



What have the sermons of John Wesley ever done for us?

‘On Family Religion’: discipleship within the home

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Wesley’s sermon ‘On Family Religion’ points to the importance of the home as a sphere of discipleship and focuses particularly on the importance of parents in shaping the faith of their children. Drawing on Joshua 24:15, Wesley explores what it means to serve the Lord, who is included within the home, and how parents can help their children grow in faith. In an age when many parents fail to prioritise faith within the home, Wesley’s insights on family discipleship remain challenging and helpful.

DISCIPLESHIP • FAMILY • HOME • FAITH • CHILDREN

Introduction

A key influence on the faith of John Wesley was the religious formation he received at home. Raised by Samuel and Susanna Wesley, it was particularly the influence of Susanna that helped young John learn and know the faith.¹ Even if studies of Wesley often focus on the significance of the Aldersgate experience of 1738,² it was his family upbringing that laid the foundations of his faith.

It is not surprising, then, that John Wesley stressed the importance of faith formation within the home. The theme is particularly clear in three sermons published in 1783–1784, with the first of the three – ‘On Family Religion’ – providing a helpful entry point into Wesley’s view of faith within the home.³

The sermon provides a fine example of Wesley’s approach to what we might call ‘family discipleship’. For Wesley, parents are called by God to model and teach faith within the home, and when they do God blesses them in the endeavour. Although there is no guarantee that the children of Christians will retain their faith, the home is a crucial setting for helping faith to grow.

Such a theme is not unique to Wesley. Scripture itself attests to the influence of parents on children; Deuteronomy 6 calls parents to repeat and discuss the words of the Law with their children (Deuteronomy 6:6–9), while the apostle Paul encourages fathers to bring up children in the ‘discipline and instruction of the Lord’ (Ephesians 6:4b). Theologians and pastors throughout history have similarly encouraged parents to teach and model the Christian faith,⁴ and the theme was particularly prominent among the Puritans.⁵ It was the Puritans, in fact, who influenced Wesley’s thinking in this area.⁶

The significance of parents for the faith of their children is a theme, however, that is often missing in today’s Church. Many Christians do not intentionally pass on their faith, and some fail to see its importance. As a Church of England report noted in 2014, the majority of self-identified Anglicans see passing on the faith as a low priority compared to other values.⁷ The same seems to be true of Christians in other traditions.⁸ If parents are concerned about the faith of their children, they often look to the youth group rather than the home as the primary place of nurture.

But for Wesley, the family plays a key role in the faith of children. As Wesley points out at the beginning of the sermon, adopting ‘family religion’ will lead to church growth and the glorification of God. Without it, the religious revival he had witnessed would come to an end.⁹

Before we sketch out the argument of 'On Family Religion', it is worth noting that the sermon reveals the patriarchal side of John Wesley.¹⁰ As the sermon shows, Wesley sees the man as the head of the home, expects that many in his audience would have servants, and assumes that parents will play a key role in guiding their children's career choices and decisions about who to marry.

It would be a shame if this feature of the sermon distracts from Wesley's insights. Wesley offers an approach to faith within the home that rightly points to its importance in helping the next generation grow in love of God and love of neighbour. In light of the neglect of family faith in the contemporary Church, Wesley's words challenge parents and church leaders to reclaim the importance of teaching and modelling faith within the home.

Wesley takes as his sermon text a verse from Joshua 24, a verse that comes in the context of a covenant renewal ceremony. Within the ceremony, Joshua tells the story of how God has redeemed Israel before calling the Israelites to fear God and reject idolatry (24:1–15). Joshua ends with an invitation for the Israelites to choose whom they will serve, declaring, 'as for me and my household, we will serve the LORD' (24:15b).

'On Family Religion' is divided into three sections, each focusing on an element of this verse. In the first, Wesley explores in broad terms what it means to 'serve the Lord'. Such service involves not simply outward obedience but also inward devotion. Faith, love and obedience are all expressions of such service.

In the second section, Wesley explores who is included in the house that serves the Lord. As well as spouse and children, the household includes servants and visitors. All are invited to be shaped by the household ethos where God is the centre.

Finally, Wesley turns in the third section to discipleship in the home, or, as Wesley puts it, 'what can we do, that "we and our house" may "serve the Lord"'.¹¹ It is here that Wesley offers advice for parents, focusing particularly on how parents can teach and model faith to their children.

Serving the Lord

In the first section, Wesley offers an exposition of what it means to 'serve the Lord'. While brief, it draws on key themes of his theology and offers an inroad into Wesley's view of discipleship.

For Christians, serving the Lord involves – first and foremost – faith, believing in Jesus.¹² This is the ‘spiritual worship’ of God, the service that God sees as acceptable. Citing Galatians 2:20, Wesley echoes the Pauline and Reformation emphasis on faith as that which takes hold of God’s grace in Christ.¹³ Christians live by ‘faith in the Lord Jesus’, the one whose love is demonstrated in the cross.

Second, serving the Lord involves love, a love that comes in response to our realisation of God’s love for us (1 John 4:19). Such love for God is poured into our hearts by the Spirit (Romans 5:5), and, while it may vary, it remains a sign that we belong to God.

Third, love for God needs to be accompanied by love of neighbour. Echoing 1 John 4:19–20, Wesley sees love of God as leading to love of others. Those who serve God demonstrate love for ‘every child of man’, as well as loving other ‘children of God’. Wesley cites Colossians 3:12–13 as a description of such love, and quotes Ephesians 4:32 to highlight the need for forgiveness within the Church. As Collins notes, the freedom to love God and neighbour was for Wesley a positive expression of being saved by Christ.¹⁴

Finally, serving the Lord involves obedience, walking in the ways of God unveiled in the gospel. Such obedience comes from the heart, and is driven by a desire to avoid offence towards God or others. Wesley was against a faith simply of words, and points here to the importance of living out one’s faith.

In this terse description of serving God, Wesley shows his commitment to the double-love command of Jesus and highlights the importance of faith and obedience. Such a combination reflects the ‘theology of holy love’ that Collins sees as central to Wesley’s practical divinity.¹⁵ As the sermon develops, Wesley seeks to show that serving the Lord in such a way can be nurtured and modelled within the home.

What is the home?

In the second section of the sermon, Wesley explores who is included in the household that serves the Lord. While the ancient Israelite home included a vast extended family,¹⁶ and home today can still connote the nuclear family,¹⁷ home for Wesley includes parents and children but also servants. Although in other sermons he addresses both parents,¹⁸ here he instructs fathers (and husbands).

Wesley begins by encouraging husbands to care for their wives as those who claim their 'first and nearest attention'.¹⁹ Alluding to Ephesians 5:25–29, he calls husbands to follow the example of Christ for his Church, loving their wives sacrificially and helping them to walk 'unblameable in love'.²⁰ Marriage is not simply a space of mutual support, but a relationship through which each spouse can help the other to grow in love and faith.

Next, Wesley notes that children are a key part of the household. Wesley advises parents to see them as 'immortal spirits whom God hath for a time entrusted to your care, that you may train them up in all holiness, and fit them for the enjoyment of God in eternity'.²¹ Children are not just there for their own good, or for the good of their family or society, but are created by God to become like Christ and so enjoy God for ever. Since children belong to God, parents will give an account to God for the way they have dealt with them.

Wesley also suggests that the household includes servants, whom he describes as a 'kind of secondary children'.²² This includes indentured servants employed for a fixed period, hired servants employed for short-term work, and those employed for a day or a week. Although the language is paternalistic, Wesley's intent is that servants are included within the wider family. They too should be encouraged to 'serve the Lord', and so leave their employment with something far more precious than pay. The household also includes visitors; Christians should look out for the 'stranger within the gate' (Exodus 20:10) and invite such guests to serve God too, or at least help them avoid sinning against the Lord.

Serving the Lord at home

In the third section of his sermon, Wesley explores how heads of the household can enable all within their homes to 'serve the Lord'. Wesley has already described such service in terms of faith, love and obedience, and here begins to explore what family discipleship might look like.

Wesley begins by calling fathers to ensure that all within the home are restrained from 'outward sin', such as swearing, taking God's name in vain or Sabbath-breaking. Preventing such sins is a 'labour of love', and fathers should ensure that all within the home avoid them. This should even be true of visitors, who can be dismissed from the home if they continually undermine the family ethos. Servants too should be reprovved if they fail to avoid such outward sins, but should also be dismissed if they consistently refuse.

What about wives who continually yield to 'outward sins'? Here, Wesley refuses to allow that a husband can divorce his wife for such a reason, nor that he can strike her. Instead, husbands should seek to 'overcome by good', and persuade their wives through their example and their words. If nothing in the situation changes, husbands must 'suffer' the situation and persist in prayer, trusting all the while that God is at work. Again, it is noticeable that Wesley does not similarly instruct wives who have unbelieving husbands, a theme that the New Testament addresses (1 Corinthians 7:12–14; 1 Peter 3:1–6).

Children should also be 'restrained from evil' while young, with fathers persuading and advising their children on the right path. Fathers can also use 'correction', corporal punishment, as a last resort, but must do so without passion or harshness. Responding to those who claim fathers should never use such a means of discipline, Wesley refuses to allow a universal rule against it and appeals to Proverbs 13:24 and 19:18.²³

As well as preventing outward sin, fathers should instruct in the faith all within the home, wives and servants as well as children. At regular times, and especially on the Lord's Day, there should be time set apart for teaching 'all such knowledge as is necessary to salvation'.²⁴ Instruction should also embrace practices of the faith, with time given to the 'ordinances of God',²⁵ including reading, meditation and prayer. Families should also spend time praying together. For Wesley, God works through such means of grace in shaping his people, and establishing a rhythm of practices within the home is an important feature of Wesley's vision.

Instructing children requires special care, and so Wesley discusses the theme at some length. We can note in passing that Wesley was concerned throughout his life in helping parents in this task, including through preparing simple catechisms and guides for households.²⁶ Wesley's interest in schools and education also reflects his interest in childhood faith, with his educational philosophy underpinning his advice to teachers as well as parents.²⁷

Parents should instruct their children in the faith, 'early, plainly, frequently, and patiently'.²⁸ Parents should begin early because children are able to grasp key concepts about God as soon as they can reason. As they teach them to talk, parents should not hesitate to explain to children the 'best things, the things of God'.²⁹ But parents should also speak plainly, avoiding difficult words and connecting their learning about the world with the reality of God. As an example, Wesley suggests that as children feel the warmth of the sun and see its brightness they can be encouraged to think about the great God who made

it! Just as God has shown such love to them, so they too should love God. As they continue in such instruction, parents should pray that God's Spirit might open their children's hearts.

Parents need to continue in such instruction frequently. Just as the body needs food daily – indeed, three times a day – so the soul needs regular nourishment. Wesley calls parents to weave the reality of God into the everyday, echoing a theme found in Deuteronomy 6. And yet Wesley also recognises the difficulty of such a task, and so calls parents to persevere with patience. Instructing children in the faith can be tiresome and difficult, and so Wesley advises: 'You will find the absolute need of being endued with power from on high; without which, I am persuaded, none ever had, or will have, patience sufficient for the work.'³⁰ For parents who have been faithful in instructing their children but fail to see any 'fruit' from it, Wesley offers encouragement. He advises them to keep praying, knowing that the seed that has been planted will bear fruit in time.

What about parents whose children have embraced the faith, for whom the work of instruction has borne the 'fruit of the seed they have sown'?³¹ In such cases, Wesley suggests, there is still more to consider, including the education and future marriages of their children.

In terms of education, parents need to consider the school environment that would best help their children grow in faith. Parents should not send their sons to larger public schools, where peer pressure might lead them astray, but to small private schools where teachers are known for their faith.³² They should also avoid sending their daughters to boarding schools, and instead teach them at home or send them to a 'pious mistress' who can help to raise them in the faith.³³

Parents should also consider how best to please God in steering their sons to a future business. The first consideration should not be how their sons might best prosper, but rather how they might best 'love and serve God'.³⁴ If sending their sons to a 'master', parents should look for one who follows God. Helping young people become holy is more important than securing them a financially rewarding career.

Finally, Wesley calls parents to think with wisdom on guiding their son or daughter into marriage. In the eighteenth century, parents had far more sway in choosing partners for their children, and such decisions would often be made for financial reasons. Wesley advises against such a rationale for marriage,

suggesting that parents should find spouses for their children by aiming ‘simply at the glory of God, and the real happiness of your children, both in time and eternity.’³⁵

Wesley concludes his sermon by encouraging Christians that those who walk this path will be serving God rightly and that such labour will not be in vain. Christians should seek to shape their families to reflect Christ, knowing that God is with them in the task.

Learning from Wesley

What, then, should we make of such a sermon? How might Wesley’s advice, formed in the eighteenth-century context, shape our understanding of family life today?

There are, to be sure, some features of the sermon that we might question, and perhaps the most obvious – as noted in the introduction – is Wesley’s patriarchal view of the family. At least in this sermon, Wesley seems to assume that the father has the primary role in shaping the faith of his children, as well as making choices about their education and future career. This seems odd since Wesley’s own faith was shaped so decisively by his mother,³⁶ and – indeed – other sermons highlight the crucial role of mothers as well as fathers.³⁷ As recent research also shows, fathers and mothers are *both* important to the faith of young people.³⁸

Some readers might also accuse Wesley of promoting religious indoctrination. In the strongest form, some argue that bringing up a child in any faith is a form of ‘child abuse’, as Richard Dawkins infamously claimed.³⁹ In a softer version, others believe that children shouldn’t be taught what to believe or how to pray – even if it’s fine to bring them along to church – since the child’s own spiritual choices should be respected.⁴⁰

The charge of indoctrination, however, fails to recognise that we all bring up children with sets of beliefs and values that shape them, and so some sort of ‘indoctrination’ is inevitable, however we choose to parent.⁴¹ In fact, if parents do not teach and model the faith, such ‘neutral’ parenting communicates to their children that faith is not particularly important in the larger scheme of things. As a number of studies have also shown, raising children within a faith is in fact beneficial for their general well-being.⁴² While there are of course harmful ways of passing on faith, there are many approaches to teaching and

modelling faith that can help children encounter and experience the love of God for themselves.

What, then, are some of the key insights of Wesley's sermon? What can it 'do for us' today, particularly in its vision of discipleship within the home?

First, Wesley offers a model of discipleship that is holistic and transformational – and sees this as applying within the home too! For Wesley, serving the Lord involves faith in Christ and obedience to the call of God in the everyday, love of God *and* love of neighbour. Such ways of service are not just for the individual, but are also to be worked out within families.

Approaching the family through the lens of discipleship means that parents come to view their homes as habitats of holiness. If Christ is the greatest treasure, then parents will naturally seek to guide their children in the faith. Such an approach is driven by love of God and love of one's children, and recognises that God has a claim on the lives of our children greater than our own. By helping children turn to God, parents point them to the fullness of life.

We might also see here a reflection of Wesley's stress on social holiness, the recognition that community and relationships are key in becoming like Christ.⁴³ As David Field explains, Wesley sees social holiness as 'the concrete manifestation of "holiness of heart" in our relationships with other people through concrete acts which promote their good'.⁴⁴ Family is a setting in which such 'concrete acts' can take place as parents and children together seek to grow in love of God and love for one another.

Discipleship within the home knows that the Christ who is Lord of all is Lord of the family too. Our children are not our own, but belong to God. Such a perspective can lead Christian parents to reflect on how faith is embodied within the home, and to explore how the shape and rhythm of family life can reflect the values of the kingdom.

Second, and flowing from the first point, Wesley calls parents to pursue intentional practices that help their children grow in the faith. Parents are called under God to instruct and to teach their children the ways of God. Faith is not an unseen contagion passed by osmosis from one generation to another, but a body of teaching and a way of being that involves intentional instruction and modelling.⁴⁵ This does not disregard the need for young people to 'own' the faith for themselves, but it does point to the importance of creating a context where such faith can form.

While Wesley's own aim of worshipping together three times daily looks rather ambitious, incorporating regular practices of faith within the home remains crucial for helping children discover faith. God works through parents as they model faith, speak of God within the everyday, and lead worship. Such practices can become part of what James K. Smith calls the 'liturgies of home'. Homes should be shaped by the wider worship of the Church, with families pursuing practices and rhythms that reflect the kingdom of God.⁴⁶ Even if it is not always easy, this is part of what it means to be a disciple.

The impact of parents on the faith of their children is confirmed in a range of sociological studies. Such studies show that parents who model and teach faith within the home are more likely to pass it on to the next generation.⁴⁷ Significantly, the quality of the relationship between parents and children is also crucial. Mark notes the importance of 'close, affirming, and accepting relationships with both parents',⁴⁸ while Bengtson draws particular attention to the need for parental warmth (and the negative effects of emotionally distant fathers).⁴⁹

Discipleship within the home begins by making parents aware of their responsibility, and church leaders, including youth and family workers, have an important role in encouraging parents in this area. Rather than seeing themselves as the primary 'disciplers' of young people, children and youth workers need to work *with* parents to help young people grow in faith. This does not mean that children and youth workers are unimportant – far from it! – but parents need to reclaim the important role that they have in passing on the faith.⁵⁰

In pursuing such discipleship, families can speak of God within the everyday, serve together, and develop simple practices of prayer and Scripture reading.⁵¹ Churches can create opportunities for parents to talk about what faith looks like within their homes, perhaps sharing resources and practices that have been helpful. In an age when faith has sometimes skipped a generation, grandparents can also be encouraged to share faith appropriately in their relationships with grandchildren.⁵²

Third, Wesley shows that discipleship within the home includes issues of educational choice and vocational discernment. Wesley encourages parents to think about the long-term impact of where their child attends school, which vocation they pursue, and who they decide to marry. All such issues are part of discipleship.

While Christian parents may not follow Wesley's advice on where to send their children to school, they do need to think carefully about how children will be affected by the peers they meet there. If children have few Christian friends, parents need to consider how to embed them within other Christian relationships beyond the family, including through youth groups, church camps and mission events. Such friendships have a huge impact on the faith of young people.⁵³

Wesley also advised Christian parents to guide their children into a profession where they can best serve God. For Christian parents today, this may mean helping their children think through issues of vocation. Such a focus on vocation should not be limited to those entering ordination, or simply to adults, but is crucial for young people too. If children are encouraged to grow in a life of faith that focuses on love of God and love of others, they can begin to explore how that might shape their choices for the future as well as their service of God in the present.⁵⁴ Wesley's encouragement that parents seek out a godly master for their children entering business points to the importance of elders who can offer guidance to young people. While it will not be possible for young people to always have Christian employers, mentors are particularly helpful for young people as they grow in faith,⁵⁵ including for those beginning work.

Wesley's view on guiding children to a good future marriage partner reflects a context that differs greatly from today. Whereas parents would have had a significant role in helping their children choose a spouse in the eighteenth century, changing social conventions – including people marrying in later life – means that this is unlikely to be the case in twenty-first-century Britain. Nonetheless, Wesley's approach recognises that those we marry – and before that, those we date – significantly shape our lives. Christian parents can guide their children to think about future partners with wisdom and an eye to the kingdom.⁵⁶

Finally, Wesley encourages a view of the home as missiologically open to the outside world. As we saw earlier, Wesley saw the 'home' as including both servants and visitors, and encourages families to see how both could be drawn into the ethos of the Christian family. Those within the home offer instruction in the Christian faith to all within its walls, and encourage all within the home to avoid 'outward sin'.

Wesley's more expansive sense of family challenges the tendency towards insularity within the home, a particular temptation for modern-day families. For Wesley, the household is not confined to those in the nuclear family, but

includes those whom the Lord brings across its threshold. While we may cringe at Wesley's description of servants as 'secondary children', the challenge of making all who are with us feel at home surely remains a good one.

Wesley also calls households to be places where instruction in faith takes place. Today, Christian households might consider what it means to be a place where people can learn something of God, whether through example or conversation or the hospitality offered. As Rodney Clapp has argued, Christian homes should see themselves as 'mission bases' for God's work in the world, living together in the light of the coming kingdom.⁵⁷

Wesley also challenges us to consider the importance of establishing a Christian ethos within the home. While we may react against imposing a moral code on our guests, the examples of outward sins that Wesley considers – Sabbath-breaking, swearing and blasphemy – are those that particularly undermine the vision and values of a Christian household.⁵⁸ In today's context, Christian parents might consider how to retain the key values of their home as others come into its orbit. Since technology now allows 'virtual guests' to enter the home, Christian parents need to consider how best to manage technological innovations in ways that reflect the values of the kingdom.⁵⁹

Conclusion

In an age where the majority of parents wish their children to be happy and successful, Wesley's vision of family discipleship is a challenge to check our priorities. Is the happiness we seek for our children the happiness of holiness or the happiness of pleasure?⁶⁰ And is the success we seek for our children growth in character and grace or achieving certain grades or a coveted career?

For Wesley, children are entrusted to us by God, and our calling is to help them trust Christ and to grow in love of God and neighbour. 'On Family Religion' demonstrates that Wesley's view of social holiness extends even to the home. We are shaped to be like Christ in the company of others, including in the company of our children.

As the church faces decline in numbers, it is helpful to be reminded that Wesley saw the recovery of 'family religion' as a key means of its renewal. Alongside mission and evangelism, church leaders need to emphasise again the role of parents in passing on the faith. Just as Jesus blessed the children brought to him (Mark 10:13–16), so too our children are blessed when we point them to the Saviour – in our homes as well as our churches.

Notes

1. On this point, see Newton 2002, pp. 11, 15.
2. The significance of which continues to be debated; Lancaster 2010, pp. 304–306.
3. The other two sermons are 'On the Education of Children' and 'On Obedience to Parents'. For an exposition of the three sermons, see Oden 2012, Kindle location 2677–3489.
4. For a helpful discussion of the biblical and historical emphasis on 'family religion', see Jones and Stinson 2011.
5. On the importance of faith within the home within Puritanism, see Wakefield 1957, pp. 55–65.
6. Wesley included key Puritan treatments of the theme within his 'Christian Library', as Outler notes in Wesley 1985, p. 333. The influence of the Puritans on John Wesley's mother Susanna, and so their influence on John, is argued by Newton 2002.
7. See Voas and Watt 2014, p. 18.
8. See Mark 2016, pp. 27–28.
9. Wesley, 'On Family Religion', pp. 334–335.
10. This, of course, reflects Wesley's historical context, although it should be noted that – in other respects – Wesley undermined patriarchy in the roles he gave to women within the early Methodist Societies. See English 1994, pp. 26–33.
11. Wesley, 'On Family Religion', p. 336.
12. Wesley, 'On Family Religion', p. 336.
13. For Wesley's understanding of faith, see Maddox 1994, pp. 172–176.
14. Collins 2007, pp. 226–228. See also Collins' quotation from Wesley's sermon 'On Zeal' that demonstrates the centrality of love for Wesley, p. 227.
15. Collins 2007.
16. See Block 2003, pp. 35–40.
17. The nuclear family still has a hold on the popular imagination, even though the reality of many homes today is very different. See The Methodist Church 2017, pp. 8–10.
18. See Wesley, 'On the Education of Children'. Wesley also addresses children in 'On Obeying Parents'.
19. Wesley, 'On Family Religion', p. 337.
20. Wesley, 'On Family Religion', p. 337.
21. Wesley, 'On Family Religion', p. 337.
22. Wesley, 'On Family Religion', p. 338.
23. Note that some commentators on these texts today would point to the significance of the *principle* of discipline rather than the *means* of discipline, Longman III 2002, pp. 56–57.
24. Wesley, 'On Family Religion', p. 340.
25. The 'ordinances of God' here is equivalent to the 'means of grace'. Wesley is interested in shaping the *practices* of people within the household as well as their beliefs.

26. See Maddox 1994, pp. 225–227. See, for example, Wesley’s sermon, ‘On the Education of Children’.
27. For a guide to Wesley’s approach to education, see Towns 1970.
28. Wesley, ‘On Family Religion’, p. 340.
29. Wesley, ‘On Family Religion’, p. 340.
30. Wesley, ‘On Family Religion’, p. 342.
31. Wesley, ‘On Family Religion’, p. 342.
32. For the variety of schools in the eighteenth century, see Marquardt 1992, pp. 49–51. ‘Public schools’ refer to private, fee-paying schools that would only be affordable to well-off families.
33. Such private schools were found in a range of rural areas, and Wesley explains that such mistresses can be found in several locations.
34. Wesley, ‘On Family Religion’, p. 344.
35. Wesley, ‘On Family Religion’, p. 345.
36. Newton 2002, pp. 97–129.
37. In his sermon ‘On the Education of Children’, for instance, Wesley notes the important role that mothers have in speaking with their young children about God.
38. Mark 2016, p. 12.
39. See Dawkins 2006, pp. 349–387.
40. See Mark’s comments on the value given today to the autonomy of young people; Mark 2016, p. 27.
41. Mark 2016, pp. 17–18.
42. Mark 2016, pp. 18–19.
43. For a brief ‘theology of relationships’ that defends this point, see Emery-Wright and Mackenzie 2017, pp. 1–11.
44. Field 2015, p. 183.
45. On the importance of *teaching* the faith to teenagers, see Smith with Denton 2005, p. 267.
46. Smith 2016, pp. 111–136. Smith explores a range of practices for households, and helpfully suggests that families carry out an audit of daily routines to explore how they are shaped by them.
47. See the important work of Bengtson with Putney and Harris 2013, pp. 165–83. For a summary of other significant studies, see Mark 2016, pp. 43–60.
48. Mark 2016, p. 59.
49. Bengtson with Putney and Harris 2013, pp. 71–98.
50. For an exploration of how youth leaders can work alongside parents and others within the church, see Emery-Wright and Mackenzie 2017, pp. 115–116.
51. There are now a range of resources available in this area. For two recent examples, see Mackenzie and Crispin 2016, and Turner 2010. See also the new ‘Parenting for Faith’ website developed by Bible Reading Fellowship: www.parentingforfaith.org.
52. For the importance of grandparents, see Bengtson with Putney and Harris 2013, pp. 99–112.
53. See Emery-Wright and Mackenzie 2017, pp. 47–57.

54. For the importance of helping young people grow in the skill of discernment, see White 2005.
55. Emery-Wright and Mackenzie 2017, pp. 58–70.
56. For a helpful discussion of marriage as a relationship of 'covenantal fidelity' for the sake of the kingdom, see Clapp 1993, pp. 114–132.
57. Clapp 1993, pp. 149–69.
58. While many Christians do not 'keep Sabbath' in the way that Wesley recommended, it is interesting to note the call by some writers to reclaim Sabbath for churches and families. For one example, see Dawn 1989.
59. For a superb recent guide on this issue, see Crouch 2017. Among his many helpful suggestions, Crouch suggests that the 'Sabbath principle' might apply to technology too, pp. 83–106.
60. For the link in Wesley between happiness and holiness, and the influence of Peter Böhler on this, see Collins 2007, pp. 199–200.

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