, Vol. 44, p. 9, "Sermon on the Estate of Marriage," 1519.

¹⁶ Martin Luther, *Luther's Works*, Vol. 30, p. 92, "Exposition of the Epistle of St. Peter"

¹⁷ Martin Luther, *Luther's Works*, Vol. 46, p. 269, "On Marriage Matters", 1530.

¹⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 305, 306.

¹⁹ Martin Luther, *Luther's Works*, Vol. 45, p. 18, "The Estate of Marriage." 1522.

²⁰ *Ibid.*, pp. 44,45.

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- ²¹ Ibid., p.45.
- ²² Christopher Lasch, *The Culture of Narcissism, American Life in an Age of Diminishing Expectations*, W. Norton and Co., Inc. N.Y. 1978, pp 33, 34.
- ²³ Ibid, p. 49.
- ²⁴ Ibid, p. 50.
- ²⁵ Ibid, p. 188.
- ²⁶ Ibid, p. 191.
- ²⁷ Ibid, p. 200.
- ²⁸ Ibid, p. 200.
- ²⁹ Ibid. p. 205.
- ³⁰ Martin Luther, “Exposition of the Epistle of Peter”, op. cit. p. 92.
- ³¹ Christopher Lasch, op. cit., Preface xviii.
- ³² Robert Bellah, et, *Habits of the Heart, Individualism and Commitment in American Life*, Harper Row, 1985, p. 90.
- ³³ Ibid, p. 97.
- ³⁴ Ibid, p. 98.
- ³⁵ Ibid, p. 99.
- ³⁶ Martin Luther, “The Freedom of a Christian,” 1520, L.W. V. 31.
- ³⁷ Robert Bellah, et. al., op. cit., p. 295.
- ³⁸ Ibid., p. 296.
- ³⁹ Barbara Dafoe Whithead, *The Divorce Culture*, Alfred A Knopf, N.Y., 1997, p. 82.
- ⁴⁰ Ibid, p. 83.
- ⁴¹ Martin Luther, op. cit., Vol. 36, p. 105, “The Babylonian Captivity of the Church.”
- ⁴² William Lazareth, *Luther on the Christian Home, An Application of the Social Ethics of the Reformation*, Muhlenberg Press, Philadelphia, 1959, pp. 194,195.
- ⁴³ Martin Luther, op. cit., “The Estate of Marriage,” 1522, pp. 30,31.
- ⁴⁴ Ibid., p. 32.
- ⁴⁵ Ibid., p. 32.
- ⁴⁶ Ibid., p. 32.
- ⁴⁷ Ibid., p. 33.
- ⁴⁸ Ibid., p. 33.
- ⁴⁹ Ibid., p. 35.

⁵⁰ Martin Luther, op. cit., "On Marriage Matters," pp. 311,312.

⁵¹ Ibid., p. 319.

⁵² Ibid., p. 319.

⁵³ William Lazareth, op. cit., p. 196.

⁵⁴ Cf. Sara McLanahan and Gary Sandefur, *Growing Up With A Single Parent*, Harvard University Press for clarification of the differences in the earlier and later research, pp. 14, 15, ff.

⁵⁵ Stephen G. Post, *More Lasting Unions, Christianity, The Family, and Society*, William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, Grand Rapids, Michigan/Cambridge, U.K., 2000, p. 15. Post gets his 70% estimate of low conflict divorces from Amato and Booth's, *A Generation At Risk*. Barbara Dafoe Whitehood in *Divorce Culture*, quotes some estimates which state that only 10% to 15% of divorces end marriages with high conflict, p. 98.

⁵⁶ Dan Levinson, ed., *Encyclopedia of Marriage and Family*, Vol. 2, Macmillan Library Reference USA, p. 582.

⁵⁷ Paul Louis Lehmann, "The Meaning of the Commandments for Making and Keeping Human Life Human," p. 31. *The Decalogue and a Human Future*, Wm. B. Erdman, Publishing Co., Grand Rapids, 1989.

⁵⁸ Catherine Ross; John Mirowsky; Karen Goldsteen, "The Impact of the Family on Health: Decade in Review," p. 1061, *Journal of Marriage and the Family*, 1990.

⁵⁹ Lee Lillard and Linda Waite, "Till Death Do Us Part: Marital Disruption and Mortality, pp. 1131-1156, *American Journal of Sociology*, 100, 1995.

⁶⁰ Carol Ryff and Corey Lee Keyes, "The Structure of Psychological Well-Being Revisited," pp. 719-727, *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 69, 1995.

⁶¹ Norval Glenn, *Closed Hearts, Closed Minds: The Textbook Story of Marriage*, Institute for American Values, N.Y., 1997, p. 11.

⁶² Joseph Lupton and James Smith, "Marriage, Assets, and Savings" p. 11, *Marriage and the Economy*, ed. Shoshana Grossbard-Schechtman, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, England.

⁶³ Betty Hahn, "Marital Status and Women's Health: the effect of Economic Marital Acquisitions," *Journal of Marriage and the Family*, op. cit., 55, 1993, pp. 495-504.

⁶⁴ Frank Furstenberg and Andrew Cherlin, *Divided Families, What Happens to Children When Parents Part*, Harvard University Press, 1999, p. 45.

⁶⁵ McLanahan and Sandefur, op. cit., p. 15.

⁶⁶ Ibid., p. 41.

⁶⁷ Ibid., p. 66,67.

⁶⁸ Ibid., p. 92.

⁶⁹ Bowles and Gintis, "I.Q. in the United States Class Structure," in *The New Assault on Equality*, by Allan Gartner, Colin Greer, and Frank Reissmann, eds. Quoted on page 4 of the Notes in *Small Futures* by Richard deLone, Harcourt, Brace and Joanovich, 1979, N.Y., London. A book produced for the Carnegie Council on Children.

⁷⁰ McLanahan and Sandefur, op. cit., p. 114.

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- ⁷¹ Stephen Post, op. cit., p. 13, 14.
- ⁷² Martin Luther, *Works of Luther*, Vol. 5, Six Volumes, 1930-1943, Muhlenberg Press, "On the Councils and the Churches," p.p. 298,299.
- ⁷³ *Luther's Works*, Luther Press, Translated by J. Lenkner, 14 Volumes, 1904-1909, Vol 1, p. 220.
- ⁷⁴ Max Weber, *The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism*, Allen and Unwin, 1930, p. 79.
- ⁷⁵ *Luther's Works*, Luther Press, op. cit. V. 10, p. 247.
- ⁷⁶ *Luther's Works*, Vol. 54, op. cit., *Table Talk*, p. 157.
- ⁷⁷ Martin Luther, "On Marriage Matters," 1530, op. cit., Vol. 46, p. 308.
- ⁷⁸ Ian Siggins, *Luther and His Mother*, Fortress Press, 1981, pp. 78,79.
- ⁷⁹ Cf. Luther's Exposition of the Catholic Epistles, especially, I Peter.
- ⁸⁰ "Turning the Corner on Father Absence in Black America," A statement from the 1998 Morehouse Conference on African American Fathers, published by Morehouse Research Institute and the Institute for American Values, 1998, p. 4.
- ⁸¹ Ibid, p. 7.
- ⁸² David Blankenhorn, *Fatherless America - Confronting Our Most Urgent Social Problem*, Basic Books, 1999, Introduction, pp 1,2.
- ⁸³ Ibid., p. 218.
- ⁸⁴ Don S. Browning, et al, *From Culture Wars to Common Ground: Religion and the American Family Debate*, Westminster John Knox Press, 1997, Chapter 1.
- ⁸⁵ Martin Luther, *Table Talk*, op. cit. V. 54, p. 269.
- ⁸⁶ Ibid., p. 221.
- ⁸⁷ Ibid., p. 223.
- ⁸⁸ Steven Goldberg, "Is Patriarchy Inevitable?" *The National Review*, Nov. 11, 1996, p. 32 ff.
- ⁸⁹ Jesse Bernard, *The Future of Marriage*, World Publishing, Time Mirror, 1972, p. 274.
- ⁹⁰ Blankenhorn, *Fatherless America*, op. cit., p. 3.
- ⁹¹ Ibid., p. 3.
- ⁹² Ibid., p. 16.
- ⁹³ Ibid., p. 16.
- ⁹⁴ Ibid., p. 16.
- ⁹⁵ Ibid., p. 16,17.
- ⁹⁶ Danielle Crittendon, *What Our Mothers Didn't Tell Us, Why Happiness Eludes the Modern Woman*, Simon and Shuster, N.Y., 1999, p. 35.
- ⁹⁷ Ibid., p. 35.
- ⁹⁸ Ibid., p. 35.
- ⁹⁹ Ibid., p. 57.
- ¹⁰⁰ Ibid., p. 73.
- ¹⁰¹ Ibid., p. 89.
- ¹⁰² Ibid., p. 132.

¹⁰³ Ibid., p. 187.

¹⁰⁴ Cf. Eric Gritch and Robert Jenson, *Lutheranism, The Theological Movement and Its Confessional Writings*. Fortress Press, Philadelphia, 1976, pp. 8, 9, for the character of relationships built on the authority of promise.

¹⁰⁵ Wolfhart Pannenberg, *Ethics*. Translated by Keith Crims. Westminster and Philadelphia, and Search Press in London, pp 44,45.

¹⁰⁶ Martin Marty, "Will Success Spoil Evangelicalism? Christian Century, July 19-26, 2000 cf. 757-760. There Marty divided the population of the U.S. into about four equal parts according to their self-described religious identification. By this delineation about one quarter are Roman Catholics, one quarter are Evangelicals, one quarter claim allegiance to a mainline denomination, and one quarter includes everything else. Since Roman Catholics have held the line on divorce, and Evangelicals have focused on family ministry, approximately one half of the U.S. population could be said to be focused now on maintaining family stability. Thus, if the mainline decides that the time has come to address family stability directly, a majority of Americans could well be aligned to address the issues.

¹⁰⁷ W. Bradford Wilcox, "Mixed Messages, Churches' Witness in the Family," Christian Century, February 21, 2001, pp.16-19. Bradford maintains that the mainline's witness on the family is focused on the plight of children and does not address the issues of divorce and out-of-wedlock births. Thus far, that appears to be the emphasis in the ELCA's family program that is focussed almost exclusively on the 40 assets for youth. That leaves the ELCA and the other mainline churches in a predicament which Wilcox stated as follows: "...if they want to thrive and remain true to their deepest theological commitments, they must reach out to America's growing ranks of unconventional families....and if they are serious about improving the welfare of children, mainline churches must do more to articulate a vision of the family that confronts the mounting evidence that divorce and out-of-wedlock childbearing pose serious threats to children." P. 18 . Cf also Barbara Dafoe Whitehead, "Ending the Church's Silence on Divorce," Christianity Today: November 17, 1997, p. 51. In this she says "What remains unaddressed and underdeveloped has to do exactly not with divorce but with marriage and what it means. That's my challenge to the church." P. 53.

Part III is to be found in the essay **GLOBALIZATION GUIDANCE FROM OUR SWEDISH LUTHERAN (AUGUSTANA) HERITAGE** page 12 and following.

The 3 page outline for the presentation at Chautauqua 2006 entitled THE RELEVANCE OF OUR AUGUSTANA HERITAGE TO CRISES IN EDUCATION, MARRIAGE AND FAMILY, AND GLOBALIZATION has been sent for inclusion with these essays on the Augustana Heritage web site.

THE RELEVANCE OF OUR AUGUSTANA HERITAGE TO CRISES IN EDUCATION, MARRIAGE AND FAMILY, AND GLOBALIZATION

Part I. The Relevance of our Augustana Heritage to Crises in Education

- A. The Crises in Elementary and Secondary Education.
 - 1. The "Nation at Risk" in 1983 and now.
 - 2. The secularization of elementary and secondary education
 - a. A brief history of education in the U.S.

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- b. The rise of parochial education in the Augustana Synod
 - c. Everson vs. Board of Education and the rise of a wall of separation
 - d. The difficulties of teaching “about” religion
 - e. The dramatic growth of early childhood elementary education in ELCA
 - f. The cultural consequence of dropping religion from elementary & secondary education
- B. The Crises in Public and Private Higher Education
- 1. Major changes in higher education in the last half century
 - a. The change in ratios between public and private
 - b. The development of research and a. & m. in higher ed.
 - c. The effect of the growing wall of separation on higher ed. in public ed.
 - d. The effect of the wall of separation in private & particularly church-related private higher ed.
 - 2. The consequences of the counter-culture movement on public, private, and church-related private institutions of higher ed.
 - a. The source of the power of the counter-culture
 - b. The danger of throwing out the baby with the bathwater
 - c. The consequences in terms of curriculum and *in loco parentis*
 - 3. The countervailing efforts to “save” public, private & church-related higher ed. from total secularization.
 - a. The Augustana & LCA efforts
 - b. The National Council of Churches efforts
 - c. The efforts of foundations – eg. The Danforth Foundation
 - d. The ELCA efforts
- C. The Augustana Theological Heritage Vis -à-vis Embodying Colleges
- 1. The Augustana theology from which its role in higher ed. is to be understood
 - a. Justification by grace through faith and its implications
 - b. Christian vocation and the law
 - c. Eschatology and the eschaton
 - d. The Holy Trinity as image to embody
 - 2. The relevance of Swedish Lundensian theology & Lindbeck’s cultural/linguistic theology vis -à-vis their legitimacy as scientific disciplines
- D. Whither the Augustana Heritage and Its Embodying Educational Institutions
- 1. T.S. Eliot and the west’s existential crisis with Islamic terrorism
 - a. Eliot’s Idea of a Christian Society
 - b. Hart’s Smiling Through Cultural Catastrophe
 - 2. Three sources for evaluating the faithfulness of Augustana’s colleges
 - a. Burchaell’s five criteria
 - b. LECNA’s Hardwick/Day study
 - c. Institutional self definitions
 - 3. Insuring their future

Part II. The Relevance of Our Augustana Heritage to the Crises in Marriage and Family

- A. Setting the Context and Focusing the Heritage Response
 - 1. Five major changes in our society
 - 2. Changes in basic cultural assumptions
 - 3. Focusing our Heritage response
- B. What Luther Wrote and Accomplished on Marriage & Family in the 16th Century
 - 1. Luther’s writings on marriage and family
 - 2. The major changes he made

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- C. Luther Speaks to Five Current Issues on Marriage & Family & What Might be Deduced in the Sixth.
1. Cohabitation outside marriage
 - a. The nature and extent of the practice
 - b. How Luther would treat it
 - c. What the experts have to say
 2. The reduction in the meaning of marriage to a couple's relationship
 - a. How pop culture and the media treat such relationships
 - b. What Luther said about such relationships in the 16th century
 - c. What the experts say today
 3. Divorce
 - a. The extent of divorce in U.S. society
 - b. Luther's views on divorce
 - c. Expert analysis of the consequences
 4. Father's absence
 - a. The extent of father absence in the black community and in U.S. society
 - b. Luther's views on the father's role
 - c. Conflicting judgments from experts
 5. Family governances issues
 - a. Feminism, androgyny, conflicting views
 - b. Luther as a man of his age, a realist, & as advocate of equality before God
 - c. The authority of promise and the flexibility it provides
 6. Same sex unions
 - a. What happened in Sweden
 - b. Intuiting how Luther would deal with it
 - c. *Simul iustus et peccator* as the basis of ecclesiastic ontology & guidelines
 7. The elements of a Lutheran marriage & family program

Part III. The Relevance of the Augustana Heritage for Globalization

- A. The Augustana Heritage Vis-à-vis Resolving Conflicts Between Political Ideologies and Civilization
 1. Political ideologies
 - a. Luther's theological role in resolving the crisis in East Germany
 - b. Folke Bernadotte & Carl Lund-quist in the Middle East
 2. Clashes of civilization
 - a. Luther as a model for reform Islam
 - b. Swedish Lutheran and Augustana ambassadors of good will
- B. The Swedish Lutheran Augustana Heritage Vis-à-vis the Development of International Law and Moral Authority
 1. Luther on natural law & two kingdoms
 - a. Swedish Lutheran legal writings on the nature of political community, sovereignty & the rights & duties of citizens that were seminal in the development of western civil society
 - b. Hammarkjold on the authority of moral law, its universality & its linkage with a supranational law
 - c. German thinkers, Kant & Hegel, on the universal authority of the moral vis-à-vis Hobbes & the limitation of obligation to the social contract
 2. The categorical imperative is critical to
 - a. Dealing with WMD
 - b. Reversing environmental degradation
 - c. Peaceful cooperation
- C. The Swedish Lutheran/Augustana Heritage and Solving Economic Problems of the Second and Third World
 1. The Protestant ethic and the spirit of capitalism

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- a. Weber on Luther's concept of *beruf*
 - b. Luther on usury and economic regulation
 2. The current crises in economic globalization
 - a. Financial de-regulation and its winners
 - b. The "left behind"
 3. Sweden "the middle way" model
 - a. Hjalmar Hammarkjöld & Keynesianism
 - b. Gustav Cassell & economic monetary policy
 4. A typology for world development
 - a. Minimal - law & order only property rights & macro-stability
 - b. Intermediate – in addition addresses market failures from external factors eg. monopolies
 - c. Activist – adds coordination of market activity & some re-distribution of assets – only the activist approach brings major growth, stability & shared benefits
 - d. Luther's views were close to the activists
- D. Luther's Contribution to Human Rights
1. Luther as developer of the religio-political concept of toleration in 1541
 - a. He coined the word toleranz that coupled disapproval with forbearance
 - b. Faith a gift of God – non-believers must be tolerated
 2. Luther on freedom -
 - a. Isaiah Berlin in Four Essays on Liberty "The conception of freedom, for all its religious roots, is scarcely older, in its developed state, than the Renaissance or the Reformation"
 - b. "On the Liberty of the Christian" 1520
 - c. The priesthood of all believers and the communion of free men, equal before the law, with the right to elect/depose agents, magistrates & pastors
 3. Luther on privacy -
 - a. Luther's point-man Eisermann wrote it into the law
 - b. Private property approved on this basis
 - c. Important to the peace of the commonwealth