

Intersection Content Example

Areas: Family Law and Policy

Content: Marriage – Discussion Questions

General: Intersection content examples provide samples of course content from a program or discipline with suggestions about how one or more insights from the Lutheran (and, more broadly, the entire Christian faith) perspective can inform that content.

Good instructional methods are always a part of effective teaching. But the examples do not provide a formula or recipe, and their use is not about some particular teaching method, a set of criteria, or a list of rubrics for “the right Lutheran or Christian” instructional solution. (Such an approach would put us, as Lutherans say, “under the Law rather than grace.”) The examples do indicate opportunities where the instructor and student can explore and apply specific themes related to the Gospel and a biblical world view as these may relate to course content.

To use the example, simply scan or read it for content and the featured intersections. Doing so will help acquaint you with direct and indirect ways by which the instructor can carry over some of these ideas into her or his own course work. For further background on the Lutheran tradition, see the materials at <http://twokingdoms.cune.edu/> under the menu tabs for the Grad Programs, the Lutheran Tradition, and the About page. For additional content ideas see the tabs for Content Areas and for Resources.

Several traditions inform our views and definitions of marriage and family. The definition of marriage and family is under careful scrutiny in these first and second decades of the 21st century. Yet the fact that we still measure our calendar as the 21st century after the birth of Christ indicates the significance of such traditions.

The 16th century also marks a period in which marriage and family received renewed examination. The Roman Catholic Church and the Reformation movements produced a stream of discussions, debates, and disputes about the nature of marriage and family, all well documented and accessible today to the interested reader. Like today, those discussions appealed in part to earlier views and traditions and then articulated positions for policy reflected in legislative and judicial practice.

The Lutheran tradition emerged from the Reformers’ theme of *ad fontes*, that is, “back to the sources,” the sources chiefly being the texts of the Bible. This particular tradition, re-rooted in the early church but constantly adapting to the changing conditions of the world, devised a view of marriage located in its doctrine of vocation, a doctrine that recognizes ministry and service not only in conventional church offices but among all Christian in all walks of life and even non-Christians. (Historians generally agree that this inclusive view of vocation as an expression of the Gospel, contemporaneous with the Renaissance, opened the way to the Enlightenment and modern democracies along with their advantages and disadvantages.)

For class discussion, read the brief essay, [“Your Family Vocation”](#) by Gene Edward Veith who applies this Lutheran tradition about marriage and family to the concept of vocation.

1. Discuss whether you agree with this perspective and why, why not, or both; and whether it is commensurate with your own religious or secular tradition.

2. Is this view compatible with our present society and the current state and federal legal trends?
3. As you agree or disagree with this view, do you find that you consider marriage and family to be a bedrock institution that any system of government must recognize or a human invention that human organizations can arrange, revise, or disregard based on contingency?