

# The Journal

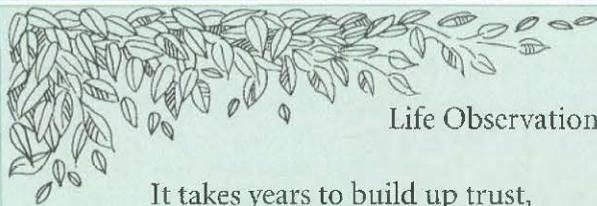


A SHEPHERDESS INTERNATIONAL RESOURCE FOR MINISTRY SPOUSES

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## Life Observations

It takes years to build up trust,  
but only seconds to destroy it.

You can get by on charm for about 15 minutes.  
After that, you'd better know something.

Don't compare yourself to the best others can do,  
but to the best you can do.

It's not what happens to people that's important.  
It's what they do about it.

Always leave loved ones with loving words.  
It may be the last time you see them.

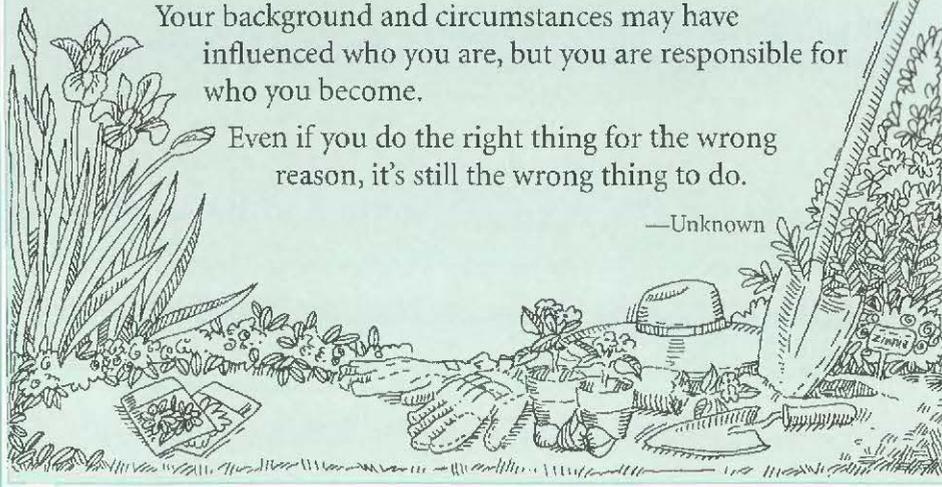
You control your attitude  
or it controls you.

It isn't always enough to be forgiven by others.  
Sometimes you have to learn to forgive yourself.

Your background and circumstances may have  
influenced who you are, but you are responsible for  
who you become.

Even if you do the right thing for the wrong  
reason, it's still the wrong thing to do.

—Unknown



## The Journal

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## Editor's Musings

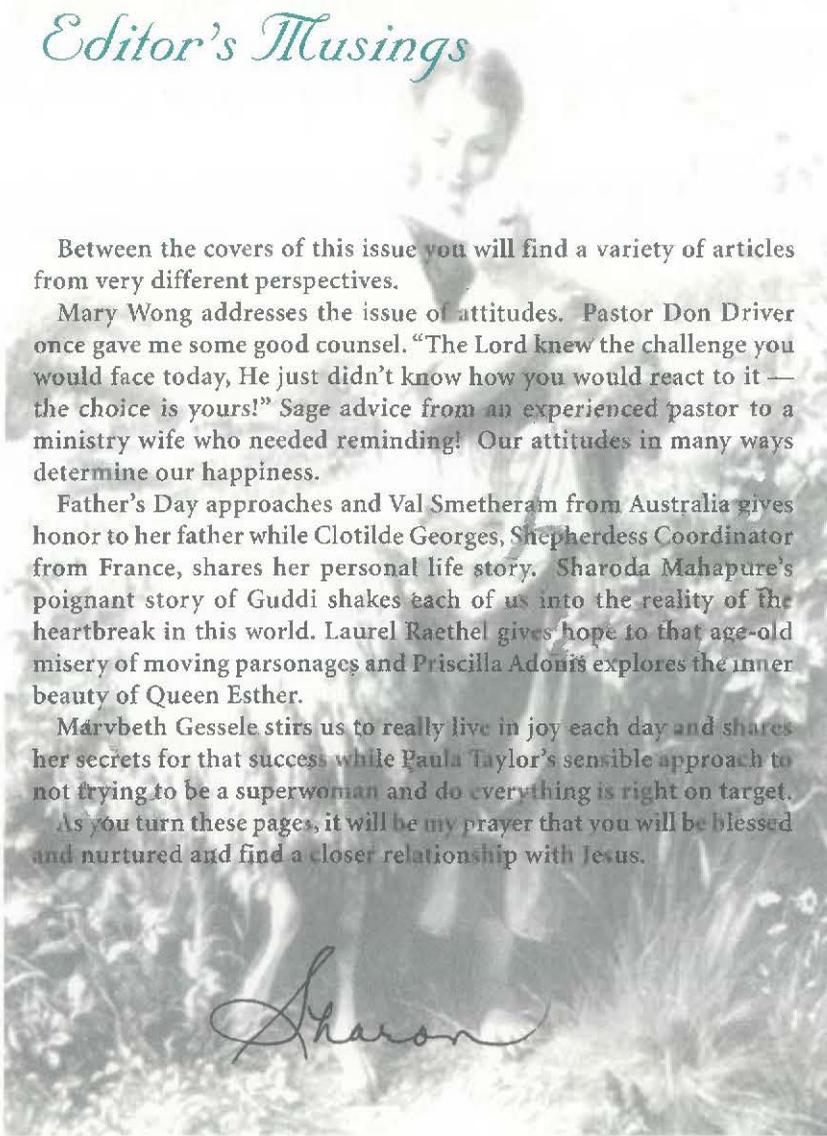
Between the covers of this issue you will find a variety of articles from very different perspectives.

Mary Wong addresses the issue of attitudes. Pastor Don Driver once gave me some good counsel. "The Lord knew the challenge you would face today, He just didn't know how you would react to it — the choice is yours!" Sage advice from an experienced pastor to a ministry wife who needed reminding! Our attitudes in many ways determine our happiness.

Father's Day approaches and Val Smetheram from Australia gives honor to her father while Clotilde Georges, Shepherdess Coordinator from France, shares her personal life story. Sharoda Mahapure's poignant story of Guddi shakes each of us into the reality of the heartbreak in this world. Laurel Raethel gives hope to that age-old misery of moving parsonages and Priscilla Adonis explores the inner beauty of Queen Esther.

Marybeth Gessele stirs us to really live in joy each day and shares her secrets for that success while Paula Taylor's sensible approach to not trying to be a superwoman and do everything is right on target.

As you turn these pages, it will be my prayer that you will be blessed and nurtured and find a closer relationship with Jesus.



Sharon

### *The Journal* A SHEPHERDESS

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# Attitudes Can Make or Break

Mary H. T. Wong

An ordained minister's wife since 1981, Mary Wong has served in various educational institutions in the Asia-Pacific region as an English teacher and chair of the English Department before she was most recently director of Children's, Family, and Women's Ministries in the Northern Asia-Pacific Division. As a teacher and a pastor's wife, she has led a very fulfilling life in ministering to the members of the church, both young and old. Mary and her husband recently moved to San Jose, California where they will be working in ministry. They have a daughter LeAnn, who recently graduated from Andrews University.



*Two young students from the present and two literary giants from the past lead the author to reflect that attitudes can make life either linger on the clouds or leap to the rainbows.*

## Betty: Am I Destined for Clouds?

The rich contralto voice wafted over the auditorium and captivated me. I looked up and saw Betty.\* It was always a joy to listen to her sing. She caught my attention almost from the first day I joined the college as chair of the English Department. Betty was attractive, talented and vivacious. She learned English with ease and could speak it like a native. *This girl will have a bright future,* I thought to myself. However, I was in for a surprise. There were days when Betty was radiant, seemingly on cloud nine. She would perform very well in classes. But other days she would disappear from classes—in fact, from sight for days at a time. Betty was a victim of depression. Whenever it hit her, she would bury herself in the refuge of her room, unable to do anything until her depression lifted.

What was wrong? An unhappy childhood. Her father's infidelity

and the consequent bitterness of her mother had impacted little Betty. As Betty grew up, she became increasingly more bitter toward her parents for having robbed her of a happy childhood. She was convinced that her future was ruined as a result. A failed romance in college compounded her condition.

As Betty approached graduation, I seriously considered employing her as a teacher. But I did not, simply because of her unpredictable behavior. A teacher, however capable, cannot afford to be unpredictable. I chose someone else, less capable but more stable. Betty found a job teaching in the academy. Her self-image improved, and she was able to perform quite well. Unfortunately, her old malady soon returned, and she had to leave teaching for another job. Today she is out of the church and still wallowing in self-pity—a handicap that has prevented her from being the successful person she could have been, for Betty went through the storms of life and saw only gloom and darkness in the days ahead.

## Arlene: Clouds Don't Last Forever

Arlene\* came to campus a few

years later. Like Betty, she too was a victim of a broken home. Her father had left home. Her mother was a schizophrenic, and so was her only brother. While in college, Arlene was not only constantly embarrassed by the bizarre behavior of her brother, who was attending the same college, but was also subjected to verbal and physical abuse by her mother whenever she appeared on campus, which was quite often. Arlene dreaded vacation at home; hence, she preferred the loneliness of a deserted college campus during the summer months. Her mother was possessive. Whenever Arlene had a boyfriend, her mother did her best to break up the relationship. She never had any successful relationship until after her mother's death.

Did Arlene have any reason to be miserable, depressed? Plenty. However, she was determined not to let adverse circumstances prevent her from getting the most out of life. Always helpful, radiant, and upbeat, she was one of the most cheerful girls on campus. Because of a sensitivity to suffering developed in her as a result of her unfortunate background, she decided to be trained as a nurse in order to alleviate others' suffering. After graduation, she worked as a nurse before becoming one of the administrators in an orphanage, devoting her life to meeting the needs of the little orphans in her care. Today she is happily married with a family of her own. Unlike Betty, Arlene went through the storms of life but saw only the light of dawn.

Reflecting on what Betty and Arlene made of their lives took me back to a literary journey to the lives of Jonathan Swift and Charles Lamb.

#### Swift—Bitter Forever

Jonathan Swift (1667-1745), one

of the most outstanding English prose writers of his time, was noted for his juvenile satires—bitter and invective—in which he railed against individuals, his country, and the world. Although there were brief glimpses of the playful side to Swift's nature in some of his personal letters and works, so bitter were his satires that some critics considered him a misanthrope. The Earl of Orrery considered Swift's writings, particularly *Gulliver's Travels*, an "intolerable" "misanthropy ... the representation which he has given us of human nature, must terrify, and

*She was determined not to let adverse circumstances prevent her from getting the most out of life.*

debase the mind of the reader who views it."<sup>1</sup> Martin Day concurred: "the greatest satirist in English literature might be explained, superficially, as a sick man to whom, like the sick Carlyle, the whole world had a bad smell."<sup>2</sup>

Swift was born the posthumous son of an Englishman who left his family and moved to Ireland to improve his fortunes. Consequently, Jonathan and his four brothers were brought up by his uncle Godwin. Chafing at his lot as a "poor relative," Swift developed into a disagreeable young man whose relationship with his uncle turned sour. At his uncle's death, Jonathan discovered that he was left out of the will. Embittered, Swift left for England and eventually became secretary to Sir William

Temple, a distant relative. He remained with him intermittently for some years, "reading aloud to his employer, keeping accounts, and cursing his fate."<sup>3</sup> However, his scornful attitude towards pedants, of whom he considered Temple to be one, affected his relationship with his boss, and he was once again left out of the will when Temple died. Swift turned even more bitter.

Between 1695 and 1713, Swift served in various capacities in Ireland—vicar of Laracor, and Dean of St. Patrick's Cathedral, Dublin—and threw in his lot with a people whose abject poverty and misery had strongly affected him and whom, he believed, had been exploited by the British government. He took up their cause, writing such biting satires as "The Drapier's Letters" and "A Modest Proposal."

Swift's bitterness permeated even his romantic life. Having been repulsed by Jane Waring, he scorned marriage with her although she later relented. He developed a close relationship with Esther Johnson (referred to as Stella in his works), one who evoked the tenderest utterances in his letters and journals. However, although it was rumored that she was his secret wife, there was no record of his marriage to her. According to some critics, being the practical idealist he was, he didn't want to ruin an ideal relationship with marriage. Her death in 1728, however, left him desolate. This, together with a life-long suffering due to vertigo and a tendency to giddiness, deafness and melancholia, intensified his hatred for the world and his personal suffering. Toward the end of his life, he turned insane and died a bitter man. A master craftsman of English language, a shrewd observer of human struggle, a sympathizer with

the less fortunate, Swift could have made the world a better place both for himself and for those who were less fortunate, but that was not to be. Bitterness forever marked his life.

### Lamb—Courage to Live

Charles Lamb (1775-1834), is known as “the prince of English essayists.” Readers delight in his writings—whimsical, lighthearted, entertaining, and witty—essays that reveal little of his tragic background.

Lamb was born the son of a lawyer’s confidential clerk. At 17, he started work as a clerk in the East India House and served there for the next 33 years. Both he and his elder sister were victims of a hereditary tendency toward mental illness. As a young man, Lamb fell in love with a lovely girl. He thought his life was going to be happy, but the girl dropped him to marry someone with a higher station in life. Lamb couldn’t take the romantic breakdown and landed briefly in a Hoxton house for mental illness. After his recovery, he wrote facetiously to William Coleridge, “I am got somewhat rational now, and don’t bite anyone. But mad I was.”<sup>1</sup>

A year later, tragedy struck again when his elder sister stabbed his mother to death in an insane fit. Lamb then decided to assume responsibility for his sister the rest of her life. This meant constant moving for the two in order to prevent gossip. By the time he was 23, Lamb found his East India House job boring and his family duties increasing: support of a maniac sister, a dying aunt, and a prematurely senile father.

Did Lamb allow these tragedies in his personal life to overwhelm him? No. Disappointed in love and fearful that the hereditary tendencies to insanity would be passed on to

future generations, he gave up the idea of marriage. But he wrote, “Dream Children,” an essay filled with pathos and yet entertaining and humorous in depicting the children he imagined he had. Most notable of his works were *Essays of Elia*, a volume of delightful personal reflections.

Unlike Swift, he did not rail at the weakness and fallibility of humankind. Instead he took a positive look at life: “I often shed tears in the motley strand for fullness of joy at so much life . . . I am determined to lead a merry life in the midst of sinners.”<sup>2</sup>

*Whether we emerge from  
the storm a wreck or a  
survivor, a Swift or a Lamb,  
a Betty or an Arlene  
depends on our attitude.*

Of him, Day wrote, “He had cause in the series of family and personal tragedies to defy the gods and complain that the world was wrong and had wronged him. But behind the smiling, off-hand Elia [a pseudonym he used for his volumes of essays] is a monument of courage, one who did not advertise his achievement and would not ask the world to cut itself to his plan. Possibly no man, and certainly none with the pall of insanity hanging over him, has so determinedly deported himself with true sanity and wholesomeness.”<sup>3</sup>

### Between the Two: Attitude

What made the difference in the

lives of the two students and their literary counterparts? Was it their background? No, Their ability? No. Their environment? No. The difference is *attitude*.

Consider Paul, for example. His life too was such as to swing between the polarities of Swift and Lamb, Betty and Arlene, but he did not let pessimism sway his life. He had the right attitude. To him nothing in life really mattered except Jesus. To live or to die, Jesus was everything to him. Suffering, hunger, toil, rejection, imprisonment, betrayal—all these and more he could bear because of his attitude: “And we know that in

all things God works for the good of those who love Him, who have been called according to His purpose” (Romans 8:28, NIV). Even as he awaited his execution, he could write: “But one thing I do. Forgetting what is behind and straining toward what is ahead, I press on toward the goal to win the prize for which God has called me heavenward in Christ Jesus” (Philippians 3:13, 14, NIV).

The frail bark of humanity is often storm tossed on the tempestuous sea of life.

Whether we emerge from the storm a wreck or a survivor, a Swift or a Lamb, a Betty or an Arlene depends on our attitude: Are we able to break through the clouds to perceive the rainbow of God’s promises beyond?



\* not her real name.

<sup>1</sup> *Remarks on the Life and Writings of Dr. Jonathan Swift* (London: Charles Bathurst, 1755), p. 184.

<sup>2</sup> Martin S. Day, *History of English Literature 1660-1837* (New York: Doubleday & Co., 1963), p. 100.

<sup>3</sup> William Vaughn Moody & Robert M. Lovett, *History of English Literature* (New York: Charles Scribner’s Sons, 1964), p. 189.

<sup>4</sup> Day, p. 518.

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 524.

<sup>6</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 522.

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# The Other Bill Gates

Val Smetheram

Val Smetheram, British born, is a naturalized Australian living in Queensland, Australia. Passionate about the environment, justice, and all growing things, she is an amateur writer and poet with over a hundred pieces published. She has been a minister's wife for over 18 years. Her ambitions are to become superfit, learn to swim and write a book, not necessarily in that order. Her motto: Life begins at 60!



*H*i, I'm Bill Gate's daughter. Yes, really! No, no, no, not that one. My Bill Gates, my dearly loved dad was, unlike his namesake, rather short of cash, lived a very simple life, would not know one end of a computer from the other and rode a bike to and from his job on the railway.

He would have been staggered to know how much someone with his name has changed the world. My Bill Gates certainly never did anything that affected the whole world! He hardly ever used the telephone, he couldn't drive a car and he had never flown in an aircraft. But, he *always* had time to listen to my questions as I was growing up. We had great discussions while working together in the garden. Thankfully, my childhood years were pre-television so I knew I had his undivided attention when we were together.

My dad spent most of his non-working time in our patch of ground which he kept full of edibles. We lived during the war years and if he hadn't grown almost all of our food, we would have starved. Everything was scarce or non-existent. Self-sufficiency was the norm for everyone. Even now when I think of Dad's

homegrown tomatoes, my mouth waters. Vine-ripened tender skins and flesh, emerald green seeds . . . what flavor! The hard-as-a-cricket ball spheres, devoid of taste, that sell in the shops today don't come near those Dad grew. Dad worked hard to keep our garden acres like a mini-market garden.

During those years I spent sharing my dreams with him, we talked at length on any subject you could name. He was interested in everything and hungry for learning, he was fascinated by all the latest discoveries. I'm convinced that, given the opportunity, he would have been an academic.

When the first moon landing occurred, just four years before his death, he was utterly enthused and couldn't stop talking about it. "You're going to have such an interesting life," he declared, "I wish I could live to share it with you." By that time I had been in Australia for four years but communication between my dad and me never stopped. He didn't send me letters for he hated to write but he did send me tapes where he shared his thoughts and observations about almost everything! I replied in the same mode.

He was right, of course. I have had an interesting life. It had been full of change, travel (which he and I were both passionate about) and I've learned much along the way. Neither of us had any idea I was destined to travel widely after I left home while in my early twenties.

Dad was a great story teller. Some of his stories he entertained me with about India where he spent some of his army time have surfaced in later short stories in my collection. The older I get, the more I realize what a profound effect my dad had on my life. Although not deeply religious, he had a simple basic belief about our existence in those dangerous times. Without instilling fear, he taught me to value being alive each day and be grateful for the little we had. Surprising when you consider the air raids that occurred often in my young years. We were, after all, only a few miles from the coast where the dockyard and the airfields were popular targets. The coast of France was only 25 miles away. Life was quite uncertain.

Nevertheless, he managed to share truths which had really caught his attention, some of the which became indelibly printed in my subconscious. His favorite? "A soft answer turneth away wrath." It has proved helpful many times through the years when, on occasions, I am about to lose it. Suddenly I will hear his soft voice in my mind, "React peacefully child, Anger destroys." It's saved me more than once. He believed utterly in the rightness of trying to uplift people, of showing them the silver lining in the cloud. I'm sure he lifted a few people in those dark days of war. Both my parents admonished us that "if you can't say something nice or kind to people, then say nothing at all." In later years, when reading Philippians 4:8, I always think of my dad. I'd like to think I've had as deep an influence on my children as he

did on me. Though sometimes I feel I haven't managed to pass on any of his values, now and again, I am agreeably surprised.

Such was a time a few years ago when, in a freezing New Zealand winter, my daughter-in-law told me they had bought a heater for a neighboring family whose income always seemed to end up in the publican's pocket. With six young children in the family, they needed some heat. "Your son's idea, Mum," she said, "but I agreed. We couldn't leave them with no heat." My husband and I were so proud of them. They were a young family then with their own needs but they put others first. I thought of my dad then. I remembered the times he'd drop ten shillings (a lot then) in an elderly widow's letterbox or a cabbage on someone's back step. There were a few aged women who lived near us and had no one to care for them. My dad did what he could.

Dad stressed absolute honesty and impressed upon us the importance of keeping promises. "Always keep your word. It will be appreciated." Dad was such a good, strong influence. Come to think of it . . . maybe the most glaring truth is that he made it possible to accept the idea of a loving heavenly Father.

I was a lucky child. In this age when both parents work, ghostly images on the television, videos, books and magazines abound, children really need to feel secure at home. But how many children today have the listening ear of even one of their parents?

I was incredibly fortunate being born into my family. My parents were the best! My father and the Microsoft Boss share the same name. There the similarities end. Our family may not have a fraction of the wealth of that other Bill Gates, but you know, somehow I fancy we have the greater riches. Am I proud to be Bill Gate's daughter? You bet! 

## Butterfly

A man found a cocoon of a butterfly. One day a small opening appeared. He sat and watched the butterfly for several hours as it struggled to force its body through that little hole.

Then it seemed to stop making any progress. It appeared as if it had gotten as far as it could, and it could go no further. So the man decided to help the butterfly. He took a pair of scissors and snipped off the remaining bit of the cocoon. The butterfly then emerged easily. But it had a swollen body and small, shriveled wings. The man continued to watch the butterfly because he expected that, at any moment, the wings would enlarge and expand to be able to support the body, which would contract in time.

Neither happened! In fact, the butterfly spent the rest of its life crawling around with a swollen body and shriveled wings. It never was able to fly. What the man, in his kindness and haste, did not understand was that the restricting cocoon and the struggle required for the butterfly to get through the tiny opening were God's way of forcing fluid from the body of the butterfly into its wings so that it would be ready for flight once it achieved its freedom from the cocoon.

Sometimes struggles are exactly what we need in our lives. If God allowed us to go through our lives without any obstacles, it would cripple us. We would not be as strong as what we could have been. We could never fly! 

*Via the internet.*

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# The Pastor's Candle

## Marybeth Gessle

Marybeth Gessle is a pastor's wife from Gaston, Oregon. After many years in pastoral ministry her husband, Glen, now works in the Trust Department of the Oregon Conference. Marybeth has a degree in Home Economics and Secondary Education and is currently working with people with special needs.



There is something intriguing about taking a new candle from its wrapping. The delicate, smooth, unscarred form seems to invite us never to burn it at all. But candles are for burning.

Life is like a candle. The conditions surrounding it determine how long it burns. Our lives, like candles, are meant to shine brightly. It matters how we burn our candle of life. Typically women live longer than men so we want to do all we can to help our husband's candles come out even with ours! We need to keep reminding ourselves of things we can do to encourage our husbands and help them live a fulfilling and quality lifestyle.

### Promote Inner Jogging

Laughter is an instrument of happiness, a smile that bursts. It is sunshine in a home. One of the greatest assets a man can have is a happy place to come home to. Make your times together extra-ordinary and fun. Seek to find comical things to share (*Reader's Digest* offers great spirit lifters for just before lights out). Much about ministry is serious so whatever lightness we can create helps to relieve underlying stress. There is much health in laughter!

### Keep Him Moving

If your husband does not have an

exercise program, encourage him to try just plain walking—and go with him when possible. Walking is the most natural movement known to man. It's also one of the most effective ways to stay in shape, and certainly among the most convenient. If fitting 30-minute walks into a busy day is impossible, take heart. Researchers at the University of Ulster in Ireland discovered that short bouts of brisk walking add up to as much benefit as one longer session. Squeezing in 10 minutes here and there throughout the day is much better than none at all. His body will thank you!

### Push Nutrition

We truly are what we eat. Pack into your meals all the nutrition possible. Capitalize on whole foods in their most natural state. Ground (or blended) seeds (sesame, pumpkin, flax, pumpkin, etc.) are great for adding to muffins, cookies, breads and baked products. A spoonful here and there boosts the nutritional content tremendously without changing the taste. Replacing sugary desserts with natural goodness keeps the body system from clogging up. If need be, provide your husband with a water bottle of his own and urge him to drink as if his life depends on it—because it does! To have clear minds, we must first have

healthy bodies. Do your man a favor and help him be healthy.

#### Give Him Ears

Take a real interest in what your husband does and be a good listener. Ministry can be a lonely job and if you won't listen and be a sounding board to him, there are others out there ready to take that job. A close, warm relationship between a man and wife is the first step in preventing unnecessary heartaches. Strive to be the most important person in each other's lives. We can actually enjoy a bit of heaven on earth. And that's actually just what God wants!

#### Defy Satan

The bottom line in life is balance. A person whose life is unbalanced short changes themselves on happiness and productivity. Too much or too little sleep, food, exercise, work or play offsets the system of living. It is the unbalanced life that makes us prey for the devil. He does not fight fair. He attacks us when tired, discouraged, hungry or sleep-deprived. As wives of dedicated men, we can help them have a harmonious relationship in all aspects of the person. Systematic devotional times does much to maintain a positive outlook and keep things in perspective. Our husbands may need help in blocking out time for this vital spot in their day.

It does matter how we burn our candles. If our candle of life came with written instructions, there might be a warranty something like this: "With great care, your candle will give you many years of enjoyment. But the Creator is not responsible for any damage or loss caused by neglect or misuse."

Burn your candle carefully and wisely and help your husband do the same. There is only one per customer!

# Not Until the Loom Is Silent



Betty Kramer

Not until the loom is silent,  
And the shuttles cease to fly,  
Will God unroll the pattern  
And explain the reason why.  
The dark threads are as needful  
In the weaver's skillful hand,  
As the threads of gold and silver  
For the pattern which He planned.

Not until we know the reason  
For the trials sin brings to all,  
Will we recognize the purpose  
Of God's great and blessed call.  
For the dark threads make the contrast  
In the pattern, don't you see?  
They are needed for its beauty  
They are good for you and me.

Not until God's plan is perfect,  
And each color, dark or light,  
Has been woven smooth and even,  
Can we catch in clearer sight,

The majestic work of beauty,  
God would make of each one's life,  
If we let Him plan the pattern,  
Free from fear or inner strife.

Not until we see more clearly  
Not until we trust in love,  
Can we hope to know His purpose  
And accept help from above.  
We must walk by faith in Jesus.  
We must seek to learn His will,  
Lest we mar the perfect pattern,  
Ere the loom's forever still.

Even now I glimpse God's purpose  
As I sort the tangled strands.  
Even now I see His guidance  
As I watch, in awe, His hands.  
Dear hands of the Master Weaver,  
Who lovingly, skillfully blends,  
The threads of gold and silver,  
Till the pattern in glory ends.

Betty Kramer is a pastors wife, homemaker and mother of three. Her hobbies include: yard sales, buying and selling antiques and collectibles for investment, and doing jigsaw puzzles.

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# The History of a Shepherdess

*Clotilde Georges*

I was born in Madrid on April 7, 1940, just a few years after the Spanish Civil War. I am the only daughter of parents who worked very hard to make a living during those post-war years. My parents discovered the Adventist Church when I was but a child. My mother was baptized in 1958. I was converted in 1962 as a result of the church's young people visiting me, the Sunday meetings and the reading of *The Great Controversy*.

I lost my job because of my Sabbath observance. My pastor, Pastor Bueno, suggested I work as a colporteur and I immediately accepted the idea. I worked as a colporteur for two years. During that time, I felt called to serve God through evangelism.

I decided to further my education and go to the seminary in Collonges, France. I wanted to get the Bible Instructor degree for I recognized the problems with authorities in Spain. They had accused our institutions' leaders of proselytizing so the institutions had been closed and forbidden to operate. I felt I had a mission in that field. During the summers, I earned my fees for school by working as a colporteur in Spain. God richly blessed me and I was able to study without economic problems.

At the end of three years, I obtained my diploma and immediately the

Spanish Union employed me. I worked there for five years. It was a wonderful experience to participate in evangelistic campaigns, have numerous Bible studies and, as a result, see many people baptized.

In 1971, I went back to Collonges to celebrate the college's fiftieth anniversary. There I renewed an old friendship with a theology student who had studied there. A year and a half later, on October 6, 1972, we had a civil wedding in France and the religious wedding was held in Madrid on October 22, 1972.

My husband and I have served in eight churches in Paris, Rennes and Angers. I have had the blessing as serving as director of Sabbath School, Mission Activities, Bible Studies, Youth and many other departments.

During our stay in Rennes, our only daughter, Tania, was born. Shortly after that, my husband was nominated to serve the North French Field and he served there for nine years. He worked in the following departments: Sabbath School, Mission Activities, Dorcas and Christian Stewardship.

I have enjoyed taking an active part in Dorcas. We've held five-day plans, helped clothe the needy, encouraged the neighborhood children, etc. When we were members of the Maraichers et Champigny

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*Clotilde is a pastor's wife in France.*

Church, I worked with the youth in Pathfinders and helped with Bible courses. I also worked with the elderly. Because the Conference was unable to remunerate me for my work, I had to work outside the home in whatever job I could as I had to assume the financial expense for my mother at a nursing home. I also had to pay my daughter's tuition. God blessed me with job opportunities that enabled me to both work and continue with my church activities.

Global Mission sent us, along with two pastoral couples, to the Amiens area to start a church in a virgin area as the Seminary believed there were no church members in that territory. I worked in public relations, passed out pamphlets, put up flyers/billboards in the city, did visitation, gave Bible studies, helped with five-day plans, seminars and the annual ingathering.

I've also helped my husband with the annual ten-day seminar for the Maranatha Seminar. During the last three years, I had the opportunity to take a psychology course called "Active Listening," which helps me to better understand others.

It is a pleasure to be involved in the pastoral work and share moments of joy and sadness with my colleagues. Our team has five persons and we continually work on new projects for the Lord.

For two and a half years, we've been at the church in Neuilly, Paris. I work with Women's Ministries and Church Life. I feel my life is very complete. Apart from these activities, I care for my elderly mother-in-law who is very disoriented.

Apart from my evangelism, I have many hobbies. I like the culture in Paris and when time permits, I visit museums such as the Louvre. I enjoy visiting the expositions, gardens, concerts and meetings presented in the area. I am curious about nature.

I like to keep up with novelties (the new state of things) and current events. I like to sew and embroider and do all types of needlework. I also enjoy hairdressing and fix my friends and grandmother's hair. Music is a joy to me. The choir was one thing that helped in my conversion. I have taken courses in piano and song. I have sung in various choral groups. For seven years now, I have taken part in the North France Choir and Orchestra. Our group has grown to 50 and we perform two concerts a

year. My husband goes with us and we have a wonderful time. I enjoy traveling and love to learn about other countries, cultures and customs.

Above all, I thank God for the husband He has given me. As a couple, we work together to advance new projects that God gives us. We long for the day when we will be together with our Lord Christ and our families, with our brothers and sisters in the faith and with our friends in the New Earth. 

## Almighty God

*M*y friend, Rich, volunteers with prison ministries, and in his work has become friends with the pastor of a store front church called the *Almighty God* Tabernacle.

On a Saturday night several weeks ago, this pastor was working late, and decided to call his wife before he left for home. It was about 10:00 pm, but his wife didn't answer the phone. The pastor let it ring many times.

He thought it was odd that she didn't answer, but decided to wrap up a few things and try again in a few minutes.

When he tried again, she answered right away. He asked her why she hadn't answered before, and she said it hadn't rung at their house. They brushed it off as a fluke and went on their merry way. The following Monday, the pastor received a call at the church office, which was the phone that he'd used that Saturday night. The man on the other end

wanted to know why he'd called on Saturday night. The pastor was dumbfounded and couldn't figure out what the guy was talking about. Then the called said, "It rang and rang, but I didn't answer."

The pastor remembered the apparently misdirected call and apologized for disturbing the gentleman, explaining that he'd intended to call his wife. The caller said, "That's OK, let me tell you my story. You see, I was planning to commit suicide on Saturday night, but before I did, I prayed, 'God, if You're there, and You don't want me to do this, give me a sign now.' At that point my phone started to ring. I looked at the caller ID, and it said, 'Almighty God.' I was afraid to answer!"

The man who had intended to commit suicide is now meeting regularly for counseling with the pastor of *Almighty God* Tabernacle. 

*Gospel Radio Group via the internet.*

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# *It Took Place on Dorcas Day*

*Elizabeth de Pachecho*



In each of our Adventist Churches, there is a Sabbath School program to motivate and teach us. Some of the programs make the Bible stories come alive so that we feel as if we were actually there.

In the district, where my husband and I serve in ministry, something unusual happened on Sabbath, June 9, 2001. The Sabbath School program covered the Bible story of Tabitha, a very special woman. The church ladies had designated the day as the Dorcas and Good Samaritan Day. Everything seemed to be going smoothly. The participants arrived on time and prepared the platform. The woman selected to represent Tabitha, Luz Marina Ramos, had excitedly prepared for this event. She had dedicated her life to serve others.

When the platform was being organized, the actress laid a bed sheet down on the floor where she would later faint. She exclaimed, "Here is where I am going to die!" Everyone thought she referred to her part in the play and didn't pay too much attention to her comments.

The program started on time. There were no delays. The narrator began by telling where Tabitha lived and how she liked to serve others and help the needy. At that moment a

young lady came onto the stage and Tabitha measured her size, and in doing so, Tabitha suddenly fell. The congregation thought that she was getting ahead of the story. After a few seconds of observation, it appeared that she had suffered a heart attack because of the way that she had fallen.

At that painful moment, first aid was administered. Confusion reigned as happens in moments of crisis. No one knew what to do. It was decided to take her to the hospital and on the way there, Luz Marina Ramos died.

It was a very sad time for the church. People began to surmise. Some said that at that moment the church should have gathered together in prayer and God would have brought her back to life. Others felt that this was a call from God. Those that arrived late felt rebuked—"if we were in her place, we would have died anywhere, but she was happy to die at church."

The neighbors told me that morning she had been very happy as she left her house. She had greeted a neighbor knocking on the next door, "Perhaps they won't open the door as they get up late. But today is Sabbath and I am going to my church." She waved good-bye and could be heard singing, "Alas and Did My Savior Bleed."

"Oh Savior, help me to be faithful and when you reign in Glory; remember me."

Some time later, I went to Luz's home. I went alone as my husband was holding evangelistic meetings in Bogota. It was very painful to see her two young children weeping (12 and 13 years old). I prayed to the Lord Jesus and felt strengthened to give them hope. The children hugged me and cried. I never had imagined I would be able to talk to them about the love of God. I told them how faithful their mother had been and that the Creator should be their guide so that they could see her again.

At that moment I could understand many things. But above all else, when we are in difficult moments and we ask for help from above, we will receive it. If our load is very heavy, Jesus will carry us in His arms.

## **Recipe for the Weak**

If you are impatient, sit down and talk with Job.

If you are stubborn, go interview Moses.

If your knees tremble, study the experience of Elijah.

If you feel you do not have a song in your heart, listen to David.

If you are a person stuck to government laws, read Daniel.

If you are inclined to be lazy, consult James.

If you have lost your vision for the future, climb the ladder to Revelation and take a look toward the promised land. ☞

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*Elizabeth and her husband work in the Tierralta-Córdoba area in South America. They have two children, Jonathan and Kelly. She is a technician in enterprise management and enjoys reading and writing.*

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# Things I Don't Apologize For as a Pastor's Wife

*Paula Taylor*

**A**s a new 21-year-old Christian, I blew unto an Adventist college campus tabula rasa, as far as my expectations were concerned. So when I read an amusing (!) piece in the student paper on "What A Pastor's Wife Should Be" I laughed—and read on. The article, concocted by some seminarians, purportedly as a joke, included such morsels as:

- Be able to play the organ
- Make the perfect cottage cheese loaf
- Single-handedly teach large Sabbath-school classes
- Know how to wisely shop at the nearest thrift store

It didn't concern me because I was following my own career track in the communications field. I could afford to laugh it off. Then I married a pastor.

Ironically I followed, however subconsciously, the tenets laid out in that long-ago article, lived out by so many pastors wives before me. Submissive and cheerful, they dressed conservatively, didn't voice their opinions too loudly, took up the slack in their own churches in the

music and children's divisions. Every Sabbath they had groups at their homes for meals and managed, on meager salaries, to provide gifts for every expectant mother and bride-to-be. With husbands on call 24/7, they were the glue that held the family intact. Then I watched as many of their lights faded out, one by one.

As my personal ministry has shifted now to nurturing the broken and wounded, delicately removing church-related shrapnel, I've come to recognize the value of healing the pastor's wife and her church from the inside out. Here is some of what I've learned along the way:

## **We Can't Do It All**

As trite as it may seem, we can't do it all. I know we might say it, even laugh about it. But deep down there is a sense that maybe we should at least try. After all, we're taught to be mission-minded, which translated means doing without and giving your all.

Jesus took great care to replenish his spiritual well on an on-going basis. He established healthy

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*Paula Taylor and her husband have two sons. They are pastoring in the Foster Church in Asheville, North Carolina.*

boundaries with those he ministered to. Giving ourselves permission to do those things which bring us joy will have a greater impact for good on those around us, than simply performing a task merely because it's part of our self-proscribed 'job description'. In Nancy Pannell's book, *Being a Minister's Wife and Being Yourself*, she describes this dilemma. "The more self-understanding we gain, the easier it becomes to recognize when we are doing good things for the wrong reasons. We can be pretty sure we are shaping our lives to meet the expectations of others if we've lost all joy in service. If we continue on that course we can expect to become depressed, or physically ill, or both."<sup>1</sup>

I used to think I needed to bake a loaf of bread for everyone experiencing difficulties in their lives. You know what? That's just about everybody. And while I still enjoy baking bread, I save my hand deliveries for those occasions where it is most appropriate.

#### **Not Every Pastor's Wife Is a Women's Ministry Leader**

I've mentally kicked myself over the fact that I have no interest or ability in leading a women's ministry department. Somehow I had the idea that, as a pastor's wife, I would naturally fit into that role. Now the kicking has stopped and the acceptance has set in. I know I will never be a leader—my spiritual gifts lie in other areas. Romans 12:6 tells us "We have different gifts, according to the grace given us." My gifts may lie in hospitality and music. Yours may be in teaching and discernment. Our task is to joyfully embrace those areas God has generously gifted us with, and share them with others. In the book *Investing Your Life in Things that Matter*, speaker and teacher

Linda McGinn says, "God knows us exactly as we are. Fully aware of both our shortcomings and strengths, He loves us. And as an outgrowth of that love, He develops the gifts, talents and abilities He has given us as a testimony to His love."<sup>2</sup> My friend Judy is a dynamic women's ministry leader in our church and has an amazing ability to bring women together. She has confidently taken the reins in an area I am not comfortable leading. Knowing we are all members of one body, we can happily affirm those who have a variety of gifts, praying for their leadership and abilities to impact the lives of others in ways we can't.

*I know I will never be a leader—my spiritual gifts lie in other areas. . . . Our task is to joyfully embrace those areas God has generously gifted us with, and share them with others.*

#### **Counseling Changes Lives**

I have seen Christian counseling positively redirect the lives of so many around me. I've watched it change my own. Not dramatically, at first. Change comes slowly. But it does come, I can promise you. Counseling helps us to gently unfurl the fingers we keep tightly balled into white-knuckling fists. It teaches grace in accepting our very human selves, a lesson Christ has been trying to teach us all along. I have heard some people say God is their counselor. Great! But know that God doesn't work alone. He uses you, He uses me, He uses the lady behind the counter at the post office. And He uses objective, caring,

committed Christians who are trained to help us get at the root of that which baffles us. I may not see my counselor for months, maybe years. But I do go. To untangle emotional knots, to have a safe place to unload. Learning acceptance of ourselves and our limitations is the key to accepting others.

#### **Develop Close Friendships Outside Your Church Family**

Sometimes we're too close to our church family to be too close. Maintaining intimate friendships within our own church can be challenging, sometimes devastating. If the friendship disintegrates, it is often awkward and uncomfortable to continue to associate on a weekly basis, as well as at other church functions. And how close do you get? How much can you confide about your own relationships with your husband and other church members without placing them in jeopardy? Several years ago I confided something of a highly personal nature to a church friend believing I could trust her. Later I discovered I couldn't. She had

spread my story with lightning speed and I was crushed. Crushed, but not broken. I still take the risks of friendship within my church because I am a lover of people and a believer of connectedness within the body. But three of my closest friends are women not in my denomination, strong, spiritual women whom I trust, love and admire. They are not saints. And therein lies their value. We can talk about unsaintly things. We can share our burdens, our sorrows, our joys. Different perspectives, but the same spirit joins us. Cultivating friendships outside of your church is not difficult. Nancy Pannell shares that, "God has placed in my path many

wonderful people outside our church family. He has given me innumerable opportunities to be salt ... God can (further) enrich our lives when we take a step beyond the church."<sup>3</sup> This is true in our own lives. They are all around, waiting to be touched by you. Non-denominational Bible-study groups, exercise classes, your favorite bookstore, the park, evening classes at the local community college, twelve-step groups, are all places of friendships in embryo. I made one now-close friend through my dentist. It also takes vulnerability and the releasing of expectations. And it is worth it.

*There are no spiritual limitations to a woman who knows she is called into ministry with her husband.*

### Celebrate Your Femininity!

This past year, in a newsletter to pastor's wives, I was reading valentine's messages pastors had posted to their wives/husbands. While my own husband had penned (wisely for him!) a loving and affirming epistle, a few other pastors had not. One that I read particularly bothered me. It said, "Thank you for helping out in my church." Ouch! MY church? Wasn't it supposed to be OUR church? Too often it is the husband in the forefront celebrated, lauded, pressed for his opinion while his wife is relegated downstage to be taken "as needed." My husband may be a minister, but then, so am I and so is every other child of God. The Apostle Peter tells us, "Husbands, in the same way be considerate as you live with your wives and treat them

with respect." I Peter 3:7(NIV). "He is to be considerate of his wife. That means that he is to be thoughtful and observant of her rights and needs, sensitive to her feelings, respectful of her intelligence and the contribution she makes to his life, to the kingdom and to the (church) family."<sup>4</sup>

You are uniquely suited for the work God has given you in your ministry today. You bring to your church incredible spiritual gifts which no one but you can bestow. Your strengths of nurturing, of evangelism, of discernment, of teaching as well as a host of others, are as valuable and needed in the eyes of God as those of your pastor husband. Pastoring is just one of many spiritual gifts. We need to celebrate the fact that we are partnered together, male and female, in an uncommon opportunity to reach others for Christ.

I can honestly say, after fifteen years of ministerial pinnacles, train wrecks, and everything in between, I wouldn't trade what I have lived and learned with my pastor husband for another profession. The hardest lesson for me has been to admit mistakes promptly and often, and of course this has been the most important lesson of all.

It is certain I will never play the organ. But I will continue to encourage others to see themselves as God sees them, to celebrate the path He is leading them along, and to know there are no spiritual limitations to a woman who knows she is called into ministry with her husband. 

<sup>1</sup> Nancy Pannell, *Being a Minister's Wife and Being Yourself*, (Broadman Press, 1993) p. 80.

<sup>2</sup> Linda McGinn, *Investing Your Life in Things That Matter*, (Broadman & Holman Publishers, 1996) p. 79.

<sup>3</sup> Pannell, p. 97.

<sup>4</sup> Zig Ziglar, *Courtship After Marriage*, (Thomas Nelson Publishers, 1990) p. 159.

## God's Family

**A**n eyewitness account from New York City, on a cold day in December: A little boy about 10 years old was standing before a shoe store on the roadway, barefooted, peering through the window, and shivering with cold. A lady approached the boy and said, "My little fellow, why are you looking so earnestly in that window?" "I was asking God to give me a pair of shoes," was the boy's reply.

The lady took him by the hand and went into the store and asked the clerk to get half a dozen pairs of socks for the boy. She then asked if he could give her a basin of water and a towel. He quickly brought them to her. She took the little fellow to the back part of the store and, removing her gloves, knelt down, washed his little feet, and dried them with a towel.

By this time the clerk had returned with the socks. Placing a pair upon the boy's feet, she purchased him a pair of shoes. She tied up the remaining pairs of socks and gave them to him. She patted him on the head and said, "No doubt, my little fellow, you feel more comfortable now?"

As she turned to go, the astonished lad caught her by the hand, and looking up in her face, with tears in his eyes, answered the question with these words: "Are you God's Wife?" 

*Via the internet.*

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# Guddi

## Sharda Mahapure

*Sharda is the wife of the outgoing president of Northern India Union. Her husband was the former president of Central India Union. Sharda is a teacher and worked for 38 years in Adventist schools. She was the principal of two high schools in the Central India Union. She is also the former director of the Women, Family and Children's Ministries in the Northern India Union.*



She was not a student of any school when I first saw her. She was only a toddler sitting on the steps of the Corporation Bridge in Pune City. I changed buses at this bridge on the way home from Salisbury Park High School. Since the journey was usually made during the rush hour, I would hurry down the bridge through surging crowds, rushing for the second bus.

Fortunately, my long journey was shared with another teacher from the same school and we enjoyed "comparing notes" as we traveled together. Because she was short and slender, my own children called her "Baby Teacher" and I had gotten into the habit of using the same endearing name for her. Calling her Baby Teacher somehow made me feel close to Ellen Charles as we shared the journey five days each week.

One afternoon, as Baby Teacher and I dashed down the forty wide steps of the Corporation Bridge on the way to catch our bus, I stumbled over a tiny girl. She had been placed on one of the steps and was there to beg. I paused to take a closer look at her. She wore very few clothes and sat on a piece of newspaper, presumably to protect her from the heat of the stone steps. A swarm of flies buzzed around the broken biscuit that had been placed in front of her but which she ignored. A few

coins lay scattered on the paper, thrown there by hurrying passers-by. The tiny, bony fingers of her right hand were balled into a tight fist. As I paused, she looked up into my curious face. I held my breath as pity filled my heart for this little mite. Where was her mother? I looked around but saw no one who was even slightly concerned for this little-more-than-a-baby child.

Baby Teacher was clapping her hands vigorously to draw my attention to the waiting bus, so hurriedly adding a coin to the others, I dashed down the steps and into the bus. But the sight of that little girl would not leave me. Thereafter, I never failed to look for the little girl as I passed that way. Often I talked to her, sparing a few seconds as the steps and bus claimed my attention.

One day, I noticed a woman standing close to "my little beggar girl" and guessed she must be the mother. She was young, poorly dressed and had a haunted, hollow look in her eyes. Going closer, I asked, "Is this your child? How can you let her sit on those hot steps every day?" At once, she flared at me, "If you feel that bad for her, then provide for our needs!"

In an attempt to help her understand my feelings, I said, "I also am a mother and work hard for my children. You need to find a job. I

wouldn't waste my money smoking as you are doing. It is a bad habit, especially for a young person like you." Offended at my words, she turned her back to me and walked away muttering something I could not understand.

In time, I learned that the little one's name was Guddi (little doll) and she really was a pretty little raggedy doll. Each trip seemed to bring us closer together. I stopped dropping a coin and instead started bringing small food items which she enjoyed. As the days passed, Guddi became as anxious for my coming as my own little boy at home was. At the sight of me she would smile and hold up her little hand for the gift she knew I had. Sometimes I would tease her by hiding the gift behind my back and holding out an empty hand. She would then giggle for she knew I was only teasing. Then I'd exchange a few words, put the food items in her hand, pat her sunburned cheeks and rush away.

Occasionally, the delay caused me to miss the bus and Baby Teacher would be understandably upset. "Why do you worry about everyone when we are already late," she would scold me.

Guddi's mother watched me with aloofness, but each time she saw my affection for her daughter, she became less hostile. One day she waited for me at the foot of the bridge, but in my hurry I failed to see her. As I passed by, she pulled at my hand and our eyes met. In a stammering voice, she thanked me for being kind to her daughter. "Instead of calling me kind," I rebuked her, "you and your husband should work hard for Guddi." With tear-filled eyes, she pointed towards the beggars' shacks lined up against the wall of the bridge. "He is there. My husband is a drug addict. How

can we do anything when he takes drugs and sleeps all the time? He doesn't care if we get the next meal, but if he doesn't get his drugs, he gets wild and violent."

I felt compassion. I told her I had a few clothes of my son's that I would bring for Guddi. She smiled at me as I hurried to the bus stop.

The day after receiving the clothes, Guddi was wearing a white shirt and looked like a doll sitting on the black steps. I smiled as I leaned down to pat her cheek. "Now you are a clean, pretty girl, Guddi, and pretty soon

*We must grab  
the opportunity  
to do good  
when it comes!*

you will be able to go to school." But what a shock awaited me the next day. There was Guddi, seated as usual on the newspaper, dressed in her rags. Her mother was sitting under the Neem tree, waiting for me as I asked for an explanation about Guddi's clothes. "Who will give money to a well-dressed child? Anyway, my husband sold the clothes immediately for his drugs."

"Can't you start looking for some work?" I asked her again. Putting her head down, she whispered, "Who will take me for work with a child in my arms and a drug addict for a husband at the door step where I might work?" I didn't know what to say.

Anxiety for Guddi continued to haunt me, but I could find no way to help her. Then came the winter day when I found Guddi on the steps surrounded by the loose motions she had passed. She was too ill to smile or hold up her little hand for my gift. I touched her forehead. "She is burning with fever," I told Baby Teacher. She touched Guddi's head and agreed. Seeing us near her child, the mother came running up. "She has been sick with loose motions and vomiting since last night," she explained. My friend and I searched

our purses, found some money and pressed it into the mother's hands. "Please take her to the doctor right away. Don't leave her in the cold."

I worried about Guddi for the entire weekend. Her being ill nagged at my mind all through Sabbath and Sunday. On Monday, I anxiously watched for her on the steps, but she wasn't there. I looked around carefully, but could not see her anywhere. The mother, too, had disappeared from her cool spot under the Neem tree.

Two weeks went by, then the mother came hurrying towards me, crying. She held my feet and told me that Guddi was very ill and had been admitted to the Government hospital. She showed me a prescription for medicines which the doctor had ordered. Forgetting about my bus, I went to a nearby shop for biscuits and fruit and put these, along with some money, into her hands, urging her to get the medicine immediately. Again, I felt most anxious for the child, since several days had passed during which the illness had not improved.

That was my last gift to Guddi. Months went by and I did not see the mother. Then came the afternoon when, as Baby Teacher and I rushed

down the steps, someone caught my hand. It was Guddi's mother and she was crying. In between uncontrollable sobs, she said, "You will never see my Guddi again. God has taken her from us." I was dumbstruck! Tears filled my eyes as I listened to the heart-broken mother. I heard Baby Teacher shout for me to hurry as the bus rolled to a screeching halt before her. I had forgotten all about the bus and it was all I could do to force my feet down the steps and walk towards the bus stop. But by the time I arrived, my sympathetic friend waited alone for me.

Guddi, the bread earner for her addict father, was no more alive. I missed her each time I passed that bridge and the question still troubles me today as to why she had to die so soon. The answer to that will have to wait until Jesus returns. There are hundreds of needy and helpless people around us; let us not pass them by like the Priest or Levite, but like the Good Samaritan, recognize their need.

You may not have money as did that good man to say to the innkeeper, "Take care of him, and whatever more you spend, I will repay you, when I come again." Luke 10:35-37. But God surely opens ways when you desire to do good for others. Some are in need of encouragement and need not money, but a sharing of your faith in Christ. Helping others will give you great pleasure and inner satisfaction. Each time I remember Guddi, I think that I might have done more for her. This experience taught me that we must grab the opportunity to do good *when it comes!* There is a saying, "Opportunity is bald at the back." In other words, you may not be able to catch it and turn it around a second time. Do not let an opportunity get lost. Be a Good Samaritan today. This is what Jesus taught. 

## *This Really Makes You Think. . .*

- Funny how a \$10.00 bill looks so big when you take it to church, but so small when you take it to the mall.
  - Funny how big an hour serving God looks and how small 60 minutes are when spent watching television, playing sports, sleeping or taking a lunch break.
  - Funny how long a couple of hours spent at church are but how short they are when watching a good movie.
  - Funny how we get thrilled when a football game goes into overtime, but we complain when a sermon is longer than the regular time.
  - Funny how laborious it is to read a chapter in the Bible and how easy it is to read 200-300 pages of a best selling novel.
  - Funny how we believe what newspapers say, but question what the Bible says.
  - Funny how people scramble to get a front seat at a concert, but scramble to get a back seat at the church service.
  - Funny how we cannot fit a gospel meeting into our schedule with our yearly planner, but we can schedule for other events at a moment's notice.
  - Funny how we look forward to that big date on Friday night, but complain about getting up for church on Sabbath morning.
  - Funny how we are rarely late to work, but always late to church.
  - Funny how we call God our Father and Jesus our brother, but find it hard to introduce them to our family.
  - Funny how small our sins seem, but how big their sins are.
  - Funny how we demand justice for others, but expect mercy from God.
  - Funny how much difficulty some have learning the gospel well enough to tell others, but how simple it is to understand and explain the latest gossip about someone else.
  - Funny how we can't think of anything to say when we pray, but don't have any difficulty thinking of things to talk about to a friend.
  - Funny how we are so quick to take directions from a total stranger when we are lost, but are hesitant to take God's direction for our lives.
  - Funny how so many churchgoers sing "Standing on the Promises" but all they do is sit on the premises.
  - Funny how people want God to answer their prayers, but refuse to listen to His counsel.
  - Funny how we sing about heaven, but live only for today.
  - Funny how people think they are going to Heaven but don't think there is a Hell.
  - Funny how it is okay to blame God for evil and suffering in the world, but it is not necessary to thank Him for what is good and pleasant.
  - Funny how when something goes wrong, we cry, "Lord, why me?" but when something goes right, we think, "Hey, it must be me!"
- ... Or wait ... maybe all this isn't so "funny" after all.

# It's Happened Again

Laurel Raethel



When my husband and I considered the idea of a move at the end of 1999, I wasn't too phased. After all, we had been at our present location for six years, and I knew a move was somewhere in our future. However, as the year-end drew closer and plans started to take shape, the realization that we would soon be uprooted hit me with vengeance. Life as we knew it would never be the same.

Once again I would have to resign from my high school teaching job. I had just received a promotion and was excited about the impact I was having at the school. When I talked to the principal about resigning, I found myself explaining, "Yes, I am turning my back on my career to follow my husband to a different state. No, he's not getting a promotion. No, he won't be receiving a higher salary. And no, it's highly unlikely that we will be moving back to this area in the future." It's hard for those not in the ministry to understand the life of a pastoral family. All the farewells kept us busy around Christmas and the New Year. My family and I said our goodbyes to precious friends who have meant so much to us. Even months later, the

*Laurel and her husband pastor the Kingcliff SDA Church. They have ministered in Australia, New Zealand and Fiji. They have two children, a son who is 12 and a daughter who is 10. Laurel is a high school teacher. However, she is teaching adult education this year.*

hurt of saying goodbye is still close to the surface. Just the other night, our daughter said, "Mum, shifting wouldn't be so bad if only we could bring our friends with us."

Establishing our family in a new location always takes time. We must familiarize ourselves with new supermarkets, doctors, schools, music teachers and the like. Fortunately, God led us to a neighborhood full of friendly neighbors. Still, we did not forget our old friends and we continue to stay in regular contact with them.

Years ago, an experienced minister's wife told me that she had found the process of adjusting to a new move takes a good six months. I have found her theory to be true.

The first six weeks were daunting. Everything was so new...our home, the school, the shopping centers, even the climate! And on top of that, there was the new church, full of new faces who all wanted to see what the minister and his family are like. The stress took its toll on our family and we found ourselves saying things to one another we wish we hadn't.

After about three months, the dust started to settle. We had discovered friends we knew from the past and it has been exciting to relive old memories and to rebuild those friendships. We've also run into others who went to college with us years ago. Though they were only acquaintances then, we have a common bond and deeper friend-

ships have developed. It's happened again that God has helped us see the light at the end of the tunnel.

We are now approaching the six-month anniversary of our shift and we are feeling pretty positive about the whole experience. We've survived the hard slog of those first few months, the stress of saying goodbye, the stress of starting afresh.

God has also blessed me again by helping me find gainful employment. It's always disheartening to walk away from all you've worked so hard to achieve, knowing full well that you have to start from the bottom up at the next job and once again work your way up. In all the moves we've made, I've never walked straight into another teaching job. I've always had to do the obligatory amount of days relief teaching just to prove I really can teach. Still, I've always ended up with a basic job that has turned into something better. This time is no exception.

There is a promise I have kept close to my heart (and stuck on the fridge door) that has helped me many times over the past months. It is Proverbs 3:5, 6 which says, "Trust in the Lord with all your heart, and lean not on your own understanding. In all your ways acknowledge him and he will make your paths straight."

It's happened again... the great Advent move. I thank God I'm part of it!



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# The Brave and the Beautiful

*Priscilla Adonis*

When I was a little girl, I used to dress up in my mother's clothes. I would put her shoes on my feet, her handbag on my arm, her gloves on my hands and her hat on my head. Then I would pose in front of the mirror. In my mind I would say, "I look just like Mommy."

I thought my mother was beautiful. She was my role model and I wanted to be just like her. Like everyone else, I was beauty conscious and wanted to be pretty. Fortunately, as I grew into a young woman, my dear mother instilled in my head the verses of 1 Peter 3:3, 4. "Whose adorning, let it not be that outward adorning of plaiting the hair, in that which is not corruptible, even the ornament of a meek and quiet spirit, which is in the sight of God of great price."

We spend too much time in front of mirrors, checking out our hair, smoothing our clothes, making sure the cuffs and collars are straight and hems and lapels are in place. We check out our fronts, sides and backs. Others, however, check us from yet another angle. If we reflect Jesus, they will remember that rather than our outward appearance.

Women desire to be beautiful. Beauty delights the human's eyes. However, physical beauty may be only skin deep. It may cover ugliness, spitefulness and ill-temperers. Still, in

our world, we too often judge a book by its cover. Consequently, billions are spent in search of beauty. This search spans centuries and continents.

The Bible tells us of a beauty queen. She was described as fair and beautiful. She was a captive, brought against her will from her homeland. Still, her spirit was not subdued. She had been left an orphan and reared by her uncle. Her name meant "star" but stardom did not come easily for her. Life was difficult, yet she remained true and faithful to the God in Heaven. Esther was someone who was beautiful for she exuded love.

Her uncle, Mordecai, was the most influential person in her life. He gave her spiritual training, counsel and direction. He challenged her as a child and his teachings helped her face the many difficulties she encountered as an adult.

Even during Esther's time, women were given skin purifiers, lotions, moisturizers and oils so they could look their best. For twelve months, their skin was pampered so they would look beautiful when they were presented to the king. They could ask for whatever they needed and they always seemed to want more. All except Esther, that is. She did not ask for more. She had beauty without and within.

*Priscilla leads the Women's Ministries Department at her local church. She and her retired husband have two married daughters and one grandson.*



The king loved Esther above all women and she obtained grace and favor in his sight. So the king set the royal crown upon Esther's head and she replaced Queen Vashti.

Even becoming a queen was not easy for Esther. No one knew she was Jewish. She was surrounded by intrigue and hatred! Haman, a top official of the king, hated Jews and got the king to make a decree stating all Jews were to be killed. Esther knew her people's lives were in danger and she knew she had to do something.

Can you imagine the emotions going through Esther? What would you do if you were in her situation?

Though Esther was a queen, she remained humble and sought advice from Mordecai. He told her, "Who knoweth whether thou art come to the Kingdom for such a time as this?" Esther was cautious and tactful. Mordecai could trust her discretion for he knew Esther was a God-fearing person. She fasted and prayed for her people. Her faith and trust were firmly grounded and she had confidence that the Lord would not forsake her. She said, "And I will go unto the king, which is not according to the law, and if I perish, I perish." What courage!

Why do you think Esther was willing to risk her life? She was a woman who had strength of character. She was willing to take risks and act courageously, not fearing for herself.

Esther was more than just a pretty face. She was a beautiful woman, both inside and out. She met Haman's hatred with kindness. She was patient, peaceful and kind. She had the kind of beauty that lasts forever and can come from no cream or lotion. Esther's beauty was a reflection of her devotion to God. She cared not what the world thought of her, but rather followed her beliefs and put her priorities in order.

Beauty is more than skin deep. The time spent in trying to find that fountain of youth can be better

spent getting to know God as your personal Savior. May we all be beautiful and brave in Christ Jesus. 

## *Promise Yourself*

To be so strong that nothing can disturb your peace of mind,

To talk health, happiness and prosperity to every person you meet,

To make all your friends feel that there is something in them,

To look at the sunny side of everything and make your optimism come true,

To think only of the best, to work only for the best, and to expect only the best,

To be just as enthusiastic about the success of others as you are about your own,

To forget the mistakes of the past and press on to the greater achievements of the future,

To wear a cheerful countenance at all times and give every living creature you meet a smile,

To give so much time to the improvement of yourself that you have no time to criticize others,

To be too large for worry, too noble for anger, too strong for fear, and too happy to permit the presence of trouble.

—Unknown

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# The Pastor's Helper

Judith Mutanga



He needs the help, the harvest is plenty.  
She does help. She knows the ups and downs.  
Supplementing the budget, as well as helping to  
spread the Gospel are worthy duties to do.  
She is the pastor's helping hand.

He needs the help. The struggles and challenges  
are many.  
She can help as she experiences them too.  
She encourages him to remain steadfast and  
principled.  
She makes sure he is spiritually nourished too.  
She is there to cry beside him and praise with him in  
realizing God's blessings.

He needs the courage, the Bamabasses are few.  
She does encourage. She has a warm heart that  
soothes and dresses the wounds of ministry.  
She knows the words to say and when to say them  
to make him realize that His calling is special.  
She is the pastor's special friend.

He needs someone to remind him; the tasks are many.  
She knows—she forgets too.  
But she helps him remember the important things  
like family time.

Though he works for the Master, he needs his family.  
Time is spent sharing tasks when possible.  
She needs to be reminded to remind.

He needs Love. It is sometimes cold out there.  
She knows how to make it warm, without necessarily  
using a heater.  
She knows the home is a better place for him to relax  
and r-e-l-a-x.  
He is there to appreciate, for it is a worthy gesture to be  
loved.  
She knows no love can surpass the one at home.

He needs the assurance from someone who can give it  
well.  
She is honest to reflect what needs to be known by him  
without fear or favor.  
She knows he likes to listen too.  
She knows he needs to be saved as well.

She is surely the Pastor's helper and friend.  
Her reward the Lord has kept.  
She has so much to offer;  
It only takes a prayer and inventory of talents  
to help the busy mate.  
Indeed a co-worker is she.



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*Judith is a secretary. Her hobbies include singing, reading and gardening. She also enjoys taking walks and viewing God's beautiful nature.*

# Do You Have Time?

The Master called my name one day because he needed someone to go and help Him look.

I said, "Lord, in my spare time, between school, spending time with my husband, working from 8 to 6, and trying to coordinate a program for my community to help our children do better, I will help you look. See I know I can't go right now cause I have so much to do."

He said, "Where shall I find such a person? I thought I saw your name on my list of available people."

"Well, Lord, that was the prayer that I prayed last year, but since then, things have changed."

He said, "Like what?"

"Well, I'm working on my Ph.D. and I'm needed by so many people and my husband is always wanting something done, and on top of that my community *expects* me to help and give to them so . . ."

"Well, since you're busy, I'll let you go, but we will talk again, if *you* have some time."

I went on through the days, weeks and months completing my tasks as always.

One evening, while studying for my comp exams, I received a call from the hospital concerning my husband. He had been in a terrible accident and was in critical condition. I dropped everything and ran to the hospital where I found my husband hanging on for dear life. I immediately began to pray, "Lord, don't take him now. I can't bare it,"

but my prayer echoed off the wall and returned into my own ear.

That next morning I left the hospital tired and weary and walked in the door of my classroom just in time to begin my comps. As the professors began asking me questions, I opened my mouth to speak but nothing came out. In my mind, I began praying, praying hard, but my prayer echoed again and I found myself upset at God because He was nowhere to be found. I could not explain to them what was happening.

After leaving from my exams, I called work because I was so distraught at all that was going on. I explained to my supervisor what had happened and she demanded that I take some time off.

After visiting my husband in the hospital that evening, I went home and fell into a sunken state crying and despairing. Just then I heard someone calling my name.

"Lord, is that *you*?"

"Well, yes it is. Do *you* have some time? I wanted to see if I could just talk . . ."

Instead of waiting to hear his questions, I lashed out in anger and resentment.

"How is it that when I needed you today, *you* couldn't be found and last night I cried and cried but all I heard were echoes from the walls. My husband is dying, I'm flunking out of school, I may not have a job and you can just say *you* want to talk?"

The Lord interrupted me in my foolish speaking. "My child, I was

busy, out looking for someone to go and tell others about me when you cried. By the time I came to answer, you had moved on to something else. So, I decided to let your husband rest and keep you home for a few days that way *maybe* you would get in touch with Me, if *you* had some time. For you see, your husband, the community or your job needs you, I *need you*. And if all these things take you away from me, I have to almost take them away from *you*, in order to get a moment."

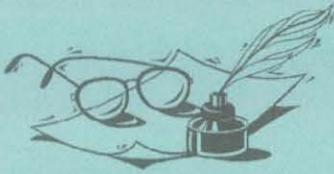
I calmed down and began to cry. For I remembered my prayer of wanting to go and do for the Lord.

He said, "I just wanted to recheck with you to see if you knew of *anyone* that I could send to be a witness for me and tell others about me, anyone at all?"

With tears in my eyes and feeling so unworthy I said, "Lord, send me, I'll go."

God should never have to ask us if we have some time. When He died on the cross He put aside everything to insure us eternal life. We should be more than grateful to do service for the Lord, to witness, and to tell *anyone* we can about Jesus. Don't let your "things", *whatever* they may be, get you so tied up that God has to become a meeting time in your yearly planner. He had more than enough time for us. The least we could do is have time for Him. ☺

Via the internet.



Dear Judy,

*I just made a wonderful discovery. Because you are so special to me I got a copy for you too. Soon you should receive the books *Seasoned with Love* and *Seasoned with Love, a Second Helping*. They are a delightful set of cookbooks with delicious, creative and interesting recipes from pastoral spouses in all parts of the world. I'm sure you will find some wonderful new dishes that your family will love.*

*I am excited about using several of the recipes at the dinner next month. Maybe we could do an international theme. What do you think?*



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