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Maintaining Balance and Wellbeing in Families

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Maintaining Balance and Wellbeing in Families



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Dear [family], I pray you may enjoy good health and that all may go well with you, even as your soul is getting along well.” 3 John 2

Times and seasons have changed, and so have the family’s structure, roles and functions. From an agrarian to an overly technologically saturated society, the family unit has moved through changes that affect how it functions. Some of these changes have been positive, such as increased opportunities for education and career growth, while others have been negative, contributing to the erosion of traditional family values. As the core unit, families shape society even as they are shaped by it.

Before the invention of the clock, it was the norm for families in agrarian society to experience quality time together and adequate rest. With no “artificial time” to dictate their schedule, they were awakened to daily activities with the sun’s rising and went to bed with its setting. This natural rhythm allowed for a sanctity of family quality time, a period when the family could bond, share experiences, and

strengthen their relationships. With the demand for greater productivity, the augmented invention of the lightbulb contributed to additional changes to the rhythm of family life. Ironically, the invention of the clock and the lightbulb contributed to greater productivity but, at the same time, altered the trajectory of sacred family time.

With the invention of smartphones, social media and ongoing updated sophisticated technology, there is increased polarization in family relationships and communication. More and more, families are spending less time engaging

in activities that enhance cohesiveness and strengthen bonds between them.

The sparsity of time and activities that contribute to healthier functionality within the family creates a dire need for more intentionality in the approach to family ministry. While we do not aspire to return to life before the invention of the clock and the lightbulb, or even the smartphone for that matter, we desire to have healthier and more functional families, as healthy and functional families contribute to the well-being of the church and society.

Amidst life’s current demands, families can foster healthier and more functional communication and relationships by prioritizing quality time with one another. Individuals can dedicate specific times for family activities such as mealtimes, worship, game nights and outdoor activities without the interruption of technology. Quality time promotes healthy communication and increases cohesiveness and attachment.

It is also essential to create balance and boundaries between work time and family time, allotting and honoring specific time for family togetherness. It is important not to have family time interrupted by work demands and to avoid frequent needs to cancel family time to fulfill work assignments.

Finally, family members can encourage and empower one another toward a healthy lifestyle individually or as a group beyond the home. They can plug into and utilize external resources (e.g., lifestyle centers, support groups [marriage enrichment, parenting or other special interests], counseling or coaching services). ■

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