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**EARLY PASTORAL THEOLOGY: PATRISTIC FAMILY COUNSELING STRUCTURES
WITHIN FIRST AND SECOND CENTURY CHRISTIANITY**

ACADEMISCH PROEFSCHRIFT

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de Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam,
op gezag van de rector magnificus
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door

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geboren te Virginia, Verenigde Staten

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Abstract

This thesis explores the concept of care and counsel for the family within the early Christian movement of the first and second centuries. Following an introduction into the placement of the inquiry within the broader scholarly scene, methodology, and scope of research, a background into 'family' within the broader Greco-Roman culture of the period is detailed. Next, early Christian sources from the first and second century are examined with a view towards 'family' and familial instruction. Then, two subsequent chapters are given where the larger Greco-Roman rhetorical structure for counsel and care known as psychagogy (soul guidance) is examined followed by a description of the themes of psychagogic content related to family observed within the Christian literature of the period. "Paraenetic-psychagogy" becomes a particular paradigm coined within the thesis for placing the structure of Christian counsel and care for the family.

First, the broader data regarding family within the Greco-Roman culture of the period is given alongside the data available regarding Christian expectations for family. Secondly, forms of rhetoric used in giving counsel are examined wherein concepts like paraenesis, protrepsis, and psychagogy are detailed. Thirdly, the pastoral care discussions are demonstrated, one example being that of Ignatius. Lastly, early Christian familial psychagogy is compared to that of contemporary Stoic philosopher Musonius Rufus wherein a divergence of telos is noted within the psychagogy. These all serve as a broader background upon which a detailed examination of the early Christian primary source documents can occur. In the end, the focus will be on the ideals or expectations of the various Christian writers in the sources versus a claim of fact about what all supposed Christian households definitively looked like.

Ultimately, the thesis argues that Christian care for the family was a part of the larger psychagogic enterprise. This argument is augmented by the conclusion that this psychagogy had a theocentric trajectory which dominated the paraenesis and in which the paraenesis was founded; it had a telos shaped by an eschatological reality versus the temporal aspects of human relationships, and as such it was given within the typical relational structures of the culture and focused on the character of the Christian family without a call to change those larger relational structures.

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place among the communion of Saints and the forgiveness of sins through the work of the Lord Jesus Christ. A scholar is still a sinner in need of a Savior...

τουτου χαριν καμπω τα γονατα μου προς τον πατερα του κυριου ημων ιησου χριστου
εξ ου πασα πατρια εν ουρανοις και επι γης ονομαζεται

(Ephesians 3:14-15)

Chapter 1

Introduction

The following thesis is a focused study on the instructions and ideals of specific writers within first and second century early Christianity regarding how Christians were to engage and view the familial structure and relationships within which they lived. “Familial structure and relationships” are those human to human connections found by blood, similar household, or other relationship that the larger culture deemed as familial.¹ While the larger Greco-Roman family structures, households and human familial relationships are an initial part of the study in order to gain context, the particular research inquiry of this thesis is to understand what the writers of the extant first and second century Christian sources envisaged regarding how early Christians should view their own households, familial structures and family relationships.² Thus, it is a social history of an aspect of Christianity—a social history detailing pastoral guidance regarding the family within the Christian movement through what can be observed from the extant sources. “Pastoral” here simply indicates a leading, guiding, and caring role undertaken by some within the movement. Therefore, this research will focus more on the vision the early writers had for how a Christian was to consider the household and family role(s) within which he or she was embedded, versus a description of what a family that was largely Christian may have looked like.

Early Christians would have had various involvements within their own households and familial relationships. These structures will be detailed and defined later in the background chapter of this thesis, but include concepts such as: relational roles (paternal, maternal, child, and slave), the idea of ‘family’ as well as ‘household,’ household codes (*Haustafeln*), sexual expression, child rearing and training. Although they were a part of the Christian movement, individual Christians would have been socially embedded within larger family and household structures (sometimes as the only Christian adherent, and in other cases, as the leader of the household). Like other philosophical and religious movements of the day, early Christianity contained instruction for how its adherents should seek to exist within their households, familial, and sexual relationships. It is this instruction, targeting one area (the household and familial structures), that I analyze to answer the larger question of the thesis. The pastoral involvement of the early Christian writers within the extant Christian literature will be researched to see what structures and approaches were employed regarding the treatment of the topic of family.

Background data on the larger Roman family and household of the first two centuries is given early in the thesis to provide an understanding of the Roman context of the time period. Then, this background from the current secondary literature will be combined with a focused inquiry into the early Christian writings of the period to research how ‘family’ was addressed in early pastoral literature. The extant documents of early Christianity within the first and second centuries are examined, to view what assertions may be made regarding how early pastoral guidance and care was structured. While the primary sources will be the main research focus, research of secondary sources will include the households and families of early Christians, as well as sources focusing on the early history of pastoral care and instruction. Then, considering the larger Greco-Roman rhetorical structures of the period used for moral exhortation as a backdrop, a set of conclusions will be given which answer the research question regarding how

¹ Moxnes in his groundbreaking work speaks to undertaking the study of early Christian families with the approaches of “the study of households, family in its relation to kinship, and family as a group established by marriage.” It is these general areas that this research will undertake as it relates to “family.” See: Halvor Moxnes, *Constructing Early Christian Families: Family as Social Reality and Metaphor* (United Kingdom: Taylor & Francis, 2002), 18.

² Chapter two provides a secondary literature review, which details information regarding various familial terms, relationships, and structures.

the writers within the early Christian stream envisioned the care of families within the early Christian context. The primary sources considered will be those of the early Christian writers, and while primary sources from non-Christian outlets will also be utilized, the main analysis of primary source material will be those sources of the early Christian movement. Therefore, the main method for research is not comparing sources from two separate movements (Christian and non-Christian), but specific analysis of the Christian sources with the larger Greco-Roman background in view. This will allow for the research to proceed in a manner that seeks to avoid the sources analyzed being incomparable. The ultimate focus of the thesis is to ascertain the vision of the early Christian writers for how family and household were to be approached. Within this thesis, the focus is on the vision of the authors of particular writings for how a Christian was to undertake his or her role within his or her own household and family relationships. Larger claims of what Christian families looked like in every instance are beyond the scope of this thesis. Rather, the focus is specifically on what the writers of various texts envisioned for how a Christian adherent was to undertake his or her role(s) within their own household. The aim of this thesis is on the provision of historical research to further the knowledge base of what is currently in the scholarly literature.

The reason for undertaking this project is that there is a significant gap in the literature of the field regarding the specific application of care to the family within early Christianity. While research of the 'family' within Early Christian Studies has been a burgeoning field within the last few decades,³ there is no real targeted research into the question of how pastoral care and counsel in the area of 'family' may have been constructed. There has been recent research into certain aspects of pastoral guidance, 'paraenesis,' and the philosophic forms of Paul (i.e. Malherbe, 1987 and Glad, 1995) and of Augustine in the fourth century (i.e. Kolbet, 2010), but within the scholarly literature, no one to date has answered the question of the nature of counsel to Christians regarding the family, the content of such care, nor the methods employed to offer this care particularly within the first and second century. These questions along with a look at the *telos* of such instruction are examined within this thesis.

In the opening paragraph of their recent volume on Early Christian studies, Harvey and Hunter write:

“Recent decades have seen an explosion of research in the area of ‘early Christian studies’...Early Christian studies examines the history, literature, thought, practices, and material culture of the Christian religion in late antiquity (c. 100-600CE). Once pursued primarily as a sub-specialty within Ecclesiastical History or Theology (that is, as ‘Patristics’), the study of early Christianity has recently emerged as a distinctive and fully interdisciplinary endeavor in its own right, embracing the fields of Classics, Ancient History, Theology, Religious Studies, Art History, and Archaeology, among others.”⁴

Given the expanding field of early Christian studies, various topics of interest have been examined which are larger than the evaluation of theological or ecclesial historical studies alone. There is a necessity to give particular attention to various areas of pastoral guidance and counsel

³ Examples of these would be the works compiled by (Moxnes, *Constructing Early Christian Families*, 1997) with particular insights into ‘*domus*’, ‘*oikos*’ and ‘*familia*’, (Dixon, *The Roman Family*, 1992) with particular focus on ‘*paterfamilias*’, and (Balch and Osiek, *Early Christian Families*, 2003), which provide focused research into the Roman family and the early Christian family.

⁴ Susan Ashbrook Harvey and David G. Hunter, eds., *The Oxford Handbook of Early Christian Studies* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2008), 1.

within a particular period of early Christianity; this thesis will focus on the counsel given to the Christian regarding one particular area.

The research will involve the topic of family being considered alongside the area of ‘psychagogy’ (soul guidance), used within the period, as a philosophic pattern of offering counsel. Much has been written regarding the pastoral care given by Paul for instance, with Malherbe being a chief example.⁵ Such work is a helpful point of departure for this thesis given Malherbe studies the guidance of the Christian adherent within the period and its connections to philosophic forms of the day. There is discussion regarding Paul and his use of the philosophic tradition of care, namely ‘psychagogy’, as well as brief reference to this theme occurring in New Testament writings.⁶ This valuable aid to the research has provided an in-depth look at the connections and similarities of Paul with the larger philosophic tradition of care. This thesis will consider philosophic forms (with a focus on psychagogy⁷) and the interplay between instruction regarding family and methods of instruction. Specifically, the background chapter on the larger Greco-Roman family within the thesis will give way in subsequent chapters to a detailed discussion of traditions of care from the period seen within the primary sources. The resulting thesis is that family counsel and care was envisioned by many of the early Christian writers to be part of the Christian psychagogical enterprise, namely, that instructions to Christians on how to participate within their own family structures was ultimately a part of the larger soul care endeavor. Whether all early Christian family members followed the counsel and instructions given or patterned their lives on that counsel is another matter and while mentioned in the thesis, cannot be proved by this research inquiry alone.

Ultimately, the research will provide conclusions regarding what the writers of the extant primary sources envisioned in the care of the family. This is not to conclude that we can know how every Christian family within early Christianity operated. Rather, in examining the literature as it mentions family and household structures, themes and patterns will emerge which help in understanding the vision for family care within the leadership of the early Christian stream. A few background areas and parameters to the research must now be addressed.

1.2. A Particular Stream within Early Christianity

This thesis focuses on one particular body of writings within early Christianity. The reason for this is both to keep the thesis narrow in scope so that greater depth can be achieved, but also to focus on a particular group within the first and second century Christian milieu. Within early Christian studies, there have been a variety of theories that have emerged since the late 1800s, and particularly since the groundbreaking work of Walter Bauer in his 1932 monograph *Rechtgläubigkeit und Ketzerei im ältesten Christentum*. Bauer’s thesis states that there were varying forms of Christianity, particularly within the first few centuries of Christianity, which were not always in agreement and that developed differently in various geographical locations.⁸

⁵ “Pastoral Care” is a term that Malherbe uses and encompasses the guidance and counsel given from leaders within Christianity to adherents/those under their leadership. See: Abraham J. Malherbe, *Paul and the Thessalonians: The Philosophic Tradition of Pastoral Care* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1987). Also: Clarence Glad, *Paul and Philodemus: Adaptability in Epicurean and Early Christian Psychagogy* (Leiden: Brill, 1995).

⁶ See: John S. Kloppenborg, “James 1:2–15 and Hellenistic Psychagogy,” *Novum Testamentum* 52 (2010): 37-71.

⁷ These will be further discussed and defined later in the thesis, and while focusing on ‘psychagogy’ will also involve a treatment of ‘parenesis’ and ‘protrepsis.’

⁸ Karen L. King, “Which Early Christianity?,” in *The Oxford Handbook of Early Christian Studies*, eds. Susan Ashbrook Harvey and David G. Hunter (Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press, 2008), 69.

His work produced a shift in Early Christian and New Testament studies creating new emphases that sought to understand the various movements within Christianity and the potential of diversity that may have existed.⁹ Various offshoot works since his monograph have sought to propose changes, further developments or refinings of his initial thesis.¹⁰

I will focus the primary source research on one set of writings within a particular period of early Christianity. Within the first and second century, this body of sources includes the *Apostolic Fathers* corpus, and a few of the writers following chronologically after that early body of writings. In large measure, the scholarly-asserted date of writing dictated the selection of the writings. These writings have been given various names such as “proto-orthodox” or “early catholic.”¹¹ Some have utilized the term “proto-orthodox” to delineate bodies of primary source writings that relate to one another.¹² Although this is a debate that continues and is developing, the term is generally understood by most as containing a clear body of literature. Brakke notes this consensus when discussing Irenaeus’ argument that there was a single consistent Christian stream when he says, “To be sure, few scholars would now tell the story in precisely Irenaeus’ terms. Most recognize that there was no single church from which Gnostic heretics deviated. Rather, Christian communities were diverse from the start, and it is probable that in some regions forms of Christianity that would later be labeled ‘heresies’ pre-dated those that might be identified as ‘proto-orthodox.’”¹³ Thus the primary sources I selected and analyzed were based on the criteria that they are considered a part of the recognizable early Christian movement (versus its various rival versions such as Docetism, Gnosticism, etc.), that they were a part of the chronological timeline of the first and second century, and if they are mentioned in subsequent chapters, it is because they contain family related references. Ultimately, I chose a particular early Christian stream or body of literature that is recognized by a general category (proto-orthodox) in the scholarly literature.

Lewis Ayres provides a summary of current movements in the issue of early Christian classification which, while not the focus of this research, does provide a helpful description of the grouping of texts within the first and second century corpus. He writes: “I suggest that there is one late second-century tradition that can fairly claim close family connections with themes that seem fundamental to our earliest Christian texts...”¹⁴ In slight variation, Hurtado writes,

⁹ In addition to King, Bingham gives a helpful summary of this debate within the last century. See: D. Jeffrey Bingham, “Development and Diversity in Early Christianity,” *JETS* 49/1 (2006): 45-66.

¹⁰ See for instance Hurtado’s interaction and disagreement with the James Robinson and Helmut Koester theories. He does not disagree with diversity within the early movement of Christianity, but rather with the considerations of ‘trajectories.’ See: Larry Hurtado, “Interactive Diversity: A Proposed Model for Christian Origins,” *JTS, NEW SERIES* 64/2 (2013): 445-462; Or see: Larry Hurtado, *Lord Jesus Christ: Devotion to Jesus in Earliest Christianity* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2003), 520-521.

¹¹ Helpful definitions of terms are found here: Delbert Burkett, *An Introduction to the New Testament and the Origins of Christianity*, Second edition (Cambridge UK: Cambridge University Press, 2019), 437.

¹² See for instance: B.D. Ehrman, *Lost Christianities: The Battles for Scripture and the Faiths We Never Knew* (Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press, 2003).

¹³ See: David Brakke, “Self-differentiation among Christian groups: the Gnostics and their opponents,” in *The Cambridge History of Christianity: Volume 1: Origins to Constantine*, eds. Margaret M. Mitchell and Frances M. Young (Cambridge, U.K.: Cambridge University Press, 2006), 245-260.

¹⁴ Lewis Ayres, “Continuity and Change in Christianity,” in *Christianity in the Second Century: Themes and Developments*, eds. James Carleton Paget and Judith Lieu (Cambridge, U.K.: Cambridge University Press, 2017), 119. Other anthologies of early writings list sources within

“...second-century proto-orthodox Christianity was not a monolithic entity, but instead comprised an interesting variety in expressions and practices. Also, although there are lines of development and continuity between the two, proto-orthodoxy does not equate with the fully developed orthodoxy of the fourth century and thereafter, with its fixed creeds, established hierarchy, and coercive power to suppress “heresy.””¹⁵ Other scholars like Lieu, Marksches and Vinzent make their own amendments to the thesis and the scholarly discussion.¹⁶

I do not provide a section within this thesis detailing the arguments stemming from the debates of Bauer and others regarding a singularity vs. a plurality of “early Christianities,” but will mention my own familiarity with the debate here simply to address the grouping of primary source texts utilized in this thesis.¹⁷ This thesis will continue to utilize the terms in order to demarcate a stream of literature and not because the question of the nature of “proto-orthodoxy” is settled.¹⁸ Nor does their usage exclude the contributions of others with alternative views regarding whether there was a clearly shared Christian tradition and message from the beginning. My mention of this development is only to show an awareness of the scholarly discussion and not to make an argument against the more traditional view that there was one continuous Christianity—a faith once for all delivered unto the saints.

the period, utilizing the “plurality” of “Christianities” idea. See for instance: Bart Ehrman, *After the New Testament: 100-300CE* (Oxford, U.K., Oxford University Press, 2015.); Josef Lössl, *The Early Church: History and Memory* (London: T&T Clark, 2010), 93-117.

¹⁵ Hurtado, *Lord Jesus Christ*, 563.

¹⁶ See Lieu who discusses the difficulty of distinguishing early Christianity from the Jewish systems: Judith Lieu, “Self-definition vis-à-vis the Jewish Matrix,” in *The Cambridge History of Christianity, Volume 1: Origins to Constantine*, eds. Margaret M. Mitchell and Frances M. Young (Cambridge, UK: 2006), 214-229. Also see Vinzent who argues that “...Rome absorbed many cross-currents from around the early Christian world, and, far from itself generating or disseminating a specific theology, the Roman church was fragmented and subject to repeated internal upheavals in the first three centuries. Time and again, this church found itself affected by controversies imported by immigrants from around the empire. This seems, generally speaking, a truer characterization than Walter Bauer’s much discussed thesis that originally heretical forms of Christianity elsewhere were brought into line by Rome seeking to impose its authority on other Christian communities.” Markus Vinzent, “Rome,” in *The Cambridge History of Christianity, Volume 1: Origins to Constantine*, eds. Margaret M. Mitchell and Frances M. Young (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2006), 397-412. For a survey of various views within the research on streams within the second century, see: Judith Lieu, “Modelling the Second Century as the Age of the Laboratory,” in *Christianity in the Second Century: Themes and Developments*, eds. James Carleton Paget and Judith Lieu (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2017), 294-308. See also: Christoph Marksches, *Between Two Worlds: Structures of Early Christianity*, trans. John Bowden (London: SCM Press, 1999), 1-38.

¹⁷ Frances Young, for instance, provides a helpful discussion on the issue of classifying early Christian writings: Frances Young, “Introduction: the literary culture of the earliest Christianity,” in *The Cambridge History of Early Christian Literature* eds. Frances Young, Lewis Ayres and Andrew Louth, (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2004), 5-10. See also: Paget and Lieu, (2017). Their volume’s very recent treatment of the issue provides a detailed discussion of the ever-evolving landscape of classifying second century Christianity and its extant sources.

¹⁸ Hurtado writes elsewhere, “...there is also a greater body of evidence extant from this period that indicates interesting diversities in Christian faith. Like the better-known second-century Christian witnesses, such as Justin Martyr, these other forms of Christian faith as well may have roots or (to change the metaphor) tributaries feeding them in the first century. In short, there is clear historical continuity as well as development in the first two centuries, and so it makes sense to have this chronologically larger field of vision.” Hurtado, *Lord Jesus Christ*, 25.

The conclusions of the thesis will only concern the literature examined and not be conclusions about how all early Christianity conducted itself. The debate over Bauer's thesis, self-definition of Christianities and the scholarly discussions of identifying Christianity in the pre-Nicene era, are connected to this research in that they provide a background discussion from which to choose a specific set of primary sources. However, this debate is beyond the scope of this thesis and therefore will not receive a detailed discussion.

1.3. Historical Overview and Context

To properly place this research, a brief discussion should be given regarding historical context particularly as it relates to family and education.¹⁹ This research seeks to provide answers to aspects of the formation of family within early Christianity. Thus, family intersecting with education and formation is part of the historical context of this research. The descriptive term 'Greco-Roman' is often utilized throughout this thesis and inherent in it is the understanding that Grecian and Roman ideals were joined together for centuries and became a descriptor for the period: 'Greco-Roman.' The blending of these two cultures created a system that became characteristic of the time period. In very few places could this combination of ideas and traditions be seen more clearly than in the realm of education and formation.

In his classic work on education in antiquity, Marrou writes, "Thus in the beginning Rome had her own tradition of teaching. Yet Latin education eventually took quite a different direction; for Rome found herself induced to adopt the forms and methods of Hellenistic education...there was not a Hellenistic civilization on one side and a Latin civilization on the other, but, as the Germans...so conveniently put it, a *hellenistisch-römische Kultur*."²⁰ The Roman aristocracy sought the use of Greek educational methods for their sons and within the period, education meant proficiency in Latin and Greek.²¹ While methods of finding tutors and educational outlets for children abounded within the first and second century Greco-Roman family, the ultimate responsibility of teaching or educating children within the household lay with the *paterfamilias*. In fact, the Romans often exhibited a type of suspicion of professional teachers such that, "the ideal teacher was the *paterfamilias* or his appointee."²² For example, Plutarch (c. C.E. 45-120), the Greek writer of philosophy and Greek and Roman biographies²³ wrote this regarding one, Cato the elder:

"When his son was born, Cato thought that only state affairs were important enough to prevent him from attending whenever his wife bathed the baby and put on his nappies. She herself nursed him with her own milk...When the child was capable of learning, Cato himself took responsibility and taught him letters—although he had a specialist slave called Chilon who was himself a teacher who had many pupils of his own. Cato himself says that he did not think it right for his son to be disciplined by a slave..."²⁴

¹⁹ In subsequent chapters, both *paideia* and *paraenesis* will be discussed as it relates to the pastoral care and counsel that the church performed toward the family. While this chapter is only given as a backdrop and summary to build upon, the future chapters will focus on specific uses of these two terms in the care of families within the Christian context of the first and second century.

²⁰ H. I. Marrou, *A History of Education in Antiquity* (New York: Sheed and Ward, 1956), 242.

²¹ Marrou, *A History of Education*, 246, 255.

²² Wiedemann, *Adults and Children in the Roman Empire*, 143, 158.

²³ Jane F. Gardner and Thomas Wiedemann, *The Roman Household: A Sourcebook* (Oxon: Routledge, 1991), 187.

²⁴ Gardner and Wiedemann, *The Roman Household*, 102.

The word *paideia*, even as early as the time of Plato, meant education.²⁵ The word however, as Marrou argues, did have a sense of enculturation inherent to its goal within its Hellenistic use.²⁶ Urbano argues that, “In the Roman era, a Greek education (*παιδεία/paideia*) was essential for political and social advancement.”²⁷ This endeavor took on a variety of forms depending on the status that a child held within Roman society. Laes details two important factors regarding the education of children in Roman society. First, the Romans were not age-graded segregators in their approach to education, and therefore ‘grades’ or levels were more fluid. Secondly, he states that, “the Roman state, throughout its history, seriously neglected education, and instruction. These were essentially considered to be areas of the private sphere.”²⁸ In validating this sentiment, Dixon points out that “...the Roman ideal entailed intense parental involvement in children’s upbringing.”²⁹ While modern secondary source literature clarifies how Greco-Roman families educated their sons and daughters (whether young or adult), discussions regarding the education of children were happening even in the period as well. For example, Musonius Rufus, a stoic philosopher in the Flavian period shared the view that men and women should receive education in similar ways.³⁰

Often one of the roles of the *paedagogus* within the household (under the *paterfamilias*) was having oversight for the education of a particular child. Slave children would undoubtedly have a focused education in an area of trade that benefited the household, although it is not inconceivable that a slave child would also have some overlap with the education of a freeborn child. The structure of Greco-Roman education was often in the form of a system of catechesis. Wiedmann writes that the, “...catechetical system of teaching was the recognised way of imparting TEXNH or ars throughout the Roman empire, and it is not surprising that Christians found it was acceptable for teaching catechumens the Apostolic Doctrine as schoolmasters did for teaching Homer or Vergil.”³¹ Schooling involved three levels in general within both the Greco-Roman educational structure: the primary school for children beginning around age seven, the *grammaticus* around age 11 or 12, and for boys who had donned the toga of manhood, a stage of working with a rhetor from around the ages of 15 to 20.³² Athletics were also a very important Greek influence to the educational process. And *paideia* itself involved not simply the attainment of facts, but was connected as well with the idea of teaching virtue. Watts writes for instance: “...education and excellence went together. The excellence that ancient men associated with education did not arise from, say, a thorough knowledge of the works of Demosthenes. Instead, it was derived from the understanding that an educated man had learned a code of proper behavior. Thus, classical learning also defined one as a gentleman. With *paideia* came an understanding of essential virtues...”³³

²⁵ Taken from a Plato quote used in: Cynthia Patterson, “Education in Plato’s Laws,” in *The Oxford Handbook of Childhood and Education in the Classical World*, eds. Judith Evans Grubbs and Tim Parkin (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013), 365.

²⁶ Marrou, *A History of Education in Antiquity*, 98-99.

²⁷ Arthur Urbano, “Schools and Paideia” (Forthcoming Publication), Brill Encyclopedia of Early Christianity.

²⁸ Laes, *Children in the Roman Empire*, 107-108.

²⁹ Dixon, *The Roman Family*, 116.

³⁰ Bruce Winter, *Roman Wives, Roman Widows: The Appearance of New Women and the Pauline Communities* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2003), 66.

³¹ Wiedemann, *Adults and Children in the Roman Empire*, 166. Capitalization of original language terms is in the original source and thus quoted accordingly.

³² Marrou, *A History of Education in Antiquity*, 265.

³³ Edward J. Watts, *City and School in Late Antique Athens and Alexandria* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 2006), 6.

Ultimately, the Christian view of *paideia* within the period involved adding Christian instruction within the family and the church, as there are very few examples of Christians setting up their own Christian institutions of learning. Rather, it appears that Christian children utilized established schools, and were supplemented in their education by their family and church community.³⁴ Markschiefs demonstrates this Christian and non-Christian connection stating that, “Naturally, the Christian confession separated Christians from their pagan environment in the pre-Constantine period, but one must make clear at the same time that the *παιδεία* and the school educational canon bound up with it simultaneously distanced Christians *and* pagans from their uneducated contemporaries and equalized them within a certain leading stratum.”³⁵ Gemeinhardt points to the reality that Christians appropriated rather than invented *paideia* as a means of formation.³⁶ He helpfully demonstrates that *Paideia* as a reality within the Christian stream was utilized from the larger cultural view and was the larger category wherein Christ was seen as the great teacher. Even within early Christian literature, the term is utilized in various ways to this end (LXX: Ps 117:18, Prov 3:13, Jer 6:7-8; New Testament: Eph 6:4, 2 Tim 3:16; Apostolic Fathers: 1 Clem 56:3-4, 1 Clem 59:3, 62:3 among others).³⁷ *Paideia* then becomes a larger category of formation for Christian initiates within a societal system that would already have had a view of *paideia* within the home. This formation within the family of particular instruction will be the focus of this research, and will require an understanding of the family within the culture, and the instruction given to Christians regarding their familial dynamics. This education and formation is the contextual point of departure for this research. This will require us to delve deeper into specific delivery aspects of *paideia*, and in this instance, this thesis will focus on ‘psychagogy’ as a major aspect of this formation for Christians regarding instruction on family.

1.3.1 Connections with ‘Psychagogy’

One aspect of the research, which will be detailed in Chapter four, was the reality that the instruction related to family and household often occurred in a particular form or structure: ‘psychagogy.’ Thus, I will briefly mention it here by way of introduction given it is an integral part of the research. In short, psychagogy was a philosophic form wherein one adherent within a philosophical school would guide another, usually less mature, member in the ways and nurture of that particular philosophy—it was a guiding of the soul. Much of the content related to family, household, sexuality, etc. had an explicit goal of soul guidance, and therefore, this project needs to interact with ‘psychagogy’ to understand the instruction(s) given to Christians regarding family, household, etc.

Within the research of this thesis, I have come to see that both prior to the time period of research, within the period, and after the period, *psychagogy* was a dominant tool within what is sometimes called the “philosophic tradition of care.” And further, utilizing the work of scholars like Malherbe (on Paul, just prior to the period of our primary source investigation) and Kolbet (focusing on Augustine, just after our period) as points of departure, there is clear evidence that

³⁴ Watts, *City and School*, 317-318.

³⁵ Christoph Markschiefs, *Christian Theology and Its Institutions in the Early Roman Empire: Prolegomena to a History of Early Christian Theology*, trans. Wayne Coppins (Waco, TX: Baylor University Press, 2015), 54.

³⁶ He writes, “Christianity did not invent the religious dimension of *paideia*; instead, it emerged within a world full of Gods and full of *paideia* where a manifold blending between both aspects was well under way.” See Peter Gemeinhardt, “*Paideia*” in *Brill Encyclopedia of Early Christianity* (Leiden: Brill, Under Publication).

³⁷ Gemeinhardt, “*Paideia*.”

Christian leaders were often psychagogues (soul guides)³⁸ and that the care of the family to which a Christian belonged was a part of this process. Therefore, this work furthers the discussion of Malherbe, Kolbet and others³⁹ in the area of ‘psychagogy’ and in some ways sees this period of time as a bridge between the psychagogy of Paul and that of Augustine. However, this work also points out that in the treatment of the family, a specific subtype of care arises, which is a psychagogy that was largely paraenetic. Thus, I argue that the instructions regarding the family was largely undertaken through “paraenetic-psychagogy,”⁴⁰ and this distinction narrows down the term *psychagogy* from being too broad a category to understand specific instructions for Christians regarding their households and familial relationships.

Secondly, this focus on psychagogy naturally arises from the primary sources wherein the discussion of family is readily connected to the eschatological outlook of the soul. In short, family often appears alongside the discussion of the nurture and guidance of the human soul and thus, dealing with the topic of ‘family’ appears to be connected to the overarching psychagogical enterprise. The clear intent of the early Christian writers when dealing with the family, was that the soul of the Christian individual be given guidance.

Lastly, this thesis also seeks to make a specific delineation on the necessity of seeing the guidance of the family as resting primarily within the realm of *psychagogy* as opposed to other related elements such as *paideia*, *paraenesis*, *protrepis* and *mystagogy* specifically because *psychagogy* is the arena within the sources where instructions on familial relationships are embedded.⁴¹ Chapter four details the interconnectedness of these other elements as well as their

³⁸ Psychagogy was a pattern from which early Christians borrowed. Glad is correct when he points to, “...an awareness among outsiders of similarities in the psychagogic practices of these communities. Paul is then not promoting a new type of community education for adults but conforms to a widespread pedagogical pattern witnessed in contemporary Epicurean schools.” Clarence Glad, *Paul and Philodemus: adaptability in Epicurean and early Christian Psychagogy* (Leiden: Brill, 1995), 336.

³⁹ See Chapter 4 for a detailed discussion on this. There, a few foundational points of departure are given such as the summary of “psychagogy” undertaken by Timothy Seid in his paper “Psychagogy in Paul: What Is It, How Does it Help Us Understand Paul, and Why Does it Matter?” electronically retrieved from: <http://scs.earlham.edu/~seidti/psychagogy.pdf> Also see: Ilsetraut Hadot, “The Spiritual Guide,” in *Classical Mediterranean Spirituality: Egyptian, Greek, Roman*, Vol. 15 *World Spirituality: An Encyclopedic History of the Religious Quest*, ed. A. H. Armstrong, 436-59, (New York: Crossroad, 1986).; Abraham J. Malherbe, *Light from the Gentiles: Hellenistic Philosophy and Early Christianity: Collected Essays, 1959-2012* by Abraham J. Malherbe, Volume 1 eds. Carl R. Holladay, John T. Fitzgerald, Gregory E. Sterling & James W. Thompson (Leiden: Brill, 2014); Glad, *Paul and Philodemus*, 1995; Malherbe, *Paul and the Thessalonians*, 1987. In addition to Malherbe, Kolbet provides a view into the connections of care and ‘psychagogy’. See: Kolbet, *Augustine and the Cure of Souls*, 2010. For continued connections past the first and second century see: George E. Demacopoulos, *Five Models of Spiritual Direction in the Early Church* (Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 2006).

⁴⁰ I am using the hyphenated phrase “paraenetic-psychagogy” deliberately to set it apart as a focal point through which care to the family was given structurally. Throughout this thesis, I will develop the argument that a particular niche of psychagogy entailing a predominate paraenetic type was utilized to guide the early Christian family and thus to distinguish this, “paraenetic” becomes an adjective further describing psychagogy and is therefore grammatically connected with a hyphen. Chapter four focuses on this discussion.

⁴¹ The differences and specifics of each of these terms will be detailed in chapter four, and there is some slight disagreement in the secondary literature about how to define them. However, in general, psychagogy was the “guiding of the soul.” Paraenesis, however, is usually viewed as giving specific ethical teaching and guidance within a particular school, and protrepis in

use in the care of the family.⁴² In the end, I conclude that while there were aspects of each of these in the care and nurture of the Christian adherent in areas related to family envisioned in the sources, the entire enterprise of addressing ‘family’ was viewed as a guidance of the soul and therefore this thesis places much of its emphasis on ‘psychagogy.’ Thus, as the research unfolded, a necessary precision regarding these terms came to the forefront providing a lens through which to understand the intent of the writers.

This thesis will show that the pastoral instruction given related to the family within the writings analyzed can rightly be classified as psychagogic. There are debates about the precision of this classification in general,⁴³ but this research will show that the early sources which came to be classified as non-canonical demonstrate an aspect of psychagogy and that the instructions, paraenesis or protrepsis regarding the family rightly fit within the category of psychagogy. The enterprise of family nurture and behavior was envisaged not simply as instruction for virtuous living, but was ultimately about the guidance of the soul of the Christian adherent.

1.4. Methodology

Any historical research requires a look at the primary sources of the epoch in question. For that reason, this thesis seeks to bring together primary sources from the period in question with the most recent research to provide a clear and fresh vision of Christian pastoral care and counsel regarding the family within the first and second century. This study predominately rests on a literature review of primary sources of first and second century Christianity as well as secondary sources focused on the Greco-Roman family context of the time. There are multiple reasons for the focus on the first two centuries. First, to adequately work through the primary sources, a period of time must be delineated and therefore it is necessary to have a limit on the material to be examined. Secondly, it is within these two centuries that much of the so-called “early Christian” writings were written (i.e., *New Testament, Apostolic Fathers, some Apologists*), and therefore, while not focusing too rigidly on a specific date, this delineation of centuries affords the opportunity to examine the relevant literature. Thirdly, it could be argued that this specific period of time avoids the impending Nicene-related Christological controversies that would overtake the early Christian movement. It also allows for an examination of certain potential pastoral care structures, which may extend beyond the period, but were utilized in even a more infant form within the period.⁴⁴

The primary sources will be analyzed in a chronological manner and with a view towards their context, and then secondary sources will be used to provide research assistance. Specifically, both the *Apostolic Fathers* corpus and some later writings (i.e., Tertullian, Clement of Alexandria, Athenagoras) usually called *ante-Nicene* were considered (the writings utilized were contained within the first two centuries of the Common Era, and thus the general cutoff date was 200 C.E.) because of the longstanding view that these two groupings represent the extant early

contrast, may have involved a unique type of conversion approach. There is clear overlap among the terms as will be seen in chapter four, and there are varying views about them within the secondary literature, but these basic definitions are a general picture of what these philosophic forms of guidance entailed. Mystagogy, as will be detailed, is usually considered the guidance of an initiate into the rights and mysteries of a philosophy or faith, and while discussed later, will be a less dominant structure seen in the sources in instructions for familial practice.

⁴² Chapter 4 gives a detailed discussion of these other terms as well as their interconnectedness within the time period with that of psychagogy.

⁴³ This will be further detailed in Chapter four of this thesis.

⁴⁴ See for instance: Paul R. Kolbet, *Augustine and the Cure of Souls: Revising a Classical Ideal* (Notre Dame, IN: University of Notre Dame Press, 2010).

Christian primary source material. Thus, the methodology was to first consider the sources of the period belonging to the early Christian movement,⁴⁵ then to search those for references for ‘family’ related material (i.e., relational roles, household, sexual expression, childrearing, marriage, etc.). The specific primary source researching method was to read the sources to look for ‘family’ related material in context. It also included an electronic search for related terms (both Greek and English), noting them, and then including them (and the surrounding section or passage) for analysis.⁴⁶

The research will move from a broader examination of issues to specific foci (for example: Greco-Roman families in general and then toward instructions on the ‘family’ for Christians within the primary sources) for the areas researched. The research will begin with a background study of the Roman family context and family roles. Following this, I will progress into an interaction with the early writings of the first two centuries of Christianity in an attempt, with the Roman family context in view, to understand the pastoral approaches envisioned for family and spiritual care. Methodologically, the primary source texts of the period connected to the Christian movement that contain material in any way related to ‘family’ will be analyzed, with a proper view towards context and varying genre and then components found therein dealing with family will be cataloged and engaged. With a background understanding of the Greco-Roman family in general, comparisons will be made to what the Christian sources advocate in terms of ‘family.’ It will be at this juncture that the larger Greco-Roman rhetorical forms used within the period for moral exhortation and guidance will be examined.

1.5. A Word Regarding Primary Source Texts and Hermeneutics

This thesis focuses on social history of early Christianity versus a detailed exegesis of specific source texts and thus most of the work will have been undertaken using translation editions (usually English). I have sought to utilize as recent and complete editions as possible. I have attempted to maintain the same translations throughout the thesis body for the sake of consistency. This will allow for the use of academically reputable and obtainable recent diglot or critical versions to be used across the various sections of the thesis. Given that the research is rarely, if ever, based on textual variants, the thesis will not make use of discussions on variants within recent critical editions. For the sake of consistency of presentation within the body of the thesis, although various translations will be utilized, notation regarding which source is referenced will be provided for ease of reading and discussion. Where possible, various scholarly editions were consulted for nuances in translation. In some cases, some series were not complete, such as the *Corpus Christianorum Series Graeca* (which does not currently offer a critical edition of the *Apostolic Fathers*, nor collections of most of the particular ante-Nicene Fathers researched

⁴⁵ Again, I considered those sources which have been historically recognized as Christian writings, and in some cases works that were written by authors who would not later be viewed as “outside” the early Christian movement

⁴⁶ For instance, in the entire *Apostolic Fathers* corpus, while the term *oikos* (household) appears 54 times, the term *pater* occurs 107 times, *méter* occurs 4 times. Out of this search, the instances wherein the context was related to family, the terms could be utilized for analysis. In the case of *oikos* for instance, sometimes the context related to household and family, in other instances, the usage of the Greek term simply referred to a “house” as a building, or “house of God.” In some cases, Greek terms would be sifted for use based on the context as well. For instance, *aner*, occurring 101 times, could refer to “husband” or to “man” and thus, the contextual cases where husband in meant would be cases for consideration. Similarly, *gyne*, occurring 45 times needs to be sifted contextually for its meaning of “wife” vs. “woman.” Various Greek words for adultery (like *moicheuo*) appear just over 30 times. This search of terms, both in Greek and English provided further verification that the sources were exhausted for ‘family’ related material.

in this study), or the Oxford University Press *Oxford Apostolic Fathers* series, (it currently contains only *2 Clement*, *Polycarp*, *Epistle to Diognetus*). Therefore, in the main, other editions such as the *Loeb* edition, the *Lexham Classics Apostolic Fathers* or the *Sources Chrétiennes* series may be utilized as the translation provided in the text of the thesis.

As the thesis progresses, some primary sources will have been reviewed, but not later mentioned or cited since no content related to the focus of this thesis ('family') was found. As a part of the analysis of the primary texts, particular discussion will be briefly given concerning the hermeneutic employed to further the rationale of the research approach. The criteria for determining statements in the primary sources regarding pastoral care and guidance will be to use statements of paraenesis, either to individuals (such as in *The Shepherd of Hermas*) or to a group (such as in *Clement of Rome*) as a main way to determine the vision of pastoral care regarding the family espoused in that source. To see any development of ideas within the short period of time a chronological study of the sources will be undertaken. Rather than making a definitive case that all the Christian movement was exactly uniform in its treatment of the family, the conclusions given will show what evidence the extant sources provide regarding the vision of the writers concerning Christian treatment and pastoral care of the family.

Regarding hermeneutics, the research will seek to interpret the texts internally before paradigms are hypothesized. Once the individual familial references were found in the sources, a close analysis of that citation (related to family) ensued in order to rightly understand the phrase, sentence or paragraph in its context with the author's goal in view (if known). This has been undertaken with a view to the larger theme of each work, and thus this thesis is focused on references taken thematically from the various primary sources reviewed. Thus, while the goal was to extract from the primary sources a compilation of the treatment of the family, those various references found would have been analyzed with a close reading and a consideration of context as well. Then, with the contextual study undertaken and having engaged with the primary sources, I will give conclusions regarding social history and the family. The research involved a particular focus on the interpretation of primary sources to ascertain the meaning of words, phrases, and contextual constructs from a position of authorial intent and then broaden the meaning of texts out to the larger context of the historical period. A value of this approach is that while there is a thematic summary of the treatment of family within the various texts of the period, the conclusions are made only after a thorough analysis of the text in context has been made.⁴⁷

1.6. Scope of The Research

This thesis will seek to avoid the potential problem of the broadening out of the inquiry. Specifically, there will be aspects covered that will be summaries of previous scholarly work (i.e., the Greco-Roman family). While the relevant chapters on such matters will be in-depth, the goal will be to seek the trajectory of the research as it relates to pastoral care to the family. I have

⁴⁷ See Chapter 3, Section 2 for a more thorough discussion of the hermeneutical approach taken in this thesis. There, a discussion of Dilthey (Wilhelm Dilthey, "The Rise of Hermeneutics," trans. Frederic Jameson in *New Literary History*, Vol 3, No. 2, On Interpretation: I (Winter, 1972), and *Verstehen* is undertaken. For further reading see: P. van Geest, 'Omnis scriptura legi debet eo spiritu quo facta est... On the hermeneutics of Wilhelm Dilthey and Albert Deblaere' in: R. Faesen ed., *Albert Deblaere, S.J. (1916-1994). Essays on mystical literature-Essais sur la littérature mystique - Saggi sulla letteratura mistica* (Louvain 2004), 427-442 (*Bibliotheca Ephemeridum Theologicarum Lovaniensium* 177). See also: Suzanne Watts Henderson, "Taking Liberties with the Text: The Colossians Household Code As Hermeneutical Paradigm," *Interpretation* 60 (4) (2006): 421. Aid from these sources, alongside the general principle of seeking authorial intent, have been a foundational guide to the hermeneutic of this thesis.

found many interesting and curious avenues that could be explored in much greater depth, but in the chapters given which provide a background to the research, the goal is to avoid moving away from the focused inquiry of this research. Thus, the reader will at times be interested in further discussion of some of the peripheral issues unearthed, but such discussion is beyond the scope of this research.

One other aspect that will be avoided is the tendency to anachronistically inject concepts of counseling or psychotherapy from modern or postmodern times into the time period in question. While another work could follow on this work looking at the similarities of ancient family nurture with that of the 20th or 21st century, this research is limited to the vision of several primary source authors for the care of the family within the Christian community within the time period in question. Thus, the intended goal is to keep the conclusions from being tainted by modern ideas of what pastoral care might look like today. Rather, the pastoral care structures of the Christian community of the period itself will be seen and compared with aspects of other components from within the period.

Thus, it is the hope that within the five chapters that follow, there is a clear demonstration of and understanding regarding pastoral care toward the family within early Christianity. The goal is to show particular aspects of soul care within the early Christian community in its foundation, and the connectedness of at least some of its methods to the methods of other philosophical movements of the time.

1.7. Structure

The outline of this thesis will unfold in a manner designed to demonstrate the movement of the research. Chapter two will give a background of the time period under investigation. Specifically, the Greco-Roman period of the first and second century will be examined with a focus on family structures. This will involve a discussion of the role of family within the culture and the persons of the family with a specific look at the household. Certain relational points regarding the family will also be examined such as marriage, sexuality, and the education of children. While this background chapter will not necessarily produce any new conclusions, it will be of specific benefit in culling the necessary background data to move from simply a discussion of the family in the period, to the subsequent chapters focusing on the application of guidance for the family within the Christian community. However, there will be a set of general conclusions offered regarding the shape of the family within the Greco-Roman society of the first and second century. This background is crucial to the thesis itself and therefore, chapter two as a background chapter is necessary.

Whereas chapter two gives a background of the larger culture and family in general, the focus of Chapter three will be to show the content of the material related to family within the sources examined. Next, Chapter three will move from a description of ‘family’ within the period to the specific instruction, both Christian and non-Christian alike, that involved references to the family. This is necessary in that a culling together of the primary source material is beneficial to the larger field of inquiry, but is specifically required in order to demonstrate the answers to the research question of this thesis. This also will be similar to Chapter five in that some recurrence of primary source citations will occur, but Chapter three will provide a cataloging of the Christian source material whereas Chapter five will provide more detailed analysis of the primary source material, and will offer specific claims regarding the nature of that psychagogical material. Chapter three will also reference some of the various, and often divergently nuanced voices in the secondary literature regarding family related issues in general, and sexual expression in particular (Brown, 2008; Harper, 2013; Hurtado, 2016; Blidstein, 2017; Castelli, 2017 and other related and

referenced scholarship in the literature.)⁴⁸

Chapter four then moves ever closer to overall research conclusions in that with the larger background observed, and the actual content detailed, it focuses on the method of care itself. The chapter will focus on the philosophic method of offering care utilized within the Christian community. Specifically, while tracing elements seen in other venues such as *paraenesis*, *protrepsis* and *psychagogy*, the chapter will argue that when offering counsel and care in general, including in areas of ‘family’ specifically, Christians adopted the rhetorical structures used within the broader culture. This chapter will continue by further arguing that while these philosophic forms of care can be seen in other contexts, the Christian community commandeered them for use in addressing the topic of ‘family’ but did so in a way that was distinct and ‘otherworldly.’ A unique term (paraenetic-psychagogy) will be utilized within that chapter and is the result of a survey of the larger philosophic forms for care used within early Christianity. It will be argued that it was through psychagogy (soul direction or leading of the soul) that instructions regarding the family were given, and that the main application of psychagogy was paraenesis (--that family care was through the means of a ‘paraenetic-psychagogy’). Moving from the argument that family care was psychagogical, the chapter will proceed into examples of this enterprise with a specific case study utilizing the letter of *Ignatius to Polycarp*. Here, it will be argued that that letter, among other things, was a type of training in psychagogy, and that the issue of ‘family’ did play a part in that training. Thus, the line running through the thesis is that there were certain cultural and societal expressions of ‘family’ within the first and second century Greco-Roman world; that Christian writers had a take on ‘family’; that they taught and offered guidance regarding the family, among other things; and that the main structure for that direction and teaching regarding the family was through the larger philosophical device known as psychagogy.

Finally, the fifth chapter will move from the method utilized in the writings into the specific content of that guidance. Chapter five will be a chapter of conclusions regarding the content of the pastoral guidance offered regarding ‘family.’ It will offer particular contributions to our understanding of how the family was handled within the period as elements from the previous chapters are brought together into conclusions in answer to the inquiry regarding the nature of guidance within first and second century Christianity. Specifically, four attributes regarding the nature of family instruction, or counsel offered within the writings will be seen: 1). that it had an eschatological *Telos*, and as such the argument is made that the family counsel had an eschatological goal; 2). that the focus of the counsel was theocentric; 3). that the focus of the paraenetic-psychagogy related to family was about changing and ordering the Christian family, and not the larger cultural norms for household and family; 4). that the material of the non-canonical Christian writings of the period were largely consistent with the New Testament material from the period. It is within this chapter that Christian sources will also be analyzed with a view towards the psychagogical focus argued for in Chapter four.

Following these chapters, a summary chapter of conclusions will form Chapter six. It is here that much of what has been discussed in the previous chapters will be summarized, with particular focus on why such conclusions are contributions to the field.

⁴⁸ Within these works alone there are differences regarding the uniqueness of Christian sexual practice and expectations. Some argue that Christians offered a distinct view of gender and sexuality from the larger culture, and others a more fluid and transitioning construct in areas related to celibacy, renunciation, asceticism, and sexual restrictions. Many of these nuances of opinion within the secondary literature will be detailed in Chapter three.

Chapter Two

The Greco-Roman Family of the First and Second Century

The goal of this chapter is to provide a background for how ‘family’ related terms and concepts have been understood in the recent scholarly secondary literature. For the concept of ‘family’ to be rightly ascertained in this research, a view of the general familial concepts of the day must be understood. Thus, current secondary literature will be researched for concepts of ‘family’ within the first and second centuries to be understood. This chapter then is to be a background chapter for the remainder of the thesis.

Far from the idea of the ‘nuclear’ family idea held in many cultures today particularly in the West, the Greco-Roman family was of a different structure. There is not even a specific word or term within Greek or Latin that particularly delineates a ‘nuclear family.’¹ The Greco-Roman family of the first and second century included husbands, wives and children, but it also included slaves as well as other non-biological members who may be involved in the service, or care for the family. Of course, in some instances, the ‘family’ would likely also involve extended family members. As will be seen, the family of the period was more of a “household” of persons than it was a two-parent relationship with potential children. This is the picture that arises from the sources of the period.

Much has already been written regarding the Greco-Roman family within the first and second century such as Verner (1981), Saller (various), Wiedemann (1989), Dixon (1992), Moxnes (1997), Osiek and Balch (1997), Balch and Osiek (2003), Rawson (1986, 2011), and Treggiari (various), among others. These scholars have produced a large amount of secondary literature within the last few decades regarding the family within the time period, particularly as it relates to the connection to Christian families. Of course, these works build upon earlier scholarly ventures into the topic. This section seeks to summarize the literature as well as to prepare background for the discussion regarding the focus of the thesis: the counsel and care of Christians concerning family within the first two centuries of Christianity. Dealing first with various Latin and Greek terms associated with family within the period, and then moving into familial relationships and structures, this section seeks to transition into the subsequent chapter with a sufficient core of descriptive background information.

While time periods are fluid, the focus of this chapter will be on the Greco-Roman family solely within the first and second century as this is the scope of the research in general.² Particularly, concepts such as *Domus*, *Oikos*, *Adoptio*, *Paterfamilias*, *Gens*, and *Patria Postestas* will be examined and a current social history of the family within the first and second century will be provided. Without anachronistic interpretations, these main semantic terms used in both Greek and Latin regarding the family will be examined in summary form, but an examination will also be given of the larger contexts in which they were used. While the intersection of these structures within early Christianity is the ultimate goal, the immediate focus is to understand the greater

¹ Halvor Moxnes, *Constructing Early Christian Families* (London & New York: Routledge, 1997), 20. However, Saller and Shaw do shed some light on the possibility that a form of ‘nuclear’ family may have been somewhat of a relational construct based on Roman tombstone inscription data. See: Richard P Saller and Brent D Shaw, “Tombstones And Roman Family Relations In The Principate: Civilians, Solders And Slaves,” *The Journal of Romans Studies* 74 (1984): 124-156. But Dale Martin disagrees with aspects of their conclusions of the epigraphic data, and therefore the debate continues. See: Dale Martin, “The Construction of the Ancient Family: Methodological Consideration,” *J. Rom. Stud.* 86 (1996): 40-60.

² This period in Roman history is often assimilated into what is call the Principate (27 B.C.-A.D. 235). See: Susan Treggiari, “Marriage and Family in Roman Society,” in *Marriage and Family in the Biblical World*, ed. Ken M. Campbell (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 2003), 141.

system known as ‘family.’ Both the Jewish and Roman structures of the larger Greco-Roman backdrop will be examined initially without specific focus on Christian families to provide a baseline for comparison and contrasting as the research unfolds. This goal will be pursued in order that in subsequent chapters, a point of departure can be made offering new insights regarding the Christian instruction of the family within the first and second century Christians movement. Given the religious connections to early Christianity, Jewish families will be examined first briefly, followed by the larger Greco-Roman understanding of family.

This chapter will not provide extensive detail into every area of ‘family’ within the Greco-Roman context, but rather to give a detailed summary background for the research to follow regarding Christian care and counsel toward the family. The main method of research within this chapter is to bring together much of modern research into the family within the period found within the secondary sources while acknowledging that the present research seeks to answer specific questions which guide the entire project. The secondary research is approached with a focus on answering the specific questions, which guide this project. This chapter seeks to show what the family of the first and second century looked like to have a foundation upon which to lay the primary sources of Christian authors in order to find similarities and comparisons.

2.1 Greco-Roman Context

By the time of the first and second century, a distinct Roman culture as a construct was a settled reality, although with fluid elements. This cultural context developed over many centuries evolving from various ideas and the influences of the Greeks and was bolstered by the distinctly Roman contributions. As this development unfolded there was undoubtedly a cultural view of family, which ultimately came to include laws and household codes (*Haustafeln*, a frequently used term in the literature³). A challenge in understanding ‘family’ in this period is the lack of a full-orbed body of source literature. For the most part, the extant literary records are predominately focused on the upper-class elements of society. Treggiari writes, “Literature was written by or for the upper classes; senators; the order immediately below them, called the equites; and the richer, educated classes of Italian or provincial towns, so it tends not to reflect the experience of small farmers or artisans.”⁴ This is not to say that studies on other classes of society (i.e., the poorer and slave classes) cannot be undertaken. In fact, at least early in Christianity, these lower classes proved to be a breeding ground for the Christian faith. For a glimpse into these parts of society Christian writings, funerary inscriptions and other forms of evidence must be studied even further. However, what is clear is that within this context of Greco-Roman culture, family was a social construct for all groups. Varying terms are used within the Greco-Roman context that provides insight into this family construct.

2.1.1 Terms

When dealing with the household and family of the first and second century, several key Greek or Latin terms or descriptors occur regularly in the literature. More terms will be detailed

³ Gombis reports that the term (translated in English as “house table”) was coined by Martin Luther, and “is a common convention used with reference to the household codes in the NT.” See: Timothy G. Gobis, “A Radically New Humanity; The Function of the *Haustafel* in Ephesians,” JETS 48/2 (June 2005): 317. Hering states that this term has become a term “...indicating a far smaller grouping of paraenetic texts.” See: James. P. Hering, *The Colossian and Ephesian Haustafeln in Theological Context: An Analysis of Their Origins, Relationship and Message* (New York: Peter Lang, 2007), 1.

⁴ Susan Treggiari, “Marriage and Family in Roman Society,” in *Marriage and Family in the Biblical World*, ed. Ken M. Campbell (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 2003), 141.

as the chapter unfolds, but for now, a cursory gloss of certain terms related to family is necessary to assist in the usage of the secondary sources. The word *oikos* is the primary term used in describing a family, however it deals predominately with a house or sometimes a household,⁵ or even a dynasty.⁶ For example, the word is used over 100 times in the New Testament, (or variations of it appear frequently in the Greek New Testament (i.e. Mark 10, Luke 10:5, Acts 10:2, etc.)), and in 60 of those uses it refers to a house or home and at least 12 of those times it represents a family or group of people.⁷ It signifies a unit of persons working and living together, to include servants, under the leadership of the patriarch or head of that household, and even a lineage.⁸ Within the Latin language, a similarity occurs in that the two main words used, *familia* and *domus*, while sometimes referring to people, include reference to possessions or to the general household.⁹ Moxnes writes, “In the passage in Mark 10:29-31 we meet the family as a household, a group of people bound together by close kinship, who live together and make a living together. This is the pattern found in many peasant communities, in which the place of residence and subsistence takes precedence and defines the group that lives and works there.”¹⁰ For good reason, *oikos* is an important key to understanding the historical context of the family in the first and second century because each *oikos* itself was a center for more than relationship; it was the center for a common existence. Indeed, the sense of this word is a homestead type of word¹¹ wherein people are living together for a common purpose.¹²

Domus referred to a single house or home with a particular focus on the residence location. And while specifically spatial in nature, its range also includes the idea of a “family, household, or dependants collectively of the head of a house.”¹³ *Familia* however, referred to the entirety of the household, involving not just kin, but other dependents as well.¹⁴ The Oxford Latin Dictionary defines it in the first instance as, “All persons subject to the control of one man, whether relations, freedmen, or slaves, a household.”¹⁵ The Roman *familia* was the principle means of production and trade within the empire, and a rich merchant’s *familia* could involve

⁵ Walter Bauer, *A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature*, rev. and ed. Frederick W. Danker, 3rd ed. (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2000), s.v. “*oikos*.”

⁶ Faculty of Classics, University of Cambridge, and James Diggle, *The Cambridge Greek Lexicon*. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2021), s.v. “*oikos*.”

⁷ Kurt Aland, *Did the Early Church Baptize Infants?*, ed. G. R. Beasley-Murray (London: SCM Press LTD, 1963), 87.

⁸ Moxnes, *Constructing Early Christian Families*, 21. Also see: Franco Montanari, Madeleine Goh, Chad Matthew Schroeder, Gregory Nagy, Leonard Charles Muellner, and Rachel Barritt-Costa *The Brill dictionary of ancient Greek* (Leiden: Brill, 2015), s.v. “*οικος*,” 1435.

⁹ Moxnes, *Constructing Early Christian Families*, 21.

¹⁰ Moxnes, *Constructing Early Christian Families*, 23.

¹¹ Johannes P. Louw & Eugene A. Nida, *Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament Based on Semantic Domains: Volume 1 Introduction & Domains*, eds. Rondal B. Smith & Karen A. Munson, 2nd ed. (New York: United Bible Societies, 1989), s.v. “*οικος*,” 113.

¹² Some information in this paragraph is like that used in: J. R. Davidson, “Family Relations in the First Century,” in *Lexham Bible Dictionary*, eds. J.D. Barry and L. Wentz (Bellingham, WA: Logos, 2012).

¹³ P. G. W. Glare, and Christopher Stray *Oxford Latin dictionary* (Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press, 2012), s.v. “*domus*,” 628.

¹⁴ John Bodel and Samuel Olyan, *Household and Family Religion in Antiquity*, (Malden, MA: Blackwell Publishing, 2008), 248.

¹⁵ P. G. W. Glare, and Christopher Stray *Oxford Latin dictionary* (Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press, 2012), s.v. “*familia*,” 740.

dozens to hundreds of people.¹⁶ These individuals would certainly include the immediate kin of the head of the *familia* who was called the *paterfamilias*, but it could also include any dependents, including slaves, that the *paterfamilias* owned. *Gens* is also a related term in the literature and referred to those related to a common ancestor through males. This would be akin to the idea of “clan” and connotes a common name or could connote the idea of a race or nation¹⁷ and thus the *familia* in its use of person often involved the term *gens*.¹⁸ While discussing these terms, there is overlap, but also distinctions. For instance, the *domus* could involve individuals connected through women, and was often used by the Romans to have a larger sense of household than the more specific idea of male linkage as in the terms *gens*, or *familia*.¹⁹

The *paterfamilias* held great power (*patria potestas*) over the entire household, to include the power of life and death. This power was central to the family structure and the place of family within society. This male-driven family model looms large on the family dynamics of the first and second century contextual backdrop within which the Christian movement was cradled. Women were not equal with men in the larger Greco-Roman culture and society. The norm was for the male *paterfamilias* to lead within the Greco-Roman paternal power system known as *patria potestas*. However, there is some recent scholarship which points to rights that women held including the possibility of serving as a head of a household.²⁰ Ultimately, women could not have power equivalent to the male *paterfamilias*²¹ even though there are examples of women seemingly existing as the head of a household. Keener envisages how *paterfamilias* authority can be related to the larger scale relational structure of Emperor to subject.²²

2.1.2 Connections in the Literature

This treatment of the terms is focused on simply providing a baseline background for the future chapters. It is not intended to provide analysis of the primary sources yet. The goal is to introduce concepts that will be seen in varying ways in the analysis of the primary sources in the subsequent chapters.

In chapters to follow, some other terms will be added, however, these particular concepts are those that are the dominant terms and concepts in the secondary literature that are related to family in the Greco-Roman culture within the time period. Some of these terms will be specifically mentioned in the subsequent chapters as primary sources are analyzed (for instance, “oikos” appears often in the Greek primary source writings analyzed, and thus, as a part of the methodology of the research, it will be searched in order to find primary source material for

¹⁶ Kate Cooper, “The Household as a Venue,” 187.

¹⁷ P. G. W. Glare, and Christopher Stray *Oxford Latin dictionary* (Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press, 2012), s.v. “gens,” 834.

¹⁸ Peter Garnsey and Richard Saller, *The Roman Empire: Economy, Society and Culture* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1987), 127.

¹⁹ Garnsey and Saller, *The Roman Empire*, 128.

²⁰ See: Carolyn Osiek, “What We Do and Don’t Know About Early Christian Families,” in *A Companion to Families in the Greek and Roman World*, ed. Beryl Rawson (Chichester, West Sussex, U.K.: Wiley-Blackwell, 2011), 202-203.

²¹ Keener, C.S. “Family and Household,” in *Dictionary of New Testament Background*, eds. C.A. Porter and S.E. Porter (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2000), 354.

²² Keener, “Family and Household,” 357.

analysis²³), and other terms while not terms used methodologically to search the primary source documents, they are nonetheless concepts found there in the background of the writings.²⁴

Much of the secondary scholarly literature surrounding the Greco-Roman ‘family’ within the period addresses these terms. And in my own analysis of the primary sources utilized for this thesis, there are clear connections made. I will not detail the primary source data here (that will largely appear in Chapters three through five), nor will I give every secondary source reference to these terms in the applicable literature. However, for the sake of this chapter, I will note that the common secondary source consensus on these terms is a consensus that I can validate as well from the primary source research of this thesis. For instance, Nevett writes,

“In Greek and Latin the household is elided linguistically, and arguably also conceptually, with both the family and also with the physical structure of the house (*familia* and *domus* in Latin, *oikos* in Greek). Nevertheless, as anthropologists have long realized, “family” and “household” actually have precise and distinct meanings which are analytically important: households by definition do not necessarily comprise people related by blood, while those who are closely related biologically may reside in different houses.”²⁵

Along with this, in the general sense, Bodet and Olyan agree²⁶ along with Moxnes.²⁷ Dixon agrees and helpfully provides a discussion of the Latin term *familia* as well as the usage and distinction of the terms *familia* and *domus* (arguing that *domus* was the preferred term used when lineage or kinship was in view).²⁸ Garnsey and Saller also note distinctions among the terms as well.²⁹ These secondary source writers articulate what my own research has found within the early Christian primary sources of the period. For instance, as will be detailed in Chapters three and five, there are multiple writings that address the *oikos* (with connections to the Latin *familia* and *domus*) in ways that assume more individuals than those related by blood. In both the *Didache* (i.e., 4.9-11), and the writings of Ignatius (i.e. Ignatius, *To Polycarp* 4.3) for instance, there is the explicit mention of what amounts to household codes wherein instruction is given related to parents, children, slaves, etc. There were no primary sources that I examined that I felt were contrary to the current secondary literature sources regarding the concepts of *oikos*, *familia* or *domus*. In addition, while the terms *paterfamilias*, *gens* or *patria potestas* were not dominantly used by term in the sources analyzed, the concepts were there, nonetheless. In Chapter three for instance, I discuss Hermas (*Shepherd of Hermas*) as a kind of *paterfamilias*.

Therefore, these terms that are utilized in the secondary literature (some of which are literally found in the primary sources analyzed and others, which are part of the conceptual background of the items addressed in those sources) are necessary to note here. In my own

²³ Again, in the entire *Apostolic Fathers* corpus, the term *oikos* appears 54 times. Sometimes the context was related to household and family, in other instances, the usage of the Greek term simply referred to a “house” as a building, or “house of God.”

²⁴ For instance, “paterfamilias” or “domus” are Latin terms and thus are not searched in the *Apostolic Fathers* corpus, which is largely Greek, but these Latin terms are concepts which can be seen in the writings and will be noted in future chapters.

²⁵ L. Nevett, “Family and Household, Ancient History and Archeology: A Case Study from Roman Egypt,” in *A Companion to Families in the Greek and Roman Worlds*, ed. B. Rawson (Oxford U.K.: Blackwell Publishing, 2011), 14.

²⁶ Bodet and Olyan, *Household and Family Religion in Antiquity*, 248

²⁷ Moxnes, *Constructing Early Christian Families*, 21.

²⁸ Suzanne Dixon, *The Roman family* (United Kingdom: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1992), 3.

²⁹ Garnsey and Saller, *The Roman Empire*, 128.

research of specific early Christian primary sources, specifically in sections dealing with family, I did not find anything of note that contradicts the current understanding of these terms in the secondary literature. And at this juncture, this further demonstrates why this background is necessary in undertaking instruction related to ‘family.’

2.1.3. Excursus: Family Terminology as a Metaphor for the Christian Community

While the focus of this thesis is the ideal(s) for household and family for instruction of early Christians, it is worth noting that the early Christians utilized family language to identify each other. Early Christian sources frequently utilized familial and kinship terms as references for one another. In the *New Testament*, Paul regularly utilized sibling terminology (ἀδελφοί) to refer to other Christians (i.e. 1 Co 1:9-10, 1 Co 16:10-11, Php 1, Col 1:2, Eph 6:23, 1 Ti 4:5-6, Ro 1:13) as did Peter (i.e. Ac 1:16, 2 Pe 1:10) and James (i.e. 1:2, 16; 2:1, 14, 3:1, 10, 12; 5:12, 19). This kind of usage would not have been at odds with Jesus’ own focus on his followers being a type of family (Mk 3:35, 10:30), and a type of true family. In his extensive study on the topic of early Christians as family, Hellerman argues that Paul’s usage of kinship language would have been in line with Jesus’ own usage of the metaphor.³⁰ Within the works of the early Christian writers following the New Testament corpus, there is also significant familial metaphor used—family terms applied to fellow Christians. In the corpus commonly known as the “Apostolic Fathers”, the term ἀδελφοί is used over 50 times (i.e., *1 Clement* 13.1, *Polycarp to the Philippians* 3.1, *Ignatius to the Philadelphians* 5.1, *Barnabas* 5, *Shepherd of Hermas*, Vision II, iv, *Martyrdom of Polycarp* 22.1, etc.) Moss argues that even the use of the terms could have added to the false slanderous myths regarding Christians. She writes, “The terms “brother” and “sister,” references to the kiss of the peace, and the “flesh and blood” symbolism of the eucharist and scriptural passages like John 6.50–58 could further the idea that Christians were engaging in incest and cannibalism.”³¹ It is also very possible that, as Mouton has suggested, familial terms were utilized for the early Christian community in order to “distinguish themselves from outsiders.”³²

Other familial terms such as *oikos* are also used (Gal 6:10, Barnabas 16.1) as a reference to the early Christians as a people of God—a family. Family as a metaphor for spiritual kinship among the new Christians demonstrates not only how the early Christians viewed themselves as a community, but it also speaks to the value that Christians would place on kinship connections given that they would apply those terms to their own community members. However, the focus of this thesis is not on early Christian self-identity structures, nor even how Christians viewed themselves as a type of family. Following the teachings of Jesus, God was viewed as “Father” (Matt 6:9), fellow Christians were brothers and sisters, and the early Christian community was an *oikos*—a household and family. Ultimately, it is this very language and terminology for the home and household (versus the Christian community) that is the study of this thesis.

2.2 Setting, Roles and Relational Structure

³⁰ Joseph H. Hellerman, *The Ancient Church as Family* (Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 2001), 26.

³¹ Candida R. Moss, “Infant Exposure and the Rhetoric of Cannibalism, Incest, and Martyrdom in the Early Church,” *J. of Early Christ. Stud.*, Volume 29, Number 3, (Fall 2021): 348.

³² Elna Mouton, “Reimagining Ancient Household Ethos? On the Implied Rhetorical Effect of Ephesians 5:21–33.” *Neotestamentica* 48, no. 1 (2014): 164.
<http://www.jstor.org/stable/43926977>.

Within the Roman family, each household had a head or leader, usually the father or patriarch, called the *paterfamilias*.³³ The *paterfamilias* is a central concept in understanding the entire Roman family and home, and the power of the *paterfamilias*, called *patria potestas*, is a key component to any research with family in the period. This concept would have directly or indirectly affected the aims of Christian instruction. Important components connected to family structure include relational dynamics, the role of women and slaves, sexuality, and the place of children within the Greco-Roman family. And the family was in many ways a central foundation to the culture. Klauck states that it was also the focus of “major themes of social theory and admonition.”³⁴ As will be seen, Christian instruction and care regarding the family did not occur within a vacuum, but within the larger culture’s concept of family, particularly as it related to non-Jewish families. Thus, an understanding of the general components to the Greco-Roman family is crucial in understanding the larger milieu of the cultural context regarding the family.

Within this context of family, an individual was heavily reliant upon the group for honor, recognition, or the experience of shame, and this reliance could be reciprocally experienced. The context of the Mediterranean family involves several dominant sociological aspects. Kinship, politics, religion, and economics were all interconnected spheres within the largely agrarian family systems of much of the Greco-roman family structures.³⁵ The dynamic of family and support was multiplied beyond simple relational structures to include the success of an entire homestead seeking economic survival. Given the disparity in socio-economic status among households in the period, making broad generalizations is challenging.³⁶ However, there is much that can be stated regarding the Greco-Roman family in the period out of which larger hypotheses can be made. For example, Saller shows that Roman families “organized most of the production of the Roman economy.”³⁷ While the good of the Roman state was the goal in the formation of families and household, there are signs that there was a deep affection that members of the *familia* shared for one another. For example, poetry and satire from the period demonstrate that Roman parents did love and share affection for their children.³⁸ The roles of each individual person in the family, whether it be the father, mother, children, or slave, as well as the cultural norms associated with those persons, are vital in understanding any counsel that Christian leaders would give the family. In addition to individual roles, relational dynamics, particularly those related to marriage and parent/child structures, are crucial to understand.

There were multiple social values within the larger Greco-Roman sphere.³⁹ The ideal of ‘*pietas*’ was one of several crucial social values within the Roman world and one that is specific to this thesis as it dealt with both family honor and faithfulness to family religious structure. The

³³ Dixon, *The Roman Family*, 36.

³⁴ Hans-Josef Klauck, “The Roman Empire,” in *The Cambridge History of Christianity: Volume 1: Origins to Constantine*, eds. Margaret M. Mitchell and Frances M. Young (Cambridge, U.K.: Cambridge University Press, 2006), 75.

³⁵ Moxnes, *Constructing*, 20.

³⁶ Keener, “Family and Household,” 354.

³⁷ Richard Saller, “The Roman Family As Productive Unit,” in *A Companion to Families in the Greek and Roman World*, ed. Beryl Rawson (Chichester, West Sussex, U.K.: Wiley-Blackwell, 2011), 127.

³⁸ Keener, “Family and Household,” 357-358.

³⁹ For instance, Langlands details the following sampling, including *pietas*, borrowing on Litchfield’s earlier gathering of data from Latin literature up through the fourth century: “...*aequitas* (justice), *fides* (loyalty), *pietas* (sense of duty towards gods, fatherland, relations and others), *severitas* (strictness), *fortitudo* (bravery), *constantia* (perseverance), *continentia* (self-control), *paupertas* (poverty), *pudicitia* (sexual virtue), *clementia* (mercy), *moderatio* (moderation).” See: Rebecca Langlands, *Exemplary Ethics in Ancient Rome*, (Cambridge, U.K.: Cambridge University Press, 2018), 16.

Oxford Latin Dictionary defines the term in the first instance as, “An attitude of dutiful respect towards those to whom one is bound by ties of religion, consanguinity, etc.”⁴⁰ It is particularly because of the focus of this thesis that this Greco-Roman virtue is detailed given its connections to the ties of both family and religion.⁴¹ This particular value was considered a virtue, which combined, “...an emphasis on submissive, obedient behavior, with notions of family loyalty, citizenship, and deference to God or the gods.”⁴² It was often a driving force, which could cause an individual to overlook justice-related issues in order to honor the *pietas* of his or her family.⁴³ *Pietas* influenced much of the Greco-Roman household. Dixon defines it as a combination of strong sentimental family feelings and a sense of traditional obligation.⁴⁴ This is not to imply that every person always honored this familial *pietas*, however it was a driving force in the period within the household at large. Each family had a variety of specific relationships that forged together the larger dynamic of ‘family.’ In the end as Osgood observes, the family was the basis for social and economic realms of Roman society.⁴⁵ Vorster in a similar vein argues that Roman society was set up in a way such that family was conscripted as a tool for the “Romanization” of society.⁴⁶

Marriage. The Greco-Roman culture of the first and second century was a multi-faceted arrangement. Marriage was a key component to society, and Roman marriage in particular has been the object of a large amount of scholarship. Dixon, a key scholar on the subject, gave this summary regarding Roman marriage:

“Roman marriage was a union for the purpose of producing legitimate children and contracted between consenting parties with the capacity to marry. On the whole, this meant Roman citizens of the proper age—at least 12 for girls, 14 for boys. In theory, the consent of the bridal couple and of their fathers was required but the consent of the bride and groom was in practice assumed. No ceremony or dowry was legally necessary, the key elements were the legal capacity to marry and the intent to be married. In practice, it was usual to have a wedding ceremony and for the bride’s family to pay an agreed dowry to the groom or his father.”⁴⁷

⁴⁰ P. G. W. Glare, and Christopher Stray *Oxford Latin dictionary* (Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press, 2012), s.v. “pietas,” 1516.

⁴¹ This is not to argue that it is the only Greco-Roman virtue, but rather it receives much attention in this thesis as it contains the ties of family and religion. Given the focus of the thesis is on religious (Christian) instruction to families, *pietas* comes to the foreground as a virtue, both in Christian and non-Christian writings.

⁴² Margaret MacDonald, *The Power of Children: The Construction of Christian Families in the Greco-Roman World* (Waco, Texas: Baylor University Press, 2014), 9.

⁴³ MacDonald, *The Power of Children*, 9.

⁴⁴ Dixon, *The Roman Family*, 30.

⁴⁵ Josiah Osgood, “Making Romans in The Family,” in *The Oxford Handbook of Social Relations in the Roman World*, ed. Michael Peachin (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011), 69.

⁴⁶ “Public building, architecture, sculpture, wall paintings, friezes all served to signify and effect relations of power incorporating the Roman family as strategy in a bid for a full-scale process of Romanization.” Johannes N. Vorster, “Exploring the Possibilities of the Family as Strategy in the Roman Empire and Early Christianity,” *Acta Patristica et Byzantina*, 21:2 (2010): 230-231. Vorster helpfully details the connection of religious structures to family structures such that they served the greater Romanization program.

⁴⁷ Suzanne Dixon, “From Ceremonial to Sexualities: A Survey of Scholarship on Roman Marriage,” in *A Companion to Families in the Greek and Roman World*, ed. Beryl Rawson (Chichester, West Sussex, U.K.: Wiley-Blackwell, 2011), 249.

Given that the emphasis on the state within the Roman Empire was a major focus, procreation with the good of the State was valued. Lassen discusses how familial metaphors and imagery became popular given the place of the family within the state.⁴⁸ This is not to say that marriages were loveless, but the concept of marriage was not what it is considered in much of the West today. Dixon points out a variety of epistolary examples from the literature where strong affection and desire were expressed between a husband and wife. These examples, coupled with tombstone formulae extolling the conflict-free examples of some marital couples, give credence to the idea that not all Roman marriages were devoid of affection and caring concern, or that they were only initiated for legal reasons.⁴⁹ Marriage did confer certain legal rights, and a variety of family laws (Augustan) appeared around 29 or 28 B.C.E., which further addressed marital issues previously less regulated by law until that time (aspects of divorce, issues of concubinage, etc.)⁵⁰ Augustus addressed both the prevalence of divorce as well as the practice of living with concubines (*lex Papia* and *lex Julia*).⁵¹ McGinn points out that these statutes encouraged the raising of children and the conducting of marriage for moral and demographic reasons.⁵² These ordinances undoubtedly took aim at creating specific familial structure within society. Given that polygamy was not legal, other live-in or sexual partners were considered concubines.⁵³ Legally recognized marriages were a major source of passing on the family name and inheritance. This practice was particularly true in the upper-class families where such inherited items were at a premium. If a marriage was not recognized by the State, (i.e., marriages between slaves,) then the passing on of a name and property were not accessible. Slaves could not experience the same access to legal marriage as freeborn or freed persons. Therefore, any children born from sexual encounters, committed relationships or otherwise, were not legally protected and would not usually constitute part of a new family unit. Men usually married around their late twenties, while women usually married as close to puberty as possible. The marital age of women could have been in part due to the high mortality rate, as nearly one half of children born would be deceased by age 10.⁵⁴ However, marital age data varies slightly as research generalizations are made.⁵⁵

Marriage in the imperial period most commonly took on the form of ‘free’ marriage, which meant that a woman remained under the authority of her original *paterfamilias* provided he was still living. If he was deceased, then she was independent from the formal authority of her husband. However, if the couple bore children, the connection of the wife to the family of her husband became stronger.⁵⁶ In upper class society, marriage was in many ways a business arrangement, or at least had an element of economic benefit. While the culture was a male-dominant, husbands did not have complete control over every aspect of their wives, and this was particularly the case in finance. Rawson details this reality when he writes: “Wives were not

⁴⁸ Eva Marie Lassen, “The Roman Family: Ideal and Metaphor,” in *Constructing Early Christian Families: Family as social reality and metaphor*, ed. Halvor Moxnes (London & New York: Routledge, 1997), 103-120.

⁴⁹ Dixon, *The Roman Family*, 83-90.

⁵⁰ Lassen, “The Roman Family,” 107.

⁵¹ David G. Hunter, *Marriage in the Early Church* (Minneapolis, MN: Fortress, 1992), 7.

⁵² Thomas A.J. McGinn, “Roman Children and the Law,” in *The Oxford Handbook of Childhood and Education in the Classical World*, ed. Judith Evans Grubbs and Tim Parkin (Oxford University Press, 2013), 342.

⁵³ Susan Treggiari, “Marriage and Family in Roman Society,” in *Marriage and Family in the Biblical World*, ed. Ken M. Campbell (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 2003), 169.

⁵⁴ *Ibid.*, 143-144.

⁵⁵ For example, see: Beryl Rawson, “The Roman Family” in *The Family in Ancient Rome: New Perspectives*, ed. Beryl Rawson (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1986), pp. 21-22.

⁵⁶ Beryl Rawson, “The Roman Family,” 19-20.

completely dependent financially on their husbands, especially when their marriage was of the most common form, ‘sine manu’ (i.e., the wife did not come under her husband’s complete authority—his *manus*). He was accountable for the money or property which she brought as dowry, and this was usually reclaimable by the wife if the marriage was dissolved.”⁵⁷ Usually a wife marrying without entering the *manus* of her husband brought a dowry. In this situation, a woman would usually remain under the *manus* of her original *paterfamilias*, and if the marriage was ultimately dissolved, the two of them (wife and father) had the right to sue the husband for return of the dowry. However, differing amounts of this could be held by the husband based on factors like the number of children, or the reasons for the marital dissolution. While married, the dowry was considered part of the property or goods that belonged to the husband, but it was also in a sense, a resource in a separate category. Dowries were also generally to be sized appropriately to the financial and/or social standing of the two parties, and could involve tangible, textile or food-related goods in addition to cash.⁵⁸ A wife outside the *manus* of her husband was not in the direct position of inheritance if he died due to his direct blood relatives having first priority.⁵⁹ From within the time period of this research, the *Institutes of Gaius* (circa 160 C.E.) report that:

“Now, while both males and females are found in *potestas*, only females can come under *manus*. Of old, women passed into manus in three ways, by *usus*, *confarreatio*, and *coemptio*... These three methods involved a different set of obligations or rituals: *usus* involved premarital cohabitation for a year, *confarreatio* involved a ritual sacrifice to Jupiter with particular words spoken, and *coemptio* was a sort of emancipation involving a certain number of witnesses.”⁶⁰

Betrothal and wedding ceremony practices appear to have been observed but were not the only focus of the marital initiation. Given that parental arrangement of marriages was a dominant factor, largely among the higher social class, and that premarital cohabitation was considered a valid marital conception provided that mutual consent (among non-slaves) was achieved, there were several potential avenues for entrance into a marital arrangement. *Nuptiae* was used in Roman documents to mean both a ceremony of marriage, but also a term to “denote unity and partnership for life.”⁶¹ Legally recognized marriage required citizenship, a sufficient distance from blood relation to a relative, and aspects of social class similarity.⁶² While homosexual relations existed during the period, and perhaps with some prevalence, marriage was reserved for one man and one woman.⁶³ Again, marriage in the time period can be challenging to generalize given the differences in social class and the corresponding variety that this brings upon the historical data. For example, epigraphy is available for both upper society as well as lower classes, however, given the fact that slaves could not maintain legal marriages, certain slaves living as married individuals, particularly if they were observing personally held religious

⁵⁷ Rawson, “The Roman Family,” 19. Also, Cohick and Hughes have a good and recent discussion on this: Lynn H Cohick and Amy Brown Hughes, *Christian Women in the Patristic World: Their Influence, Authority, and Legacy in the Second Through Fifth Centuries* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2017), 46ff.

⁵⁸ Treggiari, “Marriage and Family,” 159-162.

⁵⁹ Treggiari, “Marriage and Family,” 164.

⁶⁰ Gaius, *Institutes*, trans. Francis De Zulueta (Oxford, Clarendon Press, 1946), Book 1, 110-111.

⁶¹ Paul van Geest, “Nuptiae,” in *Augustinus-Lexikon*, vol. 4, eds. Robert Dodaro, Cornelius Mayer, Christof Müller (Basel: Schwabe, 2012), 243-245.

⁶² Rawson, “The Roman Family,” 21-23.

⁶³ Keener, “Family and Household,” 353-354.

convictions (i.e., Christianity or Judaism), may not be included in the full picture of the culture of ‘marriage’ that existed.

Divorce was common practice within the period, and Treggiari writes that,

“the vital point about divorce is that no public authority had to ratify it...the theory that unites Roman thinking about marriage and divorce is that both are free, a principle continued into modern law. In theory, no one could be compelled to marry. He or she could make a legal Roman marriage with any legally eligible person. No one could be compelled to remain married against his or her will. No one could be compelled to divorce...the marriage last as long as both continue to consent. If one withdraws consent, there is a divorce.”⁶⁴

This provides some background into the Biblical discussion of marriage in the epistolary writings of Paul given that they occur within this particular period of time. His focal point in chapter seven of the first letter to the Corinthians on marriage is the seeming indissolubility with which Christians should view and value marriage. While it may have been legally easy to divorce, the Apostle Paul declares it to be problematic (1 Cor. 7) given the ultimate relationship that marriage typifies—Christ and the church (Eph 5). Practically, when a divorce occurred, any children of the marriage, although they may live with their mother, remained under the legal responsibility of the husband. The blame of the divorce usually rested with the guilty party (e.g., adultery), or it rested with the person who ended a marriage when their partner was not guilty of a fault.⁶⁵ Rawson rightfully points out that since public reasons for divorce were not usually given, it was often not known who initiated a divorce.⁶⁶ Adultery was of course a reason leading to the dissolution of marriages. It was considered immoral, but was common in Roman society in general.⁶⁷ However, there was a distinction made regarding the expectations of marital fidelity between that of the husband and the wife. *Adulterium* really only applied to affairs with women who were married.⁶⁸ The related Greek culture did not limit male sexual activity to marriage,⁶⁹ and the most ‘regulated’ position in which to be, both legally and culturally, was that of a married woman. Married women were expected to maintain fidelity to their husband, but married men were able to explore sexual avenues with other unmarried women, men, or in some cases, boys (pederasty).

Given the intentional arrangement of marriages within the first and second century Greco-Roman culture as well as the series of statutes produced to regulate and proffer it, any instructions of Christians regarding the family would necessarily involve a focus on marriage. Since marriage was the centerpiece of the Roman family, household structure and inheritance creation, it is logical that it would be a major source of teaching of any group that would take up the instruction of families within their subgroup of the culture. As will be seen in subsequent chapters of this thesis, marriage indeed does occupy an important place in the instructions, teaching and counsel regarding the Christian family.

Sexual Expression. During the first and second century C.E., sexual expression appears to have been fluid. The larger Greco-Roman culture appears to have been marked by sexual variety. Married women were not to engage in sexual activity outside their marriage, however

⁶⁴ Treggiari, “Marriage and Family in Roman Society,” 157.

⁶⁵ Treggiari, “Marriage and Family in Roman Society,” 158-159. Treggiari has a helpful description of a variety of components of marriage, family and divorce within the period. Particularly helpful is her discussion on divorce and the relation of ancient sources, specifically the *Digest* regarding divorce within the period.

⁶⁶ Rawson, “The Roman Family,” 33.

⁶⁷ Keener, “Family and Household,” 353-354.

⁶⁸ Rawson, “The Roman Family,” 34.

⁶⁹ Keener, “Family and Household,” 353-354.

men, married and unmarried alike, were free within the culture to seek sexual gratification outside of their marriage,⁷⁰ however, social status was usually a key factor regarding the sexual exploits of a man. While both men and women engaged in a variety of sexual relationships, men were free to engage in casual sex, and to take a concubine, both of which were culturally acceptable. The concubine of the man was a person with whom he lived in a relationship for as long as he wished. Once he married another, the relationship ended, however, he may take up that relationship again if his wife died. Concubines were usually of a lower social status than the man.⁷¹ Scheidel discusses the aspect of the Roman man and polygynous relationships with his own slaves. He writes, "...effectively polygynous relationships with (a man's own) slaves were not prohibited. Married men's sexual relations with slaves did not legally count as adultery. The Roman literary tradition is rife with allusions to sex with slaves..."⁷² Effectively, sexual relationships, particularly for men, were not explicitly tied to marriage. While Roman law only allowed one legal marriage at any one time, sexual exploits could occur in a variety of fashions. Speaking regarding young single men and the sexual exploits around the time of receiving the *toga virilis*, Cicero wrote the following just a century before this period:

"Is there anyone who thinks that youth should be forbidden affairs even with courtesans? He is doubtless eminently austere, but his view is contrary not only to the licence of this age, but also to the custom and concessions of our ancestors. For when was this not a common practice? When was it blamed? When was it forbidden? When, in fact, was it that what is allowed was not allowed?"⁷³

Sexual promiscuity among males within the first and second century Greco-Roman empire was an assumed practice. So much so, that a century before, Cicero could decry any call for abstinence or rigidity in sexual morals.

Sexual expression appears to have been enacted in stages. Both heterosexual and homosexual practices abounded in the period. Wiesner-Hanks writes that the only two regularly condemned sexual practices condemned in the Roman literature of the time were that of a male taking the passive (penetrated) role in homosexual relations, (a role seen as unfit for a Roman citizen and only appropriate for a slave or a prostitute), and that of a woman taking a dominant or active role.⁷⁴ Often times, for freeborn young adults around the age of 14 or 15, an entrance into sexual activity was normal. The *toga virilis* would be donned, and with it came an invitation into manhood. Booth discusses at length one segment of society and shows the likelihood of early homosexual advances that young men would receive from other men. Banquets would often be the occasion for much libation and sexual activity, and young men would likely have already

⁷⁰ Bruce Winter however argues that by the first century, there was a new cultural phenomenon, which he calls "New Wives" which essentially was a new development whereby some women were engaging in infidelity that was out of character up to that point. He writes, "...this book will present evidence for new mores that had come to determine the social activities of the 'new woman' and, in some cases, endorsed her illicit sexual liaisons with younger, single men. See: Bruce Winter, *Roman Wives, Roman Widows: The Appearance of New Women and the Pauline Communities* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2003).

⁷¹ Treggiari, "Marriage and Family in Roman Society," 169.

⁷² Walter Scheidel, "Monogamy and Polygyny," in *A Companion to Families in the Greek and Roman World*, ed. Beryl Rawson (Wiley-Blackwell, 2011), 112.

⁷³ Winter, *Roman Wives*, 68.

⁷⁴ Merry E. Wiesner-Hanks, *Christianity and Sexuality in the Early Modern World: Regulating Desire, Reforming Practice* (London: Routledge, 2000), 26.

been exposed to sexual activity, at least second hand, and so in their early days of manhood, when invited to recline at such occasions, advances were not uncommon.⁷⁵

Sexuality did not exist with the view towards “identity” that it often has in Western cultures today. Rather, sex was viewed as a range of physical expressions by the individual, which usually culminated by the time of a person’s marriage, and if they were to marry, in a heterosexual relationship. While there clearly was a double standard in the sexual ethic between men and women, both genders became involved in sexual encounters. However, they were usually involved in these encounters for different reasons. Men dominated the culture, and as such were allowed more freedom, whereas women had to be much more compliant in their sexual activities to the cultural norms of the day, particularly once they were married.⁷⁶ In fact, ‘masculinity’ was connected to sexuality and the idea of sexual penetration.⁷⁷ Gender hierarchy was also a sexual hierarchy.

***Paterfamilias* and Fatherhood.** As mentioned already, the role of the *paterfamilias* is key to understanding the background of the Greco-Roman family in the period. The *paterfamilias* was the male head of the family, and held power not only over his household, but potentially multiple generations, possibly including children, grandchildren, etc. The power that he held (*patria potestas*) could be imaged by comparison to that of an emperor to his subjects. This patriarchal head could in theory hold the right of life or death over persons (children, slaves, or otherwise) under his power. A *paterfamilias* even held the power over the practice of *expositio*. This practice involved the abandoning of an infant child--an abandoning that if left unabated would result in the physical death of the child.⁷⁸ The *paterfamilias* did not need the consent of the mother to expose the child. Many factors led to the potential exposure of a child such as the cost of caring for another infant, particularly in a poorer family, and even more likely, the less favored female gender of an infant given lineage and dowry concerns. All of this led to higher marital ages for males in society given the shortage of females.⁷⁹ This practice was made illegal in 374 C.E.⁸⁰

There were crude forms of contraception utilizing various herbs and plants. Some of these forms were intended to block conception, while others were attempts at abortion.⁸¹ However, the dominant form of handling unwanted children was the paternally driven abandonment of children after birth. There were also legal forms of infanticide that the father

⁷⁵ Alan Booth, “The Age for Reclining and Its Attendant Perils” in *Dining in a Classical Context*, ed. William Slater (University of Michigan Press, 1991), 105-120.

⁷⁶ Harper, in *From Shame to Sin* deals extensively with the landscape of practices in the Greco-Roman first and second centuries and makes the argument that it was the Christian movement that changed the face of morality indefinitely. See: Kyle Harper, *From Shame to Sin: The Christian Transformation of Sexual Morality in Late Antiquity* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2013).

⁷⁷ Peter-Ben Smit, *Masculinity and the Bible: Survey, Models and Perspectives* (Leiden: Brill, 2017), 50-53.

⁷⁸ An interesting detail of note, which will be discussed in later chapters, is the source data that Christian individuals and/or families would often take in, or rescue exposed infants and care for them as their own. This practice marked Christians, and in addition, there are clear references in the corpus known as *The Apostolic Fathers* that early Christian families were known as families or persons that did not expose their infants.

⁷⁹ Keener, “Family and Household,” 359.

⁸⁰ Keener, “Family and Household,” 360.

⁸¹ I have elsewhere written about ancient forms of abortion in general. See: J. Ryan Davidson, “Abortion in Antiquity,” in *Lexham Bible Dictionary*, ed. John D. Barry (Bellingham, WA: Lexham Press, 2012).

could utilize if he acted immediately following the birth of a child.⁸² This is not to draw the conclusion that all fathers had a lack of concern for their children, even the less desirable children in the societal economy. There are many examples of paternal affection within the sources. *Expositio* however, is a backdrop of paternity that existed within the period. The larger family structural dynamic was that of the power of the father (*patria potestas*) and this dynamic was a foundation for much of the family structure within the Greco-roman family within the first and second centuries.

Lacey details the concept of *patria potestas* and believes it to have been the “fundamental institution underlying Roman institutions.”⁸³ There were eventually some changes (second century) in the power that a *paterfamilias* could wield over his family.⁸⁴ The normative practice in the period however was that the authority of the *paterfamilias* ended upon his death, and his relatives were freed from his *patria potestas*, and then usually transferred to their own *potestas*, (in the case of a son), or to that of the next person over them (in the case of a grandchild of the original *paterfamilias* who would, in the event of the death of his or grandfather, be transferred to his or her father who would then come to have *patria potestas* over them). Often however, given life expectancy, adult males would not have a father or grandfather living, and therefore, many would come into their own authority earlier in practice than in theory.⁸⁵ Property and goods gained by anyone under the *potestas* of the *paterfamilias* was held by the *paterfamilias*, and could only be considered personally owned when a person came out from under the authority of their *paterfamilias* at his death, and often became an heir of himself (*sui heredes*).⁸⁶

Those under a *paterfamilias* were called *filius* or *filia*, depending on gender. Legitimate, or legal fatherhood had to come through Roman marriage. If a child was born to a slave for instance, that child would come under the *patria potestas* of the *paterfamilias* over the household, and not under the biological father of the child. The *Pater naturalis* did not matter if the child was illegitimate (born to a couple who were in a relationship not legally recognized by the State). In this case, the authority over that child, including that of life or death (*ius vitae necisque*) would rest with the head of the household. It should be mentioned that biological paternity was not the only method whereby a person came under the fatherhood of someone. In addition to biological generation, there was the acquisition of slaves, new marriages, etc., however, adoption was also practiced widely in the period. Evidence from the time attests that: “...not only are the children of

⁸² Treggiari, “Marriage and Family in Roman Society,” 175-176.

⁸³ W.K. Lacey, “Patria Potestas,” in *The Family in Ancient Rome: New Perspectives*, ed. Beryl Rawson (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1986), 123. Saller, however, is careful to nuance the understanding of *patria potestas* when he writes, “There is no doubt that *patria potestas* was a central principle organizing the Roman law of persons and property, but its legal centrality does not warrant reading the nearly absolute legal powers of a father over his children as a sociological description of family relationships.” See: Richard Saller, *Patriarchy, property and death in the Roman family* (Great Britain: Cambridge University Press, 1994), 114-115.

⁸⁴ Thomas A.J. McGinn, “Roman Children and the Law,” in *The Oxford Handbook of Childhood and Education in the Classical World*, ed. Judith Evans Grubbs and Tim Parkin (Oxford University Press, 2013), 355. Also, Lassen discusses how it was in the second half of the second century that a *paterfamilias* became legally forbidden to break up a marriage of persons under his *patria potestas*. This would apply for instance to a *paterfamilias* seeking, for example, to break up the marriage of his son under his *patria potestas*, and his son’s wife presumably under the *patria potestas* of her own father/paterfamilias. See: Eva Marie Lassen, “The Roman Family: Ideal and Metaphor” in *Constructing Early Christian Families: Family as social reality and metaphor*, ed. Halvor Moxnes (London & New York: Routledge, 1997).

⁸⁵ Keener, “Family and Household,” 357.

⁸⁶ Treggiari, “Marriage and Family in Roman Society,” 137.

our bodies in our postestas...but also those whom we adopt.” (*Gaius Ins.* 97).⁸⁷ Both *adrogatio* (adoption of a person already having a *paterfamilias*) and *adoptio* (adoption of one not having a *paterfamilias*) were methods to bring a person under the *patria potestas*, and eventual inheritance, of a father.⁸⁸ Rawson points out the prevalence of adoption within the Roman family, and connects the point that the financial and political motives for undertaking adoption affected upper class families more than other social groups. There appears to have been a tendency for young adult males to be adopted to stand in the place of natural sons.⁸⁹ Lindsay discusses adoption as a “convenient method for those without heirs to choose either a close relative or the son of a friend, during their lifetime, to fill the role.”⁹⁰ Inheritance was a key component within the structure of the Greco-Roman family, and it was a male-dominated family system. There is evidence that daughters were held in high regard in Roman society, but the agnatic nature of the culture and of inheritance made female inheritance rights very challenging. However, Roman daughters were useful in passing down inheritance to a new generation.⁹¹

One other important role that the *paterfamilias* played within the household was his role within the household cult or religion. The religion of the household followed a pattern of hierarchy. Slaves, operating under the *paterfamilias*, would serve in menial tasks related to religious expression, whether it was sacrifice or homage to the genius of the master, yet it was the *paterfamilias* who was ultimately considered the head and priest of the household.⁹² Maier writes, “Roman religion in the Republic consisted largely in “a spiritualization of family life.”⁹³ The household god or gods would define the religion of the entire household, and a rebellion against the religious practices of this household religion could have consequences. The *paterfamilias* was not only the chief ruler and decision maker for the household, but he was its religious leader.⁹⁴

In summary, the *paterfamilias* is of central importance to the discussion of family within the first and second century as it was the centerpiece of familial operation. Early Christians would be greatly affected by this concept because most of them, particularly as Christianity moved out from the Jewish context, would either be a *paterfamilias*, or would come underneath one. This “chief of household” mentality would affect the family within the period, and it would be under this system that the early Christians would exist, and address issues related to family. Thus, it is not surprising to find, as will be seen in subsequent chapters, that much of the paraenesis to Christian fathers involves the consideration that they would be the leader of the family religion.

⁸⁷ Gaius, *Institutes*, 33.

⁸⁸ Lassen, “The Roman Family,” 104-105.

⁸⁹ Beryl Rawson, “Children in the Roman Familia,” in *The Family in Ancient Rome: New Perspectives*, ed. Beryl Rawson (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1986), 196.

⁹⁰ Hugh Lindsay, “Adoption and Heirship in Greece and Rome,” in *A Companion to Families in the Greek and Roman World*, ed. Beryl Rawson (Wiley-Blackwell, 2011), 358.

⁹¹ Lindsay, “Adoption and Heirship,” 356. Jane F. Gardner also has a helpful discussion regarding ‘Intestacy’ with the Greco-Roman culture. Of chief importance is her discussion of the three classes of inheritors within civil law (*sui heredes*, *agnates* and *gentiles*-members of the gens). See: Jane F. Gardner, “Roman “Horror” of Intestacy?,” in *A Companion to Families in the Greek and Roman World*, ed. Beryl Rawson (Wiley-Blackwell, 2011), 316-376.

⁹² Harry Maier, “The Social Setting of the Ministry as Reflected in the Writings of Hermas, Clement and Ignatius” (Dissertations SR 1, 1991, Wilfrid Laurier University Press), 17.

⁹³ Maier, “The Social Setting,” 17. He quotes this from: Robert A. Nisbet, “Kinship and Power in First Century Rome,” in *Tradition and Revolt* (New York: Random House, 1968) pp. 203-24.

⁹⁴ Bodet and Olyan give exhaustive details regarding household and family religion in the period. Particularly, they offer discussion regarding *Penates* and *Lares* and the connections of the family to the religion of the household. See: John Bodet and Samuel M. Olyan, *Household and Family Religion in Antiquity* (Malden, MA: Blackwell Publishing, 2008), 248-275.

Much like the *paterfamilias* of the surrounding culture, the Christian *paterfamilias* was expected to guide his family, in both structure, and as the “priest” of his family.⁹⁵

Mothers. In her landmark work on the Roman mother, Dixon concludes by saying that, “...the Roman mother was not associated as closely with the young child or with indiscriminating tenderness as the mother of our own cultural tradition but was viewed primarily as the transmitter of traditional morality—ideally, a firm disciplinarian. This forms a contrast with the current stereotype of more recent history which characterizes the mother as typically affectionate and the father as typically disciplinarian.”⁹⁶ Dixon however admits that there is an “inadequacy” of the sources in giving a complete picture of the maternal relationship with children in the Greco-Roman family.⁹⁷ She is not alone in giving this picture, as others have shown that the Roman mother was not primarily a source of gentle sentimentality, but rather of moral authority.⁹⁸ Given the modern day stereotype of motherhood, anachronistic glances at Greco-Roman motherhood, particularly in the more elite populations of Roman culture, can be all too common. Motherhood was seen in the period considering the totality of familial purpose. While the paternal role was one of supreme responsibility, the mother guided day-to-day discipline. In the Greco-Roman household, there was not the strict ‘nuclear’ family idea that we find in other modern familial expressions. Households often included many parties (servants/slaves, children, etc.) and a shared relational dynamic was often a focus.

The role of the *nutrix*, or Roman nurse is important to this discussion regarding the Greco-Roman mother, and more specifically, the maternal relationship with offspring. This individual would be a family retained individual (usually a person from a lower class status with whom the family would often share loyalty, resources and even burial places) that would care for the early feeding and needs of an infant child.⁹⁹ Even though this official relationship was likely more common in the socio-economic upper classes, it is likely that even in lower classes, a system of foster parents could be involved in the care of the child. Perhaps this was so that the biological parents could work,¹⁰⁰ or it could be in part due to the transient population of slaves and their children. Wet nursing appears to have been very prevalent with a long-standing tradition in all elements of society. Slave mothers would have been necessarily required to return to work, and therefore, the household would provide lactation for even slave children.¹⁰¹ There are also numerous recordings in the sources of the role of a *paedagogus*, who would provide aspects of guardian care for a developing child. A *paedagogus* was often a slave that was chosen with a careful view toward moral integrity and likely some intellectual ability. This individual was not a teacher specifically but would accompany the child in journeys to and from school or classes and would be given oversight over the child’s lessons.¹⁰² Another relational dynamic regarding motherhood was likely the person of a “step-mother” which likely was a regularly occurring reality given divorce and mortality rates within the culture. With the likelihood of such a woman seeking to care for her own financial welfare amid the marital process, given the structure of rights afforded or denied a woman in the culture, relationships with stepchildren were at least in

⁹⁵ The reader is encouraged to see Chapters three and five as they detail this reality from the primary sources.

⁹⁶ Suzanne Dixon, *The Roman Mother* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1988), 233.

⁹⁷ Dixon, *The Roman Mother*, 236.

⁹⁸ Keener, “Family and Household,” 356.

⁹⁹ Dixon, *The Roman Mother*, 145.

¹⁰⁰ Dixon, *The Roman Mother*, 146.

¹⁰¹ Beryl Rawson, *Children and Childhood in Roman Italy* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2003), 122, 124.

¹⁰² Rawson, *Children and Childhood*, 165.

part impacted by such concerns. Often, such a woman would be viewed with negative sentiment.¹⁰³

By and large, the role of the mother in society was to support the *pietas* (duty or honor) of the household in whatever way necessary. Depending on the societal or economic class of the family, the specific duties of the wife and mother may vary, however caring for the needs of husband and children, whether singularly or in the overseeing (under the *paterfamilias*) of the servants of the household, was the central role.¹⁰⁴ As children grew, the influence of the mother upon the child varied. In this mixture of some children turning on a mother and others having an active mother-child relationship, the varying maternal dynamic can be seen. One example of maternal influence is the large amount of evidence that mothers arranged the marriages of their adult children even though there was no legal statute for this.¹⁰⁵

Within the larger Greco-Roman culture then, the *paterfamilias* would have been a major focus of any group, philosophical school, or religion seeking to address the family. However, mothers would have been a part of such addresses, and were,¹⁰⁶ given their influence within the family system. This would be even more the case given the ultimate goal of the maternal unit supporting the *pietas* of the household, which included the household deities.

Children. The future of the Roman state rested in the generations of citizens to come. Rawson declares, “Procreation of children was the explicit aim of Roman marriage.”¹⁰⁷ The societal goal for parents was to bring up their children, both in character and in education, in such a way that the future hopes of the Roman Empire were ensured. The research on children in the period is intricate particularly given the variety of differences that existed in the experiences of children among the various classes. Far from the modern Western ideal of the centrality of children, the focus upon children varied. In her work on children in the period, particularly within the *New Testament*, MacDonald addresses the overlapping category or distinction between children and adults. Speaking to the blurred distinction between the two, she writes, “Within the broader framework of the life cycle, several ancient authors did have a basic concept of the stages of childhood and adulthood...Age seven typically marked the end of infancy and the beginning of adulthood...the world of work also blurs the distinction between child and adult, especially for freeborn poor and slaves. It was expected that a slave child by the age of five could render service to his or her master.”¹⁰⁸ Even given this blurring of stages, there is some idea that childhood was a reality in the ancient world. Horn and Martens write, “What is clear is that childhood was both a conceptual and a social reality in the ancient Jewish and Greco-Roman worlds. There were clear divisions to childhood, as numerous texts from the ancient world state.”¹⁰⁹ Clarifying this reality, they also write, “In the first century A.D., a ten-to-twelve-year-old person was on the cusp of becoming an adult.”¹¹⁰ While multiple factors determined the actual reality of “childhood,” many of which differ from modern conceptions of childhood, there were some stages, albeit loose markers, which could be defined as childhood. Cohick writes, “...children were valued as they contributed to the larger social whole. Moreover, their social class and physical maturity were the

¹⁰³ Keener, “Family and Household,” 353-356.

¹⁰⁴ See: Treggiari, “Marriage and Family in Roman Society,” 177-182, for a discussion on roles and ideology of familial relationships.

¹⁰⁵ Dixon, *The Roman Family*, 36.

¹⁰⁶ In subsequent chapters this will be seen, but the household codes of *New Testament* literature (i.e., *Ephesians* and *Colossians*) as well as the writings of the *Apostolic Fathers* corpus clearly demonstrate this.

¹⁰⁷ Rawson, *Children and Childhood*, 95.

¹⁰⁸ MacDonald, *The Power of Children*, 34-35.

¹⁰⁹ Cornelia B. Horn and John W. Martens, *Let the little children come to me* (Washington D.C.: Catholic University Press, 2009), 6.

¹¹⁰ Horn and Martens, *Let the little children*, 2.

markers used to determine age-appropriate behavior and occupation. There was little sentimentalism about childhood itself...¹¹¹ Several factors were also involved in determining what age a child moved out of childhood, either ontologically or functionally, and into adulthood. One dominant factor was socioeconomic status. Krause writes, “In poorer circles, childhood ended quickly. Boys were expected, from a young age, to contribute to the family’s support...Coming of age for elite boys was marked by the exchange of the *toga praetexta*...a boy’s special toga, for the *toga virilis* (the manly toga)...boys were between fourteen and sixteen years old when they received their adult clothing.”¹¹²

Within the period, children are recorded in literature, art and funerary inscriptions.¹¹³ The birth of a child was celebrated within the household and the larger community, and some primary source literature describes celebrations that would occur within the small streets outside dwellings, decorations that were made, perhaps by other children to announce a birth, and the congratulatory comments that would be made to the *paterfamilias*.¹¹⁴ Yet, we cannot deduce from this that children were central to society given the counter evidence provided for example by Wiedmann who discusses the reality that slaves, children and adolescents did not have a full place in the community. He recounts for example that children who died under 40 days of age were buried at night unlike adults and were often buried in the foundations of the wall of a house symbolizing their position in effect as being on the “edge of the household.”¹¹⁵ There is also the reoccurring issue of a lack of complete record among the sources for children from the period, particularly among the lower-class elements of Greco-Roman society. However, from the sources, some clear inferences can be made upon which aspects regarding the lives of children in the first and second century can be known.

While the nature of parental relationships with children often focused on discipline and development of character, there is the indication that parental relationships with children were marked with sentiment. For example, Wiedmann writes, “Cicero’s correspondence shows that Roman parents had a much wider range of feelings about their children than that to which the classical literary genres give expression.”¹¹⁶ While not elevated in personhood, children within the Greco-Roman family were a focal point for future endeavors. The passing on of name and property heightened the role that a child, particularly a male, would have within the structure of the family. In addition to natural-born children, the Roman family was marked by a fluid arrangement, which allowed for a variety of children to be cared for within the household. Many families nurtured children that were not their own natural children (*alumni*). The taking in of such children was often undertaken for a variety of reasons. The learning of a trade might be a reason

¹¹¹ Lynn Cohick, “Women, Children, and Families in the Greco-Roman World,” in *The World of the New Testament*, eds. Joel B Green and Lee Martin McDonald (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2013), 183.

¹¹² Jens-Uwe Krause, “Children in the Roman Family and Beyond,” in *The Oxford Handbook of Social Relations in the Roman World*, ed. Michael Peachin (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011), 629.

¹¹³ Beryl Rawson, “Children in the Roman Familia,” in *The Family in Ancient Rome: New Perspectives*, ed. Beryl Rawson (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1986), 170.

¹¹⁴ Janette McWilliam, “The Socialization of Roman Children,” in *The Oxford Handbook of Childhood and Education in the Classical World*, eds. Judith Evans Grubbs and Tim Parkin (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013), 267.

¹¹⁵ Thomas Wiedmann, *Adults and Children in the Roman Empire* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1989), 179.

¹¹⁶ Wiedmann, *Adults and Children*, 89. I acknowledge that Cicero pre-dates the period by a slight amount of time, however, given the general closeness to the period, as well as the fact that Cicero would have been speaking for what would have been one or two generations ahead of the period in view, his source data is of relevance to the study in this regard.

for *alumni* to be brought under the care of a *paterfamilias*. This could be of help to the household, but ultimately to the child once that trade was developed. There are references in the *Digest* to a *paterfamilias* hiring out slaves as young as age seven to be apprentices in the learning of a trade or skill.¹¹⁷ Another economic reason to nurture a non-biological child was the ability to pass on property. In the period, mortality rates were very high, and there was often the need to secure an heir to whom property could be bequeathed. This arrangement was not without any kind of emotional bond. Often, a parental type of affection existed and therefore economic concerns were not the only factors in the relationship.¹¹⁸ *Alumni* were one type of non-biological relationship, and it could be considered a form of care for children other than one's own. While *alumni* were seemingly intentional additions to the household, they were not the only non-biological parenting relationship. In addition to *alumni*, *vernae* were also children that were additions to a household through means outside of biological processes. *Vernae* were slaves born inside the house of a master. These children were different than slaves purchased or acquired. Rather, *vernae* were children born to slaves already within the household, and so by virtue of their birth, these children added more slaves to the household. Rawson writes that it is, "generally agreed that *vernae* held a special position in the household and could expect better treatment than other slaves."¹¹⁹ One example of this is the source evidence written in wills within the time period.¹²⁰ Slave children might often be raised by parents in the hopes that that child would ultimately see to their own burial and commemoration upon death.¹²¹ Both *alumni* and *vernae* offer further insight into the varied parental practices of the Greco-Roman family.¹²²

The full experience of childhood in the period is not completely known. Depending on the place of the child in society (wealthy household, freeborn, slave, etc.), the experience would have varied. If a child were a slave, even then, their responsibilities, and favor within the house, could have varied. Work was a reality for children in all levels. For the wealthy freeborn children, educational preparation was of the utmost importance, and would have begun early. For a slave-born child, this too could have been a reality depending on the aptitude and position of that particular child. For example, if a slave child was marked out for a particular vocational or trade position, then training could have conceivably begun at an early age. The usefulness of that child in the household would dictate that dynamic. Rawson discusses how play and storytelling was frequently attributed in the literary sources with nurses, and how there is a large amount of archaeological and literary evidence of a range of childhood toys.¹²³ There is also evidence that pets were often a part of the childhood experience, either literally, or symbolically through toys.¹²⁴ Dolls are seemingly the most well mentioned toys in the literature.¹²⁵

Children, while not the dominant entity of society in position, were essentially everywhere. Freeborn and slave children alike would populate the Greco-Roman *domus*.

¹¹⁷ Thomas Wiedmann, *Adults and Children in the Roman Empire*, 156.

¹¹⁸ Beryl Rawson, "Children in the Roman Familia," 173-174.

¹¹⁹ Beryl Rawson, "Children in the Roman Familia," 186.

¹²⁰ Suzanne Dixon, *The Roman Family*, 129.

¹²¹ Suzanne Dixon, *The Roman Family*, 128.

¹²² Dixon writes, "*Vernae* and *alumni* are interesting groups that recur tantalizingly in the inscriptions and other sources having to do with slave children. Although the precise nature of these classifications is open to argument, it can be assumed that they roughly equate to slave children born within the *familia* and to foundlings brought up as foster children..." See: Suzanne Dixon, *The Roman Family*, 128.

¹²³ Rawson, *Children and Childhood in Roman Italy*, 126-128.

¹²⁴ Rawson, *Children and Childhood in Roman Italy*, 129.

¹²⁵ Mary Harlow, "Toys, Dolls, and The Material Culture of Childhood," in *The Oxford Handbook of Childhood and Education in the Classical World*, eds. Judith Evans Grubbs and Tim Parkin (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013), 329.

MacDonald has pointed out that the archeological record does not seem to indicate that there were separate rooms for children such as bedrooms or playrooms,¹²⁶ making the assumption credible that children occupied ‘space’ in most gatherings and in most activities. Children of a variety of origins (adoption, slave, naturally born), would occupy space, and would provide not only a presence, but also a resource to the household that was dominated by the presence of children. MacDonald is also fast to point out that the idea of ‘child’ or ‘children’ was much more fluid in the time period than it is now.¹²⁷ Marital ages of girls was younger, adoption of a child, particularly a son, often entailed the adoptee being an adult male, and boys of a mid-teenage range may be considered adults in some respects. Each of these three facts point to the fluidity in the definition of ‘children’ within the period. Children of all ages could be expected to encounter death, funeral rituals, as well as see and participate in sexual activity (most likely through the initiation of an older person). Innocence, while present, was not what is envisaged by the idea of childhood today. Still, there were certain dynamics of the childhood experience present in every culture, which were a part of the Greco-Roman experience.

Slaves. While already mentioned in the previous sections, a dominant group of people within the Greco-Roman household and *familia* was that of slaves. To avoid repetition, previous information given in other subsections will not be recounted here, but a few further components are necessary to summarize. Laes writes that, “In ancient eyes, slavery was the worst fate that could befall a person... Legal sources refer to slaves as objects. They had no rights whatsoever: they could not inherit, own possessions, marry or officially recognize their offspring. On the other hand, their Roman masters were quite aware that they were human beings with feelings, intelligence and abilities.”¹²⁸ That slaves would be included in a chapter on the family may seem odd to the reader with a modern concept of family in mind. However, slaves were a large contingent of the Greco-Roman household.¹²⁹ Having no legal rights, and often living in danger of separation from biological kinship, slaves were active participants within the household of the *paterfamilias*. Slaves were property and could be handled as such, and yet, there is much evidence to suggest that slaves, functioning in a variety of roles within the Greco-Roman household could be viewed with fondness. From child slaves to slaves caring for children; from slaves viewed with familial fondness to slaves used for sexual exploits,¹³⁰ slaves of the household

¹²⁶ Margaret MacDonald, *The Power of Children*, 21.

¹²⁷ MacDonald, *The Power of Children*, 18-19. She writes when addressing the term ‘children’ in early New Testament Texts, “To some degree one is hampered in understanding by literal translation and narrow and anachronistic interpretation. Debates about whether these texts refer to young children or adult children fail to appreciate the lack of strict demarcation between childhood and adulthood in antiquity.”

¹²⁸ Christian Laes, *Children in the Roman Empire* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011), 155.

¹²⁹ Within the study of the Greco-Roman family, and specifically the Christian divergence from the dominant culture, the issue of slavery is germane. Osiek and Balch open their chapter on “Slaves” with the following: “For early Jews and Christians, slavery was an ever-present institution of Greco-Roman society.” See: Carolyn Osiek and David Balch, *Families in the New Testament World: Households and House Churches* (Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox Press, 1997), 174. Also, Duncan-Jones details the issue of power and status within Roman society and offers a helpful summary, in two chapters, on slavery within the Roman society. See: Richard Duncan-Jones, *Power and Privilege in Roman Society* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2016), 129-153.

¹³⁰ Maier writes, “Ancient literature is filled with references to the mistreatment of slaves, especially their use as sex objects. Slave dealers often castrated boys for sale as sex objects, girls were bought to generate income through prostitution, children were purchased solely for the sake of sexual gratification, and so on. Because there was no fear of pregnancy, enslaved wet nurses

economy are a crucial part of understanding the larger Greco-Roman household. A challenge in understanding this component of the Greco-Roman household is the danger of anachronistic interpretations that can often be imported with the understanding of a slave from the more modern Colonial period in British and North American slavery for example. The existing research of the role of the slave in the household of the period produces a multifaceted view of how slaves were viewed within the period.

2.3 Jewish Families

Early within Christianity, it was the Jewish followers of Jesus Christ who were the initial converts and they passed on certain ideals and morals to Gentiles converts as early as the Jerusalem Council (Acts 15). However, it was not simply the Jewish converts to Christianity alone that may have rejected the attitudinal and practical norms of the average Greco-Roman family led by the *paterfamilias*. Early writings within the literature of the first and second century non-Christian Jewish arena appear to attest to some differences in how a Jewish household would operate from that of the dominant Greco-Roman culture. While there were undoubtedly some ways in which Jewish families assimilated to the dominant Greco-Roman culture, there were many areas where they did not. Verner, for example, discusses aspects of how Jewish society differed from the rest of the Greco-Roman world such as the exposure of infants, and the aspects of the rights of women and marriage, yet in other areas there were similarities such as strong patriarchy.¹³¹ Reinhartz, when dealing extensively with the work of Philo regarding parent-child relationships of Jewish families, concludes that, "...the many parallels in Greco-Roman literature, as well as the likely influence of such institutions as *patria potestas* on Philonic thought, raise the possibility that, despite Philo's protestations to the contrary, Jewish families were not fundamentally different either in structure or in their problems from the non-Jewish families in the Hellenistic world at the turn of the eras. Where they would have differed is in their expected adherence to specific practices such as circumcision and the redemption of the firstborn."¹³² Roman law did allow different ethnic groups to keep and pursue their own traditions and religious laws, provided that those traditions and customs did not conflict with the larger Roman state.¹³³ This was nowhere more evident than in the allowances that the Roman Empire granted for Jews within the first and second century.

Jeffers demonstrates that like the Roman families around them, the Jewish family households likely consisted of several generations.¹³⁴ He argues that the key difference between Jewish (and Christian) families from Pagan families particularly living in Rome was that of a

were often candidates for sexual exploitation. While some of these practices, such as the castration of boys, were considered illegal, it was not because of notions of compassion or justice. So far as sex was concerned, the right of a dominant party to penetrate a subordinate was considered natural." Harry O. Maier, *New Testament Christianity in the Roman World* (Oxford, U.K.: Oxford University Press, 2019), 162.

¹³¹ David C. Verner, *The Household of God: The Social world of the Pastoral Epistles* (Chico, Ca: Scholars Press, 1981), 44-47.

¹³² Adele Reinhartz, "Parents and Children: A Philonic Perspective," in *The Jewish Family in Antiquity*, ed. Shaye J.D. Cohen (Atlanta, GA: Scholars Press, 1993), 87.

¹³³ Kate Cooper, "The Household as a Venue for Religious Conversion: The Case of Christianity," in *A Companion to Families in the Greek and Roman World*, ed. Beryl Rawson (Chichester, West Sussex, U.K.: Wiley-Blackwell, 2011), 185.

¹³⁴ James S. Jeffers, "Jewish and Christian Families in First-Century Rome," in *Judaism and Christianity in First-Century Rome*, ed. Karl P. Donfried & Peter Richardson (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1998), 136.

greater focus on religious education and increased ethical demands.¹³⁵ The Greco-Roman culture valued involvement in activities and practices that benefited the influence of the *paterfamilias*. However, there was a cultural separation between Jewish families of the time period with that of non-Jewish families because of the Jewish faith expression. This separation between the non-Jewish and Jewish families of the first century can be seen clearly in the fact that to become a convert to Judaism, one had to effectively disconnect from the non-Jewish family of origin due to social factors.¹³⁶ Although the Greek and Roman religious expressions were similarly ancestral, the Jewish faith was bound up in an ethnic identity¹³⁷ so that to be Jewish was to be a follower of Yahweh and a particular approach to intermarriage, food restrictions, social expectations, etc. were all markers of a distinct minority identity. This identity was fostered from an early age as the early Hebrew Scriptures speak for instance to the training of children. The Pentateuch issues the call of God to fathers to teach their children in the ways of God. The *Shema* and surrounding passages alone give a strong set of orders toward paraenesis. Josephus, the first century Jewish historian living in the larger Greco-Roman culture, reports that one of the primary markers of the Jewish tradition was devotion to the instruction of children, particularly as it related to the decrees of God (*Contra Apionem* 1.60-61).¹³⁸

These cultural differences between Jewish families and non-Jewish families living in the first and second centuries were a part of what set Jewish families apart from the polytheistic system of the larger culture. Specifically, these differences included food, worship practices, festivals, and a weekly, recognized Sabbath, but also involved other noticeable differences in more than simply private household practices. Everyday life in a Galilean village for instance, focused on personal purity and practice observance within a community that was shaped by family even above that of sacrifice or synagogue attendance.¹³⁹ Barclay summarizes this well when he writes, “Judaism was woven particularly deeply into the fabric of family life, and Jewish children raised in an ethos in which their ethnic distinctiveness was continually reinforced.”¹⁴⁰ Both Philo and Josephus report that customs and laws of the Jewish tradition were engendered upon children at an early age, and it appears that dietary customs, socialization patterns and life rhythm were the largest aspects of the training.¹⁴¹ Josephus further writes of Moses’ giving of the law that, “Starting from the very beginning with the food of which we partake from infancy and the private life of the home, he left nothing, however insignificant, to the discretion and caprice of the individual.”¹⁴² Inherent to Jewish life was the daily rhythm of household existence based on the scriptural mandates for the home. Beyond these cultural differences, there were also necessary relational structures that marked the family.

¹³⁵ Jeffers, “Jewish and Christian,” 129.

¹³⁶ Nicholas H. Taylor, “The Social Nature of Conversion in the Early Christian World,” in *Modelling Early Christianity: Social-scientific studies of the New Testament in its context*, ed. Philip F. Esler (London & New York: Routledge, 1995), 133.

¹³⁷ John M.G. Barclay, “The Family As the Bearer of Religion,” in *Constructing Early Christian Families: Family as social reality and metaphor*, ed. Halvor Moxnes (London & New York: Routledge, 1997), 69.

¹³⁸ Barclay, “The Family,” 69-70.

¹³⁹ Gary M. Burge, Lynn H. Cohick and Gene L. Green, *The New Testament in Antiquity* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2009), 72.

¹⁴⁰ Barclay, “The Family,” 71.

¹⁴¹ Barclay, “The Family,” 70-71.

¹⁴² Josephus, *The Life. Against Apion*, trans. H. St. J. Thackeray. Loeb Classical Library 186 (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1926), 363. This Josephus quote is also referenced in Barclay, “The Family,” 70.

2.3.1. Relationship Structures

Given the focus on family life, particularly regarding parent to child paraenesis, Jewish families were intent on the family being a central structure to all of life. Seeing that the family was a source of strength for Jews within the first and second century,¹⁴³ the dynamic of familial relationships is of importance to the specific question of pastoral counsel. In his anthology regarding the Jewish family in antiquity, Cohen writes, “The striking conclusion... is that the Jewish family in antiquity seems not to have been distinctive by the power of its Jewishness; rather, its structure, ideals, and dynamics seem to have been virtually identical with those of its ambient cultures.”¹⁴⁴ Yet, if Jewish families were seeking to continue to live out of the ideals of Torah, then “ideals” certainly would have been different. Scriptural norms and practice, however, are two separate things. Marriage and parent-child relationships are the two relational structures of specific attention.

While Jewish marriage in the first century allowed for polygamy, it appears that the family was built on monogamy.¹⁴⁵ A microcosm of this reality can be seen in Italy where Jewish families living in Italy within the period were endogamous.¹⁴⁶ While certainly Jewish families could have different marriage examples, specifically with the history of men having more than one wife or concubines within the first century, the ‘family’ largely appears to have been based on monogamy. In fact, Jeffers writes that there are no known examples of polygamists among the Jewish families in Rome. It seems that Jewish families adopted the marital practices of the larger Greco-Roman culture around them in the various cities in which they lived, and Roman law did not allow for polygamy. Legal marriages (*matrimonium*) in the larger Roman context were the only marriages recognized, and the most common example of this by the late Republic was marriage “without manus” (*sine manu*). This marriage was considered legal, but the wife did not come under the authority of her husband, but remained under her original *paterfamilias*. With all of these larger marital structures in place, Jewish families married and developed households. Jewish girls married earlier than boys, marrying usually between the ages of 12 to 18, while boys or young men waited until somewhere between the ages of mid-20’s to mid-30’s.¹⁴⁷ Marital fidelity was held in high regard, not only according to Torah, but also in its connection to the legal status of the progeny of the marriage. Philo writes:

“But those men who are frantic in their desires for the wives of others, and at times even for those of their nearest relations or dearest friends, and who live to the injury of their neighbours, attempting to vitiate whole families, however numerous, and violating all kinds of marriage vows, and making vain the hopes which men conceive of having legitimate children, being afflicted with an incurable disease of the soul, must be punished with death as common enemies to the whole race of mankind...” (*Special Laws 3.11*).¹⁴⁸

¹⁴³ Barclay states that, “The Family...constituted one of Judaism’s greatest strengths in the sometimes hostile atmosphere of the Greco-Roman world.” Barclay, “The Family,” 72.

¹⁴⁴ Shaye J.D. Cohen, *The Jewish Family in Antiquity* (Atlanta, GA: Scholars Press, 1993), 2.

¹⁴⁵ S. Safrai, “Home and Family,” in *The Jewish People in the First Century: Historical Geography, Political History, Social, Cultural and Religious Life and Institutions*, eds. S. Safrai and M. Stern (Assen/Amsterdam: Van Gorcum, 1976), 748.

¹⁴⁶ David Noy, “Foreign Families in Roman Italy,” in *A Companion to Families in the Greek and Roman World*, ed. Beryl Rawson (Chichester, West Sussex, U.K.: Wiley-Blackwell, 2011), 157.

¹⁴⁷ Jeffers, “Jewish and Christian,” 133-136.

¹⁴⁸ Philo, *The Works of Philo: Complete and Unabridged*, trans. C.D. Yonge (USA, Hendrickson Publishers, 1993), 595.

Both the moral and practical components to fidelity would have also been considerations for the Christians, many of whom became followers of Jesus out of Judaism. Marital fidelity among Jewish families in the Greco-Roman culture of the first and second century is also connected to the quality or dynamic of the relationship itself.

Jewish families valued devotion to one another. Leon, when discussing the Jews of ancient Rome, postulates that based on epigraphic evidence, families had a “devoted and wholesome” existence in the community of ancient Rome.¹⁴⁹ Jewish husbands and wives, while usually in parentally-arranged marriages, were not completely devoid of love and happiness. In fact, epigraphic inscriptions point specifically to evidence of respect for the bond of marriage, as well as devotion between husband and wife.¹⁵⁰ And considering the Jewish Scriptures, there are clear examples of love (i.e., Isaac and Rebekah, Jacob and Rachel, and The Song of Solomon, or Canticles, to name a few). These celebrated passages would certainly not have been absent from the thinking of marriage, at least as a construct in the minds of parents as they arranged marriages¹⁵¹ for their children.

Jewish marriage placed considerable focus on childbearing. This was so much the case, that the theme of barrenness woven throughout the Old Testament was viewed as a curse. While the larger Greco-Roman culture desired childbearing for the proliferation of the state, in the Jewish home it was viewed as a religious necessity, and in the Jewish family it was even more important in many ways than in the larger Greco-Roman culture.¹⁵² Josephus connected the birth of children with the education of those children.¹⁵³ Marriage had a purpose in producing progeny who would be educated in the ways of God. This is not to say that relationships were devoid of emotion, or romance, but it is to point out that marriage prioritized the making of a family.

The other primary relational structure among Jewish families in the first and second century was that of parents and children. The famous Hebraic refrain of the *Shema* is followed quickly by the call to train children (Deut 6:4-7). And reciprocally, the command for children to relate to parents with honor is nowhere seen more strongly than in the fifth commandment of the Decalogue (Ex. 20:12) where children are instructed in their relationship towards parents. Jewish families tended to have a higher regard for the honoring of parents than that of the larger Greco-Roman culture. Jewish writers and teachers held this command in highest regard, and often saw this relationship structure as emanating from the power and authority of God whom parents were seen to represent.¹⁵⁴ The honoring of parents extended throughout the lifespan of the Jewish child, to include penalties for striking a parent (Ex. 21:15), caring for aged parents and not abandoning parents in their elder years (an issue which Josephus addresses¹⁵⁵). Levirate law contained strong penalties for the child that did not honor his or her parents (Deut 27:16). This honoring of parents also provided an avenue for the Jewish paraenesis of children particularly in the areas of the faith. Identity was forged in the family unit, and this served the greater good of passing on religious principles. The Jewish father was to indoctrinate and discipline his children in the faith, which

¹⁴⁹ Harry J. Leon, *The Jews of Ancient Rome: Updated Edition* (MA: Hendrickson, 1995), 232.

¹⁵⁰ Leon, *The Jews*, 258.

¹⁵¹ Safrai gives a helpful summary and description of Jewish betrothal and marriage ceremony customs among families including a description of the roles of both the two families and the bride and groom in the process. While not directly definitive regarding marriages, the information does point to the importance that Jews placed on marriage within the time period. See: Safrai, “Home and Family,” 752-760.

¹⁵² C.S. Keener, “Marriage,” in *Dictionary of New Testament Background*, eds. C.A. Porter and S.E. Porter (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2000), 681.

¹⁵³ Josephus, *Ag. Ap.* 2.25.

¹⁵⁴ C.S. Keener, “Family and Household,” in *Dictionary of New Testament Background*, eds. C.A. Porter and S.E. Porter (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2000), 354.

¹⁵⁵ Josephus, *Ag. Ap.* 2:27--reference taken from Keener, “Family and Household,” 356.

focused on the provision of God to His people (Ex. 13:8, Deut 6, 33:4, Prov. 13:24). Stamps argues that for these reasons among others, the family and home were the primary source of identity, particularly for sons, who would carry on the family line and name.¹⁵⁶ The home was the primary source of training and education as well. There is evidence that by the first century B.C.E., there were schools developed outside the home for boys, as girls did not attend school away from home. These schools were both primary, or elementary (*bet seper*) focusing on up to age nine, and secondary (*bet talmud* or *bet midrash*), focusing on boys ages 10 to 13. These schools were likely developed at least in part due to the Hellenistic influence of the culture. However, the father was still viewed as the primary instructor for small children in the things of the faith. Systematic education ended for a Jewish boy in the period after age 13, although some young men continued in synagogue training, or apprenticeship.¹⁵⁷ While this training occurring outside the home looked like the structure of the larger Greco-Roman culture, there were some differences (to include language, and not writing from dictation given the Jewish prohibition of copying Scripture).¹⁵⁸

While not the focus of this research as an entity, an understanding of Jewish families is still necessary in part due to the connections both with the larger Greco-Roman culture, and with the infancy of Christianity. The Jewish idea of family would undoubtedly affect the early Christian concept of the same institution, and therein is the connection to this part of the research. In the final analysis, in many ways, the Jewish families of the time period looked similar to the larger Greco-Roman family, and yet in many areas, it appears to have deviated from it particularly as ethnic cultural concerns tied with Judaism called for differences in familial structures.

2.4. Sample Data from Non-Christian Source Material

Within the larger, non-Christian Greco-Roman culture, there are insights to be gleaned from primary source material. Understanding the family through the writings of non-Christian authors can provide a balanced understanding of the Christian family against the larger cultural family milieu. It is the aim of this section to provide some primary source material, particularly concerning the ‘family’ arising out of clearly non-Christian sources. A particular focus will be the areas addressed in the previous sections such as children and *paideia*, sexuality, marriage, and familial structure.

One household group addressed in the previous sections was children, and the related idea of *paideia*. Within the period in question, the larger cultural understanding, particularly of those with financial status and means, was that the education of children was a priority. Plutarch, the Greek Philosopher of the first century wrote:

“Just as I advise people to make nothing of more immediate importance than the education of their children, so again I say they ought to cling to the uncorrupted and sound education...”¹⁵⁹

Similarly, Cassius Dio (2nd to early 3rd century) wrote:

¹⁵⁶ D.L. Stamps, “Children in Late Antiquity,” in *Dictionary of New Testament Background*, eds. C.A. Porter and S.E. Porter (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2000), 199.

¹⁵⁷ D.F. Watson, “Education: Jewish and Greco-Roman,” in *Dictionary of New Testament Background*, eds. C.A. Porter and S.E. Porter (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2000), 309-312.

¹⁵⁸ D.F. Watson, “Education,” 312.

¹⁵⁹ Plutarch. *Moralia, Volume I: The Education of Children*, trans. Frank Cole Babbitt, Loeb Classical Library 197 (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1927), 27.

“Is it not a joy to acknowledge a child who possesses the qualities of both parents, to tend and educate a person who is both the physical and the mental mirror of yourself, so that, as he grows up, another self is created?”¹⁶⁰

Paternal pride was often a part of the discussion of the education of children. Pliny, in a letter to Cornelius Tacitus, affirms the paternal desire for children to be educated particularly with professors in their local area.¹⁶¹ In many sources, the immaturity, or mental weakness of children was part of the understanding behind the need for education. For instance, Seneca wrote (Letters, 33,7) about giving children proverbs to learn to fend off the immaturity of the childlike mind.¹⁶² The schooling system where education occurred was a staged system, as Apuleius, among others, figuratively described.¹⁶³

Of course, as seen in the previous sections, the use of a *pedagogue* was common practice in this educational method. Epictetus writes of the common practice of parents delivering their children to a pedagogue “to take care on all that we suffer no harm.”¹⁶⁴ Various other sources from the period detail education more specifically such as Quintilian in *On Teaching Rhetoric* and in Pseudo-Plutarch, in works such as *The Education of Children*. As will be detailed more fully in upcoming chapters, Christians were not distinct in their call to educate children, but as with other aspects of social structure, they simply infused that with a different teleological trajectory.

In addition to literary examples, epigraphic evidence shows that children, even from a young age, were taught using rhetorical devices. Sarcophagi examples depicting children giving orations or being instructed are available giving evidence of the value placed on the education of children, to the point that in death, they are remembered as learned.¹⁶⁵ The fact that parents recorded such information on the burial structures of their children demonstrates the value placed on education. The training and education of children can be seen undisputedly as a focus of parents and families within the period.

Sexual expression was also a household reality, and it is clearly connected to family. The connection between ‘sexual expression’ and household or ‘family’ is made in the Christian sources related to ‘family,’ which showed that marriage was to be the only place for sexual expression. Within the larger Greco-Roman culture, certain elements of a household in the culture were free to engage in sexual experiences as a part of their status (i.e.- men of rank with slaves). One need only skim the work of Apuleius (North Africa), whose *Metamorphoses* depicts, among other things, active sexual expression, sometimes involving slaves.¹⁶⁶ However, it was not as though sexual restraint could not be found. For instance, Marcus Aurelius, the second century emperor, thanked the gods for his own sexual restraint:

“I am thankful to the gods...that I preserved the flower of my youth, and that I did not make proof of my virility before the proper season.”¹⁶⁷ (*Meditations* 1.17)

¹⁶⁰ Cassius Dio 56.3, taken from: Thomas Wiedemann, *Adults and Children in the Roman Empire* (New Haven, Yale University Press, 1989), 25.

¹⁶¹ *The Letters of Pliny*, Book IV. Xiii taken from: The Loeb Classical Library, Pliny Letters I.

¹⁶² Wiedemann, *Adults and Children*, 24.

¹⁶³ Everett Ferguson, *Backgrounds of Early Christianity*, 3rd ed. (Grand Rapids, MI: 2003), 109.

¹⁶⁴ Epictetus, *Enchiridion*, trans. George Long. (Mineola, NY: Dover Publications, 2004), 43.

¹⁶⁵ Ferguson, *Backgrounds of Early Christianity*, 169.

¹⁶⁶ S.J. Harrison, *Apuleius: A Latin Sophist* (Oxford, Oxford University Press, 2000), 212.

¹⁶⁷ M. Aurelius, *Meditations*, trans. George Long (Amherst, NY: Prometheus Books, 1991), 14-15.

In a similar vein, the Stoic Epictetus wrote:

“As to pleasure with women, abstain as far as you can before marriage: but if you do indulge in it, do it in the way which is conformable to custom. Do not however be disagreeable to those who indulge in these pleasures, or reprove them; and do not often boast that you do not indulge in them yourself.” (*Enchiridion*, XXXIII).¹⁶⁸

This conservatism undoubtedly stemmed in many ways from his own appropriation of Stoic philosophy.¹⁶⁹ Although sexual restraint could be found in other quarters of the pagan Greco-Roman empire, Christians during the period were often misunderstood due to their restrained sexual practices. Galen writes in the second century:

“Most people are unable to follow any demonstrative argument consecutively; hence they need parables and benefit from them just as we now see the people called Christians drawing their faith from parables and miracles, and yet sometimes acting in the same way as those who practice philosophy. For their contempt of death and of its sequel is patent to us every day, and likewise their restraint in cohabitation. For they include not only men but also women who refrain from cohabitating all through their lives; and they also number individuals who, in self-discipline and self-control in matters of food and drink, and in their keen pursuit of justice, have attained a pitch not inferior to that of genuine philosophers.”¹⁷⁰

One common practice in the period was cohabitation, or non-married individuals living together in the way married individuals would. This would include a sexual element in most cases. Christians, seen through the non-Christian eyes of Galen, stood out for their restraint in this practice. The Christians were not the only ones who viewed cohabitation with concern. Plutarch, in *Moralia*, for instance, addresses this as something to be avoided. Similarly, Musonius Rufus advocated for sexual intercourse to be limited to the confines of marriage,¹⁷¹ and yet he acknowledges that the norm of his time involved men expressing themselves sexually with both women and men.¹⁷² However, as will be seen further on, Christians were often in the minority within the culture in how they expressed themselves sexually.

Marriage in non-Christian sources was largely treated as something that required consent of all parties,¹⁷³ and was a partnership involving care.¹⁷⁴ Yet, descriptive observations in the literature, particularly of *The Annals* of Tacitus, paint a picture of marriage, particularly among the upper class, with a less glowing report. For instance, divorce appears by Tacitus to have been rampant (*Annals*, 3.22, 11.30, 13.44) and the use of concubines by men was also described (*Annals*, 11.29). To add to the description, Tacitus also mentions adultery (*Annals* 2.50, 4.3, 4.42,

¹⁶⁸ Epictetus, *Enchiridion*, trans. George Long (Mineola, NY: Dover Publications, 2004), 15.

¹⁶⁹ Ferguson writes, “These aphorisms and reflections are often obscure, but they reflect the sober conservatism of a great-souled and somewhat ascetic man who was wrestling with great responsibilities.” See: Ferguson, *Backgrounds of Early Christianity*, 367.

¹⁷⁰ Taken from: Robert Louis Wilken, *The Christians as the Romans Saw Them*, 2nd ed. (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2003), 80.

¹⁷¹ Ferguson, *Backgrounds of Early Christianity*, 365.

¹⁷² Musonius Rufus, *Lectures and Sayings*, rev. ed. trans. by Cynthia King (CreateSpace, 2011), 55.

¹⁷³ Digest 23.2.2, Paulus, referenced by Susan Treggiari, “Marriage and Family in Roman Society,” in *Marriage and Family in the Biblical World*, ed. Ken M. Campbell (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 2003), 153.

¹⁷⁴ Musonius Rufus, *Lectures and Sayings*, 57.

11.12, 11.30-33), incest (*Annals* 12.7) and disintegrating family trust (*Annals*, 4.69). Hayes details references to point to the ‘degradation’ of the Roman family.¹⁷⁵ These descriptions are vastly different from the Stoic writings seen earlier. Indeed, marriage and family within the Greco-Roman culture of the first and second century was not monolithic. Tacitus, writing in the period, does the work of chronicling marriage and family realities, largely among the elite and upper class. He also mentions in multiple places the reality of slaves within the Greco-Roman household (*Annals* 4.27, 6.11, 13.32) and references relational interaction(s) as well:

“...the prefect of the City, Pedanius Secundus, was killed by a slave of his—either on the denial of his freedom, for which he had struck a price, or being inflamed with love for a pathic and intolerant of his master’s being a rival. Whatever the case, since according to an old custom it was required that the entire establishment which had lodged under the protection of the same roof should be led off for reprisal...” (*Annals*, 14.42)¹⁷⁶

This incident, likely occurring around the mid to late part of the first century, gives insight into several aspects of slavery within a household. Specifically, several themes emerge: reality of slaves, the seeking of freedom, slaves being under the *potestas* of their owner, the possible sexual use of slaves, and the possibility of an entire household of slaves receiving punishment for the actions of one. In some of the literature from the period, there is a conservative, caring tone, and in others, there is a description of family structure and relationships that will come into contrast with that of the ethical paraenesis given in the Christian sources from the period.

In non-Christian writings of the period, the issues of marriage, sex, family roles, children and slaves do appear. In some cases, for example as in the Stoics, there is a call for virtuous reflection (particularly as it relates to sexual expression), but largely, the literature confirms the summary of these areas placed in the previous sections of this chapter. Specifically, the summary points find expression in the literature of the period, particularly when descriptive writing, such as that provided by Tacitus, is consulted. For purposes of the research here, what is seen is that the ‘family’ is addressed, often with ethical connections. Where this diverges from the Christian treatment of family, which will be shown next, is in the foundation that undergirded that counsel and instruction as well as in the more monolithic nature of the discussion of family within the Christian sources. How might the treatment of family in distinctly Christian sources compare with those in the non-Christian sources? This will be answered in subsequent chapters (three and five), but at this juncture, it is important to see that for any movement (philosophical, religious or otherwise), which is addressing norms and expectations of the larger Greco-Roman society of the period, slavery was another important societal structure related to family and household that must be addressed. There were very clear relational expectations set on slaves, and even though as this section has demonstrated, there was a fluidity or variance in the expression of those expectations, any writer or group of writers addressing familial and household conduct would have to deal with dynamics related to slaves (identity, expectation, sexual use, status, etc.).

More detailed conclusions will be provided in the conclusions of Chapter three following a literature review of early Christian sources. There, for instance, I will engage the debate over whether Christian individuals looked different from the larger non-Christian world in the area of sexual ethics. However, this chapter requires the next chapter prior to further conclusions from

¹⁷⁵ I am indebted to Hayes’ Masters thesis for chronicling various family related references within the annals: Walter M. Hayes, “The Romans Family in the Annals of Tacitus: A Consideration of the Family of the Annals and Its Objective Validity” (Masters Thesis, Loyola University, Chicago, 1949). Electronically Accessed final time January 20, 2020: http://ecommons.luc.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1766&context=luc_theses

¹⁷⁶ Tacitus, *The Annals*, trans. A.J. Woodman (Indianapolis: Hackett Publishing Company, 2004), 294.

analysis being offered. At this juncture, there is a fairly clear picture, which arises from the secondary literature on family in the period, and from a look at primary source material from the period as well. The basic structure of the Greco-Roman family within the first and second century is largely understood. It is the Christian family that is the point of departure for the research and where further debate occurs.

2.5. Conclusions

The Greco-Roman family structures detailed in this chapter is necessary for the subsequent chapters. The goal of this chapter has been to provide a background of what is understood regarding the first and second century Greco-Roman family within the secondary scholarly literature. This background chapter necessarily provides a starting point and backdrop to ultimately see how Christian writings handle issues related to ‘family.’ Therefore, this background chapter is necessary to rightly place the Christian material of the period regarding family.

In summary, the role of the *paterfamilias* and the power held within that position is of great importance to the entire discussion. The secondary literature appears quite unanimous in its understanding of this term. For the term *oikos*, there is a clear understanding within the secondary literature of it referring to a house or household. While there is mention in the secondary literature of further semantic domain, like it referring to ‘dynasty’, there is a clear understanding in the secondary literature that the term had a dominant focus on house and household. *Domus* has a clear definition within the secondary literature, although it does have a larger range in some secondary sources¹⁷⁷ than some other terms. Similarly, *gens*, *adoptio* and *patria potestas* all have a clear presentation in the recent secondary literature surveyed and there does not appear to be a current debate or discrepancy on how to understand these terms. It is worth pointing out that in discussions of adoption within the literature, there is a significant discussion of various types of adoption¹⁷⁸ that occurred within the first and second century, and thus, it is important for the researcher to consider the context when analysis of adoption concepts is considered.

Equally important are the subsequent family roles descending from this head of household. Wives, children, and slaves, as well as hired individuals, were a part of the fabric of the Roman household, which, as has been seen, was the center of societal education and production. The differences and overlapping similarities between Jewish families and non-Christian Greco-Roman families really intersect when the discussion of early Christian pastoral care and counseling regarding the family is researched. Understanding the sexual norms within the familial context of the period is also important and has been discussed in this chapter. The difference of expectations for men and women in the time period is important to consider when undertaking analysis of the Christian writings. There is some burgeoning research in the secondary literature that argues that women had a more dominant role than previously thought and that some of the writings of the *New Testament* are reactions to this.¹⁷⁹ How these relational structures of the family existed within the culture sheds light on early Christian writings addressing family, particularly in specific relationships (husband-wife, father-child, etc.) and sexual expression.

As will be seen in the next chapter, much of the writings of the *Apostolic Fathers* addressing family for instance, when compared to the larger background of family, speak to the call for Christians to operate differently from the larger culture around them. But are we to

¹⁷⁷ P. G. W. Glare, and Christopher Stray, *Oxford Latin dictionary* (Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press, 2012), s.v. “domus,” 628.

¹⁷⁸ See the section entitled “*Paterfamilias* and Fatherhood” and the work cited there of Rawson, 1986 and Lindsay, 2011.

¹⁷⁹ For instance, see: Winter, *Roman Wives*, 69.

believe that early Christians were different in every way from the families of the non-Christian culture? Certainly, there were similarities, such as the example of basic education mentioned previously. With the previous summary of the Greco-Roman family given, and the attestation of the importance of that summary to the focus of this research, the next chapter will move into a detailed examination of primary Christian source documents of the first and second century.

Chapter Three

First and Second-Century Writings Concerning ‘Family’: An Initial Presentation of Source Material

3.1 Introduction

Having seen the background of the family within the larger Greco-Roman context in the previous chapter, the aim of this chapter is to show how the family, and specifically the categories viewed within that background, found expression in the Christian writings of the period. In the previous two chapters, the main terms and concepts related to ‘family’ involved family roles and members (*paterfamilias*, mothers, children, slaves), education and *paideia*, marriage, and sexual practice.¹ First, this chapter will show what was written regarding the family in the writings of the first two centuries of the church (with a greater focus on the second century given the non-canonical literature produced in that century),² and secondarily, it will draw conclusions from that writing to move the research question forward regarding the counsel and care of families within the period.

The intent of this chapter is to demonstrate the source material on the family from the primary sources³ but given the amount of material available, sweeping claims cannot be made.⁴ The method of this chapter is to offer a focused survey of the material referenced, and to connect those references to family or family-related matters building on the background foundation given in Chapter two. In large part, the family and household themes (i.e., marriage, divorce, sexual expression, children, *paideia*⁵, etc.) addressed there will now be seen in the writings of the first

¹ Becker writes, “Relationships within the traditional household were transformed little by Christianization. Rather, Christians made original contributions to these institutions by re-interpreting and endorsing them in Christian terms. In other words, Christians transformed institutional discourses while differentiating themselves from broader society.” Adam H. Becker, “Christian Society,” in *The Oxford Handbook of Social Relations in the Roman World*, ed. Michael Peachin (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011), 577.

² Charles Kannengiesser, *Handbook of Patristic Exegesis: The Bible in Ancient Christianity*, vol. 1 (Leiden: Brill, 2004), 379. Greer argues from the literature of the period that, “Marriage and family are affirmed as good, and high ideals are established for family life”, and provides a comparison of this to the Gnostic ideals of the day regarding asceticism, marriage and virginity. See: Rowan Greer, *Broken Lights and Mended Lives: Theology and Common Life in the Early Church* (University Park & London: The Pennsylvania State University Press, 1986), 105-106.

³ Given the first and second century focus of this research, the *New Testament*, the *Apostolic Fathers* corpus as well as the following Ante-Nicene Fathers texts were consulted for family related material: *Quadratus of Athens*, *Aristides*, *Justin Martyr*, *Claudius Apollinaris*, *Minucius Felix*, *Melito of Sardis*, *Hegesippus*, *Dionysius of Corinth*, *Athenagoras of Athens*, *Irenaeus of Lyons*, *Rhodon*, *Theophilus of Caesarea*, *Theophilus of Antioch*, *Maximus of Jersuaem*, *Polycrates of Ephesus*, *Pantaenus*, *Clement of Alexandria* and *Tertullian*. Some of these sources were only fragmentary and come down through other sources (like Eusebius) and were viewed in formats available in online repositories.

⁴ See: Francine Cardman, “Early Christian Ethics,” in *The Oxford Handbook of Early Christian Studies*, eds. Susan Ashbrook Harvey and David G. Hunter (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008), 939.

⁵ See: Frances M. Young, “Towards a Christian *paideia*,” in *The Cambridge History of Christianity: Volume 1: Origins to Constantine*, eds. Margaret M. Mitchell and Frances M. Young (Cambridge, U.K.: Cambridge University Press, 2006), 485-500.

and second century sources. At the outset, much of the discussion related to family will touch on the aspect of a sexual ethic given the connection to marriage and family.

3.2 Text and Hermeneutic Approach

Within this chapter, for the sake of readability, English translations that are notable within the field are provided simply to demonstrate examples of the evidence under discussion. For the works within the Apostolic Fathers corpus, the English translation provided are a recent modern version, usually Brannan (Lexham) in the main, but sometimes Ehrman (Loeb), Lake (Loeb) and Holmes (Baker).⁶ The material addressed within this chapter is related, connected to, or subsumed under the background terms identified in Chapter two (*oikos, domus, etc.*) Within the work of this thesis, the overarching approach behind the examination of source material is to understand the intent of the writer(s) within their own context and time period.⁷ Similarly, the approach of this chapter is to report the appropriate texts regarding the topic, and then to understand those quotations within the context of the entire source.⁸

In some cases, particularly depending on the genre of the source, there can be intended goals for the reader of a text, specifically as it relates to the concept of creating a desired ideal.⁹ I read these texts with the genre of writing in view, but also with an understanding that in some cases, what the writer envisaged was a personal opinion of how ‘family’ ought to go and not a definitive proof text for how every Christian family ultimately expressed itself in reality. Yet, these recognized sources from within the early Christian movement, and from recognized, influential leaders,¹⁰ particularly in their substantive topical agreement, do give us enough data to make some conclusions about the desired ideals for families within the Christian movement.

⁶ This is in order to give the most recent English translation options, however, multiple other editions will be cited in order to demonstrate translation comparison See: Rick Brannan, *The Apostolic Fathers: A New Translation* (Bellingham, WA: Lexham Press, 2017). Also: Bart Ehrman, *The Apostolic Fathers*, Loeb Classical Library [LCL] vol. 1 & 2 (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press; London, 2003).

⁷ See: Wilhelm Dilthey, “The Rise of Hermeneutics,” trans. Frederic Jameson in *New Literary History*, Vol 3, No. 2, On Interpretation: I (Winter, 1972), 243. Dilthey would also write that, “The ultimate goal of the hermeneutic process is to understand an author better than he understood himself.” See: Dilthey, “Rise of Hermeneutics,” 244. The principle of authorial intent may not reach this ideal (and it could be argued that it could not), but it will seek to understand context and text with enough clarity to make conclusions regarding the content. See: Paul van Geest, “Omnis scriptura legi debet eo spiritu quo facta est... On the hermeneutics of Wilhelm Dilthey and Albert Deblaere,” in R. Faesen ed., *Albert Deblaere, S.J. (1916-1994). Essays on mystical literature-Essais sur la littérature mystique - Saggi sulla letteratura mistica* (Leuven: Peters, 2004), 427-442 (*Bibliotheca Ephemeridum Theologicarum Lovaniensium* 177). The reader will find value in considering the work of Deblaere regarding hermeneutics. This work by van Geest provides a helpful summary.

⁸ See: Suzanne Watts Henderson (2006), “Taking Liberties with the Text: The Colossians Household Code As Hermeneutical Paradigm,” *Interpretation* 60 (4):421.

⁹ See: Eva-Marie Becker, *The Birth of Christian History: Memory and Time from Mark to Luke-Acts* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2017), 5-6.

¹⁰ Verheyden gives a helpful, brief discussion regarding the reception of specific second-century texts and how they may have been viewed as authoritative and connected in some ways. See: Joseph Verheyden, “‘Authoritative Texts’ and How to Handle Them: Some Reflections on an Ambiguous Concept and Its Use in Second-Century Christian Literature,” in *Christianity in the Second Century: Themes and Developments*, eds. James Carleton Paget and Judith Lieu (Cambridge, U.K., 2017), 188-199.

3.3 First Clement¹¹

Outside the New Testament, the oldest likely surviving text of early Christianity is “First Clement.”¹² The work provides a clear picture of aspects of life within late first century Christianity.¹³ Written near the turn of the century (95-96 C.E.), this letter from one church to another¹⁴ provides a look at pastoral instruction regarding a variety of themes, but also discusses the early Christian family even within a clergy/laity distinction.¹⁵

In opening, the writer gives an overarching introduction acknowledging the positive example that the Corinthians have set (*1 Clement* 1.2) in the area of “faith” and “piety.”¹⁶ Then, the very next set of sentences (*1 Clement* 1.3) gives a commendation regarding familial roles or instruction.¹⁷ It appears from this commendation that the church itself was teaching women--women who were in household relationships with particular responsibilities--to live in certain ways within the household. Interestingly, the women were to be the managers¹⁸ of their households.¹⁹ The writer did not instruct that the cultural structures of the day were to change (in other words, there was not a call for the elevation of women in these sentences), but rather, within the already existent cultural structures, he gives teaching on the issue. Later in the text, the instruction of wives is mentioned:

“Let us set our wives on the straight path, toward the good. Let them demonstrate the habit of purity worthy of love. Let them display the innocent will of their gentleness. Let them make evident the gentleness of their speech by their silence. Let them give their love devoutly, not according to partiality but equally to all who fear God.” (*1 Clement* 21.6b-7)²⁰

¹¹ For the sake of clarity, the author of the letter will be referred to as Clement. See: Kannengiesser, *Handbook of Patristic Exegesis: The Bible in Ancient Christianity*, p.409.

¹² Andreas Lindemann, “The First Epistle of Clement,” in *The Apostolic Fathers: An Introduction*, ed. Wilhelm Pratscher (Waco, TX: Baylor University Press, 2010), 46.

¹³ Lindemann writes, “1 Clem ist insofern ein besonders wichtiger Text als er offensichtlich das durchschnittliche Christentum der römischen Gemeinde am Ende des 1. Jh.s widerspiegelt.” See: Andreas Lindemann, *Die Clemensbriefe*, Handbuch zum Neuen Testament, 17 Die Apostolischen Väter

I (Tübingen: J.C.B. Mohr, 1992), 20.

¹⁴ “The Church of God that temporarily resides in Rome, to the church of God that temporarily resides in Corinth...”

¹⁵ Carl A. Volz, *Pastoral Life and Practice in the Early Church* (Minneapolis, MN: Augsburg Fortress, 1990), 19.

¹⁶ Both Lake and Brannan utilize the words “faith” and “piety” (*1 Clement* 1.2). See: Kirsopp Lake, Clement, Ignatius, Polycarp, and Hermas. *The Apostolic Fathers*. New York: Putnam, 1912.; Rick Brannan, *The Apostolic Fathers: A New Translation* (Bellingham, WA: Lexham Press, 2017).

¹⁷ “You commanded the women to accomplish all things with a blameless, honorable and pure conscience, feeling appropriate affection for their own husbands, and you taught them being in the rule of obedience to manage the things of the household honorably, with all sensibility.” *1 Clement*, 1.3, trans. Rick Brannan.

¹⁸ Brannan, Erhman and Lake all use the English translation “to manage” (*1 Clement* 1.3).

¹⁹ See the section on women/mothers in Chapter two.

²⁰ *1 Clement*, 21.6b-7, trans. Rick Brannan.

In this instance, growth in virtue, love, and the fear of God is central to the instruction of one's wife.

In several instances, instruction regarding wives, youth, and children as a group is given, and in these cases, each member of the household is to be taught in the reverence and awe of God, which is to say, with a 'theocentric' view. A type of *paideia* (the Greek word is used in 21.6 and 21.8) is envisaged in the mind of Clement as well when he writes of the instruction in the fear of God (*I Clement* 21.8).²¹

Further on in the letter, there is a discussion of the discipline of God. Quoting from Proverbs 3:12 and Hebrews 12:6, the writer discusses the paternal discipline of God. This discussion ends up with a description of a type of father. In speaking of God as Father, the writer declares:

“...for being a kind Father, he disciplines so that we may receive mercy through his holy discipline.” (*I Clement* 56.16b)²²

Ehrman translates the phrase: “For since he is a good father, he disciplines us, that through his holy discipline we may receive mercy” (*I Clement* 56.16b),²³ and Lake renders the phrase “good father” as well.²⁴ Similarly, Funk/Bihlmeyer also render the description of God as a “good father.”²⁵ This reference, while speaking of God Himself, relates secondarily to our discussion in that one descriptor of a “good father” (πατήρ γὰρ ἀγαθός) implied in this reference is that he is one who disciplines. The assumption made in the reference is that a good father disciplines his children. This connects to the previous passage (*I Clem* 21:6-8) in that discipline there is listed specifically, and its specificity is that good discipline is that which includes training in the fear of God in the *oikos*.

I Clement then fleshes out its aim by the listing of vices to be avoided, or to be prized. These moral instructions for family life are about reverencing God within the home. Given the Christological themes of the letter,²⁶ the mentioning of family themes at least in part flows out of the faith of the Christian community with Christ at its center. This can be seen for instance in *I Clement* 21.8 where there is a call for children to “partake of the discipline that is in Christ.”

Hunter believes that there is a passing reference to marriage within the work as well.²⁷ There, Clement, while speaking of the creative work of God, speaks to the creation of the image-bearer of God, man, and finishes the section with a reference to the command in Genesis 1 to

²¹ Lake and Brannan use “instruct” or “instruction” as it relates to the fear of God. Ehrman translates the phrase (*I Clement* 21.6) as “Let our children partake of the discipline that is in Christ” and Funk/Bihlmeyer translate it as: “...die Jungen wollen wir erziehen in der Furcht Gottes.” See: Bart Ehrman, *The Apostolic Fathers*, Loeb Classical Library [LCL] vol. 1 & 2 (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press; London, 2003). F.X. Funk, Karl Bihlmeyer, Molly Whittaker, Andreas Lindemann, and Henning Paulsen *Die Apostolischen Väter: griechisch-deutsche Parallelausgabe auf der Grundlage der Ausgaben von Franz Xaver Funk/Karl Bihlmeyer und Molly Whittaker* (Tübingen: J.C.B. Mohr (Paul Siebeck), 1992).

²² *I Clement*, 56.16b, trans. Rick Brannan.

²³ *I Clement*, 56.16b, ed. and trans. Bart Ehrman.

²⁴ *I Clement*, 56.16b, trans. Kirsopp Lake.

²⁵ They translate the phrase as: “...denn als guter Vater züchtigt er, damit wir Erbarmen fänden durch seine heilige Züchtigung.” See: F.X. Funk, Karl Bihlmeyer, Molly Whittaker, Andreas Lindemann, and Henning Paulsen, *Die Apostolischen Väter: 141*.

²⁶ Jefford for instance, lists multiple Christological themes that are found within the letter, pointing to the Christological theme/backdrop of the letter. See: Clayton N. Jefford, *Reading the Apostolic Fathers: An Introduction* (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson Publishers, 1996), 107-110.

²⁷ David Hunter, *Marriage in the Early Church* (Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 1992), 9.

procreate (1 Clement 33.6-8).²⁸ Hunter is right to see within this passage a correction of zealous aesthetic methods that might have overvalued celibacy.²⁹ The inherent pastoral counsel in this passage is that marriage involves: “the work of righteousness (Brannan as well as Lake) “righteous work” (Ehrman), and similarly, “Werk der Gerechtigkeit” (Funk/Bihlmeyer). *1 Clement* contains several venues from which to further understand the pastoral expectations of the family within the period. In considering the genre of the writing, it is important to note that this work is clearly epistolary and aims at soul guidance.³⁰

3.4. *Second Clement*

Second Clement is an early extant homily whose author is unknown, though sometimes argued by some to have been written by Clement of Rome,³¹ and its date of writing range from 100-140 A.D.³² Pratscher declares that in the second letter of Clement, “we have the earliest surviving Christian sermon.”³³ Gaden argues the work is “occasioned by the author’s concern to combat the work of false teachers...”³⁴

With a soteriological backdrop as an earlier context, the sermon addresses the issue of practicing righteousness (2 Clement 4.1-3).³⁵ A few paragraphs later, adultery is considered part of this present age in contrast to the one to come (2 Clement 6.1-4).³⁶ Both passages present adultery as being against the command of Christ (2 Clement 6:7 refers to such an act as going against the command of Christ). The preacher calls for self-restraint (ἐγκρατείας). In 15.1, this idea is stated:

“I do not think that I have given trivial advice about self-restraint.”³⁷ (2 Clement 15.1)

²⁸ “Therefore, having completed all these things, he praised and blessed them, and he said, “Increase and multiply.” Let us consider that all the righteous have been adorned with good works; and even the Lord himself, having adorned himself with good works, rejoiced. Therefore, having this example, let us unhesitatingly devote ourselves to his will; let us work the work of righteousness with all of our strength.” *1 Clement*, 33.6-8, trans. Rick Brannan.

²⁹ Within Hunter’s listing is also 1 Clement 38.2 which ends with “Let the one who is pure in the flesh not act arrogantly, knowing that another has provided him with his self-restraint.” (*1 Clement*, 38.2, ed. and trans. Bart Ehrman). While not directly related by implication to marriage, as was *1 Clement* 33.6-8, there is an inherent assumption that celibacy is not the only ideal, and therefore, marriage is also valued, and declared “good.”

³⁰ Meeks argues that “The Christian letter writers, and presumably the local prophets and teachers, freely adapted the topics and methods that characterized a long tradition in the Greek and Latin worlds of the guidance of souls.” See: Wayne A. Meeks, *The Origins of Christian Morality: The First Two Centuries* (New Haven, Yale University Press, 1993), 102.

³¹ Eusebius mentions the view held by some that the work was written by Clement, but he writes that this is improbable. See: Ehrman, *The Apostolic Fathers*, 157.

³² Holmes, *The Apostolic Fathers*, 133-134.

³³ Wilhelm Pratscher, “The Second Epistle of Clement,” in *The Apostolic Fathers: An Introduction*, ed. Wilhelm Pratscher (Waco, TX: Baylor University Press, 2010), 71.

³⁴ Tim Gaden, “Looking to God for Healing: A Rereading of the *Second Letter of Clement* in the Light of Hellenistic Psychology,” *Pacifica* 15 (June 2002):161.

³⁵ “Therefore, let us not merely call him Lord, for this will not save us. For he says, “Not everyone who says to me, ‘Lord, Lord!’ will be saved, but the one who practices righteousness.” So then, brothers, let us confess him with our deeds by loving one another, by not committing adultery...” *2 Clement*, 4.1-3, trans. Rick Brannan.

³⁶ *2 Clement*, 6.1-4, trans. Rick Brannan

³⁷ *2 Clement*, 15.1, ed. and trans. Bart Ehrman

Tuckett translates the word as “self-control”³⁸ as does Lake in the earlier Loeb edition and Brannan in his recent translation. Given the sermon-like nature of the source, a strong exhortative element is more easily seen and perhaps expected even though the background behind this sermon is not known. “The preacher advocates a significantly distinctive distance from the world (5.6-7), but he is very far from a Gnostic denial of the world. His ethical orientation is very catholic, not that of a sect.”³⁹ In fact, in speaking of spiritual and flesh, the preacher points to Genesis 1:27 utilizing male and female distinctions in allegorical fashion to point to Christ and the Church (2 Clement 14).

The focus within these texts is not on changing relational structures, the elevation of women, a balancing of relational power, or even on the feelings of the offended party (if a spouse was adulterous for example), but rather on the connection to Christocentric instruction related to marital faithfulness. In addition, the instruction for sexual practice lines up with other early Christian teaching on the period such as writings on the topic in the *New Testament* where adultery is forbidden.

Quoting from elsewhere, the preacher seemingly gives a less direct, yet related reference to the sexual ethic presented in the letter (2 Clement 12.1-6).⁴⁰ Admittedly this is a more obscure passage than others within *2 Clement*.⁴¹ If indeed gender is the focus (vs. gnostic or platonic concerns regarding the material), then the reality is that sexual mental focus should not be a primary focus for the Christian. This is especially likely given that the immediate reference before and after this section speak to “doing what is right” and “repentance.”⁴² It is also possible that this instruction refers to the need to elevate the role of women within the culture given the work of Christ in this area (something that many would say Jesus did, and that Paul teaches--

³⁸ C. M. Tuckett, *2 Clement: Introduction, Text, and Commentary* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012).

³⁹ Wilhelm Pratscher, “The Second Epistle of Clement,” 84.

⁴⁰ “Therefore let us wait for the kingdom of God hour by hour with love and righteousness, since we do not know the day of God’s appearance. For when the Lord himself was asked by someone when his kingdom will come, he said, “When the two shall be one, and the outside as the inside, and the male with the female neither male nor female.” And “the two are one” when we speak the truth with ourselves, and there is one soul in two bodies with no hypocrisy. And “the outside as the inside” means this: “the inside” means the soul and “the outside” means the body. Therefore in this manner your body is made visible, so also let your soul be evident in good works. And “the male with the female neither male nor female” means this: that a brother, upon seeing a sister, thinks nothing about her being a female, nor does she think anything about him being a male. When you do these things, he says, the kingdom of my Father will come.” *2 Clement*, 12.1-6, trans. Rick Brannan.

⁴¹ Pratscher is open to the possibility that this text is a “... polemic against the Valentinian sacrament of the nuptial chamber.” See: Wilhelm Pratscher, “The Second Epistle of Clement,” 86, see footnote. Jefford sees this as not belonging to the same gnostic interpretation of the Gospel of Thomas, but rather, “for 2 Clement, to see “the male with the female” is to make no distinction between the two sexes.” See: Clayton Jefford, *Reading the Apostolic Fathers: A Student’s Introduction* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2012), 134.

⁴² *2 Clement* 11.7 says, “If, therefore, we do what is righteous before God, we will enter into his kingdom” and *2 Clement* 13.1 reads, “And so brothers, now at last we should repent and be alert for the good.” While this last reference could be summary in nature, it seems that the context immediately preceding this calls the Christian to focus less on gender, which likely is laden with a sexual component, and more on the kingdom of God.

Galatians 3:28) likely through paraenesis.⁴³ Baarda contends that the interpretation of the gender reference in this passage refers to how love and righteousness must inform the mutual relationships of believers.⁴⁴ The focus of the section is that elements inherent to gender distinctions should be realigned in the minds of the readers/hearers with a kingdom focus in view.

The sexual ethic of fidelity is advocated in this sermon to a congregation likely known earlier by the Apostle Paul for struggles with sexual fidelity in the past (1 Corinthians 5-7). This counsel is given with the Christocentric and soteriological implications in the background and with the eschaton in view. Yet, in considering the genre of this text, the instruction found within is clear in demonstrating ideals to be followed. The exhortative nature of this sermon provides the context for the instructions that are given within.⁴⁵ This is particularly related to understanding how the early Christians addressed family in that both references point to ‘adultery’ being forbidden. Within *2 Clement*, the ethical imperatives are clear for sexuality and family structure.

3.5. *Didache*

Also known by the title “The Teaching of the Twelve Apostles,” the *Didache* is likely a late first century to early second century catechetical manual for early Christians.⁴⁶ Within this “manual” of the early Christian community, there are a variety of exhortations and counsel for the Christian regarding family, family roles and relationships. These instructions come from Did 2.2.-5.2 and cover three main areas: sexual immorality, the killing of children, and household relationships.⁴⁷ What follows is list of family-related parts of the document from the 2.2.-5.2 section.

At the outset of the work, an immediate connection to the *Old Testament* Decalogue can be seen. (*Didache* 2.1-2)⁴⁸ There, the issues of marital faithfulness and care for children are both

⁴³ Tjitze Baarda, “2 Clement 12 and the Sayings of Jesus,” in *Logia: Les paroles de Jésus—The Sayings of Jesus; Mémorial Joseph Coppens*, edited by Joël Delobel, 529-56. *Bibliotheca ephemeridum theologicarum lovaniensium* 59 (Leuven: Peeters, 1982), 531.

⁴⁴ Baarda, “2 Clement,” 537. Baarda writes, “It seems to me that he is instead saying that church members should practice both <<love>> and <<righteousness>> as they continue to expect the kingdom of God: women and men should *love* each other within the restrictions that a *righteous* way of life imposes on the believers in their mutual relationships.”

⁴⁵ Clebsch and Jaekle attempt to offer the view that primary source documents do allow an “oblique” view into the pastoral care of the earliest Christians. “Although no writing preserved to us records the specific and detailed pastoral care that the earliest Christians practiced, a number of extant documents—gospels, epistles, “acts,” homilies, revelations, both within and without the canonical list of Scriptures—provide an oblique view into early pastoral concerns and activities. One of these is a lengthy sermon...a document traditionally known as the “Second Epistles of Clement.” See: William A. Clebsch and Charles R. Jaekle, *Pastoral Care in Historical Perspective* (New Jersey: Prentice Hall, 1964), 87-88.

⁴⁶ Holmes indicates a range for composition between 50AD to 150 AD. See: Holmes, *The Apostolic Fathers*, 337. In similar agreement Ehrman places it “around the year 100.” See: Ehrman, *The Apostolic Fathers*, vol. 1, 411. For further background, see also: Jonathan A. Draper, “The *Didache*,” in *The Writings of the Apostolic Fathers*, ed. Paul Foster (London, UK: T&T Clark, 2007), 14.

⁴⁷ See: John S. Kloppenborg, “The Transformation of Moral Exhortation in *Didache* 1-5,” in *The Didache in Context: Essays on Its Text, History and Transmission* ed. Clayton N. Jefford (Leiden, Brill 1995), 101-102

⁴⁸ “And the second commandment of the teaching is this: Do not murder, do not commit adultery, do not sodomize, do not commit sexual immorality, do not steal, do not practice magic, do not

mentioned. Sexual prohibitions were given since the Christian paraenetic confined it to marriage, and pederastic and abortive prohibitions were given in that they speak to how children were to be treated. The command to not participate in pederasty, abort a fetus or kill a child already born may be directed at the Christian parent, *paterfamilias*, or another person in authority, given this instruction cannot only be directed at immediate parents given the ability to end a child's life by abortion or by exposure was often held in the hands of a non-parent (i.e. *paterfamilias*).⁴⁹ In addition to this practice, pederasty (παιδοφθορήσεις) was a common practice within the culture, particularly as it related to slave-children. As Chapter two of this thesis attests, within the greater culture, this injunction would have been countercultural. Christian counsel in this source regarding the care of children was to not harm their life, or their sexual being (pederasty).⁵⁰

Regarding marital faithfulness, the paraenetic discourse is clear that the Christian was instructed to remain faithful within his or her marriage. The writer continues this theme in the next chapter:

“My child, do not be lustful, for lust leads to sexual immorality; neither be filthy-mouthed, nor have eyes prone to desire, for from all of these adultery is born.” (*Didache* 3.3)⁵¹

The writer is clearly dedicated to the idea that Christians are not to be adulterous, and should take steps to avoid adultery. Within the frameworks of the Two Ways scheme, adultery is later identified as part of the path of death:⁵²

“But the way of death is this: First of all, it is filled with evil and cursing, murders, adulteries, expressions of lust, acts of sexual immorality...” (*Didache* 5.1)⁵³

Holmes renders the phrase similarly, although using the word “lusts” in place of “passion,” giving the translation as “first of all, it is evil and completely cursed; murders, adulteries, lusts, sexual

use potions, do not murder a child by abortion, do not kill the just-born one, do not yearn after the things of your neighbor.” *Didache* 2.1-2 trans. Rick Brannan.

⁴⁹ Niederwimmer comments on this section that, “...it is certain that from the beginning, Christians, following Old Testament and Jewish custom, rejected abortion. That there is no specific prohibition of it in the New Testament is accidental. As in *Did.* 5.2 (and as we find frequently in Jewish and Christian texts) the prohibitions on abortion and exposing of infants are connected.” See: Kurt Niederwimmer, *The Didache: A Commentary* (Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 1998), 90.

⁵⁰ Milavec observes, “For the *Didache*, it suffices to prohibit pederasty with the same simple certainty whereby the Lord abhors adultery and murder.” See: Aaron Milavec, *The Didache: Faith, Hope, & Life of the Earliest Christian Communities, 50-70 C.E.* (New York, NY: The Newman Press, 2003), 133.

⁵¹ *Didache* 3.3 trans. Rick Brannan.

⁵² Holmes writes, “The Two Ways material appears to have been intended, in light of 7.1, as a summary of basic instruction about the Christian life to be taught to those who were preparing for baptism and church membership. The “way of life” (1.2-4.14), which opens with the love command and the Golden Rule, is comprised almost entirely of dos and don'ts, while the “way of death” (5.1-2) is a description of evil actions and persons.” See Michael W. Holmes, *The Apostolic Fathers: Greek Texts and English Translations, Third Edition* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2007), 335. Also, Kloppenborg also has an extensive discussion regarding the transmission of the Two Ways document and the connectedness of this system within other writings. See Kloppenborg, “The Transformation of Moral Exhortation in *Didache* 1-5,” 1995.

⁵³ *Didache* 5.1 trans. Rick Brannan.

immoralities.”⁵⁴ The *Sources Chrétiennes* translation renders the phrase similarly: “Voici maintenant la voie de la mort: Tout d'abord elle est mauvaise et pleine de malediction: meurtres, adultères, convoitises, fornications...”⁵⁵ That each of these forms of sexual sin would be identified with the Way of Death means that Christian initiates needed to flee from any sort of sexual immorality (cf. 1 Corinthians 6:18).⁵⁶

As we have seen earlier in this source, the murder of children, or aborting of a fetus, was prohibited. The Didachist maintains that not heeding this prohibition is part of the cursed way of life. He writes, speaking of those who follow the path of death, that they,

“...loving what is worthless, pursuing reward, not having mercy on the poor, not toiling for the downtrodden, not knowing the one who made them, murderers of children, corrupters of the creatures of God...” (Didache 5.2)⁵⁷

Implied within this instruction was that if a man was *paterfamilias*, abortion, or infanticide (or exposure) was not to be considered as an option, and if he was not the *paterfamilias*, seeking the welfare of children was to be done to the best of his ability.

Another component to this passage that gives insight into the counsel given to Christians regarding the family is in the phrase “corruptors of what God has fashioned” (Didache 5.2). This passage could be referring to the sexual corruption of children, like in Didache 2.2, or it could refer to abortion.⁵⁸ Brannan, Ehrman and Lake all utilize terms such as corrupters, which seems to lean towards pederasty. A few translations seem to lean towards abortion for instance: “...ils font avorter l'oeuvre de Dieu.”⁵⁹ Either one is possible but given the similar word usage to that used in Didache 2.2, it is highly possible that pederasty is in view here. If abortion is in view⁶⁰ (given the argument that could be made from the immediate context of the phrase), what is certain is that both pederasty and abortion are condemned in the letter, and that either one, by inference, could be seen as a corruption of that which God has made.

The instructions regarding household in general can mainly be found in section 4.9-11. Instruction vis-à-vis relational roles, discipline and spiritual nurture are included for certain household members. The following is given:

“Do not remove your hand from [Or: Do not refrain from disciplining; or Do not shirk your responsibility towards] your son or daughter, but from their youth teach them the reverential fear of God. Do not give orders to your male slave or female servant—who hope in the same God—out of bitterness, lest they stop fearing the God who is over you both. For he does not come to call those of high status, but those whom the Spirit has

⁵⁴ Holmes, *Apostolic Fathers*, 353.

⁵⁵ *La Doctrine des Douze Apôtres (Didachè)*, eds. Willy Rordorf and André Tuilier (Paris: Les Édition Du Cerf, 1998), 167.

⁵⁶ Milavec does not necessarily see proof within the text of the *Didache* that the “double standard” of men engaging in sexual activity with female slaves and prostitutes was prohibited for Christian men. See: Milavec, 135-137. However, given the use of the word “lusts” without clarification in the context, and given that many of these female slaves, and even prostitutes were regarded as new “sisters” in Christ, it seems unlikely that this activity is not also included in the prohibition of *porneia*.

⁵⁷ *Didache* 5.2 trans. Rick Brannan.

⁵⁸ Margaret MacDonald, *The Power of Children: The Construction of Christian Families in the Greco-Roman World* (Waco, Texas: Baylor University Press, 2014), 173.

⁵⁹ *La Doctrine des Douze Apôtres (Didachè)*, eds. Willy Rordorf and André Tuilier.

⁶⁰ Niederwimmer views this as a reference to abortion citing interpretation similar in *Doctrina*. See: Niederwimmer, *The Didache*, 118.

prepared. And you who are slaves must be subject to your masters as to a replica of God, with respect and referential fear.” (Didache 4.9-11)⁶¹

Brannan and Lake both have a similar translation. Several aspects of instruction are given within this passage. Specifically, a parent, or presumably a head of household, is to teach children in “the fear of God” (“la crainte de Dieu”⁶²) namely, according to a theocentric trajectory. Niederwimmer sees this trajectory as a part of *paideia*.⁶³

In a similar fashion, the instruction regarding slaves also has a God-centered focus. A slave should be given orders not out of bitterness (or anger), specifically so that the slave does not lose hope in God. And slaves are encouraged within the passage to view their masters as a person standing in as a type pointing to God. Of interest here to the modern reader, is that the slaveholder is not called to give up their slaves to freedom, but rather, within the accepted Greco-Roman system, to treat them well. This approach regarding slaves follows similar Pauline instruction (cf. Ephesians 6, Philemon).⁶⁴ Pastoral instruction within the *Didache* regarding the household was not directed at changing the social structure per say, but rather on giving instructions for how to live within the social structure of the day in a way that had a Godward trajectory.⁶⁵

3.6. *Letters of Ignatius*

Likely dating from the mid-second century, these letters have been the source of debate in terms of authorship.⁶⁶ Ehrman states that these letters have received much more significant scholarly attention specifically because of the debate surrounding their composition.⁶⁷ Holmes, for his part, states that today, the consensus is that Ignatius wrote the letters.⁶⁸

Of the seven letters preserved as “Letters of Ignatius,” three have specific references to family images, familial roles, sexual immorality, or concern for the care of certain household position holders (such as widows and/or orphans). From these epistles of Asia Minor, there are several ‘family’ references from which valuable information may be gathered. The form of these references to family comes by way of ethical paraenesis, with a teleological focus⁶⁹ and a specific focus on Christian ideals.⁷⁰ This *telos* is ultimately the *eschaton* to come with the appearance of Christ. Familial ethics, while not the primary focus of the letter, are a part of the ethical implications of the coming *eschaton* of Christ, as well as the potential implications of how to live in the face of impending martyrdom.

⁶¹ *Didache* 4.9-11 ed. and trans. Bart Ehrman.

⁶² *La Doctrine des Douze Apôtres (Didache)*, eds. Willy Rordorf and André Tuilier.

⁶³ Niederwimmer, *The Didache*, 110.

⁶⁴ Regarding the similar Pauline instruction, Ferguson writes, “Christianity gave instructions for the existing social structure (see Philem. 5-9; Col. 3:22-4:1; 1 Tim 6:1-2; 1 Pet. 3:18ff) but directed attention to higher concerns (1 Cor. 7:21-24).” Everett Ferguson, *Backgrounds of Early Christianity*, 61.

⁶⁵ See: Milavec, *The Didache*, 164.

⁶⁶ Hermut Löhr, “The Epistles of Ignatius of Antioch,” in *The Apostolic Fathers: An introduction*, ed. Wilhelm Pratscher (Waco, TX: Baylor University Press, 2010), 94.

⁶⁷ Ehrman, *The Apostolic Fathers*, vol. 1, 203.

⁶⁸ Holmes, *The Apostolic Fathers*, 171.

⁶⁹ Pratscher writes, “The implicit ethics of the Ignatian letters is oriented toward virtue on one hand and teleologically structured on the other.” See: Wilhelm Pratscher, “The Second Epistle of Clement,” 111.

⁷⁰ Eurell argues that, “It appears that he [Ignatius] does not speak of Christianity as an organisation, but rather as an ideal lifestyle/ethic.” John-Christian Eurell, “Becoming Christian: On the Identification of Christ-Believers as Χριστιανοί,” *J. of Early Christ. Hist.* 10:3 (2020) 70.

3.6.1 Letter of Ignatius To The Ephesians

Jeffords summarizes the letter partly in this way: “Remain humble and pure in Jesus Christ.”⁷¹ Specifically, strong language is used regarding anyone who would destroy or corrupt a household. Ignatius writes:

“Do not be deceived, my brothers; destroyers of families will not inherit the kingdom of God.” (Ignatius, *To The Ephesians* 16.1)⁷²

There is some debate over the word used in this passage (οικοφθόροι). Ehrman renders it “those who corrupt households” and Lake translates it as “they who corrupt families.” What type of destruction might be referenced here? Bauer, Arndt and Gingrich write, “...*destroying houses or families...temple-destroyer* IEph 16: 1. Since Ign. is plainly dependent on 1 Cor 6 (vs. 19; cf. also 1 Cor 3:16f) here, he is prob. thinking of the introduction of immorality as the particular means of destruction.”⁷³ Paul does write in *1 Corinthians* 6:18-19 that believers are to shun fornication, and to not destroy their bodies, which he states are a “temple.” This idea of sexual immorality possibly being the focus of Ignatius in using this word is likely the reason that in the English translation by Holmes, the phrase is rendered:

“Do not be misled, my brothers and sisters: those who adulterously corrupt households will not inherit the kingdom of God.” (Ignatius, *To The Ephesians* 16.1)⁷⁴

The implication here is that purity must extend to the Christian household, and that the message of the kingdom of God is at odds with sexual impurity.⁷⁵ This reference is the only direct familial reference to be found in the letter of Ignatius to the Ephesians. The counsel pertaining to family here is that households are not to be corrupted by sexual impurity.

3.6.2. Letter of Ignatius To The Smyrneans

One particular focus of this letter relates to women and indeed in the letter both men and women are addressed. Widows as a group are the subjects of ethical treatment, and within this treatment, the call is to provide for these women who in some way were formerly a part of a household. Although references regarding ‘family’ are sparse, the closing of the letter includes greetings to various family members of the recipients. Ignatius writes:

⁷¹ Jefford, *Reading the Apostolic Fathers*, 60.

⁷² Ignatius, *To the Ephesians* 16.1, trans. Rick Brannan.

⁷³ William F. Arndt and F. Wilbur Gingrich, *A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature: A Translation and Adaptation of Walter Bauer's Griechisch-Deutsches Wörterbuch zu den Schriften des Neuen Testaments und der übrigen urchristlichen Literatur. Second ed., 1979.* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1979), 561.

⁷⁴ Michael W. Holmes, *The Apostolic Fathers: Greek Texts and English Translations, Third Edition* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2007), 197. Emphasis mine.

⁷⁵ Schoedel writes, “The following argument makes sense, however, only if the term refers in the first place to those who destroy households by committing adultery.” See: William R. Schoedel, *Ignatius of Antioch: A Commentary on the Letters of Ignatius of Antioch*, ed. Helmut Koester (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1985), 79.

“I greet the households of my fellow believers with wives and children, and the virgins who are called widows.” (Ignatius, *To The Smyrneans* 13.1)⁷⁶

The very next greeting addresses the entire “household of Tavia.” One ethical consideration important to our question is the treatment of persons within certain familial positions or household roles that were traditionally viewed as positions of weakness. Ignatius writes:

“But observe those who hold divisive opinions concerning the grace of Jesus Christ that came to us; how opposed they are to the mind of God. For love does not concern them, no concern for the widow, none for the orphan, none for the afflicted, none for the ones imprisoned or the ones set free, none for the hungry or the thirsty.” (Ignatius, *To The Smyrneans* 6.2)⁷⁷

A lack of care for those in a variety of situations of need is incompatible with the true recipient of the gift of Jesus Christ and those who seek to live according to the the will or mind of God. The reference to the care of widows and orphans is important.⁷⁸ Louw and Nida’s definition⁷⁹ assumes that the widow would not be in the ordinary household configuration of being under another person’s care, unless she were a slave who happened to also be widowed. However, given the lack of marital recognition among slaves within Greco-Roman laws, and the reality that a female slave with or without a husband would always have been under the care of *paterfamilias*, it seems likely that the person in view is a woman who does not have provision from someone over her. Ignatius would refer to ‘widow’ again in his letter to Polycarp (4, 8.2)

Similarly, care for the orphan was also a mark of many Christians given its multiple reference in the early primary sources. Louw and Nida define the word ‘orphan’ as “an offspring whose parents either are no longer alive or no longer function as parents (as the result of having abandoned their offspring)—‘orphan.’”⁸⁰ In this case, the question could be whether slave children are in view or not. If so, there would be some type of overarching household structure head (*paterfamilias*) that would have ultimate control over the child. But in the case of both orphan and widow, there seems to be a concern that Christians were to care for those who could not care for themselves, either physically, or more specifically, in the particulars that were based on social status. Ignatius further indicates the connecting of these two status positions (widow and orphan) alongside other types of situations of bondage or suffering such as the slave and the oppressed (Ign., *Smyrneans*, 6.2).

Although these are the ideals of one man, Ignatius, his writings share an urgent ideal to be communicated to the early Christian community. Christian adherents were to treat those without family as family. The orphaning of children, and the lack of care for the widow were not acceptable practices in the pastoral counsel of Ignatius. Ultimately, this instruction of “non-traditional care” (i.e., care for certain members of society that could be often neglected) was directed at Christians in general.

⁷⁶ Ignatius, *To the Smyrneans* 13.1, trans. Rick Brannan.

⁷⁷ Ignatius, *To the Smyrneans* 6.2, trans. Rick Brannan.

⁷⁸ Within the collection of writings known as “The Apostolic Fathers,” there are multiple references to the care of widows and orphans, which was a mark of the Christian community (Acts 6.1; 9.38, 41; 1Ti 5.3-16; James 1.27).

⁷⁹ Johannes P. Louw, and Eugene Albert Nida, *Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament: Based on Semantic Domains*. electronic ed. of the 2nd edition (New York: United Bible Societies, 1996). Louw and Nida define this word (χήρα) as “a woman whose husband has died—‘widow.’”

⁸⁰ Louw and Nida, “orphan.”

3.6.3. *Letter of Ignatius To Polycarp*

In the opening two chapters, there is reference to the pastoral work, pastoral care and office that Polycarp was to undertake (Ignatius, *To Polycarp* 1.2-3). Along with this instruction on pastoral work, there comes some teaching on several members of the Greco-Roman household. For Ignatius, some of the most direct and clear family references are given within this particular letter. He continues his theme of the care of widows when in this letter to Polycarp, he writes:

“Do not let the widows be neglected. After the Lord, you yourself be their protector.” (Ignatius, *To Polycarp* 4.1)⁸¹

This is a reference to care for a person who by virtue of marital and social status would be impacted by the lack of other familial connections. In addition to widows, Ignatius writes about slaves. Specifically, he instructs Polycarp in the pastoral care of slaves. He writes:

“Do not treat male or female slaves arrogantly, but do not puff them up either; instead let them serve even more to the glory of God, that they may experience a better freedom from God.” (Ignatius, *To Polycarp* 4.3)⁸²

Undoubtedly, slaves (as members of the Greco-Roman household) were the recipients of pastoral care in the early Christian movement. Some of the men who were the *paterfamilias* of their household, who would have slaves under their *potestas*, would be simultaneously spiritually related to them as brothers and sisters.⁸³ The central pastoral issue is not emancipation from slavery, but the avoidance of slavery to lust. The slavery to be avoided was a slavery to lust. Holmes renders the translation in slightly different terms:

“Let them desire not to be set free at the church’s expense, that they not be disclosed as slaves of lust.” (Ignatius, *To Polycarp* 4.3)⁸⁴

The glory of God is the ultimate goal of the slave according to Ignatius, and as such, a passion or lust⁸⁵ (ἐπιθυμία) to anything else would get in the way of the truest goal. The pastoral training from Ignatius is to pastor slaves with a view towards the freedom that comes in the work of the Christ.⁸⁶ Schoedel believes that Ignatius would prefer slaves to remain in slavery.⁸⁷ Clearly, pastoral care of slaves was important given that it is even addressed. Even though there is not a call for their freedom from slavery, there is a concern that they be instructed in how to live for the glory of God. A teleological and theocentric component is in view in this instruction regarding

⁸¹ Ignatius, *To Polycarp* 4.1, trans. Rick Brannan.

⁸² Ignatius, *To Polycarp* 4.3, trans. Rick Brannan.

⁸³ One can recall the canonical letter of Philemon where St. Paul addresses the relational dynamics between Philemon and Onesimus in light of the gospel.

⁸⁴ Ignatius, *To Polycarp* 4.3, trans. Rick Brannan.

⁸⁵ Holmes and Lake both translate the phrase “slaves of lust” and Funk/Bihlmeyer render it: “Sklaven der Begierde.”

⁸⁶ Just one chapter earlier, Ignatius wrote, “...But especially we must, for God’s sake, patiently bear all things, so that he may also bear with us. Be more diligent than you are. Understand the times. Wait expectantly for the one who is above time; the Eternal, the Invisible, who for our sake became visible; the Intangible, the Unsuffering, who for our sake suffered, who for our sake endured in every way.” Ignatius, *To Polycarp* 3.1b-2, ed. and trans. Michael Holmes.

⁸⁷ Schoedel, *Ignatius of Antioch*, 270.

the care of certain members of the Christian households within the Greco-Roman culture of the period.

Marital relationships are also a part of the pastoral instruction and exhortation of Ignatius to fellow laborer Polycarp. Both husbands and wives are to be addressed, and similarly to the above, a Christological component is in view. Ignatius writes:

“Tell my sisters to love the Lord and to be content with their husbands in flesh and in spirit. In the same way, also command my brothers in the name of Jesus Christ to love their wives like the Lord loved the church.” (Ignatius, *To Polycarp* 5.1)⁸⁸

To the husbands, the counsel of Ignatius is nearly identical to the Pauline imperative found in Ephesians 5. For the women, ‘sisters’ as Ignatius calls them, their call is two-fold: to love the Lord, and to find satisfaction in their husbands. Ehrman renders the Greek word ἀρκέω as satisfaction and Lake renders the phrase “be content.” Louw and Nida give further semantic domain on the term writing that it signifies “to be sufficient or adequate for a particular purpose, with the implication of leading to satisfaction—‘to be sufficient, to be adequate, to be enough.’”⁸⁹ Contentment is the key in this context, and this contentment is finding a sufficiency in the marital relationship that God has provided. The teleological focus of the marriage relationship is in view.⁹⁰ The word used in this instance for “husband” is also important contextually.⁹¹ For slaves, recognizable marriage by the state was not an option, but the Christian couple could still seek to honor the Lord in a marriage relationship, even without the blessing of the state.

Ignatius continues this counsel with further instruction. He highlights the option of purity, or ‘chastity’ as Holmes renders it, and then speaks to the focus of marriage. Marriage within the Christian community is for the honor of God (Ignatius to Polycarp, 5.2).⁹² Ignatius counsels members of the Christian community to get the consent of the leader of the church community in order to verify that the focal point of the marriage is the honor of the Lord, and not simply due to lust (Lake also renders the word “lust” while Ehrman renders it “passions”). Hunter says that in this text there is also a concern, “to maintain (or impose) the power of the clergy: Ignatius does so by insisting that men and women who marry be united with the approval of the bishop.”⁹³ Each of the three letters of Ignatius addressed here have content related to ‘family,’ and each of them is

⁸⁸ Ignatius, *To Polycarp* 5.1, trans. Rick Brannan.

⁸⁹ Louw and Nida, *Greek-English Lexicon*, “ἀρκέω.”

⁹⁰ Schoedel contends at this juncture, that the strict sexual ethic “is probably best explained as a corollary to marginal status in society. The group requires coherence to survive, and control of sexuality is a vital factor in maintaining such coherence.” See: Schoedel, *Ignatius of Antioch*, 272.

⁹¹ Brannan records the impressions of Lightfoot on this sentence, particularly the word used for “husband” in the context. He writes: “Lightfoot notes “The word σύμβιος is common for a husband or a wife in this age and even earlier. ... In the inscriptions during the Roman period it is especially frequent. In those of Smyrna alone, to which place this letter was written, I find it several times. ... To the Christians it would perhaps be an especially welcome term, because it would cover those unions of slaves which are called ‘contubernia’ and which the Christian Church regarded as not less sacred and inviolable than wedlock among the free-born, though the Roman law did not recognise such a thing as marriage among slaves.” Rick Brannan, *Apostolic Fathers Greek-English Interlinear* (Lexham Press, 2011), footnote on σύμβιος, Ign to Polycarp, 5.1.

⁹² “But it is fitting for men and women who marry with the consent of the bishop to make their union, that the marriage may be in accordance with the Lord and not in accordance with lust. Let all things be done for the honor of God.” Ignatius, *To Polycarp* 5.2, trans. Rick Brannan.

⁹³ Hunter, *Marriage in the Early Church*, 9.

written to different recipients with different foci. Given the general tenor of the letters and their connection to martyrdom, there is an urgency that can be observed in these letters (rapid instruction, black and white divisions, etc.).⁹⁴

3.7. *Shepherd of Hermas*

While there is some uncertainty to the date of composition for the *Shepherd of Hermas*, the reference to it by Irenaeus (ca. 175) means it is definitely a late first century/early second century work⁹⁵ and was at one point considered a part of the canon of Scripture.⁹⁶ This work touches on many of the household themes and family life which were explored in background form in the previous chapter.

The opening of the work provides a unique look into the general expectation of a Christian home within the period.⁹⁷ Specifically, Hermas is chided for his lack of discipline regarding his children (*Shepherd of Hermas* Visions, I 3.1-2).⁹⁸ Osiek sees this reference, among others in the work, to be understood in the literal sense.⁹⁹ Hermas is chided by the heavenly intermediary because of the behavior of his children. While not named here, the behavior is likely brought out in subsequent sections of the work.¹⁰⁰ Ultimately, he is to exhort them to repentance, with the goal that they obtain eschatological salvation. This shows that a part of *paideia* idealized within this work was calling children to repentance.

Later within the sections of visions, household instruction is given again when the wife of Hermas and her need to “hold back her tongue” is mentioned (*Shepherd of Hermas*, Visions, II 2.3).¹⁰¹ This passage has at least partial application to an expected role of a father and husband

⁹⁴ While not a martyr passion as a genre, there is the need to consider the idea of suffering or martyrdom as impacting the writings of Ignatius. Harvey writes, “Christians used the presentation of martyrdom as occasion for challenging the existing social-order.” See: Susan Ashbrook Harvey, “Martyr Passions and Hagiography,” in *The Oxford Handbook of Early Christian Studies*, eds. Susan Ashbrook Harvey and David G. Hunter (Oxford, Oxford University Press, 2008), 606.

⁹⁵ Holmes, *The Apostolic Fathers*, 447.

⁹⁶ Joseph Verheyden, “The Shepherd of Hermas,” in *The Writings of the Apostolic Fathers*, ed. Paul Foster (London: T&T Clark, 2007), 63.

⁹⁷ Lampe is right to conclude that sometimes Hermas speaks of *oikos* as a building, and other times, more specifically, he uses it as a reference to the household, with specific, literal family members referenced. See: Peter Lampe, *From Paul to Valentinus: Christians At Rome in The First Two Centuries* (Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 2003), 221, 236.

⁹⁸ “But God is angry with you not on account of this, but in order that your family, which has sinned against the Lord and against you, their parents, you may turn back. But, being indulgent, you do not correct your family but permit it to be corrupted. Because of this, the Lord is angry with you, but he will heal you, all the past evils in your family. For because of those sins and iniquities, you have been corrupted by the things of daily life. But the great compassion of the Lord has mercy on you and your family, and will strengthen you and will establish you in his glory, you only do not be idle but have courage and strengthen your family. For as the metalworker hammering his work achieves the task which he desires, so also the daily righteous word overcomes all wickedness. Therefore do not stop instructing your children, for I know that if they will repent with their whole heart, they will be inscribed in the book of life with the saints.” *Shepherd of Hermas*, Visions I 3.1-2, trans. Rick Brannan.

⁹⁹ Carolyn Osiek, *Shepherd of Hermas. A Commentary*, ed. Helmut Koester (Minneapolis, MN: Fortress, 1999), 49.

¹⁰⁰ Osiek, *Shepherd*, 49.

¹⁰¹ *Shepherd of Hermas*, Visions II 2.3, trans. Rick Brannan.

within the Christian household. In this instance, children and household members are seen as under the purview of the head of household for spiritual training and correction. There is a soteriological (the salvation of his children--household salvation is again referenced in XII.3.6) and eschatological (parenting involves looking towards the *eschaton* in focus) nature to the call to Hermas to address his children. Some have said that this passage is figuratively used to point to a larger community. However, given the literary structure of the passage, and the usage of familial address previously (Vis. 1.3.1), this seems less likely.¹⁰² Both of the visions regarding the correction of children (Vis 1.3.1-2, Vis 2.6.1-4) clearly point to the responsibility of Hermas to call his children to repentance for sin, to not shirk his responsibility in instruction, and to paternal spiritual leadership within the family.

Hermas represents his household, and their transgressions in turn are related to him in a corporate solidarity. This idea can be seen as the vision continues (i.e., *Shepherd of Hermas*, Visions, II 3.1).¹⁰³ The Greco-Roman idea of the role of *paterfamilias* comes out here, at least in principle. Hermas has neglected his children, and his wife (referred to as a sibling) and this has created spiritual detriment for Hermas. What is likely at stake here is family *pietas*, and that shame has been brought upon the family. However, far from this Greco-Roman familial pride is the reality that what is being addressed is the spiritual condition of the household for eternal purposes, not simply for love of family, or the ‘family’ within the state. Ultimately, the role of head of household is a cultural one, but a spiritual one also. Much later, in the parabolic section, this idea comes to the fore (i.e., *Shepherd of Hermas*, Parables, VII 2-3). No call for egalitarian authority is given, nor concern for changing the larger social structure. Rather, the structure existent within the larger culture is used in order point to spiritual *telos*—spiritual repentance within the household.

Another aspect of ‘family’ addressed within *The Shepherd of Hermas* is related to marriage, divorce, and adultery. In various sections, the call for contentment with one’s wife is given, and adultery is to be avoided by focusing on one’s own wife:

“I command you,” he said, “to guard purity. And do not let any thoughts enter into your heart about the wife of another, or about any sexual immorality or about any such likeness of evil, for by doing this you commit great sin. But by always remembering your own wife, you will never go wrong. (*Shepherd of Hermas*, Commandments, IV. 1)¹⁰⁴

Here the call for faithfulness to one’s wife is cast in the light of the spiritual avoidance of sin, but no reference is being made to the sentiments of the wife. This is not to imply that this is excluded, but sin is given as the focus of this injunction. Hermas is elsewhere commanded to avoid adultery and sexual immorality (*Shepherd of Hermas*, Commandments, VIII. 3). Important here is that both ‘adultery’ and ‘sexual immorality’ are mentioned.¹⁰⁵ An argument could be made that the expectation seen here is that a Christian man was not only to avoid adultery with other woman, but the sexual sins prevalent in the culture (pederasty, sexual activity with slaves and homosexuality) were to be avoided as well. The use of both (μοιχεία) and (πορνεία) signifies that what is meant here is not simply a prohibition of adultery, for further injunction is given in

¹⁰² Osiek, *Shepherd*, 54.

¹⁰³ “But you, Hermas, no longer bear a grudge against your children and do not leave your sister alone, that they might be cleansed from their former sins. For they will be disciplined with righteous discipline if you do not bear a grudge against them. The bearing of grudges brings about death, but you, Hermas, had great troubles of your own because of the transgressions of your family, because you did not pay attention to them but neglected them and you became entangled in their evil actions.” *Shepherd of Hermas*, Visions II 3.1, trans. Rick Brannan.

¹⁰⁴ *Shepherd of Hermas*, Commandments, IV. 1, trans. Rick Brannan.

¹⁰⁵ Ehrman also uses the phrase “sexual immorality” in his translation.

word usage where two separate words are utilized. However, the desire for another person's wife is addressed again with potent force:

“ “What,” I said, “sir, are the deeds of evil desire which hand over people to death? Explain them to me that I may abstain from them.” “Listen,” he said, “by what deeds the evil desire destroys the servants of God.” “Above all is the desire for a wife or husband belonging to another...” (*Shepherd of Hermas*, Commandments, XII. 1.3-2.1)¹⁰⁶

Not only is the physical act of adultery to be avoided, but so is desire for another's wife. The focus of this instruction is on self-control and the avoidance of evil. However, the relationship to family is seen in the reality that the role of a married person is to avoid looking outside of his or her spouse to fulfill desire. The intersection of holiness and family instruction appears elsewhere in the work in relationship to 'adultery' and 'divorce' (*Shepherd of Hermas*, Commandments, IV. 1.4-11).¹⁰⁷

Marriage is viewed in this passage as a bond subservient to the spiritual good of the individuals. Specifically, a husband (the initial spouse referenced, clearly in line with the Greco-Roman context where adulterous wives were culturally problematic, but adulterous husbands were given latitude) is not to permit adultery to continue by his wife within his knowledge. However, once confronted, if his wife does not repent, then he is to separate from her, but he is to live alone giving recognition to the fact that she might repent, which would require him, under this counsel, to receive her back. This aspect of family counsel would seem countercultural, for this reacceptance would have been contrary to the *Lex Julia*, which prohibits such a reception.¹⁰⁸ Roman family law is not in view here, but rather the view of Christian marriage (“if someone is married to a woman who believes in the Lord”- IV. 1.4). What also appears out of step with the larger Greco-Roman culture is the fact that in this passage, both husband and wife are to equally receive and follow the counsel (“The same applies to both wife and husband”- IV. 1.8).

The text yet again seems to imply a purity within marriage beyond just the prohibition of adultery, for there is reference here to other kinds of impurities: “Not only is it adultery,” he continued, “if a person defiles his flesh; but also, whoever behaves like the outsiders commits adultery” (IV. 1.9). This could include any other type of sexual behavior that those outside the Christian community would engage in (i.e., homosexuality, pederasty, prostitution, etc.).

This passage demonstrates agreement with *New Testament* passages in the topic areas of adultery and divorce (Matt 19, Mk 10, 1 Cor. 7) where the marriage bond is highly valued. The marriage relationship is envisaged as a relationship based on a spiritual *telos* versus a personal fulfillment. In the case of an unrepentant spouse, the innocent party is consigned to a life of singleness in the hope of repentance in the other. Hermas really only addresses the idea of remarriage in one place (*Shepherd of Hermas*, Commandments, IV. 4.1-2).¹⁰⁹ Here, marrying a second time is considered permissible due to the death of the former spouse. This too appears to mirror Pauline teaching (1 Cor 7:39). However, widowhood is valued as a positive position as well, and here, as in other works examined, is viewed as a status position, which the Christian community should value (Commandments, VIII.10).

¹⁰⁶ *Shepherd of Hermas*, Commandments, XII. 1.3-2.1, trans. Rick Brannan.

¹⁰⁷ *Shepherd of Hermas*, Commandments, IV. 1.4-11. Brannan and Lake have similar translations, both utilizing “adultery” although Lake also chooses to translate “sexual immorality” as “fornication.”

¹⁰⁸ Carolyn Osiek, *Shepherd of Hermas*, 111.

¹⁰⁹ “ “If a wife,” I said, “sir, or on the other hand a husband passes away and the survivor marries, does not the one who marries sin?” “He does not sin,” he said, “but if he remains by himself he acquires an abundant honor for himself and great glory with the Lord. But even if he marries, he does not sin.”” *Shepherd of Hermas*, Commandments, IV. 4.1-2, trans. Rick Brannan.

The genre of the writing is important to consider, for unlike the epistolary examples examined already, the vision or apocalyptic nature of the text affords the opportunity to examine themes contained in the work from the position of observing ideals from narrative versus the usual prescription of norms, or paraenetic discourse.¹¹⁰ If this work was representative of widely held Christian ethical norms, then the sculpting of marriage, family and household centered not on creating a different culture, but on creating a different household—a household focused on the spiritual good of its members. Each of these areas of the ‘family’ as seen in *The Shepherd*, gives an ideal for the Christian family as disciplined unto God.

3.8. Letter of Polycarp to the Philippians

This second century document was written by Polycarp in order to respond to a letter that he had received from the Philippians regarding the writings of Ignatius, as well as to deal with issues related to unity within the church and doctrinal purity.¹¹¹ While some have argued that there is an anti-Marcionite component, others have not affirmed this and only pointed to an anti-Docetic Christological element.¹¹² In this only surviving document of Polycarp, there is some familial reference and instruction. As in the previous works, there is reference to sexual purity within marriage, however, there is also some paraenetic discourse regarding the relationship of husband to wife. For instance:

“The love of money is the beginning of all difficulties. And so, since we know that we brought nothing into the world and can take nothing out of it, we should arm ourselves with the weapons of righteousness and teach one another, first of all, to walk in the commandment of the Lord. Then we should teach our wives to walk in the faith given them and in love and purity; to be affectionate towards their own husbands in all truth; to love everyone equally, with all self-restraint; and to discipline their children in the reverential fear of God.” (Polycarp, *Letter to the Philippians* 4.1-2)¹¹³

This instruction comes directly after Polycarp has announced his intent in writing the letter: righteousness.¹¹⁴ For Polycarp then, righteousness involves aspects related to the marital relationship. Specifically, there is instruction to teach one’s wife in the faith, which involves, according to Polycarp, the need for wives to be “affectionate towards their own husbands in all truth.” This is Ehrman’s rendering of the text: στεργούσας τοὺς ἑαυτῶν ἄνδρας ἐν πάσῃ ἀληθείᾳ. Holmes renders it “cherishing their own husbands in all fidelity”,¹¹⁵ while Hartog

¹¹⁰ Verheyden writes that the work is, “...not interested in revealing hidden schemes of world history or in speculating about the sequence of the events announcing the end-time. Its message rather is about what should be done in the here and now to prepare oneself for the end. At best this could be described as apocalyptic procedure in action, but with a clear-cut focus on the present and serving catechetical and pastoral purposes.” See: Verheyden, “The Shepherd,” 65. Bauckham views Hermas as “...primarily concerned about the steadfastness of Christians to endure and impending persecution which he understands as part of a larger eschatological event...” See: Richard Bauckham, *The Christian World Around the New Testament* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2017), 662.

¹¹¹ Ehrman, *The Apostolic Fathers*, 324-326.

¹¹² Boudewijn Dehandschutter, “The Epistle of Polycarp,” in *The Apostolic Fathers: An introduction*, ed. Wilhelm Pratscher (Waco, TX: Baylor University Press, 2010), 121.

¹¹³ Polycarp, *Letter to the Philippians*, 4.1-2 ed. and trans. Bart Ehrman.

¹¹⁴ Polycarp, *Letter to the Philippians*, 3.1-3.

¹¹⁵ Holmes, *The Apostolic Fathers*, 3rd Edition, 285.

renders it “cherishing their own husbands with all veracity”¹¹⁶ and Brannan renders it “feeling affection for their own husbands in all fidelity.”¹¹⁷ In each of these translations, there is an emotive sense to the instruction. This is like the instruction found in 1 Clement 1:3 (both Ehrman and Holmes point to this) when the church is praised for having instructed wives to demonstrate “dutifully loving their husbands.” Here however, the writing involves an even more instructive element. Once again, the training of children appears, in this instance, with husbands teaching their wives to discipline their children with the reverential fear of God as the trajectory. As in previous sources, *paideia* is envisaged in the context of spiritual training.

The purity envisaged as a part of the Christian household involves sexual purity as well, for further on the issue of sexual expression comes up again, this time with men as the focus:

“So too let the young men be blameless in all things, concerned above all else for their purity, keeping themselves in check with respect to all evil. For it is good to be cut off from the passions of the world, since every passion wages war against the spirit, and neither the sexually immoral, nor the effeminate, nor male prostitutes will inherit the kingdom of God; nor will those who engage in aberrant behavior.” (Polycarp, Letter to the Philippians 5.3)¹¹⁸

Holmes renders the phrase regarding male sexuality as “...neither fornicators nor men who have sex with men (whether as the passive or as the active partner...),¹¹⁹ and Brannan renders it, “...nor the passive homosexual partner, nor the dominant homosexual partner will inherit the kingdom of God.”¹²⁰ The difference in translation is related to the household only in that the translations of Holmes and Brannan demonstrate a sharper prohibition against a practice that many married men were a part of in the culture: sexual activity with other men. If the reference is as Ehrman renders it, then it would potentially only rule out male prostitution (although married men could be involved in this in some way, i.e., parties, etc.), but not the larger practice of pederasty and male relationships. Funk/Bihlmeyer render it as, “...und weder Unzüchtige, noch Weichlinge, noch Knabenschänder das Reich Gottes erben werden...”¹²¹ However, if Holmes is correct, then both single and married Christian men were to avoid any type of homosexual interaction, for purity in this context would rule out any sexual activity except for with a marital partner. Given that the text includes both words for passive and active homosexual action (*μαλακοὶ* and *ἀρσενοκοῖται*) and that the latter is defined usually as committing sodomy¹²² (without necessary reference to the setting, or potential for the practice of prostitution),¹²³ then Holmes’ translation seems to render the text more completely. Hartog follows a similar path in his translations rendering the phrase, “...neither fornicators nor passive nor active homosexual partners...”¹²⁴ Overall, the envisioned ideal by the author would be that for the Christians, sexual activity is as an activity for marriage only envisioned as male and female.

¹¹⁶ Polycarp, Saint, Saint Polycarp, and Paul Hartog, *Polycarp's Epistle to the Philippians and the Martyrdom of Polycarp: Introduction, Text, and Commentary* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013), 85.

¹¹⁷ Polycarp, *Letter to the Philippians*, 4.2 trans. Rick Brannan.

¹¹⁸ Polycarp, *Letter to the Philippians*, 5.3 ed. and trans. Bart Ehrman.

¹¹⁹ Holmes, *The Apostolic Fathers*, 3rd ed., 285.

¹²⁰ Polycarp, *Letter to the Philippians*, 5.3 trans. Rick Brannan.

¹²¹ Polykarpbrief 5.3, trans. Funk/Bihlmeyer.

¹²² G.W.H. Lampe, *A Patristic Greek Lexicon*, OUP 1976, sv *arsenokoiteo* (Oxford, U.K.: The Clarendon Press, 1979), 231.

¹²³ Lake translates the phrase, “...nor the effeminate nor sodomites.” Polycarp, *Letter to the Philippians*, 5.3 trans. Kirsopp Lake.

¹²⁴ Polycarp, *Letter to the Philippians*, 5.3 trans. Paul Hartog.

3.9. *Epistle of Barnabas*¹²⁵

Written by an anonymous Christian, the work was likely written after AD 70 (see:16.3-5) but before the city was rebuilt by Hadrian.¹²⁶ A central concern of the letter is the interpretation of scripture, and specifically the connection of the Old Testament to Christianity.¹²⁷

Within the *Epistle of Barnabas*, there is only brief paraenetic instruction regarding family. Although brief, this treatment of ‘family’ is another piece of the Christian literature of the period in that it aligns with much already seen in other writings. The main passage dealing with family is found toward the end of the letter:

“Do not engage in sexual immortality, do not commit adultery, do not engage in pederasty. The word of God must not go out from you to any who are impure...Do not abort a fetus or kill a child that is already born. Do not remove your hand from [*Or: refrain from disciplining; or: shirk your responsibility towards*] your son or daughter, but from their youth teach them the reverential fear of God.” (*Epistle of Barnabas*, 19.4-5)¹²⁸

Here the Christian ethical ideal seen is that sexuality was to be contained within a marriage. In a specific sexual reference, while Ehrman uses the word “pederasty,” Brannan prefers the phrase “corrupt children,” and Lake renders the phrase more generally as “thou shalt not commit sodomy.” Funk/Bihlmeyer render it as “du sollst nicht Knaben schänden.” All the translations taken together, there is a clear prohibition from the sexual use of boys, or children. Thus, the three main categories of sexual expression seen within the Greco-Roman culture are brought to the fore and are all condemned: sexual immorality (which could include prostitution, fornication and homosexuality), adultery (which was often allowed for married men, but eschewed for married women) and pederasty (which was prevalent). This work implies then that only marriage is to be the place for sexual expression.

Secondly, this passage gives the ideal, much like that in the works of the *Didache* and *The Shepherd of Hermas*, that children were to be taught to reverence God. Parents, and specifically, fathers, were to view *paideia* through the lens of discipleship. Here then, a Christian had ethical familial responsibilities. Also, within the work, the discussion of sexual immorality and abortion occurs as a part of family counsel and in both situations (sexual expression or an unwanted pregnancy or child) practices regarding the household are in view. Later, when the “path of the Black One” is mentioned, another reference is made regarding children:

“murderers of children, corrupters of the creatures of God...” (*Epistle of Barnabas*, 20.2)¹²⁹

Previously, the commandments given were to those seeking to live in the path of light. Here, contrasted with that is a description, which includes a whole host of behaviors viewed as immoral, one of which is the murder of children. This could refer either to abortion, or to exposure, and in similar fashion to the description in the *Didache*, there is a phrase regarding the

¹²⁵ Holmes describes this work as “one of the earliest contributions outside the New Testament to the discussions that have confronted the followers of Jesus since the earliest days of his ministry.” Holmes, *The Apostolic Fathers*, 3rd ed., 370.

¹²⁶ Holmes, *The Apostolic Fathers*, 3rd ed., 373.

¹²⁷ James Carleton Paget, “The Epistle of Barnabas,” in *The Writings of the Apostolic Fathers*, ed. Paul Foster (London: T&T Clark, 2007), 70-79.

¹²⁸ *Epistle to Barnabas*, 19:4-5, ed. and trans. Bart Ehrman.

¹²⁹ *Epistle to Barnabas*, 20.2, trans. Rick Brannan.

“corruption of children.” However, an argument could be made that the phrase refers to pederasty as well, so that the phrase is essentially condemning both the murder and sexual corruption of children. Either way, in the previous section, the letter has condemned both, so the injunction does not hinge on the interpretation of this singular phrase. In keeping with the previous chapter of the *Epistle of Barnabas*, the path of the Black One involves not caring for widows and orphans, as well as committing adultery.¹³⁰ The author(s) had specific paraenesis regarding family for the early Christian community, which provides further understanding into the desired outcomes or ideals for families within the movement.

3.10. *Epistle to Diognetus*

The *Epistle to Diognetus* is partly mysterious in that its authorship and date are not completely agreed upon.¹³¹ Van Geest sees the Stoic-infused letter as an argument for historical discontinuity between Christians and Jews and Greeks.¹³² This later second century work includes only a few sentences dedicated to anything that is remotely connected to family. In describing Christians to Diognetus, the author shares many ways in which Christians do not appear to mimic their Greco-Roman pagan counterparts. Touching on family only briefly, the epistle describes Christians in the following way:

“They marry like everyone, they bear children, but they do not expose their offspring. They set a common table, but not a common bed.” (*Epistle to Diognetus*, 5.6-7).¹³³

Here, a passing glance is given to describing Christian marriages and Christian parenting. Specifically, Christians are described as not going outside of their marriage for sexual expression (Ehrman renders the final phrase as sharing “sexual partners”), and Christian parents kept children, even those children who otherwise would be subject to exposure/abandonment. This would have been for clear moral reasons, but likely also as a clear critique of larger Greco-roman culture.¹³⁴ This statement in the epistle regarding family is an ideal rather than a clear movement-wide reality, and yet, the entire work appeals to the observable. Horst argues that such a practice was about Christians seeking to imitate God.¹³⁵ Thus, there was at least some observable means to

¹³⁰ Becker helpfully notes that genre criticism is a necessary component for the scholar to consider, including items like personal patronage. See: Becker, *The Birth of Christian History*, 37.

¹³¹ Holmes writes, “...the authorship and date...is entirely a matter of conjecture. Hippolytus of Rome (ca. 170-236) is frequently suggested; Lightfoot hazards the conjecture that it was Pantaenus (d. ca. 190), who preceded Clement of Alexandria as head of the catechetical school in that city.” See: Holmes, *The Apostolic Fathers*, 689.

¹³² P. van Geest, ‘The Pursuit of Discontinuity in the *Epistula ad Diognetum* and the Human Qualities of the Word Incarnate,’ in: G. Guldentops, C. Laes, (eds), *Felix curiositas. Studies in Latin Literature and Textual Criticism from Antiquity to the Twentieth Century. In Honour of Rita Beyers* (Turnhout: Brepols 2017), 133-152 (*Instrumenta Patristica et Mediaevalia* 72), 137-38.

¹³³ *Epistle to Diognetus*, 5.6-7 trans. Rick Brannan.

¹³⁴ Moss helpfully discusses the defenses of Christian apologists in their discourses of infant exposure. See: Candida R. Moss, “Infant Exposure and the Rhetoric of Cannibalism, Incest, and Martyrdom in the Early Church,” *J. of Early Christ. Stud.*, Volume 29, Number 3, (Fall 2021): 341-369.

¹³⁵ He writes, “These points of continuity between God and Christians subtly convey that Christians’ distinctive way of life is characterized by the imitation of God.” William Horst, “The Secret Plan of God and the Imitation of God: Neglected Dimensions of Christian Differentiation in *Ad Diognetum*,” *J ECS*, Volume 27, Number 2, (Summer 2019): 181.

see the ideal mentioned as occurring within early Christian families. As an apologetic work, what is being claimed within the work is largely assumed to be that which can be observed given the appeal to observable evidence. In the two sentences listed above, there is a description of ethical behavior toward members of a household. This work, unlike the others, is written to describe or portray Christian behavior, and give demonstration of the potential contrast between Christian and non-Christian families.

3.11. Further Works: Athenagoras, Justin Martyr, Aristides, Irenaeus, Clement of Alexandria, and Tertullian¹³⁶

Given the chronological boundaries of this thesis, other writers from within the Christian sphere of the period must be considered on the topic of family.¹³⁷ Specifically, although in the main, their references to family are less, Athenagoras (*Supplication for the Christians* c. 177),¹³⁸ Justin Martyr (d. 165),¹³⁹ Aristides (*Apology*, c. 120-138),¹⁴⁰ Irenaeus (c. 130-200),¹⁴¹ Clement of Alexandria (c. 150-215),¹⁴² and Tertullian (145-220)¹⁴³ all address aspects of family which shed further light on the counsel given within the proto-orthodox Christian movement. Norris places Athenagoras, Justin Martyr and Aristides in the category of ‘Apologists’ within the second century. Clement of Alexandria and Tertullian are of a different kind of genre and tend to, at least regarding the works in this thesis, entail writings related to teaching, catechetical practices and instruction.¹⁴⁴

¹³⁶ For this last section of second century writers, to display the text in the thesis, I have largely utilized the Eerdmans updated revision set of translations by Roberts and Donaldson given its academic reputation, the fact that all of the sources could be found there and because of its revised publication within the last 40 years or so. In some cases, I note other even more recent versions or scholarly works utilized. Other sets, such as the *Loeb* set do not always contain all the sources, and were often published earlier than the Eerdmans version, and I have confirmed with personnel with *Corpus Christianorum* that they do not have a scholarly collection of these authors. Tertullianus is available in *Series Latina* 1 and 2 of *Corpus Christianorum* however. For these reasons, within the body of the thesis, for English citation purposes, I have retained the Roberts and Donaldson version.

¹³⁷ These particular authors were chosen as those authors of the early Christian movement who address themes related to ‘family,’ and which occur within the time period of the inquiry of this thesis. Here within this section, they are listed without a lengthy focus on genre, style or sharp distinctions on date. Rather, their writings simply demonstrate the continued family-themed connection points made within the first and second century writers.

¹³⁸ Frances Young, Lewis Ayres and Andrew Louth, eds., *The Cambridge History of Early Christian Literature* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2004), xxii-xxiii.

¹³⁹ Henry Bettensen, ed. and trans., *The Early Christian Fathers: A Selection from the writings of the Fathers from St. Clement of Rome to St. Athanasius* (Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press, 1956), 58.

¹⁴⁰ Young, Ayres and Louth, *The Cambridge History*, xxii-xxiii.

¹⁴¹ Henry Bettensen, ed. and trans. *The Early Christian Fathers*, 65.

¹⁴² Young, Ayres and Louth, *The Cambridge History*, xxii-xxiii.

¹⁴³ Roberts and Donaldson, *The Ante-Nicene Fathers*, vol. 3, 3.

¹⁴⁴ He writes, “The term ‘Apologists’, as applied to Christian writers of the early period, denotes a series of authors who in the course of the second century composed and circulated addresses and pleas...to emperors and others in public authority on behalf of their fellows Christians.” See: Richard A. Norris, Jr., “The Apologists,” in *The Cambridge History of Early Christian Literature*, eds. Frances Young, Lewis Ayres and Andrew Louth (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2004), 36. He also discusses Irenaeus of Lyon in light of that author’s work

Regarding family and marriage, Athenagoras pictures marriage as existing for the purpose of childbearing, and with a tone that the passion of sexual intercourse should only be stoked for procreation.

(*A Plea for the Christians*, xxxiii)¹⁴⁵ Therefore, one marriage is viewed as permissible, but divorce and remarriage are ‘types’ of adultery. Quoting Jesus in part, Athenagoras views divorce as non-permissible. The description pictures virginity as an ideal, which once taken away, must only be done for the purpose of a lawful (before God) marriage with the focus of procreative activity. Marriage becomes an allowance for the Christian, but is certainly not to be sought beyond one spouse. For Athenagoras, marital commitment then becomes the expectation once the allowed marriage has been embraced, given that sexual passion itself is pictured as something that could lead one away from God.

Clement of Alexandria in instructive format, gives paraenetic discourse regarding the family issue of marriage. At the outset, he agrees with Athenagoras in the idea of marriage being about the procreation of children (*Stromata, or Miscellanies*, xxiii).¹⁴⁶ From there, he continues a dialogue on the issue of marriage, even comparing various philosophical and cultural opinions on the topic (i.e. Plato, Democritus, Epicurus, the Stoics). In what follows, he mentions the benefits of marriage such as place in society, procreation, the helpfulness of a wife as well as having children to provide care in the later years (*Stromata, or Miscellanies*, xxiii).

The creation of a couple is valuable in Clement’s eyes. He summarizes this idea, returning to the issue of passion (*Stromata, or Miscellanies*, xxiii).¹⁴⁷ In this discussion he also prohibits divorce¹⁴⁸ and speaks negatively regarding a man who would not live with his wife and children.¹⁴⁹ Clement of Alexandria provides a more detailed description of marriage, its benefits, and the prohibitions that surround it. Both later second century writers provide a consistent picture regarding the sexual aspects as well as the expected permanency, or faithfulness, within the marriage relationship. Clement presents a higher view of marriage ontologically, given the multiple benefits he attributes to it. But both writers, consistent with the Apostolic Fathers, maintain that sexual activity is to only occur within the marriage. This is a consistent ethic throughout.

Clement furthers the discussion related to family and household when later he discusses aspects related to gender roles. Quasten, writing about *Stromata*, argues that Clement’s call for

“Against Heresies” which was an anti-heretical work. He writes that Irenaeus was, “...a central figure in the second-century debated stimulated in the Christian churches by gnosticism and by the teachings of Marcion.” See: Richard A. Norris, Jr., “Irenaeus of Lyon,” in *The Cambridge History of Early Christian Literature*, eds. Frances Young, Lewis Ayres and Andrew Louth (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2004), 45.

¹⁴⁵ Athenagoras, *A Plea for the Christians*, taken from: *The Apostolic Fathers with Justin Martyr and Irenaeus*, Vol. 2 Eds. Alexander Roberts and James Donaldson, Rev. A. Cleveland Coxe (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1981), 146-147.

¹⁴⁶ Clement of Alexandria, *Stromata, or Miscellanies*, taken from: *The Ante-Nicene*, Vol. II Eds. Alexander Roberts and James Donaldson, Rev. A. Cleveland Coxe (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1981), 377.

¹⁴⁷ “To be subjected, then, to the passions, and to yield to them, is the extremest slavery; as to keep them in subjection is the only liberty. The divine Scripture accordingly says, that those who have transgressed the commandments are sold to strangers, that is, to sins alien to nature, till they return and repent. Marriage, then, as a sacred image, must be kept pure from those things which defile it.” Clement, *Stromata, or Miscellanies*, 378.

¹⁴⁸ “Now that the Scripture counsels marriage, and allows no release from the union...” (*Stromata, or Miscellanies*, xxiii).

¹⁴⁹ “It is also unmanly and weak to shun living with a wife and children. For of that of which the loss is an evil, the possession is by all means a good...” (*Stromata, or Miscellanies*, xxiii).

morality with a focus on chastity offered Clement's readers a contrast with the Gnostics of the time.¹⁵⁰ While upholding male leadership, there is the view that women should participate in aspects of things viewed often as for men only.¹⁵¹ He also adopts the apostolic texts in this section, quoting from both of the Pauline household codes of Ephesians and Colossians.¹⁵² Similarly, children and slave to master relationships are addressed as well from these same epistolary passages. The ultimate focus of this section of Clement is that any person, regardless of age, position or gender can suffer for the faith (even martyrdom), and to attain to pious living. He writes, "But as it is noble for a man to die for virtue, and for liberty, and for himself, so also is it for a woman."¹⁵³ Given the connection in this time period between gender roles and marriage, this brief discussion of the roles of men and women is germane given that it is the contextual basis for Clement in this discussion and is located within marriage itself. A theocentric view of life appears to emerge from much of the writing and seems to follow the apostolic paraenesis of canonical writings very closely.

The work entitled *Paedagogus* (The Instructor) by Clement of Alexandria gives instructions are regarding gender, adultery and marital virtue as figuratively coming from a Divine counselor.¹⁵⁴ In unity with other Christian Ante-Nicene writers, specifically the Apostolic Fathers corpus, there is a theocentric focus (i.e., *A Plea for Christians*, in such phrases like "closer communion with God" and "resisting the hand of God") to the writings regarding marriage. Sexual ethics are germane to the discussion of family, for once again, sexual activity is restricted to the marital bedroom.

Aristides, writing to Hadrian in the early part of the second century seeks to give an apology for the Christian faith, first by discussing the God of Christianity (*Apology of Aristides I*), and then giving characteristics of the followers of the early Christian movement.

He addresses familial aspects particularly addressing the ideal sexual ethic (*Apology of Aristides, XV*)¹⁵⁵ This apologetic work includes a description of the Christian sexual ethic (with clear familial connections). In section IX he speaks to incompatibility of false "gods" practicing fornication, adultery or homosexual relations calling such behavior into question. In contrast, he compares Christian adherents and their sexual practices as part of his apologetic. Given the apologetic nature of the letter, one needs to interpret this statement with the understanding that Aristides, in the main, seems to be pointing to a regularly occurring ideal within the proto-orthodox Christian family. We must not assume that this statement is warrant enough to claim that every single member of the proto-orthodox movement avoided adultery or fornication, but only that Aristides presents this ideal as something of note among the early Christian community. Irenaeus, similarly, connects to ideas regarding family in his discussion on Galatians chapter five

¹⁵⁰ Johannes Quasten, *Patrology*, vol. II The Ante-Nicene Literature after Irenaeus (Utrecht-Antwerp, Netherlands: Spectrum Publishers, 1953), 14.

¹⁵¹ "Women are therefore to philosophize equally with men, though the males are preferable at everything..." (*Stromata, or Miscellanies*, viii).

¹⁵² Clement, *Stromata, or Miscellanies*, 420.

¹⁵³ Clement, *Stromata, or Miscellanies*, 421.

¹⁵⁴ However, this work will be analyzed in more detail in Chapter five in order that the specific related content can be seen in light of other similar works with related thematic material.

¹⁵⁵ "For they know God, the Creator and Fashioner of all things through the only-begotten Son and the Holy Spirit; and beside Him they worship no other God. They have the commands of the Lord Jesus Christ Himself graven upon their hearts; and they observe them, looking forward to the resurrection of the dead and the life in the world to come. They do not commit adultery nor fornication..." Aristides, *The Apology of Aristides*, in *The Ante-Nicene Fathers*, Vol. X, 5th edition. Eds. Allan Menzies (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1978), 276-277.

(Irenaeus, *Against Heresies*, Book V, Chapter XI).¹⁵⁶ Again, the familial connections of Irenaeus, like that of Aristides, will be analyzed in Chapter five, but his introduction here as an early writer who deals with elements related to ‘family’ is necessary.

A brief survey of Justin Martyr and Tertullian would help to round out the picture of the Christian literature dealing with ‘family’ from the period. Justin mentions concepts of both household and family in his First Apology. Regarding children, he writes:

“But as for us, we have been taught that to expose newly-born children is the part of wicked men; and this we have been taught lest we should do any one an injury, and lest we should sin against God, first, because we see that almost all so exposed (not only the girls, but also the males) are brought up to prostitution” (*First Apology*, XXVII)¹⁵⁷

And a few lines later, he adds:

“And again [we fear to expose children], lest some of them be not picked up, but die, and we become murderers.” (*First Apology*, XXIX)¹⁵⁸

The practice of exposing children seen within the larger culture is once again pictured as something that was not to be practiced among the Christians. And in giving reasons for the lack of this practice, Justin points to it as leading to the sins of prostitution and murder. Justin argues for the Christian faith, and in doing so largely defends it against a charge that he finds inconsistent with the adherents of the faith.¹⁵⁹

Interestingly, Justin pens his description with the opening phrase that he had been “taught” certain instruction.¹⁶⁰ Justin demonstrates how teaching regarding members of the family and household occurred within the period. This paraenesis speaks to a practice in the larger culture that was deemed to be inconsistent with the Christian ethic. The reference to teaching provides further clues not only to Christian instruction, but also specifically to teaching vis-à-vis the ‘family’ in general.

¹⁵⁶ “Thus does he point out to his hearers in a more explicit manner what it is [he means when he declares], “Flesh and blood shall not inherit the kingdom of God.” For they who do these things, since they do indeed walk after the flesh, have not the power of living unto God. And then, again, he proceeds to tell us the spiritual actions which vivify a man, that is, the engrafting of the Spirit; thus saying, “But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, goodness, benignity, faith, meekness, continence, chastity: against these there is no law.” As, therefore, he who has gone forward to the better things, and has brought forth the fruit of the Spirit, is saved altogether because of the communion of the Spirit; so also he who continued in the aforesaid works of the flesh, being truly reckoned as carnal, because he did not receive the Spirit of God, shall not have power to inherit the kingdom of heaven.” Irenaeus, *Against Heresies*, in *The Ante-Nicene Fathers* Vol. I Eds. Alexander Roberts and James Donaldson, Rev. A. Cleveland Coxe (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1981), 537.

¹⁵⁷ Justin, *First Apology*, taken from: *The Apostolic Fathers with Justin Martyr and Irenaeus*, Vol. 1 Eds. Alexander Roberts and James Donaldson, Rev. A. Cleveland Coxe (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1981), 172.

¹⁵⁸ Justin, *First Apology*, ed. Roberts and Donaldson, 172.

¹⁵⁹ Robert M. Grant, *Greek Apologists of the Second Century* (Philadelphia, The Westminster Press, 1988), 66.

¹⁶⁰ “ἐκτιθέναι τὰ γεννώμενα πονηρὸν εἶναι δεδιδάγμεθα.” See: Justin, *First Apology*, taken from: *Justin, Philosopher and Martyr: Apologies*, eds. Denis Minns and Paul Parvis (Oxford: Oxford University Press 2009), 152-154.

Tertullian, in both *On Exhortation to Chastity* and *On Monogamy*, pointedly offers specific instruction related to family. In Chapter five of this thesis, more detail regarding those two works will be provided. Another example of his work related to ‘family’ is that in his *Apology*, Tertullian addresses similar themes related to family from within the period. He states that abortion is not a Christian practice (IX, 8); he bemoans pagan stories of incest (IX, 16-18); decries pagan adultery practices (XXXIX, 12-15); and speaks to chastity. In unity with the other writings previously shown, he speaks to the expectation of Christian chastity, and the Christian husband only engaging in sexual acts with his own wife:

“The Christian husband has nothing to do with any but his own wife.” (*Apology*, XLVI)¹⁶¹

In relation to this, he speaks of the Christian’s ability to battle lusts and the passions of the eyes. He argues that sexual ethics revolve around marriage and marital faithfulness. Tertullian does not define chastity as complete sexual abstinence, but rather as marital faithfulness. However, Flexsenhar has argued that there may have also been economic motives in view in some of the counsel of Tertullian regarding richer Christian matrons.¹⁶² However, this would not diminish that focus of on chastity. Similarly, in *Ad Nationes*, he speaks to the value of this chastity as well, even hinting that simply looking at a person in lust outside of one’s spouse would bring pollution to chastity.¹⁶³ Tertullian, contra Marcion, speaks to marriage in terms of its blessedness, yet differs from others presented here in that there is a recommendation toward refraining from it (*Tertullian Against Marcion*, XXIX).¹⁶⁴

Given the date of 207 AD,¹⁶⁵ the text is indicative of the thought of a Christian writer moving out of the period in question. While upholding marriage as holy, yet restricting it, he counsels that sexual activity was right only within the confines of marriage. Paraenesis regarding family within the Tertullian corpus was focused on the supposed transformation of the Christian from his or her previous life. Theocentricity is the focus of his counsel regarding the family, both in this case, in his rebuttal to Marcion, and in his overall view of marriage.

In both *On Exhortation to Chastity* and *On Monogamy*, Tertullian pointedly offers counsel in a theocentric manner. He writes about marriage focusing on a view towards the will of God (*On Exhortation to Chastity*, Chapter II). And later, he points to certain benefits of widowhood and of only having a single marriage such as the ability to focus on God (Chapter X-XI). In *On Monogamy*, Tertullian opens quite pointedly by saying, “Heretics do away with marriages; Psychics accumulate them. The former marry not even once; the latter not only once”

¹⁶¹ Tertullian, *Apology*, taken from: *The Ante-Nicene Fathers, Vol. III* eds. Alexander Roberts and James Donaldson, Rev. A. Cleveland Coxe (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1980), 51.

¹⁶² Michael Flexsenhar, “Sought Out for Luxury, Castrated for Lust: Mistress-Slave Sex in Tertullian’s *Ad Uxorem* 2.8.4.” *Vigiliae Christianae* 72, no. 5 (2018): 498. <https://www.jstor.org/stable/26566990>.

¹⁶³ Tertullian, *Ad Nationes*, ed. Roberts and Donaldson, 112.

¹⁶⁴ “For we do not reject marriage, but simply refrain from it. Nor do we prescribe sanctity as the rule, but only recommend it, observing it as a good, yea, even the better state, if each man uses it carefully according to his ability; but at the same time earnestly vindicating marriage, whenever hostile attacks are made against it is a polluted thing, to the disparagement of the Creator. For He bestowed His blessing on matrimony also...” Tertullian, *Tertullian Against Marcion*, ed. Roberts and Donaldson, 294.

¹⁶⁵ Johannes Quasten, *Patrology*, vol. II *The Ante-Nicene Literature after Irenaeus* (Utrecht-Antwerp, Netherlands: Spectrum Publishers, 1953), 275.

(*On Monogamy*, I).¹⁶⁶ Within this work as well, he argues again against a person having more than one marriage. In *To His Wife*, Tertullian argues that should he die before her, she should not remarry. He writes, “The precept, therefore, which I give you is, that, with all the constancy you may, you do, after our departure, renounce nuptials...But whether to you, or to any other woman whatever who pertains to God, the advice which we are giving shall be profitable” (*To His Wife*, Chapter 1).¹⁶⁷ What is clear is that the focus for Tertullian was a theocentric life. Whether one agrees with Tertullian or not in terms of his interpretation, marriage, chastity, and sexual practices were envisaged within these works as a theocentric enterprise.

In addition to what has been previously noted regarding genre concerning epistolary sources in this chapter, it is worth mentioning that apologetic writing also is seen in these sources.¹⁶⁸ For our purposes here, the family-related material is seen as material expressing familial ideals, and in some cases realities for the early Christian movement. The focus of this section is simply the presentation of instances where later, post-apostolic fathers reference family.

3.12. Evaluation and Conclusions

While not completely monolithic, the treatment of ‘family’ appears within the writings of the first and second century revealing various themes of similarity among the Ante-Nicene sources. While the genre of literature varies between homilies, epistolary or apologetic forms, the manner of treatment comes either in the form of commending a current practice, or through ethical paraenesis toward particular practices.

Paraenesis regarding sexual ethics and the treatment of children have been the largest part of this instruction, and there was a focus upon the household, versus society at large. This paraenesis had a theocentric, or at times, Christocentric trajectory and could, in some writings, be seen with an eschatological dimension (i.e. Ignatius and Athenagoras¹⁶⁹). Family envisaged with the glory of God (versus the glory of the state or the self for instance) is in large part the teleological focus of the writings. The paraenetic writing on family is not focused upon the desires of the individual per se, but rather on the concept of Christian family in general. This is not to say that relational dynamics were never addressed (i.e., the brief treatment of slaveholders to slaves within the Ignatian corpus), but they were not the main focus. Thus, counsel regarding familial, and mainly marital relationships, was centered on the theocentric nature¹⁷⁰ upon which those relationships were envisaged. And upon this foundation, marriage is viewed with

¹⁶⁶ Tertullian, *On Monogamy*, taken from: *The Ante-Nicene Fathers Vol. IV* Eds. Alexander Roberts and James Donaldson, Rev. A. Cleveland Coxe (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1979), 59.

¹⁶⁷ Tertullian, *To His Wife*, ed. Roberts and Donaldson, 39.

¹⁶⁸ Edwards writes, “No distinction between polemic, protreptic, and apologetic appears to have been observed by the early Christians, least of all by those who consciously aped the rhetoric of the schools.” Mark Edwards, “Apologetics,” in *The Oxford Handbook of Early Christian Studies*, eds. Susan Ashbrook Harvey and David G. Hunter (Oxford, Oxford University Press, 2008), 549.

¹⁶⁹ Athenagoras for instance in *Embassy* writes, “If we believed that this life here below was the only one to be lived, then it would be reasonable to suspect us of being enslaved by flesh and blood, subject to greed and passion and engaged in sins. But we know that God is present to all our thoughts and words, night and day, that He is light to all things and sees what is in our hearts. We believe that when we have departed from this life, we shall live another life in heaven better than this, not another earthly one.” Athenagoras, *Embassy for the Christians*, trans. Joseph Hugh Crehan (London, Longmans, Green and Co., 1956), 72.

¹⁷⁰ In my use of the term ‘theocentric’, I am implying the foundation and centerpiece reality of God and the Christian faith. So, for family counsel to be theocentric, the ‘family’ itself is envisaged with the Christian God at its center.

permanency such that divorce, and going outside marriage in adultery were not to be options for the Christian.

The writings of the period outside of the *New Testament* reveal similarity in theme with the *New Testament* corpus as regards ‘family.’ In the area of sexual prohibition, as well as in the instruction regarding *paideia*, apostolic instruction is mirrored. *New Testament* Pauline literature addresses sexual expression (i.e. 1 Corinthians 5-6) as well as the role of children in household codes (i.e. Ephesians 6 and Colossians 3). There is a current debate as to the actual expression of sex within the early Christian movement. The dominant position, even up to the current time, has been that Christians ultimately created a new sexual ethic. This purported new sexual ethic contrasts with the larger Greco-Roman view of sexual expression.¹⁷¹ Recent scholars such as Harper (2013) and Hurtado (2015) have argued similarly. However, contrasting opinions can be seen in the work of Peter Brown, Elizabeth Castelli and J.A. Glancy. Castelli provides an avenue of further consideration in a recent chapter where she demonstrates the research since the year 2000 into sexual renunciation among the early Christians. Borrowing from Queer and Feminist scholarship, she seeks to provide a path forward which offers new roads of inquiry into the exact nature of early Christian practice.¹⁷²

The writings observed here present certain familial ideals without a call to transform society. Rather, aspects of ‘family’ were to be undertaken differently even amid the continued structure (male leadership, slavery, etc.) of the larger culture. *Paideia*, which was valued among both the Christian and non-Christian families alike, was envisaged with a focus toward instruction in the things of God. This is not to say that in non-Christian homes religious values were not instilled, for dedication to household gods, such as the *Lares and Penates*, was important. However, within the Christian home, there was a soul discipleship aspect present in the discussion of the *paideia* of children such that *Hermas* could be challenged, for instance, to help his family pursue ‘repentance’.

The complete prohibition against pederasty, abortion and the abandonment of children is monolithic within the writings. This is further evidenced by the strong call to care for orphans. The connection to family and household in this theme is in the overall elevation of children within the structure of the Christian household. The communicated ideal was that children were to be kept, cared for, protected, and trained—and trained with a theocentric approach.

Having seen the specifics of how the family was addressed in the Christian source documents of the period, and having compared them to some of the non-Christian writings on ‘family’ from the period, the next step in the research is to hone in on the structure of pastoral care within the period, with a particular eye toward its use vis-à-vis the family.

¹⁷¹ Johnson and Ryan write, “Poets, as well as legal and historical writers, describe extra-marital relationships across the class divide.” Even following *Lex Julia* and *Lex Scantinia*, they detail that, “Male citizens could visit brothels and have sex with slaves without breaking either the *Lex Julia* or the *Lex Scantinia*. Roman laws on morality only applied to relations between freeborn men, women and children. Even so, husbands could seek either immediate sexual relief or a long-term sexual relationship outside marriage.” See: Marguerite Johnson and Terry Ryan, *Sexuality in Greek and Roman Society and Literature: A Sourcebook* (London: Routledge, 2005), 7-9.

¹⁷² Castelli, Elizabeth A., “Sex and Sexual Renunciation II: Developments in research since 2000,” in *The Early Christian World*, Edited by Philip F. Esler (London: Routledge, 2017), 381. See also: Jennifer Glancy, “Slavery and The Rise of Christianity,” in *The Cambridge World History of Slavery*, vol. 1 *The Ancient Mediterranean World*, eds. Keith Bradley and Paul Cartledge (Cambridge, U.K.: Cambridge University Press, 2011).

Chapter 4

Counseling and Care Through Paraenetic-Psychagogy

4.1 Introduction

Having surveyed the background material regarding the first and second century ‘family’ in Chapter two followed by cataloging the relevant Christian source information on the family in Chapter three, the focus of this chapter now turns to understanding the method of pastoral care within the material written on family within the period. The overall inquiry of this thesis involves the nature of counsel that was given regarding the family and household within Christianity. While pastoral care is a broad field, limiting it to this time period, and then limiting it further to understanding pastoral care and counseling structure that related specifically to ‘family’ will allow this section to not become overly cumbersome or tangential.

The classic work on the history of pastoral care by Clebsch and Jaekle defines pastoral care as consisting of “helping acts, done by representative Christian persons, directed toward the healing, sustaining, guiding, and reconciling of troubled persons whose troubles arise in the context of ultimate meanings and concerns.”¹ This definition itself, while fluid in the literature,² is one that for the purposes of this thesis provides a point of definition given the research focus of pastoral care and counseling of the family. Thus, the pastoral care background serves to narrow the field of this research. Regarding the period in question, Clebsch and Jaekle write that idea of “sustaining to the end” is how to characterize pastoral care endeavors.³ Eschatological realities were in view within the period and are evidenced by pastoral care endeavors. However, the *parousia* is only part of the eschatological foci of pastoral care to the ‘family’ as will be evidenced later in this thesis.

Within the period, multiple themes arise as pastoral care is considered. For instance, Evans demonstrates how there was a value placed on suffering in *Epistle to Diognetus* and *Clement* with a consideration of pastoring with suffering in view.⁴ Suffering was a dominant topic of consideration, and it can be seen as one area within the time period to which the attention of caregivers was given. McNeill demonstrates several components to pastoral care within the period as well, specifically as it relates to desired outcomes. For instance, there was a variance of discipline and practice as it related to repentance (i.e., compare Tertullian (pre-200 C.E) with

¹ William A. Clebsch and Charles R. Jaekle, *Pastoral Care in Historical Perspective: An Essay with Exhibits* (New Jersey: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1964), 4.

² Mayer defines “pastoral care” this way: “...all the work of the called pastor that helps people to appreciate and to grasp what God the Father has done and is doing for them through the power of his Spirit, both individually and collectively, so that Christians can support each other in mission.” See: Herbert T. Mayer, *Pastoral Care: Its roots and Renewal* (Atlanta: John Knox Press, 1979), 17.

³ They write: “The first era of Christian pastoral care lasted until circa A.D. 180 and was characterized by an emphasis on sustaining souls through the vicissitudes of life in this world, believed by the early Christians to be running swiftly towards its end.” For instance, this is evident in a brief mention of pastoral care toward slaves where they were exhorted to patiently endure. They write, “the expectation of the *parousia* galvanized all pastoral helping, for these individual problems were conceived as circumstances to be endured briefly until the cataclysmic vindication of the hopes of the faithful.” See; Clebsch and Jaekle, *Pastoral Care*, 13, 15.

⁴ G.R. Evans, “The Fathers and the early Councils” in *A History of Pastoral Care*. Ed. G. R. Evans (London: Cassell, 2000), 66-67.

Shepherd of Hermas (circa 125 C.E).⁵ This variance in how to care for wayward and repentant sinners can be seen even within this time-limited period. For instance, McNeill writes “As for Hermas, he is a lover of adulterers!”⁶ Germane for this research is the reality that pastoral care did vary and was not uniform. There is also clear discussion in the literature regarding the application or setting of this care and teaching.⁷ As previously mentioned in Chapter one, the education and formation of individuals (or *paideia*) was a shared valued among non-Christian and Christian persons alike. Some of this *paideia* involved the use of philosophic components or structures. A key component in this thesis is to understand the common forms of direction, nurture, care and pastoral therapy within the larger Greco-Roman culture, specifically as they were related to and targeted at ‘family’.

The pastoral care of the family within the first and second century Christian movement was closely aligned to the style of communication known as rhetoric that was common in the larger culture of the day. For the purposes of this thesis, questions regarding the use of rhetorical forms of the period must be answered, specifically regarding the method of leading and counseling the Christian family and household. This chapter seeks to offer a summary of the most recent scholarship on the discussion of such rhetorical forms as a point of departure, followed by a demonstration that family counsel was largely conducted through such forms known as psychagogy, paraenesis and protrepsis. I will argue that the pastoral care of the family in the period rightly belongs in classification to the larger philosophic form of ‘psychagogy’ and that a subtype predominately used was paraenesis. Rightly classifying the mechanism(s) used in the pastoral care offered to the family will provide for a clearer evaluation of the marks of that care within the subsequent chapter.

Surveying the Scene

In his well-known work on Greco-Roman letters, Stowers identifies Adolf Deissmann as the dominant figure in the study of early Christian letters.⁸ While many scholars have undertaken the task, Deissman offered seminal, pre-WWI research into understanding the dynamics of early Christian writings, particularly the writing of letters. The topic is of great importance to early Christian historians given the nature of the extant source documents, which include letters among the early Christians. It is within the area of study of various epistles that one discovers various forms of counsel given. Stowers writes, “The letter was one of the most characteristic means of expression for ancient philosophy.”⁹ Arguing that early Christian letters took on similar characteristics to the letters within the larger Greco-Roman culture, Stowers reports that the three dominant forms of social relationships (friendship, client-patron and household) dominated most letters from antiquity, and that Christian letters, although influenced additionally by the ethos of the church, were no different.¹⁰ In his estimation, most letters, following the Aristotelian example, were of the epideictic¹¹ division of rhetoric.¹² The larger connection to Greco-Roman philosophy

⁵ This variance of practice ranged such that public confession as a part of repentance was often included in worship services. See: John T. McNeill, *A History of the Cure of Souls*, 1st ed. (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1951), 89-94.

⁶ McNeill, *A History*, 92.

⁷ McGowan for instance argues that the meal setting was the likely early setting for the “sermon.” See: Andrew B. McGowan, *Ancient Christian Worship: Early Church Practices in Social, Historical, and Theological Perspective* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2014), 75.

⁸ Stanley K. Stowers, *Letter Writing in Greco-Roman Antiquity* (Philadelphia, PA: The Westminster Press, 1986), 17.

⁹ Stowers, *Letter Writing*, 38.

¹⁰ Stowers, *Letter Writing*, 31.

¹¹ He defines epideictic as “rhetoric of praise and blame.”

is important in this discussion, for philosophers often focused on persuading people to adopt the philosophical life behind their chosen school of philosophy,¹³ and acceptance of a particular philosophy was often viewed as a type of conversion to a new and more true way of life.¹⁴ Meeks states that “Philosophy was widely construed as a kind of therapy...”¹⁵ Thus, placed within the Greek philosophical milieu of its day, Christianity was impacted as persons giving epistolary counsel adopted forms and structures of the larger culture. As Christianity was also viewed as a “better way of life,” epistolary forms provided a common, culturally familiar way of giving counsel.

In existing research regarding moral philosophy, a dominant idea uncovered is that paraenesis was given through these letters. Stowers defines *paraenesis* as “giving of miscellaneous moral precepts and exhortations.”¹⁶ However, the discussion surrounding paraenesis is multifaceted. For example, Swancutt argues that Stowers, in his discussion of early Christian letter writing, sets up a “false dichotomy between paraenesis and protrepsis” and points to the work done by Paul Hartlich (1889) on which Stowers begins his own starting point, as the ultimate culprit.¹⁷ Perdue argues that the terms can be used interchangeably, but could be differentiated “on the basis of social functions, not content or literary form.” He does so by, for example, relating protrepsis as “conversion” and paraenesis as “confirmation.”¹⁸ When one considers how counsel or instruction was given, various terms emerge from the larger Greco-Roman period and even more so within the early Christian pastoral care setting. In essence, *mystagogy*, *paideia*, *psychagogy*, *paraenesis*, *protrepsis*, and *paraklesis* all arise as pieces to the puzzle of how Christians offered the exhortation and counsel, which were a part of the larger pastoral care enterprise.¹⁹ Within the Christian community, topics of philosophical discussion, ethical or otherwise, were often common fare among both educated and uneducated Christian community. It was Celsus who bemoaned that Christians viewed moral philosophy as pertaining to everyone.²⁰ Therefore, it is necessary to summarize the modern discussion regarding these terms and then to specifically focus on the aspects related to the Christian family with the result of offering an original contribution to the study of moral exhortation as it relates to ‘family.’ It is also necessary to narrow the field down to a key point of departure to specifically understand the

¹² Stowers, *Letter Writing*, 27.

¹³ Stowers, *Letter Writing*, 37.

¹⁴ Stowers, *Letter Writing*, 37.

¹⁵ Wayne A. Meeks, *The Origins of Christian Morality: The First Two Centuries* (New Haven, Yale University Press, 1993), 102.

¹⁶ Stowers, *Letter Writing*, 23.

¹⁷ Diana M. Swancutt, “Paraenesis in Light of Protrepsis” in *Early Christian Paraenesis in Context*, eds. James Starr and Troels Engberg-Pedersen. (Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 2004), 116. Swancutt writes, “Hartlich’s rewriting of Philo of Larissa’s description of protrepsis bequeathed to scholarship a faulty definition of protrepsis, one that was philosophical, exoteric, structurally dualistic, and, as a “genre,” distinct from paraenesis.”

¹⁸ Leo G. Perdue, “The Social Character of Paraenesis and Paraenetic Literature,” in *Semeia 50: Paraenesis: Act and Form*, eds. Leo G. Perdue and John G. Gammie (Atlanta, Ga: Scholars Press, 1990), 23.

¹⁹ For instance, in his 1974 dissertation on the command to love one’s enemies found in the New Testament, Piper defends his retention of the usage of ‘paraenesis’ over another scholar’s suggested ‘paraclesis’ for reasons related to its usage in his field of study (New Testament) and the ideas of form conveyed by the term. See: John Piper, *Love Your Enemies: Jesus’ love command in the Synoptic Gospels and the early Christian paraenesis* (Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2012), 176.

²⁰ Meeks, *The Origins of Christian Morality*, 102-103.

method used to offer pastoral care to the family. What follows is that summary, and then a move to specific conclusions regarding the application of counsel to the Christian family.

4.1.1. “Mystagogy”

A necessary term to include in this chapter is the term ‘mystagogy.’ Specifically, mystagogy pertains to a relationship of guidance, particularly of an initiate into the mysteries of the Christian way and journey. For instance, van Geest details the aspect of early mystagogical process within the first few hundred years of the Christian community, and points to a concrete aspect of the mystagogical process. He writes, “Mystagogy is specifically related to going a guided spiritual way, in which the mystagogue for instance points out to the *mystes* the referring character of rituals performed or clarifies to the *mystes* the words in for instance Scripture.”²¹

Given there is overlap in terms in the discussion that follows, it could be that ‘mystagogy’ is a good starting point, for in a sense, the term can encapsulate other terms used in this research such as *paideia* and *psychagogy* among others. Again, van Geest writes, “The *paideia*, however, seems to form part of mystagogy rather than the other way around... The same may be remarked with respect to psychagogy.”²² What will ultimately result in the pages that follow is my own contribution to the discussion, particularly as it relates to the care of the family. In this contribution I argue that an appropriate bridge term “paraenetic-psychagogy” is helpful and necessary. Thus, at this stage it is necessary to see the placement of both paraenesis and psychagogy in their proper order. If indeed psychagogy is rightly placed underneath the larger concept of mystagogy, at least in some part, then mystagogy becomes a larger construct, which helps to place the more specific work of psychagogy in proper context. Cohen, who is not the only one to see an interconnected relationship, for instance sees psychagogy and mystagogy as a type of “cousins.”²³

The early Christian process involved a mystagogy of new adherents into the mysteries of the faith, and if further refined, it is argued, also involved a relational psychagogy where other aspects of nurture were the focus, one of which was counsel regarding the family—an enterprise

²¹ Paul van Geest, “Studying the Mystagogy of the Fathers: An Introduction,” in *Seeing Through the Eyes of Faith: New Approaches to the Mystagogy of the Church Fathers*, ed. Paul van Geest (Leuven: Peeters, 2016), 14. He also writes, “Thus the fixed elements of the mystagogical formation process – interpretation of scripture, catechetical formation and the explanation of the rituals – culminated in the rituals themselves. Ideally the formation process and the performance of the ritual together finally resulted in a merging of the horizon of salvation history, in which god is acknowledged as the Creator and redeemer looking for man, and the horizon of the candidate’s personal history and the history of the community.” 12.

²² van Geest, “Studying the Mystagogy,” 15.

²³ See: Ed Cohen, “Dare to Care: Between Stiegler’s Mystagogy and Foucault’s Aesthetics of Existence,” in *boundary 2* (Duke University Press, February 2017) Vol. 44 No. 1, pp.149-166. See also the interconnectedness of the two words for instance in the work of Hans van Loon when he looks at the fifth-century Christian leader Cyril and connects many aspects of ‘guidance’ and spiritual nurture to the word mystagogy and its Greek root words. See: Hans van Loon, “The Meaning of ‘Mystagogy’ in Cyril of Alexander,” in *Seeing Through the Eyes of Faith: New Approaches to the Mystagogy of the Church Fathers*, ed. Paul van Geest (Leuven: Peeters, 2016), 37-54. Karla Pollman, “Mystery in St. Augustine: Rhetoric, Exegesis, and Liminality,” in *Seeing Through the Eyes of Faith: New Approaches to the Mystagogy of the Church Fathers*, ed. Paul van Geest (Leuven: Peeters, 2016), 137-162. Perhaps a helpful distinction between these two terms, which do carry some overlap, is that ‘mystagogy’ is connected to initiation and involvement into the mysteries of the faith primarily whereas psychagogy is focused on soul guidance and nurture primarily.

connected to the soul of the Christian. Therefore, mystagogy is a necessary term to clarify along the way.²⁴ Psychagogy is ultimately the construct of more specific usage given that the focus in family care was less about mystery initiation and discovery (although spiritual rituals were simultaneously occurring in the lives of Christians) and more about the corrective and instructive guidance of the soul in an area of ethics and proper behavior. Thus, to further terms we shall turn.

4.1.2. “Paraenesis”

Any study of the care of souls within the first and second century Christian world must include a discussion of Greco-Roman philosophical rhetoric, and specifically the type of discourse known as ‘paraenesis.’ Engberg-Pedersen argues that the best place to begin when seeking to understand the historical definition of the term paraenesis is the writings by Isocrates (*To Nicocles*, *Nicocles*, the *Antidosis*, and as he defines it “the possibly pseudo-Isocratean *To Demonicus*”).²⁵ He utilizes this corpus to discuss how biblical texts can fit within the category of paraenesis. For instance, in referring to the book of James, he writes, “James does not himself describe what he takes himself to be doing, but we may use the Greek term παραίνεσις for what he is doing...giving specific injunctions about how to live among other human beings as part of a traditional system of ethics.”²⁶ Paraenesis is often viewed as occurring for particular reasons and in different seasons.²⁷ However, at its core, paraenesis is generally construed as giving guidance of a life of morality.²⁸ Engberg-Pedersen discusses the Hellenistic philosophical theory of paraenesis defining it as: “the giving of injunctions concerning the concrete living of an ethical life as a way of spelling out the content of the ultimate good.”²⁹

One inquiry that arises though is that of the actual nature of paraenesis. Specifically, what defines it? Is it a style, a genre, a rhetorical device, etc.? Popkes for instance outlines several approaches in the literature regarding paraenesis, one of which is the assertion that paraenesis is not a literary genre, causing an observer to simply must ask on a case by cases basis if a text “serves paraenetic purposes.”³⁰ However, following a survey³¹ he concludes that, “taken together, the semantic and situational aspects create a functional understanding of paraenesis. The basic

²⁴ In recent literature for instance, Rouwhorst argues, when discussing the term ‘mystagogy,’ that “the use of this vocabulary does not only reflect theological ideas and spiritual experiences but also the social structures of early Christian communities.” See: Gerard Rouwhorst, “Mystagogical Terminology in Liturgical Contexts,” in *Seeing Through the Eyes of Faith: New Approaches to the Mystagogy of the Church Fathers*, ed. Paul van Geest (Leuven: Peeters, 2016), 35.

²⁵ Troels Engberg-Pedersen, “The Concept of Paraenesis,” in *Early Christian Paraenesis in Context*, eds. James Starr and Troels Engberg-Pedersen (Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 2004), 49.

²⁶ Engberg-Pedersen, “The Concept of Paraenesis,” 70.

²⁷ For instance, Perdue argues that it is often seen surrounding the death of “the sage”--wisdom passed on in the event of an imminent death. See: Leo G. Perdue, “The Death of the Sage and Moral Exhortation: From Ancient Near Eastern Instructions to Graeco-Roman Paraenesis,” in *Semeia 50: Paraenesis: Act and Form*, eds. Leo G. Perdue and John G. Gammie (Atlanta, Ga: Scholars Press, 1990), 81-109.

²⁸ Perdue, “The Death,” 6.

²⁹ Engberg-Pedersen, “The Concept of Paraenesis,” 59.

³⁰ Wiard Popkes, “Paraenesis in the New Testament,” in *Early Christian Paraenesis in Context*, eds. James Starr and Troels Engberg-Pedersen (Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 2004), 15.

³¹ Popkes points to both the Scandinavian consultation on paraenesis in Lund in 2000 as well as the “second” consultation occurring in 2001 in Oslo. These are referenced as modern or recent academic markers of the discussion surrounding paraenesis in the literature.

function is to promote attitudes and actions which secure the future of the recipient, both short- and long-range.”³²

From the larger culture and historical development up to the point of its usage in the first and second century, paraenesis was a leading form of care and direction for various philosophical streams, including Christianity.³³ Engberg-Pedersen, for instance, argues that Paul utilizes the Hellenistic philosophical theory of paraenesis, or was at least familiar with it in his writing in 1 Thessalonians.³⁴ He also argues that it is consistent to utilize the term paraenesis even though Paul’s actual use is paraklesis considering it a simple preference of word versus a denial of actual paraenesis. However, he does discuss the use of a paraenetic style as a distinct observation.³⁵ In his groundbreaking work, Abraham Malherbe³⁶ chronicles the various ways in which the pattern of paraenesis seen in the larger philosophical culture was known and utilized by the Apostle Paul. Tracing patterns between the larger culture’s use of instruction, specifically moral exhortation, a clear connection can be seen. I argue that in offering counsel and care to the family, paraenesis, a form not unique to the Christian community, was a chief sub-method under the umbrella of the guidance of souls to providing pastoral care of the family. Yet, as will be seen, this paraenesis was distinct regarding the Christian family.³⁷ Glad argues that paraenesis can be considered a part of psychagogic discourse in that it works towards the formation of religious ideals and moral attitudes of a people.³⁸ Paraenesis can be seen as having connection with both protrepsis and psychagogy.

The rhetorical device known as paraenesis is also closely connected with the theological foci of the underlying philosophy of which it is a part. Engberg-Pedersen makes connection with Wolfgang Nauck’s “*oὐν παραητικὸν*” in discussing Paul’s “theologizing” use of paraenesis as well as the tradition distinction between indicative and imperative.³⁹ There is indeed a connection between the indicative and imperative in paraenesis and this is demonstrated in the paraenesis related to ‘family’ as well, including the theological aspects contained therein. Aasgaard divides the research on paraenesis into groups of either “Wendland-Dibelius” or the vein of “Popkes, Malherbe and Perdue.” His distinction is that in his estimation, the Wendland-Dibelius variety is “advice on practical everyday issues, and consists of several loosely connected injunctions, which can be developed into “two ways” schemes, vice and virtue catalogues, and household codes.” The “Popkes, Malherbe and Perdue” variety he estimates is an expansion on this definition in that they view Christian paraenesis as having been strengthened by Christian theological motivations and focused on creating cohesion within a group.⁴⁰ Recent attempts such as this have furthered the development in the understanding of early Christian paraenesis. And as it relates to the pastoral care of the family, theological motivations relate to the paraenetic definition of offering

³² Popkes, “Paraenesis,” 17.

³³ Popkes goes so far as to say it “plays an integral part in the entire early Christian message.” p. 24.

³⁴ Engberg-Pedersen, “The Concept of Paraenesis,” 65.

³⁵ Engberg-Pedersen, “The Concept of Paraenesis,” 61, 68-70.

³⁶ Abraham J. Malherbe, *Paul and the Thessalonians: The Philosophic Tradition of Pastoral Care* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1987).

³⁷ Distinct in aspects related to its *telos*, and specifically the eschatological nature of the paraenesis.

³⁸ Clarence E. Glad, “The Rhetoric of Moral Exhortation in Clement’s Pedagogue,” in *Early Christian Paraenesis in Context*, eds. James Starr and Troels Engberg-Pedersen (Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 2004), 459.

³⁹ Engberg-Pedersen, “The Concept of Paraenesis,” 63.

⁴⁰ Reidar Aasgaard, ““Brotherly Advice” Christian Siblingship and New Testament Paraenesis,” in *Early Christian Paraenesis in Context*, eds. James Starr and Troels Engberg-Pedersen (Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 2004), 237-238.

advice. Therefore, the movement in understanding the theological connections to paraenesis is related to this research, for as we shall see, paramount to the moral exhortation of the ‘family’ was a foundation of theological concern.

4.1.3 “Protrepis”

Another variety of counsel and exhortation given was that of the protreptic. As mentioned previously, the distinction between *Paraenesis* and *Protrepis* and any potential differences between them has been debated in recent scholarship. For instance, Malherbe envisages paraenesis as “broader in scope than protrepis.”⁴¹ Some are desirous to see the two be distinct in terms of the audience, or the desired goal of the debate. Others see the two terms as variations on a theme, and therefore, as almost interchangeable. Stowers argues, while speaking of epistles, that the two could be distinguished based on the goal of the writings.⁴² Essentially, he argues in some way, that protreptic writings inherently contained a theme of conversion literature—conversion that is to a philosophical school or stream. Swancutt, however, argues that Stowers creates an unnecessary dichotomy between the two and instead argues that, “The seminal difference between paraenesis and protrepis was, therefore, not audience location per se, but the difference in social power originally attached to traditional versus non-traditional, and political versus theoretical, rhetorics of knowledge and virtue.”⁴³ In her thesis regarding Augustine’s *Confessions*, Kotzé notes the seeming overlap in the research between paraenesis and protrepis and opts for a combined usage within her own work in what she terms “protreptic-paraenetic.”⁴⁴ Her discussion includes several definitions from within the research,⁴⁵ including Malherbe, but she does eventually wade into the fray offered by Swancutt (who published her article the same year as the dissertation of Kotzé was published) arguing similarly to Swancutt that “the ancient sources used for over a century to support the assignment of dichotomous technical meanings to the terms protreptic and paraenetic do not, in fact, support such an inference.”⁴⁶ In discussing the two terms,

⁴¹ Abraham J. Malherbe, *Moral Exhortation, A Greco-Roman Sourcebook* (Philadelphia: Westminster John Knox, 1986), 124.

⁴² He writes of ‘protrepis’: “Protreptic in this semitechnical sense means those writings which fall broadly into the tradition of *protreptikoi logoi* (protreptic speeches), of which Aristotle’s *Protrepticus* and Cicero’s *Hortensius* are the most famous examples. These are exhortations to take up the philosophical life. Protreptic speeches can be traced back to the Sophists, who tried thereby to win students to their schools and to the wisdom, which they taught. Protreptic works urge the reader to convert to a way of life, join a school, or accept a set of teachings as normative for the reader’s life. A *protrepticus* may combine two or even all three of these goals. Stowers, *Letter Writing*, 112-113.

⁴³ Swancutt, “Paraenesis in Light of Protrepis,” 114.

⁴⁴ Annemaré Kotzé, *Augustine’s Confessions: Communicative Purpose and Audience* (Leiden: Brill, 2004), 56-58.

⁴⁵ She rightly comments that, “...the terms paraenesis and protreptic are often used rather loosely and interchangeably by both ancient sources and modern scholars of the protreptic.” Her handling of the two terms seems to demonstrate a careful balancing of the research on the terms, but more specifically the potential overlap that exists between the terms. She acknowledges her own leaning, and its importance for her thesis when she says, “The possibility of a protreptic being directed at both the not-yet-converted and the converted alike is important for my reading of the *Confessions*.” Kotzé, *Augustine’s Confessions*, 57-58.

⁴⁶ Annemaré Kotzé, “Protreptic, Paraenetic and Augustine’s *Confessions*,” in *In Search of Truth: Augustine, Manichaeism and other Gnosticism: Studies for Johannes van Oort at Sixty*, eds. Jacob Albert van de Berg, Annemaré Kotzé, Tobias Nicklas & Madeleine Scopello (Leiden: Brill, 2011), 5.

Kotzé says for instance that, “Isocrates uses the terms protreptic and paraenetic interchangeably in his various works...as does Philo of Alexandria...” and ultimately argues that in the use of these two terms, “it is best to use the terms protreptic and paraenetic as heuristic concepts to refer to distinct but closely related communicative purposes that frequently occur in combination and within the same works.”⁴⁷ Alieva points to the frequent appearance of the two terms together as well.⁴⁸

I believe that the terms have a clear overlap, but one that allows for some distinctions. In focusing on the moral exhortation to family, there are calls given to existing Christians⁴⁹—to use the Greco-Roman philosophical conception, those already within the philosophy—but a specific call to change certain behaviors if applicable. For instance, is it possible that some of the instances of exhortation involved a conversion to a new type of behavior and not a conversion from outside Christianity and thus a hybrid version of the form may be in view? Here, Kotzé may be on the right track, for there is an overlap in the usage of these two terms. Perhaps some will argue that protrepsis is a sub-category of paraenesis. Others may want to maintain a sharper distinction, either in its goal, social influence, or audience. However, I argue that within the specific writings in the Christian first and second century corpus, the two had an overlap.

For instance, notice the way instruction of household youth is treated in *1 Clement*:

“...Let us teach the young the instruction of the fear of God. Let us set our wives on the straight path, toward the good. Let them demonstrate the habit of purity worthy of love. Let them display the innocent will of their gentleness. Let them make evident the gentleness of their speech by their silence. Let them give their love devoutly, not according to partiality but equally to all who fear God. Our children, let them have a share in the instruction that is in Christ. Let them learn what humility has strength to do before God; what pure love is able to do before God; how fear of him is beautiful and great, saving all of those in it, who walk devoutly with a pure mind.” (*1 Clement* 21.6-8)⁵⁰

Offered here is a clear description of how an existing Christian adherent ought to discipline his youth and encourage his wife. Yet, within the last sentence, there is mention of how having a fear of God “saving all of those...” (Ehrman renders it similarly “saves all those”, as does Lake who renders it “gives salvation”) who are walking in a holy way. Clearly, if paraenetic writing is about exhorting those already within the held philosophy, then this example of family instruction belongs to that category. And yet, if protreptic literature involves an element of conversion to a philosophy focus, then this example can lean in that direction given the instruction to fathers involves an outcome related to conversion. I will argue in a subsequent chapter that there is an eschatological thrust inherent within the exhortation regarding families, therefore, I cannot make a swift deviation between the two terms given that the exhortative nature surrounding the instruction does involve a call to something in particular. Kotzé is benefited in her work from a combination of the two terms into what she calls “protreptic-paraenetic.” This serves the purposes of her research in that her ultimate thesis is that *Confessions* was a call to Manichaeans to convert

⁴⁷ Annemaré Kotzé, “Protreptik,” in *Reallexikon für Antike und Christentum: Sachwörterbuch zur Auseinandersetzung des Christentums mit der antiken Welt*, eds. Georg Schöllegen, Heinzgerd Brakmann, Sible De Blaauw, Therese Fuhrer, Hartmut Leppin, Winrich Löhr, Heinz-Günther Nesselrath, Ilinca Tanaseanu-Döbler (Stuttgart: Anton Hiersemann, 2017), 372-393. English translation provided by author via email.

⁴⁸ O. Alieva, “Protreptic: A Protean Genre,” in *When Wisdom Calls: Philosophical Protreptic in Antiquity*, eds. O. Alieva, A. Kotzé, S. Van der Meeren (Belgium: Brepols, 2018).

⁴⁹ I encourage the reader to refer to Chapter 3 of this thesis for specific examples.

⁵⁰ *1 Clement*, 21.6-8, trans. Rick Brannan.

to Christianity. If the distinction between the two terms is maintained (and I am inclined not to see as sharp a division as some), I will utilize a similar approach; yet I will simply maintain the word paraenesis, acknowledging that often, given the *telos* of the moral exhortation regarding family, protreptic components are present, either as related to ‘conversion,’ or in the overlap of the two terms pointed out within the literature. Ultimately, writings related to ‘family’ are largely targeting recipients assumed to already be within the Christian community. Therefore, while acknowledging that there is recent development on the usage of the two terms, if I were to maintain the classic division between the two, paraenesis is preferred as ‘family’ counsel is given. And yet, there is a larger, overarching philosophic tradition germane to this discussion. For ultimately, both paraenesis and protrepsis could be seen as a soul-guiding endeavor in many respects. It is to this larger tradition that I turn now.

4.1.4 “Psychagogy”

Psychagogy was a varied term based on its semantic domain, that carried the general idea of leading or guiding the soul. Psychagogy included various categories, which today might be separated into similar, yet distinct groups.⁵¹ Yet this philosophic form is crucial to understanding the pastoral care of the Christian community within the period because it encompasses what may be called pastoral care and nurture in our day.⁵² Kolbet writes that, “A working definition would be that psychagogy refers to those philosophically articulated traditions of therapy—common in Hellenistic literature—pertaining to how a mature person leads the less mature to perceive and internalize wisdom for themselves.”⁵³ Instructions to the Christian family involved forms classified elsewhere within the period as psychagogy. Malherbe traced the connections between Stoic, Platonist, and Epicurean streams, as well as that of the psychagogy occurring within the Christian community, specifically comparing them to the model used by the Apostle Paul. Recently, Rowe⁵⁴ has criticized the methods of Malherbe (and Engberg-Pedersen) as being overly ‘encyclopedic’ in the approach to making comparisons between Christian and Stoicism. This criticism, however one considers it, does not change the focus or conclusions of this thesis given that the trajectory of Rowe’s work differs from my own.⁵⁵ And Rowe has his own critics as well.⁵⁶ Others have recently criticized Malherbe in his approach of comparing Pauline literature

⁵¹ Malherbe writes: “The social, intellectual, and psychological difficulties experienced by members of philosophic communities were addressed by a well-developed system of pastoral care known as psychagogy, which included what we mean by spiritual exercises, psychotherapy, and psychological and pastoral counseling.” See: Abraham J. Malherbe, *Paul and the Thessalonians: The Philosophic Tradition of Pastoral Care* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1987), 81.

⁵² Malherbe also provides a helpful look at the connections between “psychagogy” and pastoral care in sources from the first and second century here: Abraham J. Malherbe, *Light from the Gentiles: Hellenistic Philosophy and Early Christianity: Collected Essays, 1959-2012* by Abraham J. Malherbe, Volume 1 eds. Carl R. Holladay, John T. Fitzgerald, Gregory E. Sterling & James W. Thompson (Leiden: Brill, 2014).

⁵³ Paul. R. Kolbet, *Augustine and the Cure of Souls: Revising a Classical Idea* (Notre Dame, University of Notre Dame, 2010), 8.

⁵⁴ See: C. Kavin Rowe, *One True Life: The Stoics and Early Christians as Rival Traditions* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2016), 184-199.

⁵⁵ This study and chapter is not a comparative study between early Christianity and Stoicism, but of psychagogy within the period, and thus can rely on Malherbe even amid recent criticisms.

⁵⁶ Runar M. Thorsteinsson, Review of *One True Life: The Stoics and Early Christians as Rival Traditions* (2016) by C. Kavin Rowe, *Bryan Mawr Classical Review* 2017, 04.45. He criticizes Rowe for, among other things, absence “...of primary sources in the final comparative chapters.”

and Hellenistic philosophy.⁵⁷ However, even though they are clarifying, these recent criticisms do not negate the trajectory made in this project as they focus on a critique of Malherbe (and Glad) regarding specific comparisons with Paul, and this project takes a larger view of psychagogy from multiple early Christian writers. And, even in recent scholarship, there is still a positive mention or even dependance on the Malherbe thesis.⁵⁸

Kolbet follows a slightly different trajectory than Malherbe (often focusing on the nature of speech involved in psychagogy) and yet offers the historic foundation of the practice of psychagogy through its history. He connects the roots of psychagogy to Plato's *Phaedrus* and the connection to sophistry and provides a discussion of the intimation that psychagogy was a form of "seduction" by way of speech or writing into a different way of life. He envisages Plato as providing a "recasting of rhetoric as psychagogy"⁵⁹ and discusses how the Epicureans used this rhetorical form. In his own research, he builds a foundation for the pastoral care of Augustine. Recently, Craig has agreed with his argument.⁶⁰ However, prior to Augustine, the pastors of the period observed here can be seen utilizing focused forms of persuading aimed at guiding and caring for the soul.⁶¹ And within our period, psychagogy could involve a connection to ethical dimensions as well.⁶²

⁵⁷ See: Devin L. White, *Teacher of the Nations: Ancient Educational Traditions and Paul's Argument in 1 Corinthians 1-4* (Germany: De Gruyter, 2017), 15. He argues that Malherbe's comparisons could be potentially misleading. Also, see: Justin Allison Reid, *Saving One Another: Philodemus and Paul on Moral Formation in Community* (Leiden: Brill, 2020), 9-22. White critiques Malherbe and Glad respectfully, but says "I claim that their comparative projects make an identification between Paul and psychagogy that practically assumes Paul was an Epicurean, for they do not allow Paul's differences to factor properly into that identification." (p. 15).

⁵⁸ See: Sigurvin Lárus Jónsson, *James Among the Classicists: Reading the Letter of James in Light of Ancient Literary Criticism* (Germany: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2021), 46-51; Max J. Lee, *Moral Transformation in Greco-Roman Philosophy of Mind: Mapping the Moral Milieu of the Apostle Paul and His Diaspora Jewish Contemporaries* (Germany: Isd, 2020), 515; Fergus J. King, *Epicureanism and the Gospel of John: A Study of Their Compatibility* (Germany: Mohr Siebeck, 2020), 128; Ian Y. S. Jew, *Paul's Emotional Regime: The Social Function of Emotion in Philippians and 1 Thessalonians* (United Kingdom: Bloomsbury Publishing, 2020), 103. In one instance, Jew states regarding a position Malherbe takes on paraenesis and *1 Thessalonians* that Malherbe has "built a forceful case." As part of this chapter, I searched for scholarly literature published within the last five to ten years to seek to include recent sources. Given this chapter focuses mainly on psychagogy, I focused my search there (as well as protrepsis and paraenesis in part). From what I can currently find, the additions seen here are the recent scholarly publications on psychagogy/Christian interactions. In fact, one recent 2020 monograph (Reid, *Saving One Another*, 2020) I added (which interacts a lot with Malherbe as well) interacts with much of the literature I have already included, and contains very few sources published within the last five to eight years.

⁵⁹ Kolbet, *Augustine*, 41.

⁶⁰ Robert Hunter Craig, *Augustine's Confessions: Conversion and Consciousness* (United States: Lexington Books, 2020), 104.

⁶¹ Kolbet writes "While never becoming a single, coherent system in antiquity, psychagogic traditions constituted, in retrospect, an identifiable set of practices and strategies to influence the mental and emotional habits of others." Kolbet, *Augustine* 60.

⁶² See for instance: John S. Kloppenborg, "James 1:2-15 and Hellenistic Psychagogy," in *Novum Testamentum* 52 (2010) 37-71.

In seeking to provide an historical overview to the relationship between spirituality and philosophy,⁶³ French philosopher Foucault defines “psychagogy” in the following way: “...we can, I think, call “psychagogical” the transmission of a truth whose function is not to endow any subject whomsoever with abilities, etcetera, but whose function is to modify the mode of being of the subject to whom we address ourselves.”⁶⁴ This psychagogical reality is something that Foucault envisages as divergent in the Greco-Roman philosophical versus Christian concepts. In the Greco-Roman context, he views the psychagogical relationship as one where “the necessity for telling the truth, the rules, to which one must submit oneself in telling the truth, in order to tell the truth and so that the truth can produce its effect—namely, transformation of the subject’s mode of being—falls essentially on the master.”⁶⁵ However, in the Christian psychagogical relationship according to Foucault, the truth does not come from the person who guides the soul but is given in another mode (revelation, text, book, etcetera).⁶⁶

Distinguishing between who must exhibit presence, and the connections to pedagogy,⁶⁷ Foucault seeks to make a distinction between Greco-Roman and Christian psychagogy. It is the change in the individual soul that marks the Foucaultian distinction between pedagogy and psychagogy. It is also important to note that Foucault has as his starting point of soul guidance, the idea of *epimeleia heautou*, or *cura sui* which in both instances is “care of the self.”⁶⁸ He connects this to the classical Greek concept of *gnothi seauton*, or knowing yourself⁶⁹ as well as the formation of early moralities, to include in his opinion, Christian morality.⁷⁰ As his lectures continue, he connects this idea to the role of a master in this ideal for the individual in his interpretation of Socrates, the Stoics and the Epicureans.⁷¹ This guidance of the individual soul is

⁶³ Michel Foucault, “The Hermeneutics of the Subject. Lectures at the Collège de France, 1981-82,” eds. Frédéric Gros, François Ewald, Alessandro Fontana, Arnold I. Davidson, trans. Graham Burchell (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2005), xxv.

⁶⁴ Foucault, “The Hermeneutics,” 407.

⁶⁵ Foucault, “The Hermeneutics,” 407-408.

⁶⁶ Foucault, “The Hermeneutics,” 408. He summarizes his point this way: “Greco-Roman psychagogy was still very close to pedagogy. It conformed to the same general structure of the master who delivers the discourse of truth. Christianity will unhook psychagogy and pedagogy by requiring the psychagogized soul, the guided soul, to express a truth; a truth that only it can tell, that it alone holds, and that is not the only element but one of the fundamental elements of the operation by which its mode of being will be changed.” 408-409.

⁶⁷ He defines pedagogy this way, “the transmission of a truth whose function is to endow any subject whatever with aptitudes, capabilities, knowledges, and so on, that he did not possess before and that he should process at the end of the pedagogical relationship.” Foucault, “The Hermeneutics,” 407.

⁶⁸ He writes, “With this theme of the care of the self, we have then, if you like, an early philosophical formulation, appearing clearly in the fifth century B.C., of a notion which permeates all Greek, Hellenistic, and Roman philosophy, as well as Christian spirituality, up to the fourth and fifth centuries A.D. In short, with this notion of *epimeleia heautou* we have a body of work defining a way of being, a standpoint, forms of reflection, and practices which make it an extremely important phenomenon not just in the history of representations, notions, or theories, but in the history of subjectivity itself or, if you like, in the history of practices of subjectivity. Anyway, as a working hypothesis at least, this one-thousand-year development from the appearance of the first forms of the philosophical attitude in the Greeks to the first forms of Christian asceticism—from the fifth century B.C. to the fifth century A.D.—can be taken up starting from this notion of *epimeleia heautou*.” Foucault, “The Hermeneutics,” 11.

⁶⁹ Foucault, “The Hermeneutics,” 2-10.

⁷⁰ Foucault, “The Hermeneutics,” 13.

⁷¹ Foucault, “The Hermeneutics,” 43-60.

a crucial part of understanding the counsel that was given, albeit denominated as philosophical, within the early Christian movement. It is precisely this understanding that sheds further light on the instruction of and care for the family within the Christian movement.

It could be argued that in many ways, psychagogy is a category under which one might place paraenesis and/or protrepsis.⁷² There are certainly similar overlaps between the three terms. Glad in his work on Clement of Alexandria's *Pedagogue* among other things argues that the work uses "a form of inciting and preventative *psychagogy*" which uses "paraenesis in the training and moulding of humans that reflects a certain education ideal, that of *paideia*, reminding them of their duties and appropriate behavior in a specific sociological context."⁷³ Indeed the traditional ideas of psychagogy guiding of the soul and paraenesis as moral exhortation are closely aligned, and although able to be distinguished, are connected in many ways. For the Greco-Roman ideal of guidance to involve both forms of rhetoric with significant overlap is not beyond the realm of consideration. In fact, Glad argues elsewhere that psychagogic discourse that attempts to effect a moral transformation is a form of paraenesis.⁷⁴ Which term a researcher chooses to articulate as primary is undoubtedly related to the focus that he or she is attempting to take. Glad also notes the connections between the two terms.⁷⁵ It is likely that these terms (*paraenesis*, *protrepsis* and *psychagogy*) are often distinguished due to the varying focus of the individual seeking to understand rhetorical classification. What can be agreed upon, Malherbe, Glad and Kolbet included, is that psychagogy was guidance, which while including moral exhortation, intersected with the soul and was ultimately soul leadership. Therefore, psychagogy overlaps with paraenesis and protrepsis.

Whatever overlap there may be, psychagogy need not ultimately be divorced from its truest and broadest meaning, which is the guidance of a soul. The accompanying moral exhortation, both of paraenesis and protrepsis, and of education, both of pedagogy and *paideia*, clearly were all overlapping figures within the guidance of the soul in both Greco-Roman culture, and within the Christian context of the first and second century. It is to this overlap that we now turn.

4.1.5. Toward a Working Consensus

In surveying the literature regarding the various rhetorical forms, some scholars have tried to come to a consensus. Both Aasgaard and Kotzé mentioned earlier have sought to bring cohesion to the useful distinction and overlap in terms.⁷⁶ In fact other terms not previously mentioned have also been a part of the discussion related to rhetorical forms used in the guidance of an individual or a group. Aasgaard for instance points to the *παρακαλω*-sentence. Grouping New Testament verses like Romans 12:1; he sees a pattern of such usages within the *New Testament*, which he places under the category of paraenesis.⁷⁷ Marksches states his view that many Christian leaders within the period would have been very familiar with the philosophical

⁷² Glad, "The Rhetoric," 459.

⁷³ Glad, "The Rhetoric," 434.

⁷⁴ Clarence E. Glad, *Paul and Philodemus: Adaptability in Epicurean and Early Christian Psychagogy* (Leiden: Brill, 1995), 2.

⁷⁵ Glad, *Paul*, 17.

⁷⁶ Aasgaard in his recognition of how some in the secondary literature have sought to further work of others as it relates to distinctly Christian paraenesis, and Kotzé in her use of the term "protreptic-paraenetic."

⁷⁷ Aasgaard, "Brotherly Advice," 246.

patterns of their own day.⁷⁸ Glad argues that psychagogy belongs under the category or rubric of adult education. He argues specifically that “psychagogy can be viewed as a means of moral instruction since the inculcation of a certain view of ourselves and reality is latent in psychagogy.”⁷⁹

I argue that the guidance of the Christian family is a part of the larger psychagogic formula for guiding the individual Christian, and that the main subcategory of that guidance is moral exhortation, or paraenesis. This paraenesis included aspects that could be more specifically defined as protrepsis, but without a dominant distinction, both protrepsis and paraenesis are seen as overlapping. It will be the working consensus of this thesis that paraenesis is a subcategory of psychagogy for the simple fact that at face value, the terms are related in usage and connection, but also because pastoral care of the family had the larger, overarching goal of shaping the Christian soul. The guidance of a soul (psychagogy) involved, at least in part, the moral direction of an individual or group through exhortation (paraenesis). The trajectory of Aasgaard, Kotzé, and others in seeking to bring further usefulness of these rhetorical terms to cohesion in their respective areas of research, as well as the aid of foundational works like those of Malherbe in looking at these terms within the early Christian writings, is a point of departure for this thesis.⁸⁰ In my own formulation I place paraenesis as a part, subcategory, or at minimum, related form to psychagogy specifically because in the primary sources, the instructions regarding the Christian ‘family,’ largely undertaken by paraenesis, were a part of guiding souls specifically because of the eschatological focus of that instruction. Even recently, Jónsson notes a clear overlap.⁸¹ Family instructions within the writings of the early Christian movement, even though largely moral, were “otherworldly” in that they had a theme of looking at something to come (i.e., eschatological focus). Therefore, moral exhortation was indeed about family structures within the present, but with a larger goal of soul guidance. This was the case both for the individuals receiving the exhortation as well as for the instruction of those individuals who were to pass along such instruction to others (i.e., husbands instructed to teach their wives or children in the fear of God) regarding what was to come.

Therefore, we may say that paraenesis regarding family was ultimately about the larger enterprise of psychagogy, and to borrow from Kotzé’s idea of combining terms, I propose a bridge form for this thesis called “paraenetic-psychagogy.” This hyphenated term is designed to highlight that paraenesis was a part of the instruction related to the family (whether of *paideia* or pedagogy) but that a thrust that should not be missed is that the counsel and care of the family was ultimately a part of psychagogy. Specifically, adherents of Christianity were guided in how the care of their families and related household concerns were a part of the education of the soul. Instructions regarding the family were not simply a calling to a particular way of life, although it included that, but ultimately about the guidance of the Christian soul for this life and the next (as will be seen in the subsequent chapter). Therefore, without abandoning the useful terms of *paraenesis* and *protrepsis* in discussion of the extant primary source works, when a particular part is examined (that which deals with family counsel) it is right to also utilize the term ‘psychagogy.’ Placing family counsel and care within the context of psychagogy is a new

⁷⁸ Marksches, Christoph, *Christian Theology and Its Institutions in the Early Roman Empire: Prolegomena to a History of Early Christian Theology*, trans. Wayne Coppins (Waco, TX: Baylor University Press, 2015), 71.

⁷⁹ Glad, *Paul*, 58.

⁸⁰ Malherbe’s work, among others, will be considered together as helpful points of departure for this research. Therefore, this research will not seek to convey all of his findings. Suffice it to say, the philosophic forms of rhetoric as a form of pastoral care will be an assumption built upon within this research.

⁸¹ He writes, “Hellenistic psychagogy and paraenesis are overlapping categories...” Jónsson, *James Among the Classicists*, 50.

categorization in that to my knowledge, this connection has not been made in the literature.⁸² That there is moral exhortation involved in the care of the Christian family is not new. However, moral exhortation of the family was about, or had a *telos* of guiding of souls based on specific theological and eschatological grounds. It is from this consensus of terms that the rest of this chapter, and ultimately the conclusions of the thesis, will operate. Beginning with a case study, this chapter will demonstrate aspects of paraenetic-psychagogy by analysis and example, and then further discussion will be given.

4.2 A Case Study in Familial Pastoral Care: *Ignatius to Polycarp*

There are indications within the literature of the period that Christians were to offer Christian counsel to one another (i.e., *Barn* 21.4). However, one source that specifically blends instruction on pastoral care as well as the Christian ‘family,’ is the letter of Ignatius to Polycarp. This letter demonstrates the epistolary type of psychagogic material mentioned earlier. This epistle is a good sample source for understanding how pastoral care was understood given the focus of the letter.⁸³ A central theme of the work is exhortation from one bishop to another regarding the work, or office out of which would come pastoral care. For instance, Ignatius writes,

“...Vindicate your position with all care, both physical and spiritual. Be intent on unity, of which nothing is better. Bear with everyone, like the Lord also bears with you. Endure all in love, just as you also do. Be diligent with unceasing prayer. Ask for greater understanding than you have. Be on the alert, possessing an always active spirit. Speak to each individual with agreement in God’s convictions. Bear the sicknesses of all like the perfect athlete. Where the trouble is greater, the gain is great. (*Ignatius, To Polycarp* 1.2-3)⁸⁴

In summarizing this section of the letter, Schoedel writes, “Thus the preceding exhortations are all to be seen as addressed to the spiritual guide who must sustain hard blows.”⁸⁵ Indeed, this letter provides a helpful look at aspects of being a ‘spiritual guide,’ or one might argue, a psychagogue. The work of pastoring a people is in view in this fraternal and collegial letter.⁸⁶

⁸² While paraenesis is often the category used in the literature when discussing household codes and ‘family’ components and relationships within the period, the direct connection of pastoral care to the family and “psychagogy” seems to be absent from the literature. This is not to say that some, or perhaps even many, have assumed it, but this research focuses on bringing to light the pastoral care of the family within the period, which itself is a new area of inquiry. At most, Malherbe makes brief mention of family connections as part of the content that could be included in the larger Greco-Roman moral philosophy practice of psychagogy. See: Abraham J. Malherbe, “Traditions and Theology of Care in the New Testament,” in *Light from the Gentiles: Hellenistic Philosophy and Early Christianity: Collected Essays, 1959-2012* by Abraham J. Malherbe, Volume 1 eds. Carl R. Holladay, John T. Fitzgerald, Gregory E. Sterling & James W. Thompson (Leiden: Brill, 2014), 261-262.

⁸³ As such, for this section, I will limit the primary source quotations to this letter to focus specifically on the clear training in psychagogy that is present therein.

⁸⁴ Ignatius, *To Polycarp* 1.2-3, trans. Rick Brannan.

⁸⁵ William R. Schoedel, *Ignatius of Antioch: A Commentary on the Letters of Ignatius of Antioch* ed. Helmut Koester (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1985), 261.

⁸⁶ Holmes translates 1.3b as “Speak to the people individually, in accordance with God’s example.” This translation brings out even further the reality of one-to-one pastoral care and counsel.

Unique to this early Christian letter are multiple references to the handling of people in pastoral care situations (1.3: speaking to individuals, 2.1: handling challenging persons, 3.1: he encourages Polycarp to have resolve in his dealings with people, 4.2: personal ministry by name, 6.1: communal sharing, 6.2: exhibiting patience and gentleness in the work).⁸⁷ Therefore, any items related to ‘family’ and the care of the family are contextually related to the focus of the letter between two bishops, or specifically, two men who are engaging in pastoral care. What follows is a continuation of the thrust of this chapter with a particular view of this particular psychagogic example.

4.2.1 *Letter of Ignatius, To Polycarp* as Training in Psychagogy

The *Letter of Ignatius to Polycarp* is a form of training in, or at minimum a collegial discussion regarding, psychagogy. This is not to say that this is the focal point of the letter, for others have aptly shown what the contextual backdrop of the letter may be.⁸⁸ However, Ignatius does give counsel to Polycarp, which rightly fits under the banner of training in psychagogy. Pastoral care involved not only the individual components of the life of an individual believer, but also the various familial connections with which that person may be involved. Thus, pastoral care was also extended to the family. Malherbe identifies the definition of psychagogy in a way that demonstrates it was the category for pastoral counsel.⁸⁹ The extent to which Ignatius was or was not “emulating” moral philosophers is uncertain. It is not beyond consideration that this tradition was something of which he was aware, either from outside the Christian movement, or from Paul.⁹⁰ However, the argument made here is that this epistle involves discussion on the practice of psychagogy.

⁸⁷ Ignatius, *To Polycarp*.

⁸⁸ See for instance: Paul Foster, “Polycarp in the Writings of Ignatius,” in *Studies on the Text of the New Testament and Early Christianity: Essays in Honor of Michael W. Holmes On the Occasion of His 65th Birthday* eds. Daniel M. Gurtner, Juan Hernández Jr. & Paul Foster (Leiden: Brill, 2015). He argues that “Episcopal status is placed in the foreground of the letter addressed to Polycarp, being mentioned in the words of the opening greeting...” (p. 422).

⁸⁹ “Pastoral care in the Greco-Roman tradition was part of a rich and wide-ranging enterprise known as psychagogy, which also included what we mean by spiritual exercises, psychotherapy, and psychological and pastoral counseling. Developed by philosophers concerned with human moral formation, psychagogy aimed, through character education, at the attainment of virtue and happiness, an achievement of which one could justly be proud...moral philosophers were viewed as physicians of sick souls, and their goal was to benefit their hearers by bringing them to their senses. This they sought to accomplish by frank speech, with which they laid bare the human condition and pointed to the rational life as the way to attain fulfillment of one’s potential as a human being...the topics...ranged as widely as human experience, including such concerns as marriage, the rearing of children, old age, death, happiness, grief, anger, joy, modesty, pride, dissipation, and self-control...the moral philosophers developed the manner in which such care was exercised, and it is their writings that reflect at greatest length on it, but there is ample evidence that they also served as models whom non-philosophers emulated.” Abraham J. Malherbe, “Traditions and Theology of Care in the New Testament,” in *Light from the Gentiles: Hellenistic Philosophy and Early Christianity: Collected Essays, 1959-2012* by Abraham J. Malherbe, Volume 1 eds. Carl R. Holladay, John T. Fitzgerald, Gregory E. Sterling & James W. Thompson. (Leiden: Brill, 2014), 261-262.

⁹⁰ Lindemann traces the connections of influence that Paul may have had on Ignatius. See: Andreas Lindemann, “Paul’s Influence on ‘Clement’ and Ignatius,” in *Trajectories Through the New Testament and Apostolic Fathers* eds. Andrew Gregory and Christopher Mark Tuckett (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005), 9-24.

From the opening salutation, Ignatius urges Polycarp in his practice of working with those under his charge (i.e. “I urge you, by the grace with which you are clothed, to proceed on your course and to urge all so that they might be saved,”- *Ignatius, To Polycarp* 1.2).⁹¹ What follows throughout the remainder of the letter is a litany of imperatives regarding how Polycarp is to lead and guide others, or how he is to consider the guiding of others. In some places, practical matters of pastoral care are mentioned (i.e., care for widows 4.1) and in others, specific ministerial functions are encouraged (5.1: “Flee from the evil arts; instead, preach a sermon about them”⁹²). Ehrman renders it “deliver a sermon” and Lake translates it, “preach against them.” Given that the letter is to a fellow bishop and not firstly to a congregation demonstrates the reality that this is a letter about leadership. Unlike some of the other epistles surveyed in this research where paraenesis is given, this epistle involves discussion of how one is to go about it. Kim argues that *To Polycarp* belongs to the “paraenetic letter” type given the various uses of “exhortation and advice.”⁹³ By connecting the style or method (paraenesis) with the goal of psychagogy (direction of the soul), this letter clearly fits within the paraenetic-psychagogy paradigm formulated earlier. Using the definitions for psychagogy of Malherbe and others, it is clear that Ignatius is giving instruction or encouragement to a fellow laborer about how to engage in the practice of psychagogy⁹⁴ in his own congregation in Smyrna. The instructions regarding family, such as Pol. 5.1, are ultimately about greater virtues,⁹⁵ virtues that Polycarp was to help the Smyrneans develop. In fact, Nicklas elsewhere argues that ultimately the writings of Ignatius are purposed to “...enforce what he regards as the only proper Christian way of life.”⁹⁶

4.2.2. ‘Family’ and the Guiding of Souls

Having argued that this letter of Ignatius involves discussion surrounding the practice of psychagogy, I will now connect this reality to the aspect of ‘family’ dealt with in the letter. This example is a case study in the connection of psychagogy and family care within the period.

“Do not treat male or female slaves arrogantly, but do not puff them up either; instead let them serve even more to the glory of God, that they may experience a better freedom

⁹¹ Ignatius, *To Polycarp* 1.2, trans. Rick Brannan.

⁹² Ignatius, *To Polycarp* 5.1, trans. Rick Brannan.

⁹³ Joohan Kim, “The Pastor Letter in Early Christianity Up to the Early Fifth Century C.E.” PhD diss, University of Stellenbosch, December 2012, 297-301.

⁹⁴ In fact, Kim characterizes the practice of psychagogy within the NT letters in the following way: “Firstly, the most obvious psychagogical feature of the letters in the NT is that they were composed (i) by church leaders (or pastors), (ii) who had pastoral aims (1 Thess 1:10-12; 2:8, 11-12; Rom 1:11-12; 1 Cor 4:11-13; 2 Thess 3:7b-9; 1 Tim 3:14-15a; 2 Tim 2:10; Titus 1:13b-14; 1 Pet 5:12; 2 Pet 3:1-2, 14-16a; 1 John 2:1a; Jude 3b), no matter whether the nature of the leadership was hierarchical or not. In other words, these spiritual guides had authority and were in a superior position to their recipients in composing their letters. This authority and position were either from divine origin or from the church itself, or both” (p. 231). Some would argue with the broadness in scope of this definition, and desire further specificity, and yet, this is an example of scholarship, which connects “psychagogy” to epistolary forms.

⁹⁵ For instance, Nicklas locates this discussion as an instance related to furthering the virtues of faith and love. See: Tobias Nicklas, “Living as a “Christian”: Christian Ethos According to the Writings of Ignatius of Antioch,” in *Studies on the Text of the New Testament and Early Christianity: Essays in Honor of Michael W. Holmes On the Occasion of His 65th Birthday* eds. Daniel M. Gurtner, Juan Hernández Jr. and Paul Foster (Leiden: Brill, 2015), 549-550.

⁹⁶ Nicklas, “Living,” 539.

from God. Let them desire not to be set free at the church's expense, that they not be disclosed as slaves of lust."

(*Ignatius, To Polycarp* 4.3)⁹⁷

The common focus within this instruction regarding slavery is the guiding of souls. Slaves, a part of the Greco-Roman household⁹⁸, are to be guided by Ignatius (or the *paterfamiliae* through which this counsel will come) in soul-level ways (i.e., "serve...to the glory of God", "that they not be disclosed as slaves of lust" or as Ehrman renders it: "lest they be found slaves of passion"). This singular instruction to particular members of a household is psychagogical. For the concern of Ignatius to center upon the potential for slaves to be "slaves of passion" demonstrates the pastoral concern for the souls of those slaves. The idea of "lust" itself as a topic of psychagogic material is not new.⁹⁹ Perhaps lust itself is the psychagogic focus behind the instruction for this segment of the household. Alternatively, Schoedel argues that the reason that Ignatius may have given this instruction was that if freed, slaves often became involved in prostitution, and so the "lust" involved could be connected to sexual immorality.¹⁰⁰ Whether or not this was Ignatius' main concern, the reality that there was a concern for the souls of the slaves under the charge of Polycarp remains in view. This concern is conveyed through the guidance of those souls offered ultimately through Polycarp or another. Another category example within this letter is that of marriage, or husbands and wives (*Ignatius, To Polycarp* 5.1-2).¹⁰¹ Here again, Ignatius encourages his pastoral counterpart in psychagogical practice regarding an aspect of the family. Wives are to first "love the Lord" and "be content with their husbands" (arguably implying spiritual contentment). Next, husbands are to "love their wives like the Lord loves the church" (drawing on the language of Paul in Ephesians 5) and this particular command is to be given "in the name of Jesus Christ." The name of their God is enjoined to this marital counsel. Singleness or celibacy is referenced next with a view towards humility (i.e., "if he boasts, he has been lost, and if it becomes known to any beyond the bishop, he is ruined"). Finally, the culmination of this section is that marriage "be in accordance with the Lord and not in accordance with lust" (Lake also uses the word "lust" but Ehrman renders it "passion") and ultimately that "all things be done for the honor of God." The motivation for the marital union is for God and it must involve the consent of the Bishop.¹⁰²

⁹⁷ *Ignatius, To Polycarp* 4.3, trans. Rick Brannan.

⁹⁸ I refer the reader to chapter two of this thesis.

⁹⁹ Welborn demonstrates the range of the therapeutic psychagogic enterprise as it relates to emotions and gives a helpful summary of specific emotions related to the task. See: L.L. Welborn, "Paul and Pain: Paul's Emotional Therapy in 2 Corinthians 1.1.-2.13; 7.5-16 in the Context of Ancient Psychagogic Literature," in *New Testament Studies*, 57 (2011), 547-570.

¹⁰⁰ Schoedel, *Ignatius of Antioch*, 270-271.

¹⁰¹ "Instruct my sisters to love the Lord and to be satisfied with their husbands in flesh and spirit. So too enjoin my brothers in the name of Jesus Christ to love their wives as the Lord loves the church. If anyone is able to honor the flesh of the Lord by maintaining a state of purity, let him do so without boasting. If he boasts, he has been destroyed, and if it becomes known to anyone beyond the bishop, he is ruined. But it is right for men and women who marry to make their union with the consent of the bishop, that their marriage may be for the Lord and not for passion. Let all things be done for the honor of God." *Ignatius, To Polycarp* 5.1-2, trans. Rick Brannan.

¹⁰² Ignatius is known for his focus on the Bishop. See: William R. Schoedel, *Ignatius of Antioch: A Commentary on the Letters of Ignatius of Antioch* ed. Helmut Koester (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1985). and Chapter two in: Michael A. G. Haykin, *Rediscovering the Church Fathers: Who They Were and How They Shaped the Church* (Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2011), as well as Allen Brent, *Ignatius of Antioch: Martyr Bishop and the Origin of Episcopacy* (London: T&T Clark International, 2007), 92.

Therefore, in this brief epistle, instructions for members of the Christian household¹⁰³ are given within the concept of soul guidance. This is clearly seen in how the various instructions regarding family and familial roles are all ultimately related to the spiritual good of the individual at the soul level. Foster argues from this passage that “Ignatius communicates to Polycarp the level of involvement he expects a bishop to exercise is directing the social affairs of believers,”¹⁰⁴ and he would later argue that Ignatius believed that Polycarp should take “a more active role in regulating the social affairs of believers.”¹⁰⁵ The ultimate ‘pietas’ in view is not the glory of the State, or of the household or family itself, but is the Christian God. The formation of the Christian soul is at the center of instruction regarding the family; therefore, family counsel given within this letter is properly classified as psychagogy. And it is Ignatius’ giving of exhortation, or collegial advice to Polycarp that demonstrates that the pastoral vision is that ‘family’ be envisaged within a paraenetic-psychagogical lens.

4.3. Rhetoric and the Philosophic Tradition as ‘Family’ Counseling

As seen in the previous examination of one source case study from the period, family guidance was a part of soul guidance (psychagogy). While seeking to avoid anachronistic interpretations of the data, rhetorical forms were the dominant avenue of care for the family in our period. Specifically, ‘psychagogy’ was a part of the Greco-Roman rhetorical forms of the day.¹⁰⁶ Malherbe places psychagogy within the category known as ‘rhetoric,’ and Glad gives a helpful etymology in the opening chapter of his thesis concerning psychagogy.¹⁰⁷ Kolbet also addresses this historical development,¹⁰⁸ a development that by our period has psychagogy as a common, positively viewed practice of guiding souls. However, as Glad rightly shows, psychagogy itself is a form of rhetoric—of persuasive speech. This then, is the reason for the titular reference in this section to family counseling as rhetoric. Psychagogy, was a dominant

¹⁰³ Lookadoo tracing this letter, and connections to *1 Clement* and Pauline writings, states that Ignatius “offers advice” to Polycarp on the topic of household codes. See: Jonathon Lookadoo, “Categories, relationships and imitation in the household codes of 1 Clement, Ignatius and Polycarp: a comparison with household codes in the Pauline corpus,” *Neotestamentica* 53.1 (2019): 31-52.

¹⁰⁴ Paul Foster, “Polycarp in the Writings of Ignatius,” in *Studies on the Text of the New Testament and Early Christianity: Essays in Honor of Michael W. Holmes On the Occasion of His 65th Birthday* eds. Daniel M. Gurtner, Juan Hernández Jr. & Paul Foster (Leiden: Brill, 2015), 426.

¹⁰⁵ Foster, “Polycarp,” 429.

¹⁰⁶ Kolbet writes that, “...as a contemporary investigative category, psychagogy is a distinctive use of rhetoric for philosophic or religious ends.” He also posits that, “It should...be kept in mind that the use of words for psychagogic purposes was a real but minority tradition within ancient rhetoric that, as argued here, was especially influential upon early Christians.” Kolbet, *Augustine*, 9.

¹⁰⁷ He writes, “Plato’s definition of rhetoric as ψυχαγωγία is a counterproposal to Isocrates’ work *Against the Sophists*, already parodied in the *Gorgias* where Socrates claims that rhetoric is not an art but flattery. In the *Phaedrus*, Plato views genuine rhetoric as an art by which a speaker guides another to the truth by adjusting his words to the other’s soul. Against Aristophanes’ portrait of Socrates as a conjurer of souls, Plato sets a portrait of Socrates as a true rhetorician and a true psychagogue who guides souls to the truth by seeking it himself. Embedded in these early reflections on the term “psychagogy” is a tension between beguilement and truthful guidance.” Glad, *Paul and Philodemus*, 18.

¹⁰⁸ A potentially helpful guide to the development of this term is: E. Asmis, “*Psychagogia* in Plato’s *Phaedrus*,” *ICS* 11.1/2 (1986), pp. 153-172, which is referenced in Glad, pg. 18.

form of guiding the family, and rightly belongs to and descends from the philosophic category known as rhetoric.¹⁰⁹ Thus, for our discussion, some background is necessary to set the stage.

It was through paraenetic-psychagogy found in early Christian writings that care for the family largely occurred. The guidance of the family was a part of the larger movement towards psychagogy, or soul guidance. Instructions for the Christian family came to center on the guidance of the Christian soul in such a way that the *telos* of the instruction is not simply about the direction and care of a household, but is an enterprise involving the soul of each family member involved. I will not detail the connections of the guidance of souls with the larger context of Greco-Roman philosophy, for that has already been successfully undertaken in the works of others.¹¹⁰ What I argue here is that family counsel within the period focused on the guidance of the Christian soul. In the previous chapter, writings surrounding ‘family’ were shown to be within the context of the larger guidance of the Christian in various ways (i.e., Clement connects fulfilling a particular familial instruction to the provisions of Christ (τοῖς ἐφοδίοις τοῦ Χριστοῦ *I Clem* 2.1), the *Didache* places instruction related to marriage within the context of the two paths, *Did.* 5.1, Ignatius makes the glory of God a goal for household instruction, *Ign. To Polycarp*, 4.3 and Polycarp speaks to the *paideia* and discipline of children (arguably soul guidance) within the context of an overarching reverential fear for God, (*Polycarp to the Philippians* 4.1-2.) Guiding any part of the adherent’s life was ultimately a part of the philosophic process,¹¹¹ and ‘family’ was no different.

Counsel given regarding the family can rightly be placed within the broader realm of psychagogy specifically because the goal of even those instructions (family) was the development of the Christian soul. Not heeding the paraenetic-psychagogy surrounding family would have been considered a pollutant to the soul and can be seen in various avenues such as how certain instructions to the family were placed along the pathways considered ideal (i.e., the ‘two-paths’ of the *Didache* as one example). Therefore, given the instructions detailed in the previous chapter,¹¹² while familial instructions were not the only part of the Christian psychagogic enterprise, they rightly fit within that category both as a preventative measure (the soul is guarded

¹⁰⁹ Dinkler has a recent background study on rhetoric and Christian literature. See: Michal Beth Dinkler, *Influence: On Rhetoric and Biblical Interpretation* (Netherlands: Brill, 2021), 72-79.

¹¹⁰ I refer the reader to a summary of “psychagogy” undertaken by Timothy Seid in his paper “Psychagogy in Paul: What Is It, How Does it Help Us Understand Paul, and Why Does it Matter?” electronically retrieved from: <http://scs.earlham.edu/~seidti/psychagogy.pdf>. Also, see Ilsetraut Hadot, “The Spiritual Guide,” as well as Clarence Glad, *Paul and Philodemus*, also: Abraham J. Malherbe, *Light from the Gentiles*. In addition to Malherbe, Kolbet provides a view into the connections of care and ‘psychagogy.’ See: Paul R. Kolbet, *Augustine and the Cure of Souls*. For continued connections past the first and second century see: George E. Demacopoulos, *Five Models of Spiritual Direction in the Early Church*. See Griffis for early Christian familiarity with Greek writings in general: Sarah Griffis, “Christian Interaction with Greek Tragedy In the Second and Third Centuries”.

¹¹¹ Hadot writes, “It must be pointed out here that philosophy meant something entirely different in Greco-Roman antiquity from what it means today. It was not a systematic thought structure *à la Hegel* intended to serve as the theoretical explanation of the world and the events of the world; philosophy was, above all, an education toward a happy life...Ancient philosophy was, above all, help with life’s problems and spiritual guidance, and the ancient philosopher was, above all, a spiritual guide.” See Ilsetraut Hadot, “The Spiritual Guide,” in *Classical Mediterranean Spirituality: Egyptian, Greek, Roman*, ed. A. H. Armstrong, Vol. 15 *World Spirituality: An Encyclopedic History of the Religious Quest* (New York: Crossroad, 1986), 444.

¹¹² I refer the reader to the previous chapter, chapter three, for a detailed accounting of these instructions. However, of import here are instructions regarding proper marriage, sexuality, care for children, correct use of children (not for sexual corruption), *paideia*, etc.

from corruption if these familial instructions are followed), and as a part of the cathartic, or healing measure (if the instructions are followed, the soul could be healed or sanctified from previous ills which could specifically, depending on the context, be viewed as previous sinful behaviors). Thus, any of the aforementioned definitions of Glad, Kolbet and Foucault, with their various slivers of semantic difference could rightly be utilized as a category for what was occurring as the early Christian community received instruction from its various leaders regarding the family.

It is fair to associate Paul with the larger Greco-Roman philosophers such as Philodemus and others, but this does not mean that the writers a generation or two away from Paul also engaged in the same use of rhetorical means to offer care and counsel. This argument could be based on the idea that the writers of the Apostolic Fathers corpus may not use the same larger Greco-Roman philosophic tradition that Paul, who was no stranger to Greek philosophy, would have used. However, I agree with Malherbe, who although making multiple connections between Paul and the “philosophic tradition of pastoral care”¹¹³ has also located other early Christian writers, such as some within the *Apostolic Fathers* corpus, as a part of that tradition.¹¹⁴ Many of the writers within the *Apostolic Fathers* corpus and following, in varying degrees, were not strangers to the philosophic tradition(s) of the larger culture and thus that philosophic tradition is a necessary discussion piece in this research.¹¹⁵ Harrison provides a helpful discussion of the possible connections and divergence of The Delphic Canon with the ethical training of early Christians arguing “there are moral commonplaces in the Delphic canon and early Christianity.”¹¹⁶ He provides a look into the larger philosophical influences on the education of the time, an education that early Christians would have not only been aware of, but at least in some segments of the movement, a philosophical system through which they could have been molded.

4.3.1. Early Psychagogical Evidence

Next, it is important to note that the writings of the early Christian leaders of the period, mainly within the Apostolic Fathers corpus, demonstrate a psychagogical nature. Within this research, sources within the *Apostolic Fathers* corpus and the *Ante-Nicene Fathers* were researched due to their chronological placement within the first and second centuries and their

¹¹³ See: Abraham J. Malherbe, *Paul and the Thessalonians: The Philosophic Tradition of Pastoral Care* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1987).

¹¹⁴ For instance, while including references to writings contained within the *Apostolic Fathers* corpus, he writes: “The moral philosophers gave considerable attention to developing methods by which to cultivate moral growth. There methods, which were perpetuated and further developed in later Christian monastic orders, included what we would call psychotherapy, psychological and pastoral counseling, spiritual direction or soul care, and the most general exhortation. The term used to describe this entire range of activity is “psychagogy.” While the literature naturally stresses the role of the philosopher (cf. 1 Tim. 4:13; 5:1; 6:2; 2 Tim. 4:23; Ignatius, *Pol.* 1.2) in exhortation, groups such as the Epicureans engaged in exhortation, admonition, and consolation of each other (cf. Rom. 15:14; 1 Thess. 5:12-15; Heb 3:13; 10:25; *Barn.* 19.4; 1 *Clem.* 56.2; 2 *Clem.* 17.2; Hermas, *Vis.* 3.9.10).” See: Abraham J. Malherbe, *Moral Exhortation, A Greco-Roman Sourcebook* (Philadelphia: Westminster John Knox, 1986), 48.

¹¹⁵ Marksches has an interesting discussion regarding the connectedness of second, as well as third century Christians to the philosophical schools in his section “Philosophical Instruction among Christians” in: Marksches, *Christian Theology*, 71-91.

¹¹⁶ James R. Harrison, “The Seven Sages, The Delphic Canon and Ethical Education in Antiquity,” in *Ancient Education and Early Christianity*, eds. Matthew Ryan Hauge and Andrew W. Pitts (London: Bloomsbury T&T Clark, 2016), 85.

general acceptance within the literature as distinctly Christian versus Gnostic, Docetic or other offshoot writings.¹¹⁷ Based on this, the family-related psychagogic material is detailed within this chapter and the next, and even though there is a statistically smaller portion that deals with family, there is enough primary source data to make the claims of this thesis. An analysis of these writings demonstrates a clear goal toward a psychagogical end. This reality is seen in several instances. For example, while there is discussion in the literature regarding mystagogical formation, which overlaps in several ways with the discussion of psychagogy,¹¹⁸ there is a clear focal point in the primary source Christian writings of a type of psychagogical component, which is seen in other non-Christian psychagogical works of the period. One example to note would be at the end of *1 Clement*, where there is a closing summary exposing the psychagogical nature of the letter (*1 Clement* 62.1-3).¹¹⁹ A few sentences later, in keeping with the immediate purpose of the letter, submission to leaders within the Christian community is advocated. Interestingly, the idea is that the recipients are to have submission to “the leaders of our souls” (*1 Clement* 63:1).¹²⁰ This letter is about guiding and leading of souls, and while moral precepts are contained, the vision for the work is psychagogical. In this example from *1 Clement*, a summary is given noting the intent of the entire letter.

While the background context to the letter is important, the writer clearly says that he has addressed every important topic to give spiritual guidance—guidance which as the next section notes, was for soul leading. In a subsequent section a closing prayer is offered in which the author asks God to “grant to every soul that has called upon his magnificent and holy name faith, fear, peace, patience, steadfastness, self-control, purity, and sobriety, so that they may be pleasing to his name through our high priest and benefactor, Jesus Christ” (*1 Clement* 64).¹²¹ The goal was soul development as evidenced not only in direct instruction, but also in closing summary prayer.

Like this example, a closing remark is found in the *Didache* which points to a psychagogical purpose. There we read towards the end of the work that the readers are to pursue what benefits their souls in their gatherings (*Didache* 16.2). While this is not a direct psychagogical interaction, the items discussed within the work are about the good of the Christian soul. In the late first and second century sources, there are various forms of psychagogical material of several varieties: communal letter, sermon and individual letters. Presumably these

¹¹⁷ Methodologically, these two bodies of writings were investigated and then any material related to family was analyzed in order to be detailed here.

¹¹⁸ See: Ed Cohen, “Dare to Care: Between Stiegler’s Mystagogy and Foucault’s Aesthetics of Existence” in *boundary 2* (Duke University Press, February 2017) Vol. 44 No. 1, pp.149-166.

¹¹⁹ “We have written enough to you, brothers, about the things that pertain to our religion and are particularly helpful for a virtuous life, at least for those who wish to guide their steps in holiness and righteousness. For we have touched upon every subject—faith, repentance, genuine love, self-control, sobriety, and patience—and have reminded you that you must reverently please Almighty God in righteousness and truth and steadfastness, living in harmony without bearing malice, in love and peace with constant gentleness, just as our ancestors, of whom we spoke earlier, please him, but being humble toward the Father and God and Creator and toward all people. And we have reminded you of these things all the more gladly, since we knew quite well that we were writing to people who are faithful and distinguished and have diligently studied the oracles of the teaching of God.” *1 Clement*, 62.1-3, ed. and trans. Michael Holmes.

¹²⁰ This phrase is a variant that Holmes includes but Ehrman/Loeb, Lake/Loeb, Funk/Billmeyer and Brannan do not. The topic of textual variants in the various manuscripts of the primary sources is beyond the scope of this thesis. However, in this thesis, comparing translations is a part of the research process. For consistency of presentation, since I have made a point with the Holmes translation, I will continue with the Holmes translation throughout this particular section and the next rather than list the main Brannan translation as I have usually done.

¹²¹ *1 Clement* 64 ed. and trans. Michael Holmes.

three forms mirror what would have been occurring but is lost to us: the non-written psychagogical conversations and structures of which we do not have an extant record. However, these three types provide a backdrop from the extant sources, which grant access to understanding the psychagogy of the period within the Christian community, that among other things covered the topic of ‘family.’ Having already seen an example of an individual letter, a look at the other two written types, with proper attention to genre and context, is warranted to demonstrate that the enterprise from which this thesis provides analysis (family counsel and guidance) was one of psychagogy.

4.3.1.1. Communal Letter

One type of text source within the period from which psychagogy can be observed is the communal letter written to a group or specific church. A sample of this type is found in the letter called *1 Clement*. Malherbe describes the usage of the Apostle Paul of this type of communal letter. He writes, “Here [Thessalonians 5] he gives directions on how the community is to continue its own nurture. Paul addresses two aspects of that pastoral care: the attitude toward those who exercise it (5:12-13) and the way it is to be exercised (5:14-15).”¹²² There are within *1 Clement* elements of the same type of reality of communal nurture, and of an epistle directing aspects of community nurture (1 Clement 9.1, 13.1, 58.1-2 where the word συμβουλήν is used¹²³). Within this letter, there are also particular examples of soul guidance coming within this communal epistle:

“Therefore, let us not be double-minded, nor let our soul indulge in false ideas about his excellent and glorious gifts.” (*1 Clement* 23.2)¹²⁴

“With this hope, therefore, let our souls be bound to the one who is faithful in his promises and righteous in his judgments.” (*1 Clement* 27.1)¹²⁵

“Let us, therefore, approach him in holiness of soul, lifting up to him pure and undefiled hands, loving our gentle and compassionate Father who made us his own chosen portion.” (*1 Clement* 29.1)¹²⁶

In this smattering of quotations, there is a consistent usage, or focus on the soul in a way that goes beyond synecdoche.¹²⁷ Here, a guidance of the Christian soul is in view and much like what Malherbe points out in commenting on the epistle of Paul to the Thessalonians, here, *1 Clement* demonstrates a communal aspect of nurture, and it is an example of an epistle written to a community versus a person.

This nurture can be seen as involving a guidance of the ‘family.’ Notice this type of communal guidance connected to members of the family or household (cf. *1 Clement* 21.6-8). While *1 Clement* is not primarily a book on family direction, it does include it, and this letter is a type of psychagogy and therefore that which is contained within it, including family instruction, is psychagogical.

¹²² Malherbe, *Paul and the Thessalonians*, 88.

¹²³ See the discussion on this particular word in the next section.

¹²⁴ *1 Clement* 23.2 ed. and trans. Michael Holmes.

¹²⁵ *1 Clement* 27.1 ed. and trans. Michael Holmes.

¹²⁶ *1 Clement* 29.1 ed. and trans. Michael Holmes.

¹²⁷ It could be argued that the word ‘soul’ is simply being used to refer to the entire person, however the thrust of the letter appears to be more nuanced than such a usage of synecdoche. A type of soul-focus is in view here.

1 Clement contains, in addition to references to soul guidance, a word that is often identified with psychagogy. Specifically, the Greek word *noutheteo* is used and demonstrates that a guidance of the Christian soul is in view.¹²⁸ This word, often translated as ‘to admonish,’ is demonstrative of an imperatival type of psychagogy (it, or a cognate is used in *1 Clement* 7.1, *1 Clement* 56.2, 6¹²⁹ and is also used by Paul in multiple places cf. *1 Thessalonians* 5:12 and *Ephesians* 6:4). For instance, notice the following:

“We write these things, dear friends, not only to admonish you but also to remind ourselves.” (*1 Clement* 7.1)¹³⁰

This is an example of the type of reality that Malherbe identifies in the pastoral care given by Paul because of its focus on the persons giving nurture and the attitude towards those giving it.

Similarly, in his letter to the Philippians, Polycarp gives a communal type of familial instruction in what is clearly meant to guide the souls of the Christian recipients. He notes that he is writing “these comments about righteousness” (*Polycarp, to the Philippians* 3.1). Before this, he points to the eschatological reality of this instruction in righteousness:

“But the one who raised him from the dead will raise us also, if we do his will and follow his commandments and love the things he loved, while avoiding every kind of unrighteousness.” (*Polycarp, to the Philippians* 2.2a).¹³¹

This context then provides the instruction for his comments regarding the family such as the proper instruction of wives (4.2) as well as proper instruction for young men and women in the things of righteousness (5.3), including sexual instruction. The eschatological reality behind these instructions in righteousness is apparent within these references as well when Polycarp speaks to the inheritance of the “kingdom of God” being connected the practice (or lack thereof) of certain sexual activities. Polycarp, much like that of Clement, gives communal psychagogic instruction in epistolary form to a particular community, and this included the instruction of family. Similarities can be noted from these two works in that both apply the idea of righteousness to the instruction of the readers. However, in *1 Clement*, the more explicit reference to the ‘soul’ is apparent.

4.3.1.2. Sermonic

It is not only in epistolary form that psychagogy among the Christian community is seen. It also appears in the sermonic arena in extant sources from the period. One such example would be the source known as *2 Clement*. This sermon, while not particularly addressing the area of ‘family,’ demonstrates that psychagogy occurred within the early Christian community, and again, by psychagogy, what is envisaged is the guiding of the soul of the adherent of the particular philosophy, school or movement—in this case, Christianity. *2 Clement* demonstrates a sermonic psychagogy with a soteriological and eschatological focus. For instance, in the direction of the Christian toward good works, there is the following statement: “Therefore just as your

¹²⁸ Malherbe locates this word, along with three others, as connected to the larger pastoral care and psychagogical enterprise. See: Malherbe, *Paul and the Thessalonians*, 89-92.

¹²⁹ Bauer, Walter, William F. Arndt, F. Wilbur Gingrich, and Frederick W. Danker. *A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature*, 2nd ed. (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1979), 544.

¹³⁰ *1 Clement* 7.1 ed. and trans. Michael Holmes.

¹³¹ *Polycarp, to the Philippians*, 2.2 ed. and trans. Michael Holmes.

body is visible, so also let your soul be evident in good works” (2 Clement 12.4).¹³² This may appear to be an innocuous verse in the current discussion, but the instruction toward good works in this sermon is a form of guiding the Christian soul. In fact, later in the sermon, the following is written:

“Now I do not think that the advice I have given about self-control is unimportant; in fact, those who follow this advice will not regret it, but will save both themselves and me as their adviser. For it is no small reward to redirect an errant and perishing soul, so that it may be saved”
(2 Clement 15.1-2).¹³³

Here, the soteriological aspects of this letter break through and are demonstrated once again. However, of importance to this discussion is the reality that certain instructions be viewed in terms of guiding the soul. This sermon, and its guiding instructions are to be understood as a type of psychagogy. The preacher of this homily connected his own instructions, in this case about self-control, with a soul-level soteriology. However, of even greater connection to the topic of psychagogy within this sermon is the term that the preacher uses of himself: συμβουλῖαν. This term, and its derivatives are of clear connection to psychagogical practice. Arndt and Gingrich (BDAG) define this word even noting the 2 Clement 15 reference as “advice, counsel.”¹³⁴ Tuckett translates the word “advice” in his rendering.¹³⁵ Additionally, Louw and Nida define the related verbal form συμβουλεύω as “to tell someone what he or she should plan to do- ‘to advise, to counsel.’”¹³⁶ The preacher clearly identifies with the work of giving counsel regarding the soul. He openly calls himself their adviser, or similarly, their ‘counselor’ (κάμὲ τὸν συμβουλεύσαντα). Without modern anachronisms associated with the idea of counseling and psychotherapy, counsel within the period would rightly be through ‘psychagogy.’

Thus, what is evident from this early Christian sermon is the reality that psychagogy was occurring within the Christian community in sermonic form. The preacher here identifies himself as an adviser who is offering soul-related guidance. Within the soteriological aspects of this letter, this adviser offers psychagogical leadership and thus even the liturgical aspect of the homily forms such an occasion for the practice.

The third type of psychagogic discourse can be found in individual letters and this was seen, by example, in the previous case study in the letter of *Ignatius to Polycarp*. It serves as a training resource for one person to another person. This letter is an example of individual instruction in the care of souls. Now a discussion of the audience and group connections found in the first two types (communal letter and sermonic) is necessary in considering the audience and group connections behind both types of instructional devices.

4.3.2. Audience

¹³² 2 Clement 12.4 ed. and trans. Michael Holmes. Tuckett renders it similarly, “So then, just as your body is visible, so also let your soul be clearly seen in your good works.” Tuckett, 2 Clement, 107.

¹³³ 2 Clement 15.1-2 ed. and trans. Michael Holmes.

¹³⁴ Bauer, Walter, William F. Arndt, F. Wilbur Gingrich, and Frederick W. Danker. *A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature*, 2nd ed. (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1979).

¹³⁵ Tuckett, 2 Clement, 113.

¹³⁶ Louw & Nida, *Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament Based on Semantic Domains*, 2nd ed. 2 vols. (New York: United Bible Societies, 1989).

An initial question must be answered however related to the audience of the writings.¹³⁷ Are we to assume that individual family members would receive the counsel found in this corpus of writings? Answering this in the affirmative is a fair claim to make in that in several ways, there is evidence of the early Christian community receiving counsel in its writings, whether it was read to a group, or read individually. In seeking to answer any question from the period, one must wrestle with the reality that we can only make statements based on the extant data of which we have access. Therefore, sweeping claims can be more difficult. For instance, what might have been written, said, or done in the period within the Christian communities to which we do not have access? When undertaking the question asked within the research, this must be considered. And yet, there is sufficient material to make certain claims. This is due in large part because of the commonality of how the topic of ‘family’ is handled in the various extant literature. Within the writings as ‘family’ is addressed and counsel is given, there is a common core of paraenetic discourse aimed at guidance sufficient to make claims. This fact alone for instance, combined with the forms through which the counsel was given, provide sufficient data to make the claim that care for the family occurred through epistolary writings. However, was this the only form? Of course not, for it undoubtedly occurred in sermons, catechesis as well as individual, or one on one paraenesis. On this, the words of Justin should be observed:

“But, so that we might avoid any injustice or impiety, we have been taught that to expose the newborn is wicked. First, because we see nearly all reared for sexual immorality, not only the girls but also the males, and just as the ancients are said to have gathered herds of grazing cattle or goats or sheep or horses, so now people gather children only to use them shamefully. And similarly a multitude in every nation of women and passive males who commit unspeakable acts have been brought to this defilement. (*First Apology*, 27.1)¹³⁸

This work references the previous receipt of teaching. Instruction regarding the treatment of an aspect of family, in this case, children, is depicted as something that has been taught. It is not debated that the early Christians taught in the form of epistolary, sermonic, catechetical and individual instruction. Justin does not provide a detailed description of how this teaching occurred; he simply states that it did. His apology for the Christian faith includes the reality that teaching regarding the treatment of children was involved. Perhaps this type of teaching was what Clement was commending when he wrote:

“You commanded the women to accomplish all things with a blameless, honorable, and pure conscience, feeling appropriate affection for their own husbands, and you taught them being in the rule of obedience to manage the things of the household honorably, with all sensibility.” (*I Clement* 1.3)¹³⁹

¹³⁷ Quinn details the connection of paraenesis and the *Pastoral Epistles* with a particular focus on the instruction of a community within the care of an apostle. This pattern clearly continued in the post-canonical writings structures. For Quinn’s focus, see: Jerome D. Quinn, “Paraenesis and the Pastoral Epistles: Lexical Observations Bearing on the Nature of the Sub-Genre and Soundings on its role in Socialization and Liturgies,” in *Semeia 50: Paraenesis: Act and Form*, eds. Leo G. Perdue and John G. Gammie (Atlanta, Ga: Scholars Press, 1990).

¹³⁸ Justin, *First Apology*, taken from: *Justin, Philosopher and Martyr: Apologies*, eds. Denis Minns and Paul Parvis (Oxford: Oxford University Press 2009), 152-154.

¹³⁹ *I Clement*, 1:2, trans. Rick Brannan. For comparison, Ehrman translates it as: “You directed women to accomplish all things with a blameless, respectful, and pure conscience, dutifully loving their husbands. And you taught them to run their households respectfully, living under the rule of submission, practicing discretion in every way.”

Here, there is reference to a specific type of direction occurring within the Christian community. But beyond the idea of teaching in general, there are specific examples of related teaching samples that are extant. For instance, we have examples of this type of idea, which describe Christian conduct in epistolary form as well in the extant literature. Stowers writes, “The writings of the so-called apostolic fathers, i.e., the letters of Ignatius and Polycarp and the first letter of Clement, are also primarily letters of exhortation and advice.”¹⁴⁰ Indeed, there is counsel related to family in the letters already surveyed in Chapter three. *I Clement*,¹⁴¹ *Letters of Ignatius*,¹⁴² *Letters of Polycarp*,¹⁴³ as well as the apologetic letters surveyed within that chapter all demonstrate that counsel regarding the family was specifically given. Epistolary teaching was a means to teach regarding the family, and we can assert that this teaching would have made its way, both in public and private settings, to the various members of the family. This means then that the thrust of caring for the family was accomplished through exhortation to particular precepts. Paraenetic-psychagogy existed in public form through the writings of epistles and in sermonic expressions. This psychagogy involved guidance related to the family and this guidance was ultimately designed to lead the soul. However, there are other group connection points wherein certain guidance was given through one member of the group to another.

4.3.3 Group Connections

In addition to the audience considered, there is the reality that the psychagogic care offered in relation to the family also came through channels of corporate solidarity and/or headship. This counsel could either come in the form of one person standing in as a whole for the family (i.e. as in the case seen in the previous chapter with *Hermas*, *Hermas*, *Vis* II.3.1, *Parables* VII 2-3), or it could come as one member of the family was instructed to pass along soul-guidance material to other members of his household (i.e. *Barn* 19.4-5, *Ign, To Polycarp* 4.3, 5.1, *Did* 4.9-11). In these examples, instruction was given that fits under the banner of ‘family’ or household instruction, and yet the goal was for the recipient to pass on the teaching, which ultimately was about the guiding of the souls of those to whom that original recipient would share. These examples demonstrate that in many cases the instruction was given to the *paterfamilias* and it was paraenetic instruction. However, the ultimate focus is that those who received the teaching through that person to whom they share in a household, should embrace specific soul guidance material. This is different than many other structural aspects of psychagogy, for it means that many individuals (household members) would be cared for—their souls would be guided—indirectly, and not within direct contact, in many cases, with the psychagogue. For instance, we could recall the following found in the *Didache*:

“Do not withhold your hand from your son or from your daughter, but from their youth teach them the fear of God. Do not command your male slave or female slave who are hoping in the same God in your bitterness, lest they cease to fear the God over you both, for he does not come to call with partiality but to whom the spirit prepares. And slaves,

¹⁴⁰ Stowers, *Letter Writing*, 43.

¹⁴¹ *I Clement* 21.6-8.

¹⁴² “Do not treat male or female slaves arrogantly, but do not puff them up either; instead let them serve even more to the glory of God, that they may experience a better freedom from God. Let them desire not to be set free at the church’s expense, that they not be disclosed as slaves of lust.” (*Ignatius, To Polycarp* 4.3, trans. Rick Brannan).

¹⁴³ *Polycarp, Letter to the Philippians* 4.1-2.

you shall be subject to your master as to a copy of God, in modesty and fear.” (*Didache* 4.9-11)¹⁴⁴

Here, what initially sets this paragraph apart, is paraenesis regarding members of an initial recipient’s household (presumably the *paterfamilias* or a male who was subservient to another *paterfamilias*, yet one who was to have responsibility for his own related family). However, in two cases (that of children and slaves), the instruction is ultimately about the guidance of the souls of others. This is another reason to see moral exhortation of the family as both direct and indirect psychagogy.¹⁴⁵ Here, direct instruction is given to one set of individuals (those who have children) and yet the goal (τὸν φόβον τοῦ θεοῦ) is to be passed on. Similarly, instruction is given on how to handle slaves, but it ultimately reaches a psychagogical climax in that a slave is to fear God (seen by the way of negation regarding the fear of God). Slaves in this context are addressed, so in this instance, it is assumed that the slaves are direct and indirect recipients of the discourse (in content). In fact, MacDonald is right when she states that what is unique about the early Christian writings, in particular the household codes, is that they address subordinate groups.¹⁴⁶ This reality further demonstrates that the Christian soul is in view in familial or household instruction. The reason then for the claim that the Christian writings, which were studied as a part of this research and are within the period, rightly belong to the classification of psychagogy is specifically because that familial instruction was not solely focused on behavioral outcomes, but on living a life in keeping with a particular philosophy adopted; namely, Christianity. The instructions that have been detailed in the previous chapter were seen to be larger than simple household code alone, but were ultimately about the guidance of the family member(s) involved, including the very connection of their soul to the Christian faith.¹⁴⁷

Regarding group connections there is also clear usage of this elsewhere in the sources. As previously noted, Clement praises such familial instruction:

“You commanded the women to accomplish all things with a blameless, honorable, and pure conscience, feeling appropriate affection for their own husbands, and you taught

¹⁴⁴ *Didache*, 4.9-11 trans. Rick Brannan. Lake translates it similarly but capitalizes “Spirit” indicating he views it as a reference to the Holy Spirit. He also uses the phrase “fear of God.” Ehrman renders the phrase as: “Do not remove your hand from [*Or: Do not refrain from disciplining; or Do not shirk your responsibility towards*] your son or daughter, but from their youth teach them the reverential fear of God. Do not give orders to your male slave or female servant—who hope in the same God—out of bitterness, lest they stop fearing the God who is over you both. For he does not come to call those of high status, but those whom the Spirit has prepared. And you who are slaves must be subject to your masters as to a replica of God, with respect and referential fear.”

¹⁴⁵ By “indirect,” I mean guidance given to one individual that was meant to inform how they teach, or what they teach another. This assumes that in many cases, the original ‘psychagogue’ may not have direct contact with the ultimate persons impacted.

¹⁴⁶ She writes, “Particularly significant is that the direct address to the subordinate groups has been identified as a distinctly Christian innovation to the household codes. Household management discussions from classical Greek times to the NT era certainly refer to relational pairs and often treat each member of the pair reciprocally. But the direct address to subordinate groups as if they are listening members of the audience (especially to slaves) is unusual, if not unique.” See: MacDonald, *The Power of Children*, 7.

¹⁴⁷ This idea will be detailed much further in the next chapter but is here only mentioned in order that the connection to soul direction may be seen.

them being in the rule of obedience to manage the things of the household honorably, with all sensibility.” (*I Clement* 1.3)¹⁴⁸

What is evident in this passage is that the recipient church members are being praised for how they had passed on information (presumably the entire church had seen to it that the female members were instructed in certain familial guidance). One member of the familial unit was being instructed through the efforts of the group. It is likely that this group was really the male leaders of families within the group that were being praised for their leadership of their own wives. Elsewhere this reality is seen not in the receipt of praise for having accomplished it, but by way of command:

“Tell my sisters to love the Lord and to be content with their husbands in flesh and in spirit. In the same way, also command my brothers in the name of Jesus Christ to love their wives like the Lord loved the church.” (*Ignatius, To Polycarp* 5.1)¹⁴⁹

Here, Polycarp was given instruction as a head of a group to see to it that other members receive the instruction that Ignatius passed along. What is clear in these examples is not only that the guiding of souls—psychagogic discourse—involved familial instruction, but that in many cases, it came in the form of information that one person, or group of persons was to pass along to another person or group of persons.

Within a family unit itself, this is seen most clearly in the case of Hermas in the *The Shepherd of Hermas*. In several instances (*Hermas, Vis* II.3.1, *Parables* VII 2-3) Hermas is the head of the family addressed with specific instruction. This instruction comes as he, Hermas, is the corporate head of his familial unit. Thus, the instruction is given to an individual, but the person is an individual connected to a group that must receive the instruction.

In summation, the structure and audience of those receiving care towards the family point to paraenetic-psychagogy as the method for care and counsel of the family. Also, the paraenesis was for more than behavioral adjustment, and was connected to the philosophic tradition of guiding souls known as psychagogy. Familial instruction rightly has a place among the overarching enterprise of psychagogy.

4.4. Building Upon the Foundation of ‘Psychagogy’

The arguments of this chapter intersect with the previous work of several scholars regarding psychagogy. Specifically, although many individuals serve as a helpful point of departure for this focus of this thesis, Abraham Malherbe, Clarence Glad and Paul Kolbet serve as specific points of departure in that they have varying approaches to the nature of psychagogy within or near the period that his thesis seeks to analyze. While the larger theme of this thesis is the care of the family, the more specific focus regarding the application of this care is that the content regarding family may be rightly classified as paraenetic-psychagogy. This would then place the early pastoral care and counseling of the Christian family firmly within the larger philosophic practice of psychagogy. However, between Malherbe and Kolbet, there appears to be a slight difference in definition in the consideration of ‘psychagogy’ in terms of scope, and this distinction impacts the classification of family. I argue specifically that family counsel is not only seen in the primary source content from the period rightly classified as ‘psychagogy,’ but also that the trajectory and/or goal of that counsel was specifically the larger guidance of the Christian soul.

¹⁴⁸ *I Clement*, 1.3, trans. Rick Brannan.

¹⁴⁹ *Ignatius, To Polycarp* 5.1, trans. Rick Brannan.

Malherbe locates the range of meaning of psychagogy in the following way: “The social, intellectual, and psychological difficulties experienced by members of philosophic communities were addressed by a well-developed system of pastoral care known as psychagogy, which included what we mean by spiritual exercises, psychotherapy, and psychological and pastoral counseling.”¹⁵⁰ According to such a definition, what can be deemed as pastoral counseling fits within the classification of psychagogy, and thus counsel regarding family would rightly fit. However, Kolbet argues that such a definition may give the term ‘psychagogy’ a meaning that is too precise for its original roots within antiquity. He writes the following:

“Classical traditions of philosophical therapy have been referred to as “psychagogy” in recent scholarship. Abraham Malherbe states, “The constant attention philosophers devoted to their followers’ intellectual, spiritual, and moral growth resulted in a well developed system of care known as psychagogy.” In fact, these psychagogic traditions were so widespread and influential that they are present in the Christian New Testament itself. Indeed, the ideal of an orator who cures the souls of hearers in the same way that a physician cures the body both preceded Christianity and influenced its earliest expressions. Malherbe continues, “The psychagogic tradition became increasingly important to Christians in other centuries [after the New Testament] as more structure was given to the spiritual; life by developing devotional and spiritual exercises.” Illestraut Hadot describes a process whereby the “highly developed practice of spiritual guidance was completely adopted by Christians, albeit with different premises.” In succeeding centuries, “the figure of the philosopher as spiritual guide with the philosophical schools as the center of his activity” was eventually “replaced by the person of the clerical guide.”

To use the term “psychagogy” in this manner to refer to a “well developed system of care” is to give the term a precise range of meaning that it did not have in antiquity. In its earliest usage, it was “a term from magic; it is the raising of spirits of the deceased.” Psychagogy later came to be used in rhetoric and poetics to refer to the influencing of the souls of the living...¹⁵¹

Kolbet places the trajectory of the term within its classical development. However, he admits (as do Glad and Hadot) that Christians adopted the term. Gaden for his part seeks to demonstrate within one particular early Christian source (*2 Clement*) that Hellenistic psychagogy was clearly undertaken by Christians.¹⁵² Kolbet also interacts with Rabbow when in a footnote he writes, “Paul Rabbow uses the term to refer to “that system of ancient spiritual guidance (*Seelenleitung*) and cure of soul” (*Seelenheilung*) practiced in a period of time that he characterizes as “the epoch of the methodological leading of the soul.”¹⁵³ There is a range of meaning then that demonstrate that ‘psychagogy’ included guidance and soul leadership. While Kolbet may appear to question the Malherbean definition, he ultimately admits that the term, “refers to those philosophically articulated traditions of therapy—

¹⁵⁰ Malherbe, *Paul and the Thessalonians*, 81.

¹⁵¹ Kolbet, *Augustine and the Cure of Souls*, 7-8.

¹⁵² He writes: “a close reading of the text, which attends to its debt to Hellenistic traditions of psychagogy and *paideia*, demonstrates that the letter is a sophisticated rhetorical attempt to provide much needed medicine for its audience, to draw them into a renewed awareness of their salvation by pointing them again to God, who is the one true therapist and healer of souls.” See: Tim Gaden, “Looking to God for Healing: A Rereading of the *Second Letter of Clement* in the Light of Hellenistic Psychagogy,” *Pacifica* 15 (June 2002): 155-156.

¹⁵³ Kolbet, *Augustine and the Cure of Souls*, 216. He takes this quote from: Paul Rabbow, *Seelenführung: Methodik der Exerzitien in der Antike* (Munich: Kösel-Verlag, 1954), 17.

common in Hellenistic literature—pertaining to how a mature person leads the less mature to perceive and internalize wisdom for themselves.”¹⁵⁴

Therefore, within the works of Rabbow, Hadot, Malherbe, Kotzé, Glad and Kolbet, the term is envisaged to include the leading of a soul, the healing of a soul, and the instruction of a less mature soul in the ways of the philosophic life. This is very much what the early Christian writers were doing in their guiding of other Christian adherents regarding the family. However, in the literature, family counsel or guidance is often viewed as paraenetic material, without a discussion related to psychagogy. This limitation is what this research seeks to ameliorate, at least in part, by demonstrating that the content of the family paraenetic material (already referred to here as paraenetic-psychagogy) is ultimately about the life of the Christian at the soul level. Family instruction rightly belongs to that classification of soul guidance known as ‘psychagogy’ particularly because the ultimate telos of such soul guidance was the maturing and developing of the soul of the adherent to Christianity.

Thus, how does the view of this thesis regarding the primary source material relate to these previous scholarly works? First, the gap that this thesis recognizes is that in the secondary literature discussing ‘psychagogy,’ there is no discussion of whether issues of ‘family’ were included in the classification. This chapter argues that family instruction, perhaps largely through paraenetic discourse, belongs to the category of ‘psychagogy.’ This aspect is crucial to the overarching argument of this thesis in that the research inquiry specifically seeks to understand how families were counseled, and how the family was the recipient of pastoral care within the first and second century. Thus, identifying this endeavor with the larger philosophic tradition of care answers that question in part. The specific tenor of the care and the content of it will be analyzed in the next chapter.

The argument of this chapter is that the examples of familial counsel and paraenesis within the Christian literature fit within the larger category of psychagogy, a phenomenon with which the Christian writers of the first and second century would have been familiar. Malherbe, Glad and Kolbet all point to the larger reality of the use of psychagogy within the period (Malherbe largely focusing on Paul, Glad in comparing Paul and Philodemus, and Kolbet in his analysis of Augustine, who although occurring later than the period of focus in this research, demonstrates a continued psychagogic use within Christian pastoral care).¹⁵⁵ Thus, a point of departure at this juncture must be a demonstration that ‘family’ was also a part of the larger psychagogic enterprise within the period even beyond the Christian literature and should be demonstrated from the primary sources.

4.4.1 Primary Source Non-Christian Psychagogic and Family Data

I have already introduced a discussion regarding psychagogy and family guidance within some examples of early Christian sources (see. Section 4.3). And yet, the literature concerning the chronological evolution of ‘psychagogy’ points to sources several centuries prior to our period. The *Phaedrus* of Plato is the earliest starting point for the term

¹⁵⁴ Kolbet, *Augustine and the Cure of Souls*, 8.

¹⁵⁵ Dilley also furthers the chronological discussion regarding psychagogy in his work on soul care within the monasteries of the late antique Christian period. This work furthers the discussion of soul guidance within the Christian community in the period directly following our own. Discussing cenobitic monasticism he writes regarding Pachomius and his efforts “to provide material and psychological care for his disciples” and that he “toured the cells of individual monks” and his strategy of pastoral care “recalls psychagogy’s “mixed method” of praise and rebuke according to individual character.” See: Paul C. Dilley, *Monasteries and the Care of Souls in Late Antique Christianity: Cognition and Discipline* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2017), 5.

psychagogy (in general and not specifically connected to family) and is the location of the beginning of the word's ultimate evolution (which varied over time and had positive and negative connotations), which came to connote persuasive speech of various forms.¹⁵⁶ This starting point for the term is important to see the unfolding background of its usage. Asmis for instance, argues that what unifies the entire dialogue is "...Plato's new definition of rhetoric as a certain *psychagogia*."¹⁵⁷ The philosophic enterprise involved a focus on the soul and its character development. For instance, Isocrates from the mid-fourth century BCE writes the following to Demonicus:

"...it is the nature of the soul to be developed by moral precepts."¹⁵⁸

"first of all...show devotion to the gods..."¹⁵⁹

Devotion to the gods and a soul development through moral precepts was a focus for Isocrates, and it is this kind of writing that Malherbe rightly defines as paraenesis.¹⁶⁰ However, what is important to this current chapter is that in similar form, Isocrates also gave familial instruction:

"Conduct yourselves toward your parents as you would have your children conduct themselves toward you."¹⁶¹

"Fear the gods, honour your parents, respect your friends, obey the laws."¹⁶²

From the foundations of soul guidance, moral precepts or paraenesis included instruction regarding the family. These are only selected samples, but a part of the work of soul direction included family instruction. In a similar time period as the work of Isocrates, the evolution of psychagogy can be seen as beginning in the world of rhetoric or persuasive speech. Kolbet has documented the evolution of the term, and what is of particular interest to this thesis is that psychagogy was a model that was not newly developed by the Christian community, nor was 'family' a newly realized component within said discourse as will be demonstrated largely from sources within the first and second century.

Malherbe points to first century Stoic, Epictetus, as an example of psychagogic discourse. He demonstrates that Epictetus was a spiritual director of his students and would often use "...a regimen of introspection throughout the day in which philosophical principles were applied to every circumstance and experience of the day."¹⁶³ However, related to our focus, marriage is given specific attention within the writing of Epictetus. For

¹⁵⁶ In the dialogue, Socrates says to Phaedrus, "Is it not true, then, that rhetoric, taken as a whole, is an art of influencing the soul through words..." (Phaedr, 261a)- taken from: Plato, Phaedrus, trans. W. C. Helmbold and W. G. Rabinowitz, *The Library of Liberal Arts* (Indianapolis, IN, The Bobbs-Merrill Company, Inc., 1956), 48. The original reads: τέχνη ψυχαγωγία τις διά λόγων taken from: Plato, Phaedrus, ed. Harvey Yunis (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2011), 65.

¹⁵⁷ Elizabeth Asmis, "Psychagogia in Plato's *Phaedrus*," *Illinois Classical Studies*, v. 11 no. 1/2 (1986): 154.

¹⁵⁸ Isocrates, *To Demonicus*, 11-14, trans. George Narlin, ed. Jeffrey Henderson. Loeb Classical Library (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1928), 11.

¹⁵⁹ Isocrates, *To Demonicus*, 11.

¹⁶⁰ Malherbe, *Paul and the Thessalonians*, 71.

¹⁶¹ Isocrates, *To Demonicus*, 11-14.

¹⁶² Isocrates, *To Demonicus*, 14-17.

¹⁶³ Malherbe, *Paul and the Thessalonians*, 82.

instance, observe part of his short section entitled “*Concerning A Man Who Had Been Guilty Of Adultery*”:

“Just as he was once saying, that man is made for fidelity, and that whoever subverts this, subverts the peculiar property of man; there entered one of the so-called literary men, who had been found guilty of adultery, in that city. — But, continued Epictetus, if, laying aside that fidelity for which we were born, we form designs against the wife of our neighbor, what do we? What else but destroy and ruin — what? Fidelity, honor, and sanctity of manners. Only these? And do not we ruin neighborhood? Friendship? Our country? In what rank do we then place ourselves? How am I to consider you, sir? As a neighbor? A friend? What sort of one? As a citizen? How shall I trust you? Indeed, if you were some potsherd, so noisome that no use could be made of you, you might be thrown on a dunghill, and no mortal would take the trouble to pick you up; but if, being a man, you cannot fill any one place in human society, what shall we do with you?... “What, then, are not women made by nature com-mon?” I admit it; and so is food at table common to those who are invited. But, after it is distributed, will you go and snatch away the share of him who sits next you; or slyly steal it, or stretch out your hand, and taste; and, if you cannot tear away any of the meat, dip your fingers and lick them? A fine companion!”¹⁶⁴

Philosophical virtue, a goal that Epictetus had for his students in his discourses and diatribes, included the value of monogamy and marital faithfulness. The Christian call to a similar value would include a different foundation, but the value is evident nonetheless in the psychagogic nature of a Stoic like Epictetus. Christians of the period were not the only ones to undertake the guidance of the family while focusing on the soul. Their distinction was in the foundation and trajectory of it. However, it is precisely because we find family-related instruction in the soul direction of non-Christian *psychagogues* that we can rightly classify familial paraenesis within the category of psychagogy. Malherbe also demonstrates that Epictetus, by quoting from his writings (Epictetus *Discourse* 3.24.103-4), valued his students directing one another in similar kinds of philosophic discussions because virtue was a part of directing the soul.¹⁶⁵ Glad similarly demonstrates that this kind of desired outcome was seen in the writings of Paul: “I have suggested that Paul envisages a community where individuals participate in a common psychagogy.”¹⁶⁶

Similarly, Witt has detailed in his entire work what, in his opinion, is the familiarity of Paul with that of Epicurus.¹⁶⁷ Malherbe focuses this discussion further by arguing that “It was the Epicureans who had developed the system of psychagogy, but what Philodemus says in the first century B.C. is reflected in the writings of Seneca, Paul’s Stoic contemporary, and a generation later by the Platonist Plutarch. In short, the concerns and techniques that interested us were widespread at the time Paul wrote.”¹⁶⁸ It is this widespread psychagogic reality during Paul’s time that also places those same techniques within the time frame of our period of inquiry, but also demonstrates that one of its foci was familial guidance or paraenesis.

The first century Platonist Plutarch evidences a type of psychagogy in his writings as well. In his *Moralia*, he offers an entire section on “The Education of Children” where he deals

¹⁶⁴ Epictetus, *Concerning a man who had been guilty of adultery*, trans. Elizabeth Carter and Thomas Wentworth Higginson, (1865) in *The works of Epictetus; Consisting of his discourses in four books, The enchiridion, and fragments*, (New York, NY: Little, Brown and Co), 102-103.

¹⁶⁵ Malherbe, *Paul and the Thessalonians*, 82-83.

¹⁶⁶ Glad, *Paul and Philodemus*, 192ff.

¹⁶⁷ Norman W. DeWitt, *St. Paul and Epicurus* (Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota Press, 1954).

¹⁶⁸ Malherbe, *Paul and the Thessalonians*, 84.

quite decisively with familial instruction. This family instruction is a larger part of the psychagogical material that he gives.¹⁶⁹ In this section, he addresses the value of education (*Moralia*, The Education of Children, 1-4), the role and work of mothers (*Moralia*, The Education of Children, 5), the role of training slaves (*Moralia*, The Education of Children, 6-7), and guidance for fathers throughout. Some of these instructions are quite practical in nature. For instance, he writes:

“...children ought to be led to honourable practices by means of encouragement and reasoning, and most certainly not by blows of ill-treatment...but rebukes and praise should be used alternately and in a variety of ways.”¹⁷⁰

Lest it be thought that this is simply child-rearing advice alone, Plutarch ties this in-depth instruction on the training of children to the philosophic enterprise itself. He writes:

“Wherefore it is necessary to make philosophy as it were the head and front of all education...For of the mind philosophy alone is the remedy. For through philosophy and in company with philosophy it is possible to attain knowledge of what is honourable and what is shameful, what is just and what is unjust, what, in brief, is to be chosen and what to be avoided, how a man must bear himself in his relation with the gods, with his parents, with his elders, with the laws, with strangers, with those in authority, with friends, with women, with children, with servants; that one ought to reverence the gods, to honour one’s parents, to respect one’s elders, to be obedient to the laws, to be chaste with women, to be affectionate with children, and not overbearing with slaves;...”¹⁷¹

It is clear then that relational and familial instruction was indeed a paraenetic reality for Plutarch, but this reality also took on the larger psychagogic form. Philosophy was to guide the individual, and in that guidance, human and familial relationships were in view. However, what is necessary to view here is that he demonstrates that his own view is that that mind-shaping exercise, or mind-therapeutic exercise entailed familial guidance and instruction. He demonstrates his psychagogic work in his *Progress in Virtue* and *On Moral Virtue* as well, but it is specifically notable that in his *The Education of Children*, household instruction is viewed as paramount to the task of philosophy.

Similarly, the first century Stoic Musonius Rufus also involved a great deal of discussion regarding family within his guidance and philosophy. At one point, he intimately connects the need to consider family or marriage within the discussion on philosophy:

“Are we who have a house and maybe even servants who wait on us nevertheless so bold as to claim that marriage gets in the way of studying philosophy? Indeed, the philosopher is doubtless a teacher and guide regarding what human beings must do to be in accordance with nature. Marriage obviously is in accordance with nature, if anything is...It is clear that the proper concern of the philosopher is marriage and procreation. If these are proper concerns, my young friend, how could the claim that you just made—that marriage gets in the way of a philosopher—be correct.”¹⁷²

¹⁶⁹ Malherbe writes of Plutarch that he, “...recognized the value of encouragement of others in making moral progress.” See: Malherbe, *Paul and the Thessalonians*, 83.

¹⁷⁰ Plutarch, *Moralia*, vol. 1 trans. Frank Cole Babbitt, Loeb Classical Library (London: William Heinemann, 1927), 41.

¹⁷¹ Plutarch, *Moralia*, 35.

¹⁷² Musonius Rufus, *Lectures & Sayings*, trans. Cynthia King, ed. William B. Irvine (CreateSpace, 2010), 59-61.

The argument here is not only that marriage is connected to the philosophical enterprise, but that it is very much a necessary consideration of it. Musonius' various discussions regarding marriage point to the guidance of the philosopher to his students--that family is a part of what must be considered in the philosophic process.¹⁷³ The use and knowledge of this process did provide some background for Christianity as it was forming, even if only for comparison.¹⁷⁴ This emphasis by another contemporary of Paul and the early Christians gives further credence to the idea that if we were to look at the larger cultural model of psychagogy, 'family' was one of its considerations. Far from the idea that family was not a part of the psychagogic process in the period, is the clear reality that familial and household relationships occupied space in the philosophic guidance of the day--psychagogy. This familial instruction is psychagogy pure and simple, for it clearly aims at directing the philosophical adherent's life and soul to a form of guidance, which included familial structures.

In addition to the Stoic Musonius, the first century Stoic Seneca gives voice to household instructions and their relationship to philosophy. This again can be placed within psychagogy, particularly of the epistolary variety, because he discusses the connections that he believes the philosophic life have to household patterns. He argues for a positive slave to master relationship for instance:

"I am glad to learn, through those who come from you, that you live on friendly terms with your slaves. This befits a sensible and well-educated man like yourself."¹⁷⁵

He continues to discuss the mistreatment of slaves in his day that was different from earlier times when a mutually beneficial relationship between slave and master could exist such that a slave would be willing to die willingly for his master.¹⁷⁶ He also clearly voices distaste for the practice of the sexual use of slaves demonstrated within the same passage. His ideal is the benefit derived from having a positive relationship with a slave over and above the status quo existent in his day of the undervaluing of the personal connection to one's slave. In addition to this, it has been argued that Seneca is known not only for his call for humane treatment of slaves, but his decrying of the combat arena and his uplifting of the sanctity of marriage.¹⁷⁷

Dio Chrysostom also dealt with the issue of slaves in his *Discourses* numbers 10, 13 and 14. He also valued these types of pursuits within the life of a philosopher (including household connections and relationships) as part of the philosophic process, and therefore, any psychagogic or philosophic guidance material was directed not simply at knowledge, but life application. For instance, he writes:

"But surely there are certain words which one who goes in for philosophy must hear, and studies which he must pursue, and a regiment to which he must adhere, and, in a word, one kind of life belongs to the philosopher and another to the majority of mankind: the one tends toward truth and wisdom and toward care and cultivation of the gods, and, as

¹⁷³ Klauck writes of Stoics (and Epicureans), "It is not entirely wrong to call their activities pastoral care or spiritual direction, or even psychotherapy." See: Hans-Josef Klauck, *The Religious Context of Early Christianity: A Guide to Graeco-Roman Religions*, trans Brian McNeil (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 2000), 334.

¹⁷⁴ Klauck, *The Religious Context*, 334-335.

¹⁷⁵ Seneca, *Epistles 1-65*, trans. Richard M. Gummere (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2002 ed.), 301.

¹⁷⁶ The phrase used is "were ready to bare their necks for their master." Seneca, *Epistles*, 303.

¹⁷⁷ Seneca, *Epistles*, xii.

regards one's own soul, far from false pretence and deceit and luxury, toward frugality and sobriety.”¹⁷⁸

This overarching view of philosophy combined with his various discussions regarding certain household relationships demonstrate that for him, at the center of familial and household relationships, was an understanding of the training of the human soul—the soul of the philosopher.

This pattern of psychagogy continued even past the chronological period of this research and involved marriage and family related components. For instance, Menander Rhetor (3rd or 4th century C.E.) in one of his three treatises gives direction regarding the bedroom in his *Kateunastikos* (Bedroom Speech). There, he points to the journey leading up to the bedroom chamber, but connects aspects of expected virtue with it.¹⁷⁹ Glad points to Menander Rhetor as one philosopher who demonstrates the “paradox of psychagogy in a status-oriented society.”¹⁸⁰ What is important for our discussion is that this level of psychagogic material and training in the persuasion and guidance of others was existent well past our period and involved aspects related to guidance of the family (in this case, marriage). Within this example speech in the treatise of Menander, there is a clear focus that marriage is of the gods, should be kept in a chaste and virtuous way, and benefits the larger society. The concern for Menander is the training of the leading of others, and in such a goal, he finds room and ultimately importance, for addressing familial elements. These very same components of caring for the family, albeit with a very different foundation and desired trajectory, are present within the familial psychagogy of the Christians within our period. Hunter points to the reality that Christians would find some similarities with changes already apparent within the larger Stoic philosophical stream.¹⁸¹ Menander, and others like him who come after our period, demonstrate that the unfolding use of psychagogy was still prevalent even past our period. This group of primary source examples is evidence that the psychagogic material seen within the centuries prior to, during and after our period involved familial paraenesis and thus demonstrates that the family guidance of the Christians within our period is also rightly viewed as psychagogy.

4.5. Conclusions

In engaging with the previous scholarship of Glad, Kolbet and Malherbe, among others, a summary was provided of ‘psychagogy’ within the literature and its usage within the first and second century Greco-Roman world. In building on their scholarship, several points have been helpful points of departure for this thesis. First, their work clearly demonstrates that ‘psychagogy’ was known as a chief form of guidance within the various

¹⁷⁸ Dio Chrysostom, *Discourses 61-80 Fragments, Letters*, trans. H. Lamar Crosby (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2005 ed.), 157.

¹⁷⁹ Notice the direction he gives: “ ‘Marriage delights the gods.’ This point will lead you to a brief general thesis on how the gods, desiring the increase of mankind, devised marriage and chaste intercourse; it is natural therefore that those who made these laws—Aphrodite, Cupids, Hymenaei, Marriage—should be present. You should then argue from the outcome, that the advantage of marriage lies in concord in the household and preservation and increase of wealth, and, most important, in the procreation of children to follow on in the family, to be benefactors of their country, to organize festivals.” Menander Rhetor, *Treatise II* ed. with trans. and comm: D.A. Russell and N.G. Wilson (Oxford, 1981), 157.

¹⁸⁰ Glad, *Paul and Philodemus*, 55-56.

¹⁸¹ David Hunter, *Marriage and Sexuality in Early Christianity* (Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 2018), 12-13.

philosophic schools of the time, and within early Christianity.¹⁸² I extend that research into the analysis of the first and second century Christian movement and demonstrate that, based on an analysis of the primary sources, psychagogy was utilized in the care for, and the sharing of ideals for the family. Secondly, it is right to say that the early Christians, Paul and others, would have been familiar with the psychagogical practices of their day. Malherbe and Glad demonstrate this in their respective works.¹⁸³ However, even beyond this, when I analyzed the primary sources of the early Christian movement, they clearly reveal that psychagogy was a chief structure utilized in the treatment of the family within those sources. While the extant source evidence is scant enough that we do not have a lot of examples of the detailed process, there is enough evidence to demonstrate that the literature fits its non-Christian counterparts in utilizing psychagogic structures. Thirdly, Malherbe (1987) helpfully demonstrates that early Christian writers (i.e., Paul) as well as their audiences would have had connections in view between the Christian writer and other contemporary philosophers (i.e., Dio Chrysostom).¹⁸⁴ His watershed work provides a point of departure upon which this thesis furthers the analysis. Fourthly, it is clear that Paul was familiar with and utilized a psychagogic structure, but even beyond the time period of research, psychagogy was clearly utilized in the writings of Christian figures of later, but connected centuries as Dilley and Kolbet have both shown.¹⁸⁵

Thus, the period of this research is bookended with a clear psychagogical pattern utilized among Christians, and this research has demonstrated that this practice also particularly was used in the treatment of family within the period. This was accomplished by building on their work and in the analysis of family-related texts, observing the same patterns and structures of psychagogic form that they, and others find in other topical writings of early Christian writers. Therefore, the research follows on these four arguments from previous scholarship.

An analysis of the sources within current scholarship demonstrates that early Christians adopted this standing practice, at least in their writings. How did they come to do this? This is less certain, and yet Glad provides a helpful take in connecting Paul's psychagogic usage with those observed in contemporary (Epicurean) schools.¹⁸⁶ Malherbe (1986) and Kolbet (2010) also expand early psychagogy beyond Paul.¹⁸⁷ It is beyond the scope of this thesis to provide a further explanation to the question of "how" early Christianity came to learn psychagogy, but what can be concluded in this thesis is that they clearly utilized it in their writings of various genres in addressing family-related issues and that it is the structure through which the care of and vision given the family was undertaken.

This chapter began by offering a survey of recent understandings regarding the various related terms associated with ethical instruction and soul guidance: protrepsis, paraenesis and psychagogy. It was followed on by a conjoining of two terms in an attempt to place the method and larger goal of family guidance: "paraenetic-psychagogy." Then

¹⁸² For instance, see: Glad, *Paul and Philodemus*, 192ff.; Malherbe, *Paul and the Thessalonians*, 81, 84.; Foucault also confirms a Christian psychagogical practice: Foucault, "The Hermeneutics," 408.

¹⁸³ See for instance: Glad, *Paul and Philodemus*, 5.; Malherbe, *Paul and the Thessalonians*, 4.

¹⁸⁴ Malherbe, *Paul and the Thessalonians*, 4, 84-88. Glad summarizes this point as well. See: Glad, *Paul and Philodemus*, 4-12.

¹⁸⁵ Paul C. Dilley, *Monasteries and the Care of Souls*, 5; Kolbet, *Augustine and the Cure of Souls*, 7-8, 60.

¹⁸⁶ Glad, *Paul and Philodemus*, 5. Marksches also is helpful here: Marksches, *Christian Theology and Its Institutions in the Early Roman Empire*, 71-91.

¹⁸⁷ This is a part of the total enterprise of their works mentioned here. Specifically, Malherbe is willing to extend the psychagogic enterprise beyond Paul (See: Malherbe, *Moral Exhortation, A Greco-Roman Sourcebook*, 48), and Kolbet, for his part, applies this to Augustine in particular.

primary source data from within and outside of the Christian movement were given to show the connection of ‘family’ guidance to psychagogy. From within the sources considered Christian, one particular work was utilized as a case study (*Ignatius to Polycarp*). The benefit of this case study was that both soul guidance as a focus was seen within the work, but also paraenesis for the family was seen as a subset of the larger psychagogical goal. One of the unique contributions of this chapter is the demonstration that even outside the Christian movement, psychagogy regularly involved guidance and focus on the family and household. This demonstration is necessary to show that what is undisputedly termed ‘psychagogy’ involved family guidance.

This thesis argues that paraenetic-psychagogy was the method used in the sources to care for and express ideals for the Christian family. And this argument rests on a thorough analysis of primary source documents from the period. Since family guidance was given in the form of psychagogy, or connected to the larger enterprise known as psychagogy, the larger goal for such instruction was the guidance of individual Christian soul. This will be seen in the coming chapter where the focus is the analysis of the content of the Christian epistolary psychagogy related to ‘family.’ For now, this chapter furthers the research inquiry of the thesis in that it demonstrates that there is an existent form of guidance to which family counsel can be associated. Family counsel as psychagogy within the Christian community gives us an historical setting in which to answer our question. Thus, when family guidance within the Christian paradigm is analyzed, a distinction of this instruction within early Christianity is that its foundation and ultimate desired *telos* were unique. It is to this distinction that we will now turn in the next chapter.

Chapter 5 Content Themes of the Early Christian Family Counsel

5.1 Introduction

Following the discussion of the idea of paraenetic-psychagogy as the form or structure used in giving counsel regarding family, it is now appropriate to analyze the various content of the counsel regarding family given within first and second century Christianity. Specifically, this chapter will further the earlier third chapter in that several specific claims regarding the paraenetic-psychagogy of the family will be made. While Chapter three was an initial detailing of related family material organized by areas within the family unit, this present chapter seeks to make conclusions thematically from the primary source material. Recognizing that a reductionist approach to an historical time period can produce overinflated views of a period, this chapter will seek to take its cues from the sources themselves, allowing context to influence the interpretation, and particular themes to come to the surface.¹

Connected with the overarching process of guiding the Christian through familial counsel within the period, several characteristics of the content of the counsel can be identified. Each of these aspects of family counsel will be demonstrated and then put together giving an overall picture of the nature of the content of that counsel within the first and second century. It is necessary to say that this chapter simply identifies ideals arising from the counsel, but it is not to conclude that we can know that every Christian followed that counsel. Thus, this chapter simply identifies themes in the counsel of multiple sources that were stated ideals. Each of these concluding subpoints will be shown within the context of this chapter. This chapter will show that pastoral counsel of regarding family in the first and second centuries, which was a part of the larger paraenetic-psychagogic enterprise, contained the following ideals in its content: *it had a theocentric trajectory which dominated the paraenesis and in which the paraenesis was founded; it had a telos shaped by an eschatological reality versus the temporal aspects of human relationships, and as such it was given within the typical relational structures of the culture and focused on the character of the Christian family without a call to change those larger relational structures.*

5.1.1. Textual Approach And Methodology

The methodology of this chapter will involve a comparison of much of the primary source material provided in chapters two and three. While most of the material seen in chapter three will be discussed here, some references will vary between chapter three (the goal of which was to present a case that material in the writings of the first and second century Christian movement did involve ‘family’) and the present chapter five (the goal of which is to analyze specific themes arising out of the content of the source material related to family and provide conclusions). The conclusions will be based on the three provided background areas given in this thesis: Greco-Roman family in general, Christian source material on family specifically, and pastoral care patterns found in the primary source material. All of this will be aided by secondary source material, which will in some cases provide a point of departure for the original findings that this chapter will provide. Lesser, yet necessary components of this chapter, will include reliance on and demonstration of historiographical and philological data. As the early Christian

¹ Culbertson and Shippee warn about the dangers however of seeking to find a particular trait or theme of a period and view this as “schematic and reductionistic” and seek to point out the work of historiography as being distinct from modern theoretical constructs. See: Philip L. Culbertson and Arthur Bradford Shippee, *The Pastor: Readings from the Patristic Period* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1990), 2-3.

source material (which was detailed in Chapter three) has been analyzed, the overarching method of this chapter was not only to sift through the extant Christian literature from the period (using stated terms or larger references to family) discussed in chapter three, but also to follow on from this literature review to report commonalities found. In particular, the *Apostolic Fathers* and parts of the *Ante-Nicene Fathers* corpus become the focus of research given the time period. In keeping with the time period examined in this research, Tertullian becomes the last real extant source given that following his time, the third century had dawned upon the Christian movement. This search did not produce references to or related to ‘family’ in every primary source, but this list of sources researched is given to provide the data that was searched. Some sources appear to have been written but are no longer available to us which would have likely addressed family.² Some sources containing references to ‘family’ in addition to those in the *Apostolic Fathers* have already been given (Chapter three) and a few more are added in this chapter.

While the initial focus in reading the primary sources is based on looking for family related material, there is also the goal to understand the context from which these various themes are discussed.³ In the analysis provided in this chapter, the previous discussion in chapter three vis à vis literary genre remains applicable. The most notable aspect for consideration of genre in this chapter is that, in general, with some subtle differences, all the material surveyed, while written in several different genres, is treated as source texts that reveal specific envisioned ideals of the writers of those various sources. Ultimately, each genre requires some interpretive consideration, and yet, what is clear from a cross-section of the multi-genre sources of the period, are the indications of what ideals were regarding the family for the early Christian movement on the part of the authors of the texts.⁴ The organization of this chapter is arranged by the themes found in the introduction.

Therefore, the structure of the chapter is not to demonstrate a chronological development over the first and second century, nor are the primary source quotations given based on their place in chronology, largely because of the limited date ranges of the sources (approx. 150 years). However, there will be some notation regarding chronological development later in the chapter which will seek to indicate whether possible development can be seen in the earlier sources (*I Clement*, *Didache*) and the later sources (i.e., *Tertullian*). In short, the reader may inquire as to how the primary sources were approached for this research, and largely the answer would be that they were analyzed in depth but with a focus on the connection to family as a structure for the evaluation. Therefore, for instance, one theme (i.e. ‘family’) may have had tentacles into other areas of primary source material (i.e. sex, slavery, marriage, children), and thus, while not

² Roberts, Donaldson and Coxe detail in their opening note that, “The following are the names of treatises which Clement refers to as written or about to be written by him, but of which otherwise we have no trace or mention...” See: *The Ante-Nicene Fathers*, Vol. 2, Fathers of the Second Century Eds. Alexander Roberts and James Donaldson, Rev. A. Cleveland Coxe (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1979), 169.

³ There are times where I make allowance for distinguishing primary authorial intent being dominant in a particular passage over the theme that is extracted for use in this research. For instance, a family related role or issue might be referenced in a primary source but as a secondary issue, and as such, we want to use that issue as the focal point of examination for this thesis. However, the initial focus and context of the author will be noted given it influences meaning.

⁴ While not fully rewritten in this chapter to avoid repetition, only a summary of genre information will be given or referenced in this chapter. The reader will also note that given the organization of this chapter according to themes, several of the same primary sources will be referenced multiple times in different sections of this chapter and therefore, the information concerning genre will not necessarily be restated in each section. This summary concerning genre is necessary given that a consideration of genre is important to the larger analysis of the primary source material

wanting to take passages out of context, the initial focus was on the discovery of such portions of primary source material by related theme, and then on an in depth study of those sections allowing for context not to be lost in the interpretation and data extrapolation. Generally, in the various sections, the literature given is listed in chronological order and as such, some developments, or further entrenching of ideas is seen.

5.2. Theocentricity

A distinct characteristic of the content of Christian family counsel within the period is that there was a theocentric trajectory which dominated the paraenetic-psychagogy and on which it was founded. By the term “theocentricity,” I mean that the content of the counsel given regarding the family had as its center or foundation, a focus on God and an appropriation of the ways of God into life. While the paraenetic material often did call for specific aspects of the adherent’s life to be considered, what was in view was a centering on God as a particular focus. This theme often focused on the “fear” or “reverence of God.” Firstly, a few examples of specific references will help to establish that this general theme marked the tenor of early Christian writings.

This is explicitly stated in texts such as the *Letter of Polycarp to the Philippians* 4.2 where Ehrman, Hartog and Brannan all render the final phrase of 4.2 as children receiving instruction or discipline in the “fear of God.” Hartog argues that “...Pol. *Phil*’s exhortation that mothers ‘teach their children the instruction of the fear of God’ resembles *1 Clem.* 21.6-8...The ‘fear of the Lord’ as wisdom’s foundation is rooted in the wisdom literature of the Hebrew Scriptures.”⁵ This instruction regarding the family accords with what we have previously seen, but it also serves as another example of the instruction given where not only an eschatological goal is in view (eschatological in the broader sense of the directionality of one’s life), but also that God is to be the center of how one approaches the family.⁶ This reality can be seen in a variety of ways when examining the content of counsel from the sources of the period that related to family beyond what we have previously observed. For instance, Ignatius writes:

“But it is fitting for men and women who marry with the consent of the bishop to make their union, that the marriage may be in accordance with the Lord and not in accordance with lust. Let all things be done for the honor of God.” (Ignatius to Polycarp, 5.2)⁷

Within this passage, what is evident is that instructions regarding marriage are focused on the honor that belongs to God. Schoedel rightly points out the connections to the bishop that may be the main issue of the instruction contextually,⁸ however, I am not convinced that episcopal authority is the singular focus in this last sentence of *to Polycarp*, 5.2. Rather, I believe this phrase is a summation, which while including the need for the marriage to be blessed by the bishop, also includes the idea that marriage itself, both its inception practices and its ontological reality, are to exhibit a theocentric focus. This reality is evident when the reason given for the consent of the bishop to be obtained is precisely so that the marriage is theocentric versus centered on human lust or passion. Niklas argues that the writings of Ignatius are designed, among other things, to encourage the faithful to see that the way they live their lives is connected

⁵ Hartog, *Polycarp’s Epistle*, 117.

⁶ “Fear of God” is a frequent biblical concept, the most common of which is likely Proverbs 1:7 where the fear of God is seen as the “beginning of wisdom”.

⁷ Ignatius, *To Polycarp*, 5.2, trans. Rick Brannan. Lake and Ehrman have very closely similar translations in their editions.

⁸ Schoedel, *Ignatius of Antioch*, 272-273.

to their relationship with Christ.⁹ I argue that one such expression of the reality of being “in Christ,” which Ignatius envisages, is precisely that the communal life of the family is to be theocentric. Not only does he focus on marriage for the honor of God, but he also previously instructed slaves to serve “for the glory of God” (Ignatius, To Polycarp 4.3). These sources are of an epistolary style, and thus¹⁰ were meant to convey goals, ideals, and philosophic structures (paraenesis, or psychagogy for instance). This means that the instructions may be taken as a revealed ideal,¹¹ which the writer wished to communicate. It does not mean that every reader or group of readers followed all the instructions, but it does demonstrate an ideal held by leadership within the movement.

Ignatius is not alone in this theocentric approach to family. Within the *Shepherd of Hermas*,¹² there are clear indications that the focus of family work (in this case Hermas as the leader of his family) is God-centered. Specifically, Hermas was to lead his family in such a way that when it was revealed that his family had not been led properly, spiritual issues such as repentance came into view. A theocentric focus can be seen throughout the relevant passages in the work vis à vis family (cf. Visions II 2.1-4, 3.1, Parables VII 2-3, Commandments IV 4.1-2). Sometimes this reality is even stated outright:

““If a wife,” I said, “sir, or on the other hand a husband passes away and the survivor marries, does not the one who marries sin?” “He does not sin,” he said, “but if he remains by himself he acquires an abundant honor for himself and great glory with the Lord. But even if he marries, he does not sin.” (*Shepherd of Hermas*, Commandments, IV. 4.1-2)¹³

Within this passage on remarriage, a theocentric focus can be seen in that the way in which a person is to conduct himself has within itself the glory of God, or the Lord as a focus (Ehrman renders this “...great glory to the Lord”, Lake: “...great glory with the Lord” and Funk/Billmeyer: “...so erwirbt er sich beim Herrn noch höhere Ehre und großen Ruhm”). Undertaking certain familial work for theocentric reasons is clear in the counsel of *I Clement* as well. There, the writer, among other things, calls the Christian to the task of procreation following the Genesis 1 image of fruitful multiplication. In *I Clement* 33.6ff, the call to do the will of God is the basis for the consideration of procreation (a clearly implied work understood to be contained to the family). Hunter is right to assert that texts such as these reject the notion of ascetic celibacy as a singular good,¹⁴ but I also think an implication of such a passage is that the reason for engaging in the “righteous work” of procreation is the theocentric task of undertaking the will of God.

Lastly, Tertullian wrote works touching on the issues of marriage, family and sexuality. In both *On Exhortation to Chastity* and *On Monogamy*, he pointedly offers counsel in a manner

⁹ He writes, “Because this being “in Christ” shapes believer’s existence, it is ethically relevant—that is, it has consequences for their behavior.” Tobias Nicklas, “Living as a “Christian”: Christian Ethos According to the Writings of Ignatius of Antioch,” in *Studies on the Text of the New Testament and Early Christianity: Essays in Honor of Michael W. Holmes On the Occasion of His 65th Birthday*, eds. Daniel M. Gurtner, Juan Hernández Jr. & Paul Foster (Leiden: Brill, 2015), 541.

¹⁰ See sections 3.3. and 3.6 of this thesis.

¹¹ Lookadoo agrees: “...Ignatius offers additional instruction about what the life of the people of God should be like.” See: Jonathon Lookadoo, “The Letters of Ignatius,” in *The Cambridge Companion to the Apostolic Fathers*, eds. Michael F. Bird and Scott D Harrower (Cambridge, U.K.: Cambridge University Press, 2021), 219.

¹² See Chapter 3.7 for a discussion of the genre of the *Shepherd of Hermas*.

¹³ *Shepherd of Hermas*, Commandments, IV. 4.1-2, trans. Rick Brannan.

¹⁴ Hunter, *Marriage in the Early Church*, 9.

that places God at the center. He speaks to undertaking marriage with a view towards the will of God (*On Exhortation to Chastity*, Chapter II), and it is this focus that drives much of the work. And later, he argues the benefit of widowhood and of a single marriage specifically with a focus towards the lack of distraction from God (Chapter X-XI). In *On Monogamy*, Tertullian opens quite pointedly by saying, “Heretics do away with marriages; Psychics accumulate them. The former marry not even once; the latter not only once” (*On Monogamy*, I).¹⁵ From there, he walks through both *Old Testament* and *New Testament* connections, focusing the most on Paul in describing proper, God-glorifying aspects of marriage. Within this work as well, he argues once more against a person having more than one marriage. In another work, *To His Wife*, Tertullian argues that should he die before her, his wife should not remarry. He writes, “The precept, therefore, which I give you is, that, with all the constancy you may, you do, after our departure, renounce nuptials...But whether to you, or to any other woman whatever who pertains to God, the advice which we are giving shall be profitable” (*To His Wife*, Chapter 1).¹⁶ He furthers this discussion and gives his reasons.¹⁷ And he makes clear that he does not reject marriage, as it is a God-ordained institution for the purpose of procreation (*To His Wife*, Chapter 2). What is clear is that the focus for Tertullian was not on marriage in this life, but on perceived theocentricity in life. For instance, he writes that the practice of singleness following marriage is something that is done out of love for God (*To His Wife*, Chapter 6) and with a view towards the will of God (*To His Wife*, Chapter 7). Thus, marriage, chastity and sexual practices in these works were envisaged within these works as a theocentric enterprise.

5.2.1. Clement of Alexandria and the *Paedagogus*

Clement of Alexandria also focuses instruction in a theocentric manner and provides an example worth highlighting regarding both a paraenetic-psychagogy and specifically a paraenetic-psychagogy touching on issues related to family. For instance, in his short work *To the Newly Baptized*, he opens by giving various precepts to the initiated catechumen, now baptized, and begins by saying, “For the mind, seated on high on a quiet throne looking intently towards God (πρὸς θεόν), must control the passions.”¹⁸ In the work, he clearly articulates theocentricity in the counsel he gives, whether about family or otherwise. What is important here is the focus that the mind be centered on God. In what follows, he gives a variety of instructions, in short, rapid succession. He does not give much familial counsel, but he does write, “be modest toward women, and let your glance be turned to the ground.”¹⁹ Here, the avoidance of the passion of lust is clearly in focus and is seen through the lens of a God-centeredness of the mind. Elsewhere, he argues that theocentricity involves the following of the law of God including within marital practices (*Protrepticus/Exhortation to the Greeks*, X). It is also within that work (Chapter II) that he speaks negatively in general about the immoral picture of the gods and related practices in the area of sexual expression. He pictures the immoral, lustful and adulterous behavior of characters, like Hercules among others. While not direct instruction regarding family, there is a clear picture

¹⁵ Tertullian, *On Monogamy*, taken from: The Ante-Nicene Fathers Vol. IV Eds. Alexander Roberts and James Donaldson, Rev. A. Cleveland Coxe (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1979), 59.

¹⁶ *To His Wife*, taken from: The Ante-Nicene Fathers Vol. IV Eds. Alexander Roberts and James Donaldson, Rev. A. Cleveland Coxe (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1979), 39.

¹⁷ For instance, arguing that death is a part of God’s design, he writes, “Therefore when, through the will of God, the husband is deceased, the marriage likewise, by the will of God, deceased. Why should you restore what God has put an end to?” Tertullian, *To His Wife*, 43.

¹⁸ Clement of Alexandria, *To the Newly Baptized*, taken from: Clement of Alexandria, Loeb Classical Dictionary, trans. G. W. Butterworth (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1968), 371.

¹⁹ Clement of Alexandria, *To the Newly Baptized*, 373.

of the impiety, in the mind of Clement, of the pagan deities particularly as it related to sexual aspects. What is important to note is his overall view of what constitutes proper versus improper behavior even though in this case it is not given as direct instruction for family.

Clement utilizes psychagogic discourse within his writings, and in some instances, gives guidance regarding the family and household. In his long work *Paedagogus* (The Instructor), Clement demonstrates a paraenetic-psychagogy in detailed fashion.²⁰ Within *Paedagogus*, Clement specifically speaks to precautions to maintain chastity and modesty (Book II, Chap VIII) and on the Christian and behavior at the baths (Book III, Chap VI), both of which detail appropriate theocentric foci for the Christian.²¹ Maier is correct in his view that the instructions that Clement gives are for those in the church who are living lives of contemplation on God. A focus on God becomes that *telos* of the psychagogic discourse given. Clement provides an example of a potential development within the period regarding the ideas of sex. Harper is right when he opines that, "...no Christian before him has left such an extensive and minutely detailed record of his attitudes toward the proper use of the body."²² For one certainly sees within the exhaustive detail of the human body a development either in concentrated thought regarding the Christian view of the body, or of engagement with the larger culture in terms of an apology for already existent views regarding the human body. Part of this could also have been the need, in his own mind, for Clement to address aspects of the views of body and sexuality that had developed by his time within in Christianity.

Divided into three sections, the *Paedagogus* is a work wherein the Word and Son of God is pictured as an Instructor who guides the Christian in "...the formation and development of Christian character, and for living a Christian life."²³ As previously mentioned, Clement, through the mouth of the Instructor, gives instruction on a variety of issues, often in great specificity and detail. Issues related to the body, sleep, laughter, conduct at feasts, the baths, virtue, marriage and more are discussed in this lengthy work. And within this structure, there is instruction related to family issues that does touch on living one's life in a Godward way. And this instruction often focuses on marital virtue.

Firstly, the goal of the work is clear from the beginning, for the Instructor is pictured as strengthening souls like medicine through the truth (Book I, Chap I). Thus, from the very first page, a soul guidance through paraenesis is seen.²⁴ However, following the first book, which

²⁰ Maier writes of Clement, "His identification of the self for whom the Christian cares, his description of the mode and means of that cultivation, and the goal of self-cultivation he established both echo and transpose ideals of the care of the self inherited from the pagan philosophical tradition." See: Harry Maier, "Clement of Alexandria and the Care of the Self," in *Journal of the American Academy of Religion* Vol 62, No. 3 (Autumn, 1994) pp. 719-745, p. 720.

²¹ Ultimately, Maier writes of Clement's *Paedagogus*, "Clement's ideals and goals of the care of the self represent not only a transposition of thought, but also a transposition of social setting. The arena of self-cultivation is not the polis or the philosopher's classroom, nor is it one's private chamber to which one retreats for self-investigation. Rather it is the church. Care of self has as its end the fruition of the seed planted and watered at baptism: ideally, contemplation of God in a perfect state of apatheia, but more usually the expression and preservation of the gift of salvation through the renunciation of the flesh. His modulation of the ideals of self-cultivation places the subject firmly within a redemptive context, for the goal is to testify in thought, word and deed to one's true identity as a saved creature..." Maier, "Clement of Alexandria," 739-740.

²² Kyle Harper, *From shame to sin*, 107-108.

²³ A. Cleveland Coxe, *The Ante-Nicene Fathers: Translations of The Writings of the Fathers down to A.D. 325*, vol. II eds. Alexander Roberts and James Donaldson (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1979), 167.

²⁴ Later, Clement writes, "For reproof is, as it were, the surgery of the passions of the soul; and the passions are, as it were, an abscess of the truth, which must be cut open by an incision of the

mainly opens the discussion regarding the identity and importance of the Instructor and the need the Christian has for his words, family-related instruction ensues within the larger format of soul guidance. Guidance related to eating and drinking is followed on swiftly in Book II with a discussion of the conduct of a Christian at feasts. Lustful living and adultery are two aspects viewed as antithetical to a Godward life in the eyes of the Instructor.²⁵ He writes about how to sit amongst other married persons so as to avoid lust (Book II, Chap VII); how to consider clothing in order to be above reproach (Book II, Chap. XI-XIII); embellishment of the body and the relationship to sensuality or a self-focused life (Book III, Chap II-III); how men are to look like men by not carrying themselves effeminately—masculine appearance is considered important (Book II, Chap III); and he details the evils of the baths and how Christian conduct at the baths should lead to a virtuous view of sexuality and marriage (Book III, Chap V).²⁶ All of these instructions relate to family in that they speak to the protection of the marital bond sexually, an ideal which was counter-cultural in the time. And while related to ‘family,’ these instructions provide a psychagogical approach as they occur with a focus towards addressing and suppressing the passions of the soul.

Whether it was in addressing speech, eating, feasting, bathing, clothing, festivals or other areas, Clement pictures the Word of God instructing the Christian soul in ways that guard marriage, sexuality, gender expression, and thus place a premium on a particular ideal of purity regarding the Christian family. Notably, these instructions are given with a view towards the Godward, or theocentric life. Abstaining from passions leading to the disruption of the Christian family and its individual members’ virtue was an important part of the *Paedagogus*.

Clement also deals in other works with the issue of virtue, continence, and family-connected issues. And this focus is ultimately a matter, for Clement, of soul direction. He writes,

“Continence is an ignoring of the body in accordance with the confession of faith in God. For continence is not merely a matter of sexual abstinence, but applies also to the other

lancet of reproof” (Book I, Chap VIII), 225. The *Sources Chrétiennes* version renders the phrase as: “Le blâme est une sorte de chirurgie des passions de l’âme: les passions étant un ulcère de la vérité, il faut les réduire à néant, en les retranchant par l’amputation.” See: Clement, Henri Irénée Marrou, and Marguerite Harl, *Le pédagogue: texte grec* (Paris: Éditions du Cerf, 1960), 227.

²⁵ For instance: “A night spent over drink invites drunkenness, rouses lust, and is audacious in deeds of shame” (Book II, Chap IV). “...the Instructor does not permit us to give utterance to aught unseemly, fortifying us at an early stage against licentiousness” (Book II, Chap VI). “...the danger is greater to him who attempts to break the connubial bond” (Book II, Chap VII). “The divine Instructor enjoins us not to approach to another’s river, meaning by the figurative expression “another’s river,” “another’s wife,” the wanton that flows to all, and out of licentiousness gives herself up to meretricious enjoyment with all. “Abstain from water that is another’s,” He says, “and drink not of another’s well,” admonishing us to shun the stream of “voluptuousness,” that we may live long, and that years of life may be added to us; both by not hunting after pleasure that belongs to another, and by diverting our inclinations” (Book III, Chap II).

²⁶ All of the above references of Clement are taken from Clement of Alexandria, *The Instructor*, taken from: *The Ante-Nicene Fathers: Translations of The Writings of the Fathers down to A.D. 325*, vol. II eds. Alexander Roberts and James Donaldson (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1979). A more recent version of the work providing the Greek text is that of Marcovich and van Winden. See: Clement, Miroslav Marcovich, and J. C. M. van Winden, *Clementis Alexandrini Paedagogus* (Leiden: Brill, 2002); *Sources Chrétiennes* (as seen previously) also offers a Greek/French text: Clement, Henri Irénée Marrou, and Marguerite Harl, *Le pédagogue: texte grec* (Paris: Éditions du Cerf, 1960-1970).

things for which the soul has an evil desire because it is not satisfied with the necessities of life. There is also a continence of the tongue, of money, of use, and of desire. It does not only teach us to exercise self-control; it is rather that self-control is granted to us, since it is a divine power and grace.” (Clement, *On Marriage*, Miscellanies, Book III, Chapter 1).²⁷

Here again, the focus is on soul direction, which is theocentric in its attention to marriage given the connection that continence has with a confession of faith in God. For Clement, the discussion of the body, its intersection with marriage, and the guidance of the soul is theocentric. It could be argued that by the time of Clement of Alexandria, there was development within Christian thought regarding sexual expression.²⁸ However, what is in view in this section is the overt theocentric nature regarding the counsel given.

Therefore, in a swath of separate Christian works from the period, a theocentric focus can be seen underlying the paraenetic-psychagogy. The soul of the Christian was guided in a theocentric way as the family, household codes and relational counsel were given. Within just these examples, there is a clear theocentric nature to the discussion of the ‘family.’ This theocentricity is important to see, for this provides the foundation of the paraenetic-psychagogical approach to family. The foundation was the God of Christianity and thus any call to reorder the family structure was centered not simply one of ethics, but of an overarching theological enterprise. This enterprise demonstrates again that the method of pastoral care to the family fits within the larger psychagogic category.

5.2.2. Excursus: A Comparison with Musonius Rufus

To demonstrate the distinct theocentric nature of the Christian counsel regarding family, a brief comparison with a non-Christian source will be helpful. Within the same time period, many writers were offering psychagogic material related to aspects of the family. Musonius Rufus, a Stoic philosopher and teacher within the second century offers very pointed instruction and counsel—psychagogic if the full intent is considered—regarding the family, and specifically marriage. For instance, his teaching, given in the form of copied lecture material by another entitled *On Sexual Indulgence* and *What is the Chief End of Marriage?*, includes two sections related to our discussion. In both, much of what he writes looks similar if not identical to the Christian counsel on related matters. However, what is clear is that the trajectory is different. For instance, on sexual relations, what Musonius Rufus writes sound similar in content to what is written in the early Christian literature:

“Not the least significant part of the life of luxury and self-indulgence lies also in sexual excess; for example those who lead such a life crave a variety of loves not only lawful but unlawful ones as well, not women alone but also men; sometimes they pursue one love and sometimes another, and not being satisfied with those which are available, pursue those which are rare and inaccessible, and invent shameful intimacies, all of

²⁷ Clement of Alexandria, taken from: John Ernest Leonard Oulton and Henry Chadwick, *Alexandrian Christianity: Selected Translations of Clement and Origen with Introductions and Notes* (Philadelphia, PA: The Westminster Press, 1954), 41-42.

²⁸ Gaca opines on the development of the thought of Clement regarding sexual expression and the Christian. Specifically, she traces her perception of the development of the writings of Clement as accepting of Pauline prescriptions for sexuality, and a varying yet growing assimilation of an attitude of sexual intercourse only for procreation. See: Kathy L. Gaca, *The Making of Fornication: Eros, Ethics, and Political Reform in Greek Philosophy and Early Christianity* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 2003), 247-272.

which constitute a grave indictment of manhood. Men who are not wantons or immoral are bound to consider sexual intercourse justified only when it occurs in marriage..." (XIII, *On Sexual Indulgence*)²⁹

"But of all sexual relations those involving adultery are most unlawful, and no more tolerable are those of men with men, because it is a monstrous thing and contrary to nature." (XIII, *On Sexual Indulgence*)³⁰

In these examples, what is prohibited is like that which many of the early Christian writings forbade. For instance, similar to the Christian writings, he also forbids the use of slaves for sexual pleasure. On the surface, these instructions sound identical to Christian writings, and yet, the difference is the reasoning. Musonius Rufus argues for what is proper of an individual (or a citizen), but he does so without a theocentric trajectory. His arguments are based on what is moral, or not doing that which is "contrary to nature," but what is less explicit is any reference to God or the Divine as the focal point.

Similarly, in his discussion of marriage he teaches the following:

"What is the chief end of marriage? That the primary end of marriage is community of life with a view to the procreation of children. The husband and wife, he used to say, should come together for the purpose of making a life in common and of procreating children, and furthermore of regarding all things in common between them, and nothing peculiar or private to one or the other, not even their own bodies." (XIII *What Is The Chief End of Marriage?*)³¹

"But in marriage there must be above all perfect companionship and mutual love of husband and wife, both in health and in sickness and under all conditions, since it was with desire for this as well as for having children that both entered upon marriage." (XIII *What Is The Chief End of Marriage?*)³²

What is clear here is that the focus of marriage is not a theocentric trajectory, but rather it is focused on communal life and procreation. It is the goodness of life that is more in view than the blessing of God (cf. *Ignatius to Polycarp*, 5.2). Even when Musonius Rufus does mention the divine, it still occurs within the context that marriage is about procreation:

"How great and worthy an estate is marriage is plain from this also, that gods watch over it, great gods, too, in the estimation of men; first Hera (and for this reason we address her as the patroness of wedlock), then Eros, then Aphrodite, for we assume that all of these perform that function of bringing together man and woman for the procreation of children." (XIV *Is Marriage a Handicap For The Pursuit of Philosophy?*)³³

²⁹ Musonius Rufus, taken from: Cora E. Lutz, *Musonius Rufus*, "The Roman Socrates" (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1947), 87.

³⁰ Lutz, *Musonius Rufus*, 87.

³¹ Lutz, *Musonius Rufus*, 89.

³² Lutz, *Musonius Rufus*, 89.

³³ Lutz, *Musonius Rufus*, 95, Emphasis mine. I have utilized a translation from 1947 because it is a standard in the field (Cora E. Lutz). However, I have checked the translation with a less popular, but more modern translation (Cynthia King, *Musonius Rufus: Lectures & Sayings*, revised edition (CreateSpace, 2011) and found that no differences in translation change my usage of these quotations or interpretive direction in this thesis.

Even when the polytheistic system of divinity is introduced in his teachings, the trajectory, or *telos*, is about the procreation of children. To be sure, early Christians would not have disagreed that procreation is a good and right result of marriage, and would have called for the procreation of the human race. However, in Christian writings, the *telos* was different. It was that these result in the glory of God. Harper writes, “Even pagan philosophy tended, at its deepest level, to offer a duty-based sexual ethics that accepted the logic of social reproduction while devaluing pleasure as such. But early Christianity showed itself prepared to abandon the traditional needs and expectations of society...Christianity broke sexual morality free from its social moorings.”³⁴ I argue that the difference between even similar looking paraenesis regarding sexual ethics was specifically that of an alternative *telos*. It is not that Musonius never connected his view of marriage to the divine, fate or to a related theme, but rather that his focus was of a moral expression primarily, without the glory of God as a goal.³⁵

I chose Musonius Rufus as a comparative point because he was from the same time period, practiced psychagogy, addressed marriage and sexuality specifically, and said at least in outward content, much the same things as the Christian psychagogues.³⁶ Again, there are striking similarities between his work, and the Christian psychagogues, however, what is different is that the Christian writings and counsel were noticeably theocentric in ways that M. Rufus was not. Of course, he mentions the divine (in terms of the Greco-Roman system), but the divine did not permeate his familial counsel in the way that it did within Christian instruction on the topic. This case study is an example of (against the larger philosophical backdrop) the inherent theocentricity within the counsel given within Christianity regarding the family. Similar desired behavior in various philosophical streams did not mean that the *telos* was the same in the teacher. For early Christians, theocentricity marked the familial counsel and was seen as a goal.

5.2.3. Areas of Theocentric Reception

Within the theocentric nature of the counsel offered to first and second century Christians were specific areas or expressions of reception of the theocentric ideal. Specifically, as it relates to family, these were specific household roles that were to be reenvisioned with a theocentric ethos. The focus of this section will center on three specific areas where theocentric paths were chosen. These areas were already discussed in sections from previous chapters of this thesis: Marriage and Sexuality, Slaves and Children. The main reason that these three areas are detailed here is that they are dominant within the seeming “household codes” structure of the various groups of literature of the period. Thus, these three household roles form the dominant instruction seen within the literature of the period related to family, and therefore, this section focuses on those three specifically.³⁷ Thus, with the aforementioned methodological approach outlined, this

³⁴ Kyle Harper, *From Shame to Sin*, 86. However, Glancy argues that not all of Harper’s conclusions are valid as it relates to the early Christian use of slaves for sexual expression. See: Jennifer A. Glancy, *The Sexual Use of Slaves: A Response to Kyle Harper on Jewish and Christian Porneia*, *JBL*, 134.1 (2015), 215-229.

³⁵ Gaca, in *The Making of Fornication, 113-115*, details Musonius and his connection to procreationism, and the largely moral focus regarding sex in the thinking of Musonius.

³⁶ My reading of his works was undertaken with a view towards content and his topical dealings with a subject (i.e., marriage) and as such was not undertaken with an evaluation of his own development as a philosopher. Not to mention the fact that the available extant sources of Musonius are limited.

³⁷ This is not to say that there are not other applicable elements within the topic of ‘household’ that could be discussed, but rather the focus here is on the specific familial relations within the household and the connected roles and behavioral expressions within those relationships.

section of the chapter will continue with largely a topically focused comparison of areas already outlined previously in other sections or chapters (i.e. marriage, slavery, children, etc.). This approach will involve grouping the topics together to provide an organizational structure. This chapter, then, follows on the material from chapter three of this thesis where a detailed reporting of familial instructions was shown from the extant sources.

The content of the paraenetic-psychagogy involving family was largely in harmony with the teachings of the *New Testament* writings coming out of early Christianity, which were eventually considered canonical.³⁸ The theocentric content examined from outside the Christian writings known as the *New Testament* is largely in accordance with the familial instructions and descriptions found within the *New Testament*. This reality is particularly the case in the shared genre of letters both within and outside of the *New Testament*, but is also seen within some types of literary source genre) that are not epistolary forms (i.e., *Shepherd of Hermas*).

5.2.3.1 Marriage & Sexual Expression

The survey provided in chapter two of this thesis is crucial to understand the cultural backdrop of marriage and sexuality within the first and second centuries of the Greco-Roman society. Then Chapter three showed the differences from the larger Greco-Roman culture that Christian families were to have regarding the two areas of marriage and sexual expression. The focus of this section is to understand the theocentric content and trajectory of the counsel to the Christian family regarding marriage and sexuality particularly.

It has already been argued that the counsel regarding the family within the period was a part of the larger enterprise of guiding the Christian soul, and within the area of marriage, this was no different. This idea can be seen in that in various passages, husbands were instructed to guide their wives along the path of Christian calling (*1 Clement* 21:6, *Ignatius to Polycarp* 5.1, *Polycarp to the Philippians* 4.2). Again, there was psychagogical intent³⁹ to family organization within the Christian paradigm seen firstly in the implicitly stated desire that various individuals be led in the way of God—that their souls be pointed to the Christian God. For instance, Paul writes of husbands “loving their wives” and uses a theme of spiritually focused nourishment in *Ephesians* 5:25-33. Similarly, in that Pauline passage, wives are instructed to obey, or submit to their husbands which is also a theme of *1 Peter* 3:1-6. And similarly, there, husbands (*1 Pet* 3:7) are instructed to care for their wives and this instruction comes within the context of a spiritual care.⁴⁰ This theme also appears within sources outside the *New Testament* (cf. *1 Clement* 1.3).

³⁸ Following this comparison research, I noticed that others have engaged the question regarding the awareness of early writers with *New Testament* writings, or oral traditions of Paul for instance on unrelated topic areas. Just to give one example, Weinandy, for instance, does this with Christology. See: Thomas G. Weinandy, “The Apostolic Christology of Ignatius of Antioch: The Road to Chalcedon,” in *Trajectories Through the New Testament and Apostolic Fathers*, ed. Andrew Gregory and Christopher Mark Tuckett (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005), 71-84.

³⁹ By his time, later within our selected period, Tertullian defines marriage in the following way, “Marriage is (this): when God joins “two into one flesh;” or else, finding (them already) joined in the same flesh, has given His seal to the conjunction.- *On Monogamy*, Chapter IX. See: *The Ante-Nicene Fathers, Vol. IV* Eds. Alexander Roberts and James Donaldson, Revised A. Cleveland Coxe (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1979), 67. Here, Tertullian views the entire marital enterprise with spiritual eyes, and thus sees the instruction of marriage as pertaining to something which God would place His seal upon. Instructions regarding marriage then serve not simply as ethical behavioral instruction, but as a soul-level consideration.

⁴⁰ The *1 Peter* 3:1-7 passage occurs within the middle of a discussion of theological realities, which overflow into an expected life of submission to the various authorities under which a

Elsewhere, Paul would give these mutual instructions related to submission and leadership with a backdrop of what was “fitting in the Lord” (Col 3:18).

Paul writes (cf. 1 Cor 7:5) that there should be concern for the soul of a person’s spouse where temptation related to sexual practice within marriage is concerned. Among the other things that 1 Cor 7:5 discusses, there is a clear connection to the goal of the soul of both husband and wife being aided in avoiding temptation. Sexual expression, even within marriage, involved connection to spiritual realities such as the avoidance of falling into sin. Other early writers forged a similarly path. For instance Ignatius, (already argued in the previous chapter to be, among other things, discussing pastoral care and psychagogy with Polycarp) gives an example of how counsel regarding the family intersects with a theocentric focus arguing that everything be done “for the honor of God” (Ignatius to Polycarp, 5.1-2).⁴¹ This instruction provides an example of the type of theocentric mentality with which these instructions came given that sexual and marital topics are handled with a focus on the soul before the face of God. A subtle difference between this Ignatian passage and the Pauline text of 1 Corinthians 7 is that Paul indicates getting married to avoid burning with passion was allowed, whereas Ignatius wanted marriage to be for the Lord, and “not for passion.” However, this is only a nuanced difference as in both the Pauline text (1 Cor. 7:24) and the Ignatian text, a focus on the Lord is implicit. Brown argues that “When Ignatius gave practical advice to the churches, the world he wished for was one based on an ordered sexuality. It was a church made up of generous householders, well-disciplined children, submissive wives, and reliable slaves.”⁴²

Beyond this implicit focus on the *telos* of guiding the Christian soul as a focus for marriage instruction was the reality of certain behavioral expectations, given the inward soul direction with which Christianity had pointed the individual. As chapter three of this thesis already documents, there was an inherent expectation in both the *New Testament* (cf. Hebrews 13:4, 1 Corinthians 5-7, Romans 13:9) and other texts (*2 Clement* 4.3, *Didache* 2.1-2, 5.1, *Ignatius to the Ephesians* 16.1, *Shepherd of Hermas*, Commandments, IV. 1-2, *Barnabas*, 19:4-5, *Polycarp to the Philippians* 5.3, *Diognetus*, 5.6-7, *Clement of Alexandria, Stromata, or Miscellanies*, xxiii, *Athenagoras, A Plea for Christians*, xxxiii, *Tertullian, Apology XLVI*) that sexual expression was to remain within the confines of marriage and that adultery, sexual immorality, and/or fornication was not to occur among Christians.⁴³ Furthermore, Theophilus argues on Scriptural grounds, often quoting biblical texts, for marital and sexual purity (cf. *Theophilus to Autolytus*, Book III, Chapter XIII). Similarly, Irenaeus quotes Paul from the book of Galatians as he discussed sexual practices, and does so in agreement with him (*Irenaeus, Against Heresies*, Chapter V, Book XI).

person finds his or herself. The model within the text is the person of Jesus Christ, thus providing not only a behavioral context, but a spiritual one as well.

⁴¹ “Instruct my sisters to love the Lord and to be satisfied with their husbands in flesh and spirit. So too enjoin my brothers in the name of Jesus Christ to love their wives as the Lord loves the church. If anyone is able to honor the flesh of the Lord by maintaining a state of purity, let him do so without boasting. If he boasts, he has been destroyed, and if it becomes known to anyone beyond the bishop, he is ruined. But it is right for men and women who marry to make their union with the consent of the bishop, that their marriage may be for the Lord and not for passion. Let all things be done for the honor of God.” Ignatius, *To Polycarp* 5.1-2, trans. Rick Brannan.

⁴² Peter Brown, *The Body & Society: Men, Women & Sexual Renunciation in Early Christianity*, Twentieth-Anniversary Ed. (New York, NY: Columbia University Press, 1988/2008), 58.

⁴³ For instance, Tertullian writes: “The Christian husband has nothing to do with any but his own wife.” (*Apology*, XLVI)- see: Tertullian, *Apology*, taken from: *The Ante-Nicene Fathers, Vol. III Eds.* Alexander Roberts and James Donaldson, Rev. A. Cleveland Coxe (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1980), 51.

In fact, there is a development within the chronological timeline of thought regarding adultery and sexual immorality. However, this development is a unified movement as opposed to a haphazard development of whims given the continued agreement found in the sources. Regarding this sexual ideology development, it is not that it softens, but rather that it is further entrenched in the writings. For instance, moving from the clear imperative and injunctions of the *New Testament* into the *Apostolic Fathers* corpus, there is clear alignment and even an increased mentioning of the subject. However, this quantity of reference is furthered in moving from the *Apostolic Fathers* into the *Ante-Nicene* writings. There, with writers such as Athenagoras, Clement of Alexandria, Tertullian and Irenaeus, an increase of reference to sexual prohibitions within the period occurs and clearly placed sexual expression within the sphere of the married couple. Marriage within the period from the Christian perspective was between one man and one woman, and sexual fidelity within the marriage was the requirement (for husbands, and as well as wives versus the larger Greco-Roman culture). Even though this thesis is limited to the first and second centuries by design, the period allows for a look into all three bodies of literature (*New Testament*, *Apostolic Fathers*, *Ante-Nicene Writings*) and the chronological development provides a picture showing that while the injunctions regarding sexual immorality never softened, the quantity of references within the various writers increased. This was due to the fact that the later writers simply wrote bodies of writings from which this development can be seen, but is also, in my opinion, due to the fact that the later writers were both defending the faith (and its practice) to wider audiences, and because thought was developing as psychagogical methods within the Christian community were used, more from the Greco-Roman pagan culture had to be addressed for comparison.⁴⁴

A nuance of this development that is seen in some instances throughout the various writings referenced within this thesis is the reality that the *New Testament* does not call for sexual expression to be limited to procreation whereas some later writings do. Clement of Alexandria for instance does call for sexual expression to be limited to procreation in some writings,⁴⁵ and thus it could be argued that there is a situational and chronological development within the source material. This does not preclude the observation that even given this agreement, some later writers (i.e. Clement of Alexandria) do become even more stringent, beyond the implicit requirement of the initial sources, in their prohibitions. However, because the development was a strengthening of what the sources of the *New Testament* contain, a general conclusion that the two sets of extant source material (*New Testament* and non-*New Testament*) were in alignment can be sustained because later writers do not “disagree” with general instructions of earlier ones, but further them in some contexts.

One area of potential variance within the sources of the period is the issue of forbidding marriage. Many *New Testament* passages argue for the goodness of marriage, and the view that forbidding it is problematic (1 Cor 7:1, 1 Tim 4:3). In these passages, marriage, while not viewed

⁴⁴ Hunter provides a helpful summary of the chronological development of marriage and sexuality between the period of the *New Testament* and the early third century. He rightly notes that within the first and second centuries, the literature is less dominant on the topic of marriage and sexuality and that the various groups of Christians who tended towards asceticism, or groups like the Encratites came near the end of our particular period. See: David Hunter, *Marriage and Sexuality in Early Christianity* (Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 2018), 7-21.

⁴⁵ Clement (*Strom*, 3.58.1-2, *Strom* 3.69.2, *Strom* 3.69.4); See a discussion regarding Clement’s development in: Kathy L. Gaca, *The Making of Fornication*, 247-272. She writes, “To Clement’s mind, God has rescued Christians from the need to renounce sexual activity altogether. With Christ as intercessor, the Lord miraculously bestows the nonappetitive and passionless sexual capabilities of the Stoic sage exclusively on married Christian procreationists...in place of appetitive sexual desire, God grants them a higher level of “natural impulses”...for reproduction alone, without any admixture from the innate sexual appetite (*Strom* 3.82.1).”, 263.

as a requirement, is certainly not to be forbidden, and at least in some of the later literature outside the *New Testament*, there is some discussion of either forbidding of marriage, or forbidding of a second marriage after death (cf. Tertullian, *On Monogamy*, and *To His Wife*). Comparing Tertullian on marriage with certain *New Testament* references (1 Cor 7:1, 1 Tim 4:3, 1 Cor 7:39-40) reveals some differences, at least in a pragmatic sense (i.e., whether to marry, how many consecutive marriages to have, etc.) if not in a fuller theological sense. One potential factor in these areas of discrepancy is likely the development of thinking even within the short 150–200-year period during which the included primary sources were written. Tertullian is really the last of the primary sources included in this research, and in the earlier sources of the *Apostolic Fathers* corpus and later Ante-Nicene writers, there is not such an apparent discrepancy. Given the later chronology of Tertullian, one could either argue that his differences with the other material were either the development of ideals within Christianity or were owing to his being influenced by a particular sect within Christianity (Montanism),⁴⁶ or a third option, which would be a mixture of both of the first two options. However, these differences do not mean that the larger conclusion of this section is faulty, for although Tertullian may (depending on interpretation) forbid something that the *New Testament* writers do not forbid, he appears by all accounts to affirm what they affirm overall regarding familial counsel within the Christian psychagogy related to family. Ultimately, there were developments,⁴⁷ in which a growing unity among the early Christian community is seen regarding its instruction for marriage and sexual expression. Also, there was a fairly clear reception of the theocentric ideal within the psychagogical work regarding family.

5.2.3.2 Slavery

In various places within the early Christian writings, slaves were addressed or discussed (again, slaves were considered part of the household and thus could be a part of any counsel related to ‘family’). While there are multiple examples in various sources, texts associated in some way with the Apostle Paul are the largest body of literature in the *New Testament* where slavery is addressed. In these instances, there are not only *Haustafeln*, but also instances of specific relational dynamics (for instance, in the pastoral epistles of *1 Timothy* and *Titus*). Some helpful comparisons have already been made in the literature between the early Christian writings.⁴⁸ Notice the following text comparison in which there is nearly verbatim agreement among a sample of sources⁴⁹:

⁴⁶ Tabbernee argues that the scholarly consensus is that Tertullian, while increasingly influenced by this sect, never “separated formally to form a separatist Montanist congregation.” See: William Tabbernee, *Prophets and Gravestones: An Imaginative History of Montanists and Other Early Christians* (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 2009), 98. Similarly, González argues that even amid Tertullian’s influence by Montanism, he was still a champion of Christian Orthodoxy. See: Justo L. González, *The Story of Christianity, vol. 1 The Early Church to the Dawn of the Reformation* (San Francisco, Harper San Francisco, 1984), 76-77.

⁴⁷ Wilhite has a recent helpful essay on second-century diversity, including discussion of Tertullian. See: David E. Wilhite, “Second-Century Diversity,” in *The Cambridge Companion to the Apostolic Fathers*, eds. Michael F. Bird and Scott D Harrower (Cambridge, U.K.: Cambridge University Press, 2021), 50-72.

⁴⁸ See Harrill, *Slaves in the New Testament*, 85-117.

⁴⁹ I have chosen not to distinguish within the chart those *New Testament* texts that are properly considered household codes and those which are not. This is because my focus is on the unified content of the record, and not necessarily the classification of the various writings.

Colossians
3:22-4:1

“**22** Slaves, obey your earthly masters in everything, not only while being watched and in order to please them, but wholeheartedly, fearing the Lord.
23 Whatever your task, put yourselves into it, as done for the Lord and not for your masters,
24 since you know that from the Lord you will receive the inheritance as your reward; you serve the Lord Christ.
25 For the wrongdoer will be paid back for whatever wrong has been done, and there is no partiality.
4:1 Masters, treat your slaves justly and fairly, for you know that you also have a Master in heaven.
(NRSV)

Ephesians
6:5-9

“**5** Slaves, obey your earthly masters with fear and trembling, in singleness of heart, as you obey Christ;
6 not only while being watched, and in order to please them, but as slaves of Christ, doing the will of God from the heart.
7 Render service with enthusiasm, as to the Lord and not to men and women,
8 knowing that whatever good we do, we will receive the same again from the Lord, whether we are slaves or free.
9 And, masters, do the same to them. Stop threatening them, for you know that both of you have the same Master in heaven,

1 Timothy
6:1-2

“Let all who are under the yoke of slavery regard their masters as worthy of all honor, so that the name of God and the teaching may not be blasphemed.
2 Those who have believing masters must not be disrespectful to them on the ground that they are members of the church;[a] rather they must serve them all the more, since those who benefit by their service are believers and beloved.”
(NRSV)

Titus 2:9-10

“Tell slaves to be submissive to their masters and to give satisfaction in every respect; they are not to talk back,
10 not to pilfer, but to show complete and perfect fidelity, so that in everything they may be an ornament to the doctrine of God our Savior.
(NRSV)

Didache 4.9-11

“Do not withhold your hand from your son or from your daughter, but from their youth teach them the fear of God. Do not command your male slave or female slave who are hoping in the same God in your bitterness, lest they cease to fear the God over you both, for he does not come to call with partiality but to whom the spirit prepares.
And slaves, you shall be subject to your master as to a copy of God, in modesty and fear.”
(Brannan)

Epistle of Barnabas
19.7b

“You will be subject to your master as a copy of God, in modesty and fear. Do not command your male slave or female slave in bitterness, who are hoping in the same God, lest they cease to fear the God over you both, because he does not come to call with partiality but to whom the Spirit prepares.”
(Brannan)

and with him
there is no
partiality.
(NRSV)

In content, several similarities emerge of a theocentric, or “fear of God” kind of nature. As both slaves and masters are addressed, reverence on the part of the slave, and fairness by the master (to prevent a lack of reverence on the part of the slave) are the foci. This is then cast upon a theocentric foundation. In each case, God, or the “Lord Christ” is given as the ultimate ground for such an arrangement, and given particularly with a view towards the reverencing or fearing of God. This component is crucial, for often the discussion of household codes regarding slavery focus on the relational and behavioral connections between the slave and masters and point to fear within that context. Another connection is that the focus turns to the honor of God. In all these examples, the focus is on a reverence for God as the basis out of which a slave and a master are to treat one another.

Harrill ties the connection to fear in part, to the earthly power differential related to authority. “It is important...” he writes, “...to realize the agonistic scenario that Ephesians develops. The hope that the *psychē* will be defeated with minimal effort, before potential struggles begin, is not apocalyptic but mundane. The language participates and is implicated in ancient ideologies of slavery that view mastery as a contest (*agōn*) establishing and maintaining a hierarchy and subordination. Power is personalized to the winner.”⁵⁰ However, while certain behavioral norms are sought, I disagree with the premise that the focus or goal is the ultimate minimizing of the individual or subordination of the slave. Rather, it is precisely because that slave will have an eschatological reality in connection with God that the instructions are given. This is most overtly clear in the related passage from *Barnabas* (*Barn 19.7*). Authority is observed or shown to honor God first and foremost, not because there is a culturally driven power differential that must be established (not to mention that an argument can be made from the Ephesians text, which presents God as having “no partiality” which would serve to argue against the power differential as telos hypothesis.)⁵¹ This is also seen in the instructions to the masters, for there, one observes that they are to recognize authority for the good of their own spiritual journey.

Similarly, this psychagogical theme of slave guidance accords with this theme of the canonical writings and is seen in Ignatius as well. There, he writes regarding slaves:

“Do not treat male or female slaves arrogantly, but do not puff them up either; instead let them serve even more to the glory of God, that they may experience a better freedom from God. Let them desire not to be set free at the church’s expense, that they not be disclosed as slaves of lust.” (Ignatius, *To Polycarp* 4.3)⁵²

Again, here the focus accords with the aforementioned *New Testament* texts specifically in the theocentric and personal eschatological realities seen there (to include accordance with Paul’s

⁵⁰ Harrill, *Slaves in the New Testament*, 91.

⁵¹ Buell argues that within the period, “A call for the subordination or eradication of allegiances and commitments outside of Christian communities constitutes one rhetorical strategy adopted by some early Christians...Clement applies this strategy to speak about how Christianity can be understood as a family that demands allegiance over the claims of other types of collectives, both household obligations and supra-household ties...” See: Denise Kimber Buell, *Making Christians: Clement of Alexandria and the Rhetoric of Legitimacy* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1999), 97.

⁵² Ignatius, *To Polycarp* 4.3, trans. Rick Brannan.

discussion of seeking freedom in 1 Cor 7:22-23). Ignatius picks up on these two themes, which already find foundation regarding slaves themselves, within the Scriptural corpus. The psychagogical nature of this Ignatian passage is seen specifically as he writes, “let them serve even more as slaves for the glory of God, that they may receive a greater freedom from God.” The focus is that the individual slave finds an eschatological reality from God; namely, freedom. Thus, Ignatius focuses a temporal issue (freedom), in the light of an eternal, or otherworldly reality (eschatological, or ultimate freedom connected to the glory of God). Within this passage, Ignatius does not specifically define all the particulars related to what this freedom looks like, although contextually, eschatological salvation is in view. However, this text further accords, without as specific a phrasing, with the aforementioned texts.

So, the overarching agreement found in these sources when compared is the focus of calling the individual Christian, whether slave or master, to a theocentric posture and vision. The master/slave relationship, often marked by fear was recast in terms of the fear or reverence of God. In all six sources given in the chart, there was not a call for the renunciation of the household relationship dominant in the larger Greco-Roman culture, but rather a call to utilize it in a different way with a different *telos*. Evident in the sources is the focus on the fear of God as the goal and motivation for the structural aspect of the relationship.

The letter known as Philemon is also rightly added to this discussion, for there, a relational discussion ensues regarding Philemon (master) and Onesimus (slave) and the restored relationship of a runaway. What is crucial for this conversation is that there too, the slave/master relationship was cast with a theocentric focus. Specifically, this is seen in the request of Paul that the relationship involve a spiritual brother component between the two (Philemon 1:15-16). This is paramount to the discussion of the previous chapter and this one as well, in that the soul and spiritual relationship of a slave are in view.

When one considers the instructions regarding slaves found in 1 Peter 2:19-25⁵³ the continued theocentric nature of the early Christian texts is clear. There, some aspects of slavery, at least by implication, are considered unjust for the text says that a harsh master was causing the slave to be treated in an unjust way. But what is of preeminence in the *1 Peter* text is the connection to the example of Jesus and once again, to the foundation for undertaking a submission to masters: the approval of God (1 Pet 2:20). There, cast with the sacrifice of Jesus as a backdrop, is the call for slaves to follow their masters because of a theocentric foundation, and an eschatological hope (the ultimate approval of God). Therefore, *1 Peter* and *Barnabas* 19.7 agree with one another as their foundations for slave obedience are the same.

That there was overarching agreement among Christian texts *vis a vis* slaves in terms of the *telos* of the fear of God should now be clear. The explicit conclusion is that in these sources, Christian slaves and masters were to undertake that relationship with the fear of God as the basis for functioning. This was the stated ideal, and not necessarily a proveable factual reality in every case.

⁵³ “Slaves, accept the authority of your masters with all deference, not only those who are kind and gentle but also those who are harsh. **19** For it is a credit to you if, being aware of God, you endure pain while suffering unjustly. **20** If you endure when you are beaten for doing wrong, what credit is that? But if you endure when you do right and suffer for it, you have God’s approval. **21** For to this you have been called, because Christ also suffered for you, leaving you an example, so that you should follow in his steps. **22** “He committed no sin, and no deceit was found in his mouth.” **23** When he was abused, he did not return abuse; when he suffered, he did not threaten; but he entrusted himself to the one who judges justly. **24** He himself bore our sins in his body on the cross, so that, free from sins, we might live for righteousness; by his wounds you have been healed. **25** For you were going astray like sheep, but now you have returned to the shepherd and guardian of your souls.” (NRSV, 1 Peter 2:19-25).

5.2.3.3. Children

In a third area of the household (children), within a broad range of early texts,⁵⁴ there is an unmistakable characteristic of counsel calling for Christians to engage duties in a theocentric way. The main *New Testament* instructions regarding children can be found in *Colossians* 3:20-21 and *Ephesians* 6:1-4 (writings attributed to the Pauline corpus). Many, including MacDonald, have rightly pointed out that these two sets of instructions would have been heard by those very children within early Christian gatherings as these two letters would have been read aloud in respective churches.⁵⁵ When added to the chorus of writings beyond those of the *New Testament*, a theocentricity clearly emerges. A table demonstrating the connections between the various texts is helpful:

<i>Colossians</i> 3:20-21	<i>Ephesians</i> 6:1-4	<i>1 Clement</i> 21.6-8	<i>Didache</i> 4.9	Polycarp, <i>To Philippians</i> 4.2b	<i>Epistle of Barnabas</i> 19.5e
20 Children, obey your parents in everything, for this is your acceptable duty in the Lord. 21 Fathers, do not provoke your children, or they may lose heart. (NRSV)	6 Children, obey your parents in the Lord, for this is right. 2 “Honor your father and mother”—this is the first commandment with a promise: 3 “so that it may be well with you and you may live long on the earth.” 4 And, fathers, do not provoke your children to anger, but bring them up in the discipline and	“...Let us teach the young the instruction of the fear of God. Let us set our wives on the straight path, toward the good. Let them demonstrate the habit of purity worthy of love. Let them display the innocent will of their gentleness. Let them make evident the gentleness of their speech by their silence. Let them give	“Do not withhold your hand from your son or from your daughter, but from their youth teach them the fear of God ⁵⁷	“...and to instruct their children with the instruction of the fear of God.” ⁵⁸	“...Do not withhold your hand from your son or from your daughter, but you shall teach them from youth the fear of God” ⁵⁹

⁵⁴ MacDonald is correct when she states, “There are deep similarities between references to children in the *New Testament* household codes and material about children in household management discussions among Gentiles and Jews and in the ancient world.” See: MacDonald, *The Power of Children*, 19.

⁵⁵ MacDonald, *The Power of Children*, 18.

⁵⁷ *Didache*, 4.9, trans. Rick Brannan. Brannan, Ehrman and Lake all use the translation “fear of God” and Sources Chrétiennes uses “la crainte de Dieu.”

⁵⁸ Polycarp, *Letter to the Philippians*, 4.2b. trans. Rick Brannan.

⁵⁹ *Epistle to Barnabas*, 19:5e, trans. Rick Brannan.

instruction of the Lord. (NRSV) their love devoutly, not according to partiality but equally to all who fear God. Our children, let them have a share in the instruction that is in Christ. Let them learn what humility has strength to do before God; what pure love is able to do before God; how fear of him is beautiful and great, saving all of those in it, who walk devoutly with a pure mind.”⁵⁶

Focus:
Obedient children (theocentric) and paternal training

Focus:
Obedient children (theocentric) and paternal training in the things of God.

Focus:
Discipline taught with a theocentric focus.

Focus:
Obedient children (theocentric) and paternal training in the things of God.

Focus:
(theocentric) paternal training in the things of God.

Focus:
Obedient children (theocentric) and paternal training in the things of God.

This chart demonstrates that when the texts of each of these sources is summarized, there is a common, two-fold focus regarding children: obedience of children, and their training in the discipline and/or fear of God.⁶⁰ Simonetti appears to argue a connectedness between the two: “The Apostolic Fathers emphasize the fear of God, which should be at the base of all moral

⁵⁶ *I Clement*, 21.6-8, trans. Rick Brannan.

⁶⁰ Dehandschutter connects the *Haustafel* of Polycarp for instance with the writings of Paul and the connection of the various groups commands to the faith when he writes, “Immediately after the praise in the introduction follows a paraenetic turn regarding the relationship between faith and living justly. This concept is repeated with the reference to Paul’s teaching, which is then attached to the “*Haustafel*” which occasionally speaks individually to the various groups within the community (4-6.1). See: Boudewijn Dehandschutter, “The Epistle of Polycarp,” in *The Apostolic Fathers: an introduction*, ed. Wilhelm Pratscher (Waco, TX: Baylor University Press, 2010),122.

formation.”⁶¹ There was the clear expectation that parents, particularly fathers, were to discipline and train their children and that this responsibility was not to be shirked. The *Shepherd of Hermas*, although different in style, could be added to this and relevant passages of that work were observed in chapter three. Within that work, a focus on the lack of training of children, specifically in the things of God, is the cause for the chastisement that Hermas receives. Punt points out that, “With Hellenistic moral philosophers also insisting on the duty of children to honour their parents, neither Jewish families, nor early Jesus-follower communities, nor early Christianity were distinctive.”⁶² However, although the call to obedience may not be distinctive from the larger culture or Jewish families, the theocentric basis was distinctive. It was the foundation for the counsel given regarding children.

Although the early Christian milieu and its progressing development is debated, what is much less debatable is that there was a common flavor within the period, regarding the expectation for and *telos* of raising children. What is crucially important in seeking to understand the writings of this period regarding the family, and in this case, specifically the instruction of Christian children, is that in six different sources, there is a common two-fold goal. From this cross-sectional analysis, a crucial conclusion comes to the fore—within early Christianity, psychagogy regarding family agreed with sources, which demonstrates that an ingredient to a theocentric way of life was the care of children.

5.3. Eschatological Focus

Another aspect that marked the family counsel seen within the sources in the period from within the early Christian stream was that it in many cases had a *telos* (end state, or goal) shaped by an eschatological hope versus the temporal aspects of human relationships. By the term, “eschatological,” I mean that there was a future-oriented hope and goal in view in considering family, within which the counsel offered for the present-day was located. In using the term, I mean to signal that within the writings of early Christian communities, there was an expectation of a future reality of which the current religious life was only the beginning, and a future goal upon which, in some cases, the present life was to be lived. Rowland helpfully gives a definition of “eschatology” in the context of early Christianity. He writes, “...we can find the term being used to describe the critical nature of human decisions, the fate of the individual believer's soul after death, the termination of this world order and a setting up of another, events like the last judgment and the resurrection of the dead, and a convenient way of referring to future hopes about the coming of God's kingdom on earth...”⁶³ There was often a purposeful, forward-looking

⁶¹ M. Simonetti, “Family,” in *Encyclopedia of Ancient Christianity* (Downers Grove: InterVarsity Press, 2014). Accessed February 27, 2018, ProQuest Ebook Central.

⁶² Jeremy Punt, “Not Child’s Play: Paul and Children” *Neotestamentica* 51, no. 2 (2017): 242. <https://www.jstor.org/stable/26417498>.

⁶³ Christopher Rowland, “The Eschatology of the New Testament Church,” in *The Oxford Handbook of Eschatology*, edited by Jerry Walls, (Oxford, U.K., Oxford University Press, 2008), 56. Daley while discussing early Christian eschatology writes, “The first Christians believed the end was near, almost certainly, and they hoped for a radically better life for themselves, because they were convinced that the community’s new experience of the charisms of the Spirit was a first taste of the Kingdom of God...It is that underlying faith in Jesus crucified and risen, and in the saving implications of his death and life for the believer, that gives early Christian hope its consistency and continuity.” See: Brian E. Daley, S.J., *The Hope of the Early Church: A Handbook of Patristic Eschatology* (Cambridge, U.K., Cambridge University Press, 1991), 3-4. Elsewhere, he writes that early Christian eschatological hope provided, “...the assurance of life and happiness in a world without an end, and with a conviction of God’s unfailing providence and readiness to judge human actions.” See: Brian Daley, “Eschatology in the Early Church

movement, which was sometimes soteriological, to the familial counsel offered, and this is evident when the nature of the counsel itself is considered. Specifically, more than the temporal sphere was in mind, for a greater, future *eschaton* was in view. Not only were there calls to heed certain stated familial ideals to properly live in light of an ultimate, or final judgment and kingdom, but current family ideals were envisaged as a training ground for a kingdom that was yet to fully come or at a minimum was yet to be fully realized. This is not to say that an ethic of certain counsel and/or household codes did not ultimately affect the temporal aspects of human relationships, to include wellbeing,⁶⁴ but rather it is to say that a major focus of the paraenetic-psychagogy was the guiding of the Christian soul toward a larger purpose. A survey of the relevant texts will reveal this reality.

The writer of *1 Clement* demonstrates that the instructions he is giving regarding ‘family’ are clearly about a future goal (1 Clement 21.6-8).⁶⁵ This passage identifies the central focus in the mind of the author for the training of family members within the household. Specifically, the central focus was the fear of and reverence for God. The goal indicated is that the household member, in this case the “young,” would have a correct view of God but this is also connected to the reference of a salvation to come. The connection of “the fear of God” to soteriology demonstrates that the counsel offered has in view something that is to come. This reverence would be evidenced in the current, temporal sphere, but ontologically belonged to a larger eschatological reality; namely, the result of such a reverential fear leading to a coming goal. This result is delineated a few lines later where the writer says: “Let them learn what humility has strength to do before God; what pure love is able to do before God; how the fear of him is beautiful and great, saving all of those in it, who walk devoutly with a pure mind.”⁶⁶ This emphasized phrase, is clearly connected to an envisaged soteriological outcome.

Implicit here are soteriological concerns but connected with this is the combination of undertaking current family responsibilities with a view toward the future. This section of *1 Clement* demonstrates in greater detail that this “fear of God” is to permeate the entirety of the family, or household unit, because within the paragraph, there is a reference to “youth” (being disciplined in reverential fear of God), of wives (being led along the pathway towards goodness), and children (becoming partakers of the discipline that is in Christ). This paragraph then demonstrates familial operation, a kind of household code, wherein counsel to the family is seen

Fathers,” in *The Oxford Handbook of Eschatology*, ed. Jerry Walls (Oxford, U.K., Oxford University Press, 2008), 91.

⁶⁴ For instance, Clement of Alexandria does mention temporal realities (c.f. “Now marriage is a help in the case of those advanced in years, by furnishing a spouse to take care of one, and by rearing children of her to nourish one’s old age” (*Stromata, or Miscellanies*, xxiii). See: Clement of Alexandria, *Stromata, or Miscellanies*, taken from: *The Apostolic Fathers with Justin Martyr and Irenaeus*, Vol. 1 Eds. Alexander Roberts and James Donaldson, Rev. A. Cleveland Coxe (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1981), 378.

⁶⁵ “Let us hold the Lord Jesus Christ in reverence, whose blood was given on behalf of us. Let us respect those presiding over us. Let us honor the aged. Let us teach the young the instruction of the fear of God. Let us set our wives on the straight path, toward the good. Let them demonstrate the habit of purity worthy of love. Let them display the innocent will of their gentleness. Let them make evident the gentleness of their speech by their silence. Let them give their love devoutly, not according to partiality but equally to all who fear God. Our children, let them have a share in the instruction that is in Christ. Let them learn what humility has strength to do before God; what pure love is able to do before God; how the fear of him is beautiful and great, saving all of those in it, who walk devoutly with a pure mind.” *1 Clement*, 21.6-8, trans. Rick Brannan.

⁶⁶ *1 Clement*, 21.8, trans. Rick Brannan. Emphasis mine. Ehrman translates it: “...how it saves all those who conduct themselves in it in a holy way, with a clear understanding.” Lake renders it: “...gives salvation to all who live holily in it with a pure mind.”

with eyes towards the future, in this case given the soteriological concerns. This same theme can also be observed in the *Epistle of Barnabas* 19.4-5. There, following a brief litany of paraenetic discourses related to family, an almost identical phrase is used to describe the training of youth in the “reverential fear of God.” The phrase follows a purpose clause a few sentences earlier, where the writer says, “Therefore, the way of light is this: if anyone desires to travel along the way to the appointed place” (*Epistle of Barnabas* 19.1a).⁶⁷ Thus, once more, the command regarding family is also connected to the idea that constructing family involves more than temporal concerns. A very similar theme is found in the *Didache* where discipleship of children is described as having the goal of teaching them “the reverential fear of God” (*Didache* 4.9-11), although there, the larger context is a broader discussion of the way of life versus the way of death. Yet, this still places the reference to the fear of God in a larger enterprise.⁶⁸ So, in three distinct sources, the *paideia* of children and youth, and particularly the familial instruction related to that training, the focus is a type of eschatological reality (either in view of upcoming judgment, or future salvation and kingdom appropriation).

Of course, these three quotes alone on reverential fear (*1 Clement*, *Didache* and *Barnabas*) are not enough to make the claim that there was an inherent eschatological aspect to the family counsel, however, these quotes are not unique. Other examples from the literature of the period demonstrate this same theme. For example, in several instances the sexual ethic (which I have demonstrated was a part of family counsel)⁶⁹ of family counsel is mentioned in the sermon known as *2 Clement*. Specifically, in *2 Clement* 4.1-3, the practice of adultery is prohibited, but in *2 Clement* 6.1-4, it is defined with a particular focus:

“And the Lord said, “No slave is able to serve two masters.” If we desire to serve both God and money, it is harmful to us. “For what is the advantage if someone gains the whole world but forfeits his soul?” And this age and the one about to come are two enemies. This age speaks of adultery and corruption and love of money and deceit, but that one renounces these things.”⁷⁰ (*2 Clement* 6.1-4)

Tuckett translates *2 Clem* 6.3 exactly the same.⁷¹ In this instance, adultery itself is seen as belonging to “this age” and therefore, a future oriented goal is in view when marital faithfulness is seen as the ideal in terms of the “age to come.” Here, the preacher makes clear that what drives familial sexual practice (again in the prohibition of adultery) is the *eschaton*. Later in *2 Clement* 12.1 the preacher says, “For this reason, we should wait the kingdom of God.” This phrase is preceded by exhortation to do what is right (11.7) and then is followed by a discussion of repentance (13.1). All this colors the aforementioned prohibition of adultery and sheds further light on the reality that this aspect of familial counsel was here too envisaged as having connections for the Christian in what was to come. Specific behavior and relational structures are clearly seen to belong to the movement of time that is progressing towards the kingdom, or age “to come”.

⁶⁷ *Epistle of Barnabas*, 19.1, trans. Rick Brannan.

⁶⁸ The culminating chapter of the *Didache* concerns readiness for the return of Christ and living unto that end.

⁶⁹ I refer the reader to Chapters two and three of this research.

⁷⁰ *2 Clement*, 6.1-4, trans. Rick Brannan. Emphasis Mine. Notice the emphasized phrase and that specifically, another age is expected to dawn. Ehrman has a similar translation: “But the Lord says, “No household servant can serve as the slave of two masters.” If we wish to serve as slaves of both God and wealth, it is of no gain to us. “For what is the advantage of acquiring the whole world while forfeiting your life?” But this age and the age to come are two enemies. This one preaches adultery, depravity, avarice, and deceit, but that one renounces these things.”

⁷¹ *2 Clem* 6.3, trans. C.M. Tuckett.

The idea of sexual immorality in connection with the household and familial counsel alongside an eschatological focus is seen in Ignatius as well. When writing to the Ephesians, Ignatius connects adultery, households, and the inheriting of the Kingdom of God:

“Do not be misled, my brothers and sisters: those who adulterously corrupt households will not inherit the kingdom of God.” (Ignatius, To The Ephesians 16.1)⁷²

In the English translation by Holmes, this reality is seen more clearly (contra Ehrman who leaves out the word “adulterously”). Brannan renders the word “destroyers of families”, and Lake “they who corrupt families.” While adultery is a focus, the ultimate temporal connection is the corruption of a household. Ignatius does not explicitly define this corruption, but given the context of false teaching that is in view in this section of his writing, the focus would clearly appear to be on the purity of the household and that the unit would be less pure through the influence of a corruptor.⁷³ This corruption however has future oriented implications in that ultimately inheriting the kingdom of God was in view. In the case of Ignatius, there is an urgency in his writing with a backdrop of his own desire to embrace suffering and martyrdom for the cause, and I imagine this would impact the connection to a future oriented component within his writing. This background notwithstanding, there remains a *telos* regarding the early Christian family.

Slaves too, clear household members within the Greco-Roman familial structure, were also instructed in ways that demonstrate that a futuristic goal was in view. For instance, Ignatius in writing to Polycarp declares:

“Do not treat male or female slaves arrogantly, but do not puff them up either; instead let them serve even more to the glory of God, that they may experience a better freedom from God. Let them desire not to be set free at the church’s expense, that they not be disclosed as slaves of lust” (Ignatius, To Polycarp 4.3)⁷⁴

In view with Ignatius is the reality that the temporal circumstance of slavery is to fuel a striving after a particular goal. Counsel given to slaves is seen clearly with a focus of freedom to be granted by God. Ignatius was concerned with the souls of the slaves in the sense that he did not want them going down the path of slavery to passion. Similarly, what is also evident in the instruction related to family is not simply what was prescribed, but what was inferred regarding the ‘path’ of the individual. Athenagoras, for instance, in his treatment of marriage, casts certain expected behaviors in the light of the hope of eternal life (*A Plea for Christians*, xxxiii).⁷⁵ In both

⁷² Michael W. Holmes, *The Apostolic Fathers: Greek Texts and English Translations, Third Edition*. (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2007), 197. Emphasis mine.

⁷³ Cf. *1 Corinthians* 6:9-11.

⁷⁴ Ignatius, *To Polycarp* 4.3, trans. Rick Brannan, Emphasis Mine.

⁷⁵ “Therefore, having the hope of eternal life, we despise the things of this life, even to the pleasures of the soul, each of us reckoning her his wife whom he has married according to the laws laid down by us, and that only for the purpose of having children. For as the husbandman throwing the seed into the ground awaits the harvest, not sowing more upon it, so to us the procreation of children is the measure of our indulgence in appetite. Nay, you would find many among us, both men and women, growing old unmarried, in hope of living in closer communion with God. But if the remaining in virginity and in the state of an eunuch brings nearer to God, while the indulgence of carnal thought and desire leads away from Him, in those cases in which we shun the thoughts, much more do we reject the deeds. For we bestow our attention, not on the study of words, but on the exhibition and teaching of actions,—that a person should either remain as he as born, or be content with one marriage; for a second marriage is only specious adultery.

the *Didache*, and the *Epistle of Barnabas*, adultery and mistreatment of children are seen as belonging to the wrong ‘path.’ Specifically, Christian sexual expression, family planning and the treatment of children are pictured in ways that have a journey-like focus. This journey, or path was to be the center of the Christian focus and to find familial components placed along this path, at least by way of prohibition (of what not to do), there is a reality that family instruction was considered part of the journey with an eschatological outcome. Aristides also connects the sexual relationship to a “looking forward” component writing of Christians that:

“...they know God, the Creator and Fashioner of all things through the only-begotten Son and the Holy Spirit; and beside Him they worship no other God. They have the commands of the Lord Jesus Christ Himself graven upon their hearts; and they observe them, looking forward to the resurrection of the dead and the life in the world to come. They do not commit adultery nor fornication...” (*Apology of Aristides*, XV)⁷⁶

While ultimately the genre of this work is apologetic, a description is given of the Christian sexual ethic (with clear familial connections given the sexual expectation) as connected to the life to come.⁷⁷ This summary statement about Christians not committing adultery or fornication is a generally observable characteristic in the mind of Aristides that marks the early Christian community. This passage, while not proof that this characteristic marked every Christian, is given in apologetic discourse as evidence for his arguments. The “world to come” is described here again as a connecting point to the sexual practice of Christians. Interestingly, it is also Aristides that points to the absurdity of the gods of the Greeks and Romans in various ways, pointing to the fact that the Greeks picture their gods as committing adultery.⁷⁸ Thus, for Aristides, a belief in a spiritual being who practices adultery is absurd.

Irenaeus, for his part, also connects a *telos* of the future to the practices of Christians and utilizes the letter of Paul to the Galatians. After quoting Paul from the book of *Galatians* chapter

“For whosoever puts away his wife,” says He, “and marries another, commits adultery;” not permitting a man to send her away whose virginity he has brought to an end, nor to marry again. For he deprives himself of his first wife, even though she be dead, is a cloaked adulterer, resisting the hand of God, because in the beginning God made one man and one woman, and dissolving the strictest union of flesh with flesh, formed for the intercourse of the race.” (*A Plea for the Christians*, xxxiii). See: Athenagoras, *A Plea for the Christians*, taken from: *The Apostolic Fathers with Justin Martyr and Irenaeus*, Vol. 2 Eds. Alexander Roberts and James Donaldson, Rev. A. Cleveland Coxe (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1981), 146-147.

⁷⁶ Aristides, *The Apology of Aristides*, in *The Ante-Nicene Fathers*, Vol. X, 5th edition. Eds. Allan Menzies (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1978), 276-277.

⁷⁷ This connection between sexual ethics and the eschatological hope is seen later in section 15.5: “Leurs hommes se passent de toute union illégitimes et de tout impureté, dans l’espérance de la rétribution à venir dans l’autre monde.” The “world to come” is here connected to renunciation of certain sexual deeds. See: Aristide, *Apologie*, in *Sources Chrétiennes*, N 470. Eds. Bernard Pouderon, Marie-Joseph Pierre, Bernard Outtier and Marina Guiorgadzé (Paris: Éditions du Cerf, 2003), 239. This version also provides a translation from the Syriac text. The Syriac text also appears to sharpen a description of early Christians. In the Syriac text, following a description of honoring father and mother, the statement is made that they: “...font du bien à ceux qui leur sont proches” (15.4) whereas the Greek version has “ils aiment leur prochain.” This subtle difference (with the Syriac potentially sharpening a description of the treatment of family) could seem to indicate a further content theme to be explored (doing good to family), but this description seen in the textual difference could equally be viewed as a broad description that in many ways could be subsumed under the other themes.

⁷⁸ Aristides, *Apology of Aristides*, VIII.

five, he connects sexual behavior to a future hope, and in doing so demonstrates the common counsel of the period for Christians and the sexual aspects of the household. His note regarding “shall not have power to inherit the kingdom of heaven” points to how behavior was filtered through the grid of the future (Irenaeus, *Against Heresies*, Book V, Chapter XI).⁷⁹

5.3.1 Changing the Christian Family Not Cultural Norms

An aspect of the familial paraenetic-psychagogy having an eschatological focus is seen by the fact that it was given within the typical relational structures of the culture⁸⁰ without a call to change those larger relational structures. Specifically, this characteristic of the pastoral counsel within the period involves an absence of what is seen—in other words, what is not mentioned. For instance, while instructions to slaves are given, there is no call for the prohibition of slavery. While certain cultural practices are condemned (pederasty, adultery, exposure of infants), the focus of how Christian behavior was to look is limited to the Christian family. The Christian writers of the period appear to have focused on changing how the family was to be expressed within the Christian community and not so much in the larger culture. This is not to say that there was no desire to influence the larger Greco-Roman culture in any way,⁸¹ but only to argue that what is missing from the instruction regarding family is any dominant call to change the larger societal structures.⁸² It is likely that some of the reason for this has to do with the intended audiences or recipients of these various primary texts. Given that these texts are written to, or about (in the case of some apologetic texts) early Christians, the focus is on who or what they were to be. This interpretive detail notwithstanding, the focus of the material reveals more of an interest in sculpting early Christian families than those of the larger Greco-Roman culture.

A possible exception here could be the concept of adoption and the care of orphans or the call to not neglect the widows (cf. Ignatius, *To Polycarp*, 4.1), but even in such examples, a strong argument could be made that what was envisaged was the care for those attached to the Christian community. Undoubtedly, early Christians were hospitable to their neighbors, and in

⁷⁹ “Thus does he point out to his hearers in a more explicit manner what it is [he means when he declares], “Flesh and blood shall not inherit the kingdom of God.” For they who do these things, since they do indeed walk after the flesh, have not the power of living unto God. And then, again, he proceeds to tell us the spiritual actions which vivify a man, that is, the engrafting of the Spirit; thus saying, “But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, goodness, benignity, faith, meekness, continence, chastity: against these there is no law.” As, therefore, he who has gone forward to the better things, and has brought forth the fruit of the Spirit, is saved altogether because of the communion of the Spirit; so also he who continued in the aforesaid works of the flesh, being truly reckoned as carnal, because he did not receive the Spirit of God, shall not have power to inherit the kingdom of heaven.” Irenaeus, *Against Heresies*, in *The Ante-Nicene Fathers* Vol. I Eds. Alexander Roberts and James Donaldson, Rev. A. Cleveland Coxe (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1981), 537.

⁸⁰ For instance, patterns of relationships even found in Aristotle form the order for many Christian household codes, thus pointing to the reality that the larger societal structures were similarly used within Christian writings, yet often with a different focus. See for instance MacDonald, *The Power of Children*, 13.

⁸¹ The *Epistle to Diognetus* as an example uses the purity of Christian marriages (i.e.- not sharing bed partners) as a positive argument for Christians and their faith.

⁸² I refer the reader to Chapter two of this thesis for a detailed background on the landscape of the family within the larger Greco-Roman culture of the first and second centuries. I concede that it is possible that the lack of this prohibition was due to Christianity’s early position as a minority, and the “power” to affect change was not present like it would be within later centuries of Christianity. However, that question and speculation is beyond the focus of this thesis.

this and other behavioral components, likely won others over to their faith and/or changed a part of their little sphere of society as more individuals adopted new behavioral practices. However, what I am arguing is that in the instructions pertaining to the family, the focus is on the Christian family and its structure, makeup, and expected norms versus the larger familial structures of society. A few examples would be helpful at this juncture.

Perhaps one of the most startling examples to the modern reader is the instruction regarding slaves in sources like the letter to Polycarp from Ignatius. As previously seen in chapter four, Ignatius is giving a pastoral care model to his peer Polycarp, and writes the following regarding the pastoral care of slaves:

“Do not treat male or female slaves arrogantly, but do not puff them up either; instead let them serve even more to the glory of God, that they may experience a better freedom from God. Let them desire not to be set free at the church’s expense, that they not be disclosed as slaves of lust.” (Ignatius, *To Polycarp* 4.3)⁸³

Here, the focus is on the behavior and theocentricity of the slaves within the household and not on the call, or even hope for any kind of emancipation. Greco-Roman emancipation practices notwithstanding, this very passage would have been a good opportunity for Ignatius to address any call to work for slave emancipation, but no such call exists. In fact, the final sentence almost seems to discourage slaves from having the desire for freedom from their station.⁸⁴ Schoedel argues on this point that, “...Ignatius prefers to see them remain slaves. His attitude is paternalistic: one is not to despise slaves, but neither are slaves to forget their place. For their comfort he provides justification for this view in religious terms: slaves gain greater freedom before God the more faithfully they serve their masters.”⁸⁵ Similarly, the *Didache* counsels slaves and their owners in the following way:

“Do not command your male slave or female slave who are hoping in the same God in your bitterness, lest they cease to fear the God over you both, for he does not come to call with partiality but to whom the spirit prepares. And slaves, you shall be subject to your master as to a copy of God, in modesty and fear.” (*Didache* 4.10-11)⁸⁶

Here again, no expectation or call to emancipation is given. Not only are Christians not explicitly called to work for the end of slavery within the larger culture and society, but in both examples from Ignatius and the *Didache*, no call is given to masters to release their slaves. Rather, what is given is a new or different way to undertake the slave/master relationship. This reality is like the Pauline corpus’ treatment of the slavery issue (i.e., *Ephesians*, *Colossians*, *Philemon*). Contrasting what was likely the larger cultural expression of slavery, Christian masters must not mistreat their slaves and slaves were to subject themselves in a godly way to their masters.

Again, glaringly absent perhaps to the modern reader is a lack of emancipatory suggestion. Harrill argues quite adeptly that the fact that slaves are mentioned, is not out of the norm for the literature of the period. Pointing to the evidence of ancient agricultural handbooks where slaves were directly addressed, Harrill argues that there was not an overt move to elevate slaves within the Christian community by addressing them (as if that was out of the ordinary), but

⁸³ Ignatius, *To Polycarp* 4.3, trans. Rick Brannan.

⁸⁴ Ehrman renders the sentence: “And they should not long to be set free through the common fund, lest they be found slaves of passion” and Lake renders the sentence: “Let them not desire to be set free at the Church’s expense, that they be not found the slaves of lust.”

⁸⁵ Schoedel, *Ignatius of Antioch*, 270.

⁸⁶ *Didache* 4.10-11 trans. Rick Brannan.

rather, demonstrates that the addressing of slaves was not unique to Christian literature.⁸⁷ There are scholars who think Christianity did exert a positive and possible change agent into the issue regarding slavery.⁸⁸ My attempt is not to argue that these ideas (changing perceived cultural injustices) were not necessarily present within the minds of the Christian authors, but only to demonstrate an aspect that is characteristic of what is found in the source material texts related to household and family.

Garnsey offers a helpful summary when he writes, “It is in principle possible that early Christianity, while not at all abolitionist, did foster the better treatment of slaves, at least among Christians...at any rate, the means to settle the issue are not available.”⁸⁹ I would argue the means are not available to evaluate the effect of Christianity on slavery within the entire Greco-Roman empire within the first and second century. However, the means are available to see that the supposed master to slave relationship would have changed within the Christian household, if led by a Christian *paterfamilias*. This was specifically because of the clear instruction given regarding the treatment of slaves that, if followed, would have changed the dynamic of that particular Christian household.

Another area of interest related to this same theme is the fact that in the writings surveyed, while there is a clear prohibition of abortion and pederasty, the focus is on what the Christian should consider within his own life and household versus the larger culture. The larger practice of society is an understood backdrop to the prohibition *vis a vis* the treatment of children. As seen in a variety of genres within the early Christian movement, the Christian was expected to consider a different way in their own sphere (cf. *Didache* 5.2, *Epistle of Barnabas* 19.4-5, 20.2, *Epistle to Diognetus* 5.6-7, *Justin, First Apology*, XXIX). Similarly, rather than a call to end the patriarchal hierarchy dominant within the larger cultural sphere, within the Christian family, that patriarchy was to be harnessed for the usefulness of training wives and children in the reverential fear of God (cf. Polycarp, *Letter to the Philippians* 4.1-2, Ignatius, *To Polycarp* 5.1, *Didache* 4.9-11, *1 Clement* 21.6-8, *Shepherd of Hermas*, various). In each of these examples, the husband and/or *paterfamilias* is in no way asked to abdicate his role, but only to use that role in a different way. Again, this is perhaps startling to the modern reader, but it is worth noting the markers of the counsel regarding ‘family,’ by what is said, and, in this case, what is not said.

Such a primacy then—the focusing on the internal realities of the Christian family—is important to note, for once more it reveals the psychagogic goal behind the counsel. Specifically, the instructions regarding family were viewed, at least primarily, as relating to the Christians themselves. Of course, there were gestures of generosity affecting family that can be seen in the period (adoption, care for widows, the sick, etc), but when it came to specific paraenetic-psychagogical material related to family, the focus was on the individual and their family unit and how it was understood that they should interact. The family was, for soul-level reasons, to be different than the larger cultural expression of family. As converts to Christianity (for most of the early sources surveyed involve those coming not strictly from Judaism, but from other backgrounds), these individuals were being led through a philosophic tradition of care to consider the reality of familial structure within the Christian paradigm.

5.3.2 The ‘Otherworldly’ *Pietas* of Family Counsel

⁸⁷ James A Harrill, *Slaves in the New Testament: Literary, Social, and Moral Dimensions* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2006), 85-86.

⁸⁸ For instance, see Peter Garnsey’s discussion in: Peter Garnsey, “Sons, Slaves—and Christians,” in *The Roman Family in Italy: Status, Sentiment, Space* eds. Beryl Rawson and Paul Weaver (Oxford, Clarendon Press, 1997), 101-121.

⁸⁹ Garnsey, “Sons, Slaves—and Christians,” 108.

One brief way of describing the nature of the content of the counsel regarding family found in the sources examined is that there was an ‘otherworldly’ nature to it. The focus of the material is on structuring family with a different “world” in mind and the seeming uniqueness of the ‘*pietas*’ involved. MacDonald articulates this Greco-Roman value known as ‘*pietas*’ well: “This virtue combines emphasis on submissive, obedient behavior, with notions of family loyalty, citizenship, and deference to God or the gods.”⁹⁰ She also recognizes that this virtue involved loyalty to the state.⁹¹ In fact, within the larger culture, the household and its leadership were often focused on the good of Rome.⁹² Therefore, as one considers the nature of the instructions regarding the Christian household, a modified ‘*pietas*’ becomes clear.⁹³ The family was re-envisioned from serving the society of the culture and the benefit of the *paterfamilias* alone, to being focused on the God of Christianity.

While the concept of *pietas* already contained the notion of valuing divinity such as household gods, the clear distinction within the Christian family counsel was how the household codes were arranged specifically because of the Christian view of God. Like the non-Christian family, there were religious rituals, practices, and values, but unlike the larger pagan family within the Greco-Roman society, the Christian family was to be focused on a hope that was to come. Thus, much of the counsel surveyed has demonstrated not only theocentricity at its core, but also a movement towards a *telos* involving the souls of the individual Christians within the household. Thus, the view that familial instructions and paraenesis were ultimately about psychagogy again comes to the fore specifically because the *pietas* that was envisaged was not simply about the earthly *paterfamilias* and the larger good of the State, but about how the entire family unit could be instructed in the “fear” of God which ultimately would result in a future hope. In essence, counsel regarding family could be described as having a teleological component of a unique ‘*pietas*’ from that of the larger philosophical exhortation and an inherent eschatological focus, which caused the Christian rhetoric regarding ‘family’ to be distinctly ‘otherworldly.’

This otherworldly focus is also seen in the expectation of persecution that some of the writers addressed. The view of Ignatius in the previous chapter of this thesis alone would give rise to the need to connect the goal of familial psychagogy to the expectation of both the *eschaton* and the possibility of persecution. This is not to diminish however, the clear reality within the familial instructions that the instruction itself was focused on the expectation of something to come and not simply this life alone. Even within this counsel, some larger cultural familial structures (i.e., slavery, patriarchal forms) are envisaged as continuing within the same structures yet with a different focus. Certain structures then were used, and not rejected, but within that abiding use the focus and/or goal was different.

I have demonstrated that one of the markers of the content of the family counsel, designed to guide the soul, was an eschatological focus. This focus is not the only focus in every instance, but it is a theme, which colors much of the counsel regarding family in the sources. From varying Christian sources within the period, an overarching aim behind the paraenetic-psychagogy connected to family was a future-oriented, and sometimes soteriological trajectory, and a trajectory that was not focused on changing the larger culture. This is inherent anyway

⁹⁰ Margaret Y. MacDonald, *The Power of Children*, 9.

⁹¹ MacDonald, *The Power of Children*, 170.

⁹² I refer the reader to Chapter two of this thesis for further background on this.

⁹³ This idea can be seen, at least in some form, in Harrill when he writes concerning the Christian instruction to slaves and masters, “. . .there is a concern for *pietas*. Masters baptized into Christ are in charge of the domestic cult, centered on the Lord, and must avoid actions and influences that will turn the community (as a “household”) from proper ritual adherence and obligations of reciprocity with the divine. They must remember their subordination and accountability to a higher authority.” See: Harrill, *Slaves in the New Testament*, 117.

within the previous conclusion that family paraenesis was ultimately a part of the psychagogic enterprise, for what is in view there (psychagogy specifically), is the guidance of the soul. The aim of any form of psychagogy is an inherent eschatological goal, no matter the particular philosophical or theological stream. In this case, we have the advantage not only of accepting that reality based on analytic judgment, but by also seeing it within the sources themselves. In each of the aforementioned examples of family instruction and/or counsel, a clear eschatological focus can be seen, and this idea is not borrowed in a general way just from the larger context of these sources, but rather, in these examples, the clearly demonstrable family counsel is viewed with an outlook of what was to come.

5.4. Conclusions

We end this chapter with the observation that pastoral care of the early catholic Christian family in the first and second century was a part of the larger paraenetic-psychagogic enterprise, at least in the stated vision of the primary source authors, and its content contained the following sub points: *it had a theocentric trajectory which dominated the paraenesis and in which the paraenesis was founded; it had a telos shaped by an eschatological reality versus the temporal aspects of human relationships, and as such it was given within the typical relational structures of the culture and focused on the character of the Christian family without a call to change those larger relational structures.* These are recognizable aspects of the counsel when it is analyzed. When considered as a whole, or as a mosaic of understanding the instructions and counsel given to the family, this set of conclusions provides a way of understanding how the ‘family’ was treated within a particular stream of Christian literature of the first and second centuries. In addition, the subpoints demonstrated within this chapter also further the larger argument of the previous chapter and this thesis, that early Christian counsel regarding the family was a form of psychagogy largely undertaken stylistically through paraenesis.

The goal of early Christian psychagogy, which included giving family ideals (i.e. the reorienting of family structures of marriage, parenting and household, relational dynamics, and sexual practices theocentrically and with an eschatological focus), was the guidance of the Christian soul. The specific part of that psychagogic enterprise that related to family can be seen within this chapter in detail. The content of that psychagogy having been analyzed, some of the clear intent behind familial counsel is seen. This brings this thesis closer to its terminus in that the inquiry of this thesis and its research has been to understand the nature of pastoral family counseling structures within the first and second century early Christian community. Not only has the method (paraenetic-psychagogy) been understood, but now, with this chapter, its content has been seen as well.

What are clearly seen within this chapter are the desired ideals for familial counsel from within the period. The ideals seen within the content found within the primary sources are organized here in several subcategories,⁹⁴ but, there arises an understanding of what the desired outcomes were for familial psychagogy. These subpoints together form the answer to the question of this chapter regarding the content of the familial counsel and instruction of the literature of the period within Christianity. Again, the claim is that the literature of the period reveals certain patterns and not that we can clearly know what every Christian family looked like. These patterns, when viewed together form a new understanding to the quest to ascertain the nature of counsel within the early Christian community of the period. Specifically, the previous chapter

⁹⁴ (*It had a theocentric trajectory which dominated the paraenesis and in which the paraenesis was founded; it had a telos shaped by an eschatological reality versus the temporal aspects of human relationships, and as such it was given within the typical relational structures of the culture and focused on the character of the Christian family without a call to change those larger relational structures*)

argues that family counsel and care was a part of the psychagogical enterprise that marked the pastoral care within the early Christian community—leading the souls of the adherents of the movement (in this case, Christianity). This chapter then follows on to ascertain specific aspects of that psychagogical enterprise. For the question of this chapter has been to understand what that paraenetic-psychagogy was like, both its content and its larger connections. The main points found in this chapter then are the answer to that inquiry.

Chapter Six

Conclusions

This thesis has been focused on understanding the pastoral care of the family within the first two centuries of the early Christian movement.¹ As such, it has largely been an analysis of the primary sources from the period as well as an interaction with related secondary sources. It is within this conclusion chapter that new contributions to the field, regarding the pastoral care to the family within the first and second century Christian movement will be summarized, as well as placed among the current research to understand why the contributions of this research are significant.

As was seen earlier in this thesis, research of the early Christian family has experienced a boom in recent years, and much has been written, even within the last two decades regarding the family within the first and second century, and specifically the Christian construction of family. This has aided this thesis in that specific research by other scholars has given a helpful picture of the structure of the family within the early Christian community, and of specific household roles. Chapters two and three of this thesis detailed this research from the relevant secondary literature, and further sought to summarize components from the primary sources of early Christianity. However, what has largely been untouched in the previous research is the application of counsel to the Christian family, and this thesis, specifically in Chapters four and five, has provided a contribution into the understanding of those family-related pastoral care applications. A clearer understanding is now provided for the field concerning how a specific set of early documents within the early catholic Christian stream envisaged care for the family subgroup. Given that the family as a unit involved multiple aspects (roles, sexuality, household structure, etc.), even while the thrust of the research has been answering the question of the nature of Christian counsel regarding family, other discussions have been a part of the research.

A contribution of this research was the development of the argument that the pastoral care offered to the family within the first and second century Christian family, as seen in many early primary source writings, was chiefly undertaken through paraenetic-psychagogy. This discovery is an addition to the understanding of philosophic care within the period. The two terms, blended, best describe the demeanor and structure of care from within the period, specifically as it related to the family. It is the classification of this care that part of this thesis provides. I have argued that family counsel and care rightly belong to the category of soul care and guidance—that family care was not about the family structure alone, but was further and more specifically focused on guiding the soul of the Christian.

Following this argument, the content of the family care and counsel was analyzed, and a mosaic of characteristics was identified which together marked the nature of counsel regarding the family. The argument of the fifth chapter was not focused on the system of delivery of the counsel per say, but rather on the nature and content foci of that counsel. It is within this contribution that the nature of the research is completed, for with the contribution(s) of Chapter five, the research provided what a group of early Christian writings envisioned regarding the description of ‘family’ overall within the period, the method or structure for providing that care, and the content and focus of that care as largely theocentric and focused eschatologically.

Lastly, this thesis has provided a compilation of the current source material on the topic of family within the first and second century, as well as an in-depth look at the primary source material of both Greco-Roman families and particularly of early Christian families within the

¹ Again, this thesis specifically focuses on what is currently called “proto-orthodox” or “early catholic” Christianity within the first and second centuries, C.E., and by design limits itself to the body of literature from that particular stream of sources.

period. This is a necessary requirement of the research to understand the particular structures that were being addressed by the care of the early Christian community and its leaders. While this contribution is a summary of the literature, it has not been undertaken, at least to this extent and within this trajectory, in the recent past. Therefore, a compilation of source materials is a fruit yielded by this research and additionally has provided an avenue for showing some of the potential differences between early Christian and non-Christian families within the period.

It is these summary conclusions that will be discussed briefly here within this final chapter, along with the future trajectories that can be pursued following this research. It is to these conclusions of this thesis that this chapter will now turn.

6.1. An Argument for Paraenetic-psychagogy

In the conclusion section to his chapter on the current place of research in early ‘Christian Philosophy,’ Hubertus Drobner makes the statement that, “...the basic questions of ‘Christian Philosophy’ remain: What did Christians accept from philosophy, and how did this change Christianity.”² While this thesis does not answer that question directly, it does answer, at least in part, one aspect of that question in that I demonstrate that within the first two centuries of Christianity, there was the use of a philosophic form of care utilized to care for families. Psychagogy was not unique to Christianity, but was a dominant philosophical tradition within various philosophical streams during the period in question. And it was the structure of psychagogy that early Christians utilized in their own care for and counsel of the family.

This thesis provides an understanding of pastoral care to the Christian regarding family that was envisioned within various source texts of the period. In Chapter four, the structure of that care and counsel was analyzed, and in Chapter five, its content was detailed. Thus, Chapter four fills a gap in the scholarly literature, because within that chapter it is demonstrated that care of the early Christian family seen within a particular body of writings is rightly categorized as psychagogy. And specifically, I argue that family care and counsel occurred in a subtype of psychagogy, which was given the term “paraenetic-psychagogy.” Much of the counsel offered to the family was of an ethical-imperative nature, which implies a heavy paraenesis, however the goal of the care to families went beyond the organization of familial structure toward the guidance of the Christian soul, which necessitated a psychagogical framework. Therefore, family care and counsel were part of the entire psychagogical enterprise. The work of Malherbe was a key point of departure for this project, and yet this thesis takes the research of early Christian *psychagogy* into a different area and sphere.

While providing an answer to the larger question of the nature of care and counsel for the family and showing that it was psychagogy, the thesis did provide a few points of how that psychagogy occurred (epistolary forms, sermonic forms, etc). However, for the reader interested in more specific points regarding the style of psychagogical application, there is likely to be disappointment. Specifically, due to the limitation of person-to-person data from the period, this thesis itself is limited in its ability to offer a more detailed look into the application of psychagogy on an individual level. It can be assumed that this individual to individual psychagogical enterprise occurred because the data we do have teaches that it ought to (by command), but this thesis cannot provide, for instance, examples of individual (one to one) “counseling” conversations and techniques with much detail. Within the period, there is no extant “one on one” exclusively psychagogical manual, and so a point-by-point analysis of methodology of application (i.e., verbal techniques, approach styles to counsel, etc.) is not possible. However, this thesis can provide new information and classification, and even an initial finding as to how

² Hubertus R. Drobner, “Christian Philosophy,” in *The Oxford Handbook of Early Christian Studies*, eds. Susan Ashbrook Harvey and David G. Hunter (Oxford, Oxford University Press, 2008), 687.

family care and counsel was envisaged within a particular body of literature (i.e., paraenetic-psychagogy). It can also give an example of two Christian leaders (Ignatius and Polycarp) discussing the application of psychagogy, which provides clear pastoral insight. But the claims of this thesis are limited in more detailed specifics of the methodology of the application in a way that for instance a researcher of St. Gregory would not be limited given his magnum opus *The Book of Pastoral Rule*.

This limitation notwithstanding, the question of care for the family within the period was not an inquiry primarily focused on a social structure but was focused predominately on soul guidance. If one is willing to take the inquiry of this thesis not merely as a sociological one (namely, seeing family as the end to be studied) but as a theological one (namely, that care offered to the family within the early Christian community was about guiding the soul in theological truths), then a proper placement of care arises. The significance of these findings rests in the conclusion that family care and counsel was not an isolated enterprise but was a part of the larger goal of guiding the Christian soul. Instruction on family ethics and structure was not simply an ethical paraenesis but was a part of the larger goal of guiding the Christian soul. Christianity made claims on its adherents, and these claims included how to “do” family as a part of the larger enterprise. Thus, any attempt to divide ‘family’ and its various components such as sexuality, marriage, children, slavery from the moorings of Christian doctrine and ethical practice must be avoided if one is to rightly understand Christian family ideals within this period. While it cannot be proven that all families followed this counsel, nor can it be demonstrated that there was a uniform “look” to Christians and their families, this thesis provides a detailed looked at the instructions that were given.

6.2. A Mosaic of Conclusions Regarding the Content of Counsel

In addition to providing details of the structure of counsel to Christians regarding family within the first and second century, this thesis also engaged the specifics of that psychagogical work. Given that the focus of much of the counsel was its content, a detailed analysis of that content must be provided. As seen previously, pastoral care of the Christian family in the 1st and 2nd century as envisaged in the sources surveyed was a part of the larger paraenetic-psychagogic enterprise and its content contained the following subpoints: *it had a theocentric trajectory which dominated the paraenesis and in which the paraenesis was founded; it had a telos shaped by an eschatological reality versus the temporal aspects of human relationships, and as such it was given within the typical relational structures of the culture and focused on the character of the Christian family without a call to change those larger relational structures*. When considered as a mosaic of understanding the instructions and counsel given to the family, this set of conclusions provides a way of understanding how the ‘family’ was treated within the early Christian movement or church of the first and second century. In essence, this mosaic of items drove the content for the Christian care of the family.

In Chapter five of this thesis, as the content regarding family in the early Christian sources was analyzed, a clear theme of theocentricity marked the nature of the counsel given to Christians regarding the household. Within that chapter, many examples were detailed wherein the theme of the fear or reverence of God was the basis for paraenesis regarding family. In two specific ways, this theme was further demonstrated in the preceding chapter. First, multiple examples were given from sources ranging a variety of genres showing the characteristic of theocentricity as a clear content theme. Secondly, in an excusus section, a comparison was given between two sources of the same period: one Christian and the other Stoic. This comparison was important, because in both sources, similar instructions or ideals were given to followers of each movement (Christianity and Stoicism). However, what was noteworthy is that even though the commands were similarly (i.e., commands regarding sexual expression, relational roles, etc.), the basis or foundation for the instruction was different from that of its counterpart. A clear

distinctive of the Christian paraenesis for family was that it found its basis in the fear and reverence of God.

Theocentricity then, was the basis of the instruction(s) and was seen as a goal or *telos* for the manner of undertaking family and household ideals. This reality was then further elaborated in that chapter where various household roles or topics were analyzed and graphed (i.e., Marriage, Sexuality, Children, Slaves), and a regular theme was the reception of a theocentric foundation for household and familial ideals among early Christian writings. The specifics seen in the detail of Chapter five, were that marriages were discussed with a focus on God as the basis for spousal interaction; sexual expression was limited and given boundaries due to reverence for God and Christian ethics; and training in the ‘fear of God’ marked the raising of children. These connections form the summary foundation of the claim that theocentricity was the foundation of care for the family within early Christianity.³

In addition to a theocentric theme in the paraenesis regarding family, there was also an eschatological⁴ nature to the instruction. Chapter five details that the content of the counsel had a future-focused, often soteriological aspect. As detailed in that chapter, in many instances, there was an ‘otherworldly’ flavor to the familial paraenesis, with a clear focus on living for the kingdom of God, and the eternal versus the present alone. To be clear, present dynamics were engaged, but the larger focus was the expectation of what was to come. This is further reinforced when as analyzed, the household instructions do not attempt to change the larger cultural paradigms (i.e., slavery) for the broader culture, but gave the ideal of the Christian undertaking family and household with a view towards the claims of the faith versus the sculpting of the larger Greco-Roman culture.

As seen in previous chapters, the analysis of the primary sources provides a picture of specific ideals, which writers of the sources envisioned and desired for families within the early Christian movement. This thesis provides a description of a goal for family care seen within the sources of the period, but not proof as to what every Christian family, or psychagogue to the family looked like. Thus, this thesis provides a picture of the vision of and structures for familial care but it cannot provide a complete picture of what families looked like in every instance. However, from the literature detailed here, these claims, fitting together as whole, are a solid conclusion from the examination of literature in question. Licona is right when he asserts, “We cannot go back in time. Nevertheless, remnants from the past exist in the form of manuscripts, artifacts and effects. Historians study these and attempt to reassemble them so that the resulting historical hypothesis serves as a window through which we can peer back into the past.”⁵ It is a window that we have sought to open through which we could view how a community of a bygone period dealt with the family and its spiritual care and nurture.

The importance of this mosaic of conclusions lies in the reality that there was intentionality behind the counsel given to early Christians or envisioned regarding the family in these sources. In the milieu of philosophic care within the period, there were specific foci for the Christian tradition in its treatment of the ‘family.’ These foci considered as a whole reveal what

³ The charts provided in Chapter five particularly highlight the data mentioned here.

⁴ Again, by this word I mean a future-oriented goal. One scholarly definition I referred to was that of Rowland when he helpfully gives a definition of “eschatology” in the context of early Christianity. He writes, “...we can find the term being used to describe the critical nature of human decisions, the fate of the individual believer's soul after death, the termination of this world order and a setting up of another, events like the last judgment and the resurrection of the dead, and a convenient way of referring to future hopes about the coming of God's kingdom on earth...” Christopher Rowland, “The Eschatology of the New Testament Church,” in *The Oxford Handbook of Eschatology*, ed. Jerry Walls (Oxford, U.K., Oxford University Press, 2008), 56.

⁵ Michael R. Licona, *The Resurrection of Jesus: A New Historiographical Approach* (Downers Grove, IL, 2010), 104-105.

the ultimate intent of the psychagogical enterprise was regarding the family. It is within this set of content markers that a bridge from Apostolic care was made. This bridge connects the psychagogical components of the Apostolic writers with that of the next few generations of Christian leaders. Ultimately, Augustine would become a major player in the work of the guiding of souls,⁶ and the time period in question provides a bridge to Augustine and other psychagogues to follow. For this thesis, although limited in scope, greater application of the concept of psychagogy has been demonstrated and is furthered in both its Christian and specifically ‘family’-connected nature.

6.3. Provision of Literature Background Conclusions and Compilation of Source Material

A necessary component of this thesis has been the compilation of background data necessary to the discussion of this thesis topic. Specifically, Chapter two was a background chapter of the current research in the field found within the secondary literature as well as a compilation of primary source material related to the background necessary to undertake the project. Thus, Chapter two provided a background into the larger Greco-Roman family structure of the period to undertake the topic of unearthing the Christian system of pastoral care and counsel to the family. The chapter provided a discussion of the family system and terms of usage within the period to then be able to engage the structure of ‘family’ as a system more specifically as it related to the Christian community. Although much of Chapter two is a synthesis of relevant secondary source material on the subject, this chapter provides an up-to-date and new background summary of the Greco-Roman family, and related components within the first and second centuries. Within this background, several historical realities were shown which are of particular importance for the research of this thesis. The first, and most dominant conclusion is that the Greco-Roman head of household, the *paterfamilias* held a powerful position within the family in the period. While there are recent studies, which argue for some variance in this view,⁷ the nearly uniform opinion is that this person was extremely dominant and was the center of the household.

Secondly, the terms for and structure of the Greco-Roman household were studied, and a synthesis of the study is the clear reality that the Greco-Roman household was not a nuclear family, but rather a “household” and thus included, in addition to the *paterfamilias* and his wife, any children, adopted or biological as well as slaves. This background reality is crucial for this research because any study of the family within this period, Christian or otherwise, necessarily entails an in-depth understanding of the family structure, which would have been the focus. It is also crucial in that households also had certain codes (*Haustafeln*), a necessary structure to understand in the further undertaking of this research. Thus, Chapter two also provided a detailed look at paternal and maternal relationships with children, but also a discussion regarding the issue of slaves within the household. Marital relationships were detailed also, and it was clearly seen that these relationships could have included love, but were not largely based on love or affection, at least in origin. This also led to a study of sexual expression within the period, and the general conclusion that men could engage in sexual activity outside of their marriage (more than one marriage was not permitted generally), with another woman (as long as she was not another freeman’s wife), slaves (which could include children) or other men. However, women were usually expected, once married, to not engage sexually with anyone aside from their husband. There were exceptions to this, but in the main, this difference in men and women becomes

⁶ Again, the work of Paul Kolbet specifically explores the connection of ‘psychagogy’ in later periods. See: Paul. R. Kolbet, *Augustine And the Cure of Souls: Revising a Classical Idea* (Notre Dame, University of Notre Dame, 2010).

⁷ Such as the role of this person over his wife, the ability, depending on the historical time period for this person to have *patria potestas* leading to death over his children, etc.

important to the study of counsel to the family within the period as it often related to sexual expression.

Thirdly, the training and education of children was examined in detail to provide a background for subsequent chapters. In this background, both *pedagogues* and *paideia* were crucial terms analyzed, and the instruction of children within the period was a serious endeavor, with great emphasis placed on the training of future citizens of the state. This would loom large in the chapters that followed, for within the Christian community envisioned within the sources surveyed, the training of children was seen as a priority.

This chapter also provided a look at Jewish families within the period and noted the similarities and dissimilarities with the larger Greco-Roman family structure largely because the bridge to Christian families would come, at least in part, with the connection to Jewish families. Therefore, some necessary background information was provided which helps to understand the familial milieu of the Christian family within the first and second century.

Thus, chapter two provided some necessary conclusions to the understanding of the family of the period in order that a more detailed look at the counsel given within the Christian community regarding family might be understood. Chapter two was a background chapter, and while largely a compilation of material already in the sources, serves as a launching pad for this thesis, but also a recent summary source on the structure of the Greco-Roman family within the period. Within that chapter, some discussion was provided in the conclusions where some secondary literature was analyzed and critiqued.

Following on the background material of Chapter two, Chapter three provided a detailed look at the Christian family within the period synthesizing extant primary source material from the period. The structure of that chapter was a chronological listing of the various extant Christian sources from within the period, both of the Apostolic and Ante-Nicene Corpuses. Rather than tracing the themes of Chapter two through the sources, the focus was to allow the various parts of each of the sources, which addressed 'family' directly or were in some way connected to 'family,' to come to the fore. The background themes discussed in Chapter two are discussed in the sources detailed in Chapter three, but the outlay of Chapter three was to show what themes connected to 'family' appear in the sources. Thus, a simple, yet necessary conclusion is that within the Christian literature of the first and second centuries, treatment of the family was addressed, and counsel regarding the family was given.

Within Chapter three, several conclusions from the primary source early Christian literature of the period arose. Although not monolithic where familial categories are addressed, the extant literature points to the importance of the family, and the distinct vision the leaders of the movement had for the family of the Christian. Sexual ideals were expressed in a way that differed from much of the non-Christian practice or literature of the times. This is not to say that every Christian followed those expectations, but it is only to say that the instruction of the early Christian movement regarding sexuality had a specific flavor that put it at odds with the sexual practices of many in the larger society. Within the Christian instruction was the vision that marriage was the only relationship for sexual expression, thus the prohibition of adultery, pederasty, fornication, and homosexuality are seen in the primary sources. What is monolithic in the sources is this conclusion regarding the exclusivity of sexual relations being confined to the marriage bed. While not abolished, the Christian slavemaster-to-slave relationship was to look different from that of the larger Greco-Roman world. Generally, on this point, it was the reality that the Christian *paterfamilias* was to utilize his power differently within the household than would a non-Christian *paterfamilias*.

Family was re-envisaged with a teleology of training for God versus family as a training ground for the state. Thus, the training of children was focused (not unlike the larger society) with certain aspects of *pietas*, but the focus was different. The household gods and the state were not the focus, but rather, for the Christian, the God of the Christian gospel was the focus, and this focus was to be central in the *paideia* of children.

Combining the work of Chapters two and three, there can be specific appraisals of some of the current secondary literature with a set of conclusions. The analysis provided within this research does not dispute claims made in the secondary literature regarding the makeup of the household, or even Christian household within the period. The work of (Moxnes, 1997) on ‘*domus*,’ ‘*oikos*’ and ‘*familia*,’ (Dixon, 1992) with a focus on ‘*paterfamilias*,’ (Balch and Osiek, 2003), (Bodel and Olyan, 2012), and (Nathan, 2002), all providing research into the Roman family and the early Christian family, are not really challenged in this thesis. Rather, following an extensive survey of the secondary literature and then primary source analysis, this work can largely utilize the understanding of family structure provided in those works. This thesis provides an opportunity to evaluate some of the prevailing secondary literature alongside a new analysis of the primary literature, which this thesis provides. One area of agreement is with the work of Hunter on the Christian family and marriage. At a few points in this thesis, agreement has been stated. For instance, Hunter is right when he finds in his analysis of 1 Clement 33.6-8 a tacit assumption that marriage within early Christian estimation is good (contra any argument that within the early Christian paraenesis, ascetic celibacy was the only ideal).⁸ An analysis of this passage, along with others, demonstrates that Hunter is correct. He also helpfully demonstrates that strong calls for sexual renunciation of all kinds were not explicit within the period.⁹ Even though research into later centuries may deviate from this, within the first and second centuries, this renunciation was not a strong component. This thesis provides an analysis of the primary source material and in the end finds alignment with Hunter on an understanding of marriage and sexual expression and/or renunciation.

In addition, I believe that Harper (2013) and Hurtado (2015) were correct in their assessments of sexual expression and expectations for early Christians in the first and second centuries over against Glancy (2011) and Castelli (2017). In the conclusion section of Chapter three of this thesis, I argued that Glancy and Castelli might be assuming too much. While they both contribute to the secondary literature regarding Christians and early sexual expression, together, they miss components, which, in my opinion, affect their own conclusions. Specifically, Castelli writes:

“Focused as we are primarily on written, literary sources that provide scholars with the social and moral perspectives of literate church elites, we remain always at a remove from Christians on the ground, as it were—the many who saw no contradiction between membership in the church and full participation in the social and economic life of the society at large. By reading the idealizing and aspirational admonitions of some church leaders against the grain, one encounters a more complicated portrait of the lived reality of Christian sex and sexual renunciation in antiquity.”¹⁰

However, particularly because the extant sources present an expectation of aspiration to certain ideals, the content of those sexual ideals voiced were the very content of Christian counsel. She acknowledges that we are focused “primarily on written, literary sources” and yet there appears to be a slightly unfounded presupposition in her argument in that she argues that these sources were the “social and moral perspectives of literate elites.” It is possible to demonstrate from the various genres of extant sources that many of the sources were either sermons or epistles written specifically for dissemination even among the illiterate and non-elite classes. Sermons and epistles in this period were preached or read to church audiences and passed from church to church for just that purpose. Also, as documented in Chapter three, there are examples of

⁸ Hunter, *Marriage in the Early Church*, 9.

⁹ Hunter, *Marriage and Sexuality in Early Christianity*, 7-21.

¹⁰ Castelli, Elizabeth A., “Sex and Sexual Renunciation II: Developments in research since 2000,” in *The Early Christian World*, ed. Philip F. Esler (London: Routledge, 2017), 381.

individuals within the primary source material, such as Justin, who report to having been taught material from others in the faith.¹¹ This example serves as a reminder that information, whether from so-called elites, or not, made its way around the Christian movement. Lastly, her presupposition seems to discount the cross-section of economic status present within the early Christian movement. It seems unlikely that the various primary source documents were only the moral perspectives of “literate church elite.” As was detailed in Chapter two, many Greco-Roman slaves were pedagogues and would have had access to the education which non-slave heirs would have received. There is also every indication that many slaves would have been literate to help the household function within the economy. What “literate church elite” is the referent within her argument? If it were a reference to the leaders, or teachers, then yes, their opinions would have been looked to as that which an adherent of the faith was expected to value. If by “elite,” she means an elite status within the larger Greco-Roman culture, then she seems to miss some of the counterpoints regarding the abilities of the so-called non-elites within the larger Greco-Roman culture detailed in Chapter three. In short, slaves may not have been considered elite in the larger culture, but they may have been literate, and in terms of the Christian movement, considered “elite.” This is not to say that we can prove what every Christian family looked like, but only to argue that she appears to undervalue the “aspirational admonitions of some church leaders against the grain.” It remains to be seen as to whether her thesis and those with whom she cites agreement, such as Glancy (2011), or that of those like Hurtado and Harper, will prevail.

Glancy, for her part, argues that Christian slaveholders likely would have followed the larger culture in the first and second century in the utilization of slaves for sex. She writes,

“A contentious area in the study of Christian slaveholding is the question of Christian attitudes towards slaveholders who enjoyed casual sexual access to their slaves. New Testament scholars have typically assumed that the earliest Christians restricted sexual activity to legitimate marriages, a restriction that would place slaves off-limit to their owners, unless, of course, their owners married them. First-and second-century Christian sources did not address the sexual use of slaves...Just as Christians in antiquity accepted as morally unproblematic a slaveholder’s right to beat a slave, they seem, in the first decades of the Christian movement, to have accepted the sexual use of slaves as part of the normal order of the world.”¹²

However, Glancy seems to assume too much when she writes, “first and second century Christian sources did not address the sexual use of slaves.” First, there is the tacit assumption that the strong prohibited language against sexual immorality and fornication (*porneia*) in the sources she mentions from the period would not have included the inherent assumption that slaves were included in those to be avoided sexually. This is particularly the case as one considers the Old Testament backdrop to the early Christian movement. While there was not a literal statement of prohibition in the early sources against the use of adult slaves for casual sex, as detailed within Chapter three, there were strong calls to forsake pederasty (which undoubtedly would have involved slave children) as well as calls to treat slaves gently. There was also a range of meaning involved in the discussion of sexual immorality. Just because the larger culture engaged in something does not mean that the lack of a literal prohibition means that the early Christians would have engaged in it. Therefore, while providing a helpful avenue of research, in this area, Glancy likely overstates her case. While an area of current debate in early Christian studies, the

¹¹ “ἐκτιθέναί τὰ γεννώμενα πονηρὸν εἶναι δεδιδάγμεθα.” See: Justin, *First Apology*, eds. Denis Minns and Paul Parvis, pp. 152-154.

¹² Jennifer Glancy, “Slavery and The Rise of Christianity,” in *The Cambridge World History of Slavery*, vol. 1 *The Ancient Mediterranean World*, eds. Keith Bradley and Paul Cartledge (Cambridge, U.K.: Cambridge University Press, 2011), 461.

idea that Christians did not evidence from the infancy of the movement, a clear change in sexual practice from the larger Greco-roman culture is not yet proven. In this thesis though, I only argue for what the extant writings reveal as an ideal or expressed expectation, and not that we can know how every Christian operated sexually.

I also believe that Cardman (2008) needs a slight adjustment, not in her actual conclusions, but in the nuance with which she discusses what we can know about the family in sexual expression and the exposure of children. For example, she writes, "...it would be difficult, at best, to demonstrate that most early Christians were significantly different from their pagan counterparts in terms of care of the self, sexual morality, marriage and household, corporal punishment, or even exposure of children."¹³ Citing Meeks (1993), Osiek and MacDonald (2006), Corbier (2001), and Bakke (2005), she implies that a clear demonstration of a difference would be difficult to prove. Footnoting Bakke (2005), she admits that there are some stronger assertions in the literature. However, can such a demonstration be difficult to surmise? For, both source material of a non-Christian nature (like the reference given in Chapter two by Galen) and of a Christian nature like the *Epistle to Diognetus* (detailed in Chapter three) portray Christians with a call to a distinct sexual ethic openly displayed. This is one area where there is a difference of opinion in the secondary literature as for instance, on this issue, Hurtado (2015) and Harper (2013) would argue differently from Cardman. Also, given the exhortations seen in non-Christian primary source literature for sexual restraint within other philosophical schools, such as Stoicism, detailed in previous chapters, in slight disagreement with Cardman, I would argue that given the various calls for restraint from various schools or movements in the culture (i.e., Stoicism etc.), the Christian family looking different, at least in the areas of sexual mortality and the exposure of children, was a clear possibility. Cardman is not technically wrong overall in the sense that even though we do have clear paraenesis in the Christian literature as well as some archeological and epigraphic evidence that point us to early Christian expectations, we cannot "prove" what every single Christian, or Christian household looked like in these areas. But perhaps her summation could be tempered slightly with the acknowledgement that we do have enough primary source evidence to demonstrate what the expected ideal was.

Therefore, this thesis, in both Chapters two and three, provides an important background for itself, and for the field in the understanding of the family within the first and second century—the proto-orthodox Christian family as well as the non-Christian Greco-Roman, and/or Jewish family. This background comes from current, and formative secondary sources, but particularly in the case of Chapter three and the Christian family, a detailed compilation is given of the treatment of the family from the Christian primary sources. This background, necessary to the thesis, is furthered in Chapters four and five, and without this background data, the thesis would not have a good point of departure. A detailed understanding of the Christian family within its period context and social context provides this thesis a springboard for understanding how pastoral care must be structured. However, these two chapters also provide for other areas of inquiry in the future in that this thesis brings together primary and secondary sources related to family and can offer a helpful point of departure for future lines of research inquiry.

6.3.1. Provision of Psychagogical Comparisons of Greco-Roman families w/ Christian Families

This thesis details my argument that the counsel related to 'family' within the early Christian literature of the period was more monolithic in nature than the non-Christian treatment

¹³ Francine Cardman, "Early Christian Ethics," in *The Oxford Handbook of Early Christian Studies*, eds. Susan Ashbrook Harvey and David G. Hunter (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008), 939.

of family within the larger culture. While there were cultural expectations, the philosophical, legal, and religious approaches to ‘family’ and household were different from the Christian ideal of ‘family’ found within the extant Christian literature surveyed. I will not recount here all the comparisons which this thesis makes between the larger Greco-Roman family and the envisaged Christian family of the first and second century except to summarize a few main points. First, this thesis argues that when the areas of marriage, sexuality, children, and household relational structures are discussed in the literature of the period, there is a fairly uniform ethical ideal found within the literature. This stated ethic is different from the larger family structure (Chapter two) of the Greco-Roman society and there are clear markers of difference between the family envisaged in the Christian writings and those outside of Christian writings. When there are similarities, such as some ethical requirement found in common in Stoicism for instance (i.e. marital faithfulness, etc.), the foundations for the similarities are different. The sample comparison provided in Chapter five provides a clear example of this.

Early Christianity had a unique and distinct approach to family in its paraenetic sources. This is seen in the reality that relational structures were to be used for the growth of the soul toward a ‘reverential fear’ of God, its sexual boundaries were tight and did not allow for the permissiveness of sexual promiscuity seen within the larger culture, and while its structure borrowed from the larger culture (paterfamilias, slaves, etc.), it re-envisioned the character of those relationships. In short, the Christian family was to be intentionally different. Thus, slave-to-master relationships took on a different form, as did the parent-to-child relationship. This form was driven by a newly envisaged relational structure resting on a different teleological foundation. Within the content of the Christian counsel, the basis for these differences is seen. This is not to say that every Christian adherent lived up to every stated ideal, but only that the early Christian ideals expressed on the sources was divergent from many practices in the larger Greco-Roman culture.

There was also a difference of approach in the areas of *paideia* and *paraenesis* between Christian and non-Christian sources of practice and instruction. This thesis argues that the focus or *telos* of these endeavors meant that they took on a different form. So, whereas *paraenesis* and/or *protrepsis* are seen in other philosophic traditions of care within the period, within the Christian community of the period as seen in the literature, the guiding principle behind the education and moral instruction of family household members was soul guidance. When placed against the backdrop of the larger Greco-Roman family, the care of the Christian family shines and its light illumines its motive: *paideia* and *paraenesis* focused on the guiding of the Christian soul within an eschatological and soteriological framework. Thus, both external components (i.e. how relationships worked and functioned) and internal components (i.e. the goal or basis for functioning) were different when the two (Christian and larger Greco-Roman families) are compared and contrasted.

Understanding the counsel and care given the family within the Christian community of the period requires placing it against the backdrop of ‘family’ in general within the period. The subsequent comparison then provides a look into what was valued by those seeking to care for the family. This Christian distinctiveness expected in the sources matters and points to the strong claims that the Christian faith made upon its adherents. However, as has been seen, the early Christian movement, as seen in the sources researched, as a faith did not simply offer ethical imperatives, but grounded those ethical commands in certain foundations, namely theocentric and eschatological motivations.

6.4. The Potential Further Research Avenues Based on this Research

Although this thesis provides a contribution to the literature, it also serves as a point of departure for future inquiry into related or even dissimilar themes. Specifically, following this thesis, the research here could be furthered beyond the particular period markers or boundaries of

this thesis. By design, this research was limited to the first and second century. However, this research serves as a point of departure for expanded research that could be undertaken to ascertain how later periods in the unfolding history of the Christian movement undertook their pastoral care of the family. For instance, an inquiry into how the foundation laid within these first two centuries (as detailed in this research) was furthered or changed could be investigated. In other words, did later generations clearly follow the same principles and foci, or were there developments over time beyond this period? Historians of pastoral care will also need to place this understanding of early family care and counsel in a trajectory of pastoral care and counseling in general longitudinally across the Christian development, which would be a Herculean task, but a task for which this thesis offers initial insight.

Of course, other avenues of study stemming from this thesis abound such as a micro-level study on this theme based within a specific context. This thesis examines the question on a macro-level within a two-century period, but further research could be undertaken on a location specific micro-level where specific regions, communities or cities could be examined perhaps connected to regions where extant literature within the period was written. Or, a micro-level study could be undertaken on one relational role, household structure, etc. Beyond this, the mosaic of terms that marked the content of the pastoral care to the family could also be analyzed within other social constructs of the Christian movement (i.e., was theocentricity seen in other topics dealt with within the extant literature besides the family?). So, taking the conclusions of the content of family care and counsel to other areas or topics within the Christian literature of the period and outside the period could be another avenue to explore.

This thesis has been a lengthy, challenging, and rewarding undertaking. Seeking to understand how early Christians cared for and counseled the family provides a multiplicity of research avenues to explore. In so doing, I was met with a vision in the literature of families and individual Christians being guided in their souls to consider the larger realities of their faith as it was expressed in their daily family operations. This thesis started with a specific question: “how did the Christian community of the first and second century counsel and care for the family?” These six chapters provide an answer to that question. In the end, the literature of the period portrays Christian families within the period, living here in time and space, as preparation for the Kingdom that was to come. Caring for the family was one important aspect of the larger enterprise of caring for the soul. Thus, within the first and second century, family care and counsel was soul care.

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