

# THE JOURNAL OF FAMILY MINISTRY

EQUIPPING THE GENERATIONS FOR GOSPEL-CENTERED LIVING

<http://www.familyministrytoday.com>

VOLUME 1 • ISSUE 2 • SPRING/SUMMER 2011

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Yearly subscription costs for two issues: Individual inside the U. S., \$30; individual outside the U.S., \$50; institutional inside the U. S., \$50; institutional outside the U. S., \$70. Opinions expressed in *The Journal of Family Ministry* are solely the responsibility of the authors and are not necessarily those of the editors, members of the Peer Review and Advisory Board, or participants in forum articles. We encourage the submission of letters, suggestions, and articles by our readers. Any article submissions should conform to the

*Journal of Biblical Literature* stylistic guidelines. The editorial philosophy will be consistent with *The Baptist Faith and Message* (2000) and with the Seminary's *Abstract of Principles* (1858). This periodical is indexed in *ATLA Religion Database*, a product of the American Theological Library Association, 300 S. Wacker Dr., Suite 2100, Chicago, IL 60606 USA. E-mail: [atla@atla.com](mailto:atla@atla.com), WWW: <http://www.atla.com/>.

*THE JOURNAL OF FAMILY MINISTRY* is published semi-annually by the Gheens Center for Christian Family Ministry, The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, 2825 Lexington Road, Louisville, KY 40280. Spring/Summer 2011. Vol. 1, No. 2. Copyright © 2011 The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary. ISSN 2152-6397. Second Class postage paid at Louisville, Kentucky. Postmaster: Send address changes to: The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, Cooke Hall 112, 2825 Lexington Road, Louisville, Kentucky 40280.



# The Family Discipleship Perceptions and Practices Survey

TIMOTHY PAUL JONES



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Discipleship and Family Ministry at The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary where he coordinates family ministry programs and edits *The Journal of Family Ministry*. Previously, he served sixteen years as a pastor, youth minister, and children's minister. A recipient of the Baker Book House Award for Theological Studies, the NAPCE Scholastic Recognition Award, and the 2010 Retailers' Choice Award for his book *Christian History Made Easy*, Timothy has authored or contributed to twenty books. Timothy lives in St. Matthews with his wife Rayann and daughters Hannah and Skylar. He enjoys hiking, playing games with his family, and drinking French-pressed coffee. The Jones family is involved in children's ministry at the east campus of Sojourn Community Church.

"How can I find out what parents in my congregation are doing to disciple their children?" Early in my explorations of family ministry, I heard that question many times. Then, in dialogues with churches that were engaging effectively in family ministry, I discovered that the reassessments that had led to transformation in their ministries often started with a simple survey. Recognizing the need for a tool that could be used in a wide variety of congregations, I began to develop the Family Discipleship Perceptions and Practices Survey.

Initially, thirty-two items were drafted. An expert panel of six persons in the field of family ministry revised the items and approved the content validity of twenty items. Eight of these items—items 9 through 16 in the instrument's final form—gathered objective data related to the frequency of particular practices and experi-

ences. Twelve items had to do with parental perceptions. It was necessary to validate these items statistically.

The twelve items related to parental perceptions were first field-tested with a group of 117 parents in three evangelical congregations. Principle component factor analysis revealed that four items related weakly or negatively to the primary component; these four items were eliminated. The remaining eight items exhibited strong internal consistency reliability (Cronbach alpha coefficient, 0.88). Two research projects conducted with larger samples after the field test resulted in similarly strong coefficients, suggesting a stable and reliable instrument.

Items 2, 3, 4, 5, and 7 are reverse-scored. If adding items using a scale of 1 to 6 to analyze data from the surveys, reverse the order of the scale—so that it goes from 6 to 1 instead—on these items.

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## THE FAMILY DISCIPLESHIP PERCEPTIONS AND PRACTICES SURVEY

This survey is intended for parents with children living at home.

For the purposes of this survey, “church leaders” include  
pastors, elders, ministers, deacons, teachers, or small-group leaders.

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Somewhat disagree	Somewhat agree	Agree	Strongly agree
01. I prioritize consistent family devotional or worship times in my family's schedule.	<input type="radio"/>					
02. I would like to do regular family devotions or Bible reading in our home, but my family is just too busy for that right now. It will probably be that way for quite a while.	<input type="radio"/>					
03. The church is where children ought to receive most of their Bible teaching.	<input type="radio"/>					
04. When my child spontaneously asks a biblical or theological question, I really wish that my child would have asked a minister or other church leader instead of me.	<input type="radio"/>					
05. I want to do whatever it takes for my child to succeed in certain sports or school activities—even if that means my family is too busy some weeks to eat any meals together.	<input type="radio"/>					
06. Parents—and particularly fathers—have a responsibility to engage personally in a discipleship process with each of their children.	<input type="radio"/>					
07. Church leaders are the people primarily responsible for discipling my children and teaching them to share the gospel with others.	<input type="radio"/>					
08. My church has helped me to develop a clear plan for my child's spiritual growth.	<input type="radio"/>					

	Never	Once	A couple times	Three or four times	Five or six times	Seven or more times
09. Other than mealtimes, how many times in the past <i>WEEK</i> have I prayed aloud with any of my children?	<input type="radio"/>					
10. How many times in the past <i>WEEK</i> has my family eaten a meal together with television, music, and other similar media turned off?	<input type="radio"/>					
11. How many times in the past <i>MONTH</i> have I read or discussed the Bible with any of my children?	<input type="radio"/>					
12. How many times in the past <i>MONTH</i> have I discussed any biblical or spiritual matters with any of my children while engaging in day-to-day activities?	<input type="radio"/>					
13. How many times in the past <i>TWO MONTHS</i> has my family engaged in any family devotional or worship time in our home?	<input type="radio"/>					
14. How many times in the past <i>TWO MONTHS</i> have I talked with my spouse or with a close friend about my children's spiritual development?	<input type="radio"/>					
15. How many times in the past <i>YEAR</i> have I intentionally participated with one or more of my children in witnessing to a non-Christian or inviting a non-Christian to church?	<input type="radio"/>					
16. How many times in the past <i>YEAR</i> has any church leader made contact with me to help me to engage actively in my child's spiritual development?	<input type="radio"/>					

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- are frustrated with programmed ministries that fail to produce results.

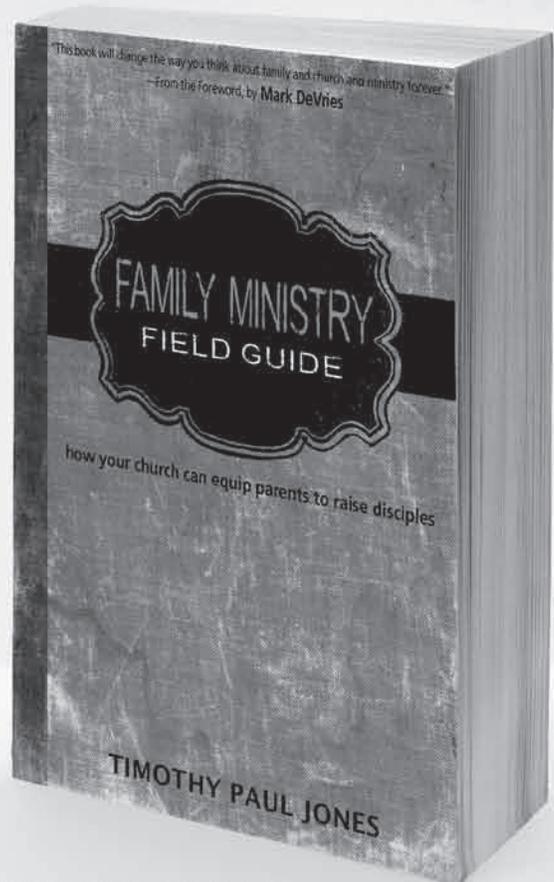
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#### **ABOUT THE AUTHOR**



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