

Grace-Based Family Ministry

The spiritual health of our churches and their greater impact in our communities rests far more with what's happening in our church families during the week than with what we do on Sundays. All pastors desire to have spiritually healthy families, but often struggle with substantively making that happen through the priorities, pulpit, programming and application of church resources (budget). In this concluding session, we'll learn how to make grace-based relationships the DNA of the church staff and volunteers and how to create a culture of God's grace within your church that equips couples and parents to take Jesus home with confidence. We'll map out a family ministry strategy that can work regardless of the size of your church or the sophistication of its staff. We'll conclude by discussing how to tailor the grace-based theology of families to your personal family and then to the work God has called you to carry out.

Tim Kimmel is the founder and Executive Director of Family Matters, whose goal is to see families transformed by God's grace into instruments of reformation and restoration. Tim develops resources for families and churches and conducts conferences throughout the world on the unique challenges facing today's families. He has authored many books, including: *Grace Based Parenting*, *Raising Kids for True Greatness*, *Little House on the Freeway*, *Connecting Church and Home*, and *Grace Filled Marriage*. Tim and his wife Darcy count their role as parents and grandparents as one of their greatest joys. God has blessed them with four children, their children's spouses, and a growing number of grandkids. Tim is a graduate of Bryan College (BA), Dallas Theological Seminary (Th.M.), and Western Seminary (D.Min.).

Kory Schuknecht is one of the founding board members of Family Matters and has been leading the charge for spiritually strong families for over three decades. He continues to advocate for this powerful message through personal relationships and through the leadership he provides as the Pastor of Family Ministry at Scottsdale Bible Church; a church of more than 7000 congregants in metropolitan Phoenix. There he has served as an elder for much of the past thirty years as well as teaching in the Children's Ministry and Student Ministry. Kory and his wife Gail teamed with Tim and Darcy Kimmel to teach and disciple 30 young couples (for thirteen years) in the grace-based model of relationships. Kory and Gail have four children who bless them with their own expanding families. He has a Bachelor of Science in Business from Arizona State University.

1. God's love is best _____ through spiritually thriving families.

Then God said, "Let us make man in our image, after our likeness ... Gen.1:26 ... Then the LORD God said, "It is not good that the man should be alone; I will make him a helper fit for him." ... Gen. 2:18 ... And God blessed them. And God said to them, "Be fruitful and multiply ... Gen. 1:28a ... fill the earth and subdue it, and have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the heavens and over every living thing that moves on the earth."

Gen. 1 and 2 (various passages)

Family: the domestic church----Church: a gathering of domestic churches

Thriving families have this in common – parents are deliberately trying to lead their kids spiritually and they're outwardly focused.

2. The gospel is best illustrated through churches and homes that reflect God's _____.

*I can't stand your religious meetings. I'm fed up with your conferences and conventions. I want nothing to do with your religion projects, your pretentious slogans and goals. I'm sick of your fund-raising schemes, your public relations and image making. I've had all I can take of your noisy ego-music. When was the last time you sang to me? Do you know what I want? I want justice—oceans of it. I want fairness—rivers of it. That's what I want. That's all I want. **Amos 5:21-24 (MSG)***

- God's grace is supposed to be the spiritual climate control system of the relationships within our families and our churches—whether we want to acknowledge it or not.
- God is a God of relationship. Our Trinitarian understanding of God is vital to grasping the priority of God's grace when it comes to how we operate within our churches and families. **Ephesians 4:1-3**

3. God's love is best _____ through a well-thought through strategy that is guided by God's _____ and tempered by his _____.

*And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we have seen his glory, glory as of the only Son from the Father, full of grace and truth. **John 1:14**
But grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. To him be the glory both now and to the day of eternity. **2 Peter 3:18***

- **Tactical, Strategic, Philosophical Thinkers**
Without grace being deliberately put in the position of defining how we do what we do or how we treat each other, legalism, sin management, performance based Christianity, heavy handed high control, and toxic fear based parenting can get a strong footing and sabotage all of our efforts.
- **Grace-Based Model of Relationships**

4. The gospel is best _____ when churches and families operate in _____.

Church and family are supposed to be dancing together.

Connecting Church and Home: A Grace-Based Partnership



- Baby dedication (for some churches, it may be infant baptism).
- Giving children a clear sense of blessing.
- Educating and preparing children in the area of love, sex, and honor (age 5 and up).
- Dialing in on a child’s unique personality bent (age 5 and up).
- Training children in financial stewardship.
- Marking a rite of passage (age 13).
- Identifying spiritual giftedness.
- Equipping them to be deliberate lights in their world (evangelism).
- Providing a ceremony or some way to mark their preparation for launch into adulthood (age 16).
- Putting their future marriage into perspective.
- Preparing them to flourish spiritually in college.
- Training in Grandparenting.