

THE JOURNAL

A Shepherdess International Resource for Ministry Spouses

VOL. 29 - FIRST QUARTER 2012



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NEW YEAR'S
RESOLUTION

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The fact that we are called upon to endure trial shows that the Lord Jesus sees in us something precious which He desires to develop. If He saw in us nothing whereby He might glorify His name, He would not spend time in refining us. He does not cast worthless stones into His furnace.

The Ministry of Healing, p. 471

God's love for His children during the period of their severest trial is as strong and tender as in the days of their sunniest prosperity.

The Great Controversy, p. 621

The Saviour is by the side of His tempted and tried ones. With Him there can be no such thing as failure, loss, impossibility, or defeat.

The Desire of Ages, p. 490

Our heavenly Father has a thousand ways to provide for us, of which we know nothing. Those who accept the one principle of making the service and honor of God supreme will find perplexities vanish, and a plain path before their feet.

The Desire of Ages, p. 330



JERRY PAGE is the General Conference Ministerial Association Secretary.

SATAN CALLED A WORLDWIDE MEETING

Recently, I came across a compelling story that I want to share with you in its short form.

Satan called a worldwide meeting. The huge crowd hushed as he stepped up to speak. “We can’t keep Christians from going to church. We can’t keep them from reading their Bibles and knowing the truth. We can’t keep them from conservative values, but we can do something else.” He paused. Everyone listened.

“We can keep them from forming an intimate, abiding experience in Christ. If they gain that connection with Jesus, our power over them is broken. So let them go to church, let them have their conservative lifestyles, but steal their time so they can’t gain that experience in Jesus. This is what I want you to do. Distract them from gaining hold of their Savior and maintaining a vital connection through their day!”

“How shall we do this?” shouted his angels. “Simple. Keep them busy, busy, busy in the nonessentials of life and invent unnumbered schemes to occupy their minds,” he answered.

“Tempt them to spend and spend, then borrow and borrow.

“Keep them from their children. Convince the wives to go to work and the husbands to work six and seven days a week, 10 to 12 hours a day, so they can afford their lifestyles. Tell them they are doing it FOR their children. Hah! That one works well. As their families fragment, their homes won’t offer an escape from the pressures of work.

“Overstimulate their minds so that they cannot hear ‘the still small voice.’ Entice them to play the radio or DVD player whenever they drive, to keep the TV, DVDs, MP3s, iPods,

cell phones, text messages, and CDs going constantly in their homes. This will jam their minds and break that union with Christ.

“Fill their homes with magazines and newspapers. Pound their minds with news 24 hours a day. Invade their driving moments with billboards. Flood their mailboxes with junk mail, sweepstakes, catalogs, and every kind of newsletter and promotions with free products, services, and false hopes.

“Even in their recreation, let them be excessive. Have them return from their recreation exhausted, disquieted, and unprepared for the coming week. Don’t let them go out in nature. Send them to amusement parks, sporting events, concerts, and movies instead.

“When they meet for spiritual fellowship, involve them in gossip and small talk so that they leave with troubled consciences and unsettled emotion. Don’t let them encourage or uplift each other; keep those who are gifted encouragers especially busy and worn out.

“And above all, when they get together keep them from praying for one another. Let them be involved in soul winning. But crowd their lives with so many good causes they have no time to seek power from Christ. Soon they will be working in their own strength, sacrificing their health and family unity for the good of the cause.”

It was quite a convention in the end. And the evil angels went eagerly to their assignments trying to cause Christians everywhere to get busy, busy, busy.

Author Unknown

Do you sense the busyness of the world today? I know I do. This story so accurately portrays the temptations Satan uses to keep us from developing an intimate connection with Jesus. Yet as my wife, Janet, and I look back over God’s leading in our lives, ministry, and family, we’ve found God’s Word true: “In your presence is fullness of joy; At your right hand are pleasures forever more” (Psalms 16:11, NKJV).

Just before my ordination, Elder H. M. S. Richards, Sr., told me, “Jerry, never lose your time with Jesus!” That has proven a major key to God’s best for us.

When we stay connected to Jesus, our marriage, ministries, and children do so much better! When we separate ourselves, even for a short time, things go downhill in a hurry. We’ve learned that without Him

we just can’t do anything of lasting value.

I pray that the words of John will be true in your life today: “I am the vine, you are the branches. He who abides in Me, and I in him, bears much fruit; for without Me you can do nothing. . . . If you abide in Me, and My words abide in you, you will ask what you desire, and it shall be done for you. By this My Father is glorified, that you bear much fruit; so you will be My disciples. . . . These things I have spoken to you, that My joy may remain in you, and that your joy may be full” (John 15:5, 7, 8, 11, NKJV). 

Your brother in Christ,
Jerry



PARTNERING IN PRAYER

by Peggy Casebier

**“AGAIN, I TELL YOU THAT IF TWO OF YOU ON EARTH
AGREE ABOUT ANYTHING YOU ASK FOR, IT WILL BE DONE FOR
YOU BY MY FATHER IN HEAVEN.”**

Matt. 18:19

1. WHY IS PRAYER PARTNERING SO IMPORTANT?

- God asks us to pray for each other (Eph. 6:18).
- Praying with others enriches our personal prayer life.
- Prayer partnering fills people’s deep hunger to have others caring and praying for them.

**PRAYER PARTNERING
HELPS US APPRECIATE THE
MEANING OF CHRISTIAN
COMMUNITY.**

- Prayer partnering assists us in being accountable to at least one other person.
- Prayer partnering puts us on track with God.
- Prayer partnering puts God’s power to work in our lives and in the church.

2. GUIDELINES FOR PRAYER PARTNERING

- Decide how often you will meet.
- Withhold judgment regarding anything said.
- Resist the temptation to become a counselor; your partner’s problems are not yours to solve.
- Maintain confidentiality.

**TRY TO SPEND MOST
OF YOUR TIME TOGETHER
PRAYING, NOT TALKING ABOUT
WHAT TO PRAY ABOUT.**

- Keep a record of answered prayer.
- Claim scripture promises as you pray.
- Keep prayer times conversational; pray in short sentences or paragraphs.
- View pauses or silence as a normal and positive aspect of your time together.



3. WORK THROUGH THE BARRIERS OF PRAYER PARTNERING.

- *Time.* We make time for what is important to us. Prayer is a paradox that takes time and frees time.
- *Risk.* Most people are afraid of being vulnerable or misunderstood. What may seem initially intimidating can be a benefit.
- *Previous bad experience.* One bad experience doesn't have to lead to another. Try again with a new partner.
- *Feelings (inadequacy, uncertainty, doubt, etc.).* For most people, these feelings are normal when attempting something new. Honestly acknowledge your feelings and pray about them.

“AND PRAY IN THE SPIRIT
ON ALL OCCASIONS WITH
ALL KINDS OF PRAYERS AND
REQUESTS.”

Eph. 6:18

4.

WHAT DO PRAYER PARTNERS PRAY ABOUT?

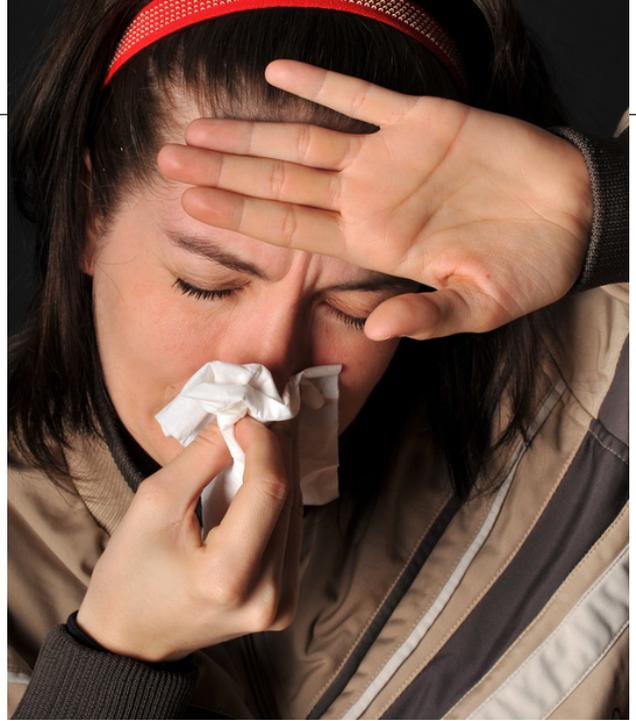
- Praise and thanksgiving
- Family concerns (spouse, children, in-law issues)
- Mutual friends
- Work pressures
- Church matters
- Personal requests (temptation areas, new ministry opportunities, future dreams, etc.)
- Individual and corporate church revival
- Outpouring of the Holy Spirit
- Non-attending members
- Your community
- National leaders
- Your pastor and church leaders
- Prayer partner ministry
- Students, teachers, schools 



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Are You Too Sick to Work?

by Rae Lee Cooper



One morning you awaken with a stuffy nose, your head aches, and your throat is scratchy. You feel your forehead and it's warm—too warm. The light hurts your eyes. As you try to stand up, your legs seem to be made of rubber. Suddenly it dawns on you—you're sick!

"Oh no!" you exclaim. "I can't be sick. I have that important project due today, and a meeting during lunch. I could just take an aspirin and go ahead into work. I'll probably feel better later. But I feel so lousy now. What shall I do? Shall I call in sick?"

Do you ever feel concerned about calling in sick?

Do thoughts of work obligations, project deadlines, and commitments haunt you?

Are you afraid an absence will reflect poorly on you?

Do you fear the workforce will collapse if you should miss a day?

Or maybe you're a part-time worker and you don't get paid sick days. And with jobs disappearing in today's economy, you don't want the boss to think that you're not totally committed.

Even so, a sick employee generally isn't a very productive one. What she is, though, is an *infectious* one who will spread germs to her co-workers, who will in turn be faced with the dilemma of whether to call in sick in the days to come.

Often by coming in sick and infecting others, you could be costing your employer much more than the cost of you alone being absent one or two days. One study suggested that presenteeism (the act of being at work but not engaged for whatever reasons including sickness) can generate a significant financial loss as ill workers perform below their usual levels while often passing on their ailments to their co-workers, which then further negatively impacts productivity.

So be kind to your employer, your co-workers, and to yourself. By staying home and resting, you can heal more efficiently, and recovery will often be quicker.

Here is a list and description of illnesses and symptoms which represent *very good reasons* for calling in sick to work. Use common sense and good judgment when other problems arise.

- 1. Stomach Woes:** You have diarrhea or you are vomiting. It could be food poisoning or it could be a gastrointestinal infection. The latter is very contagious, so why put your co-workers at risk? It would be advisable to see your physician in order to obtain a diagnosis and to avoid becoming severely dehydrated.
- 2. Flu:** A sudden fever, chills, and achiness usually mean you have the flu. This can run through a workplace like wildfire, taking down everyone in its path by droplet (sneezing and coughing) and touch contamination. You won't feel up to standing, never mind working, so stay home. With viral infections like flu and colds, you are the most infectious at the beginning of the illness, although in some cases you may be able to transmit germs and viruses to others for a week or longer. Often a few days of rest, fluids, and appropriate medications will set you right more quickly than if you try to accomplish a multitude of tasks at the same time. Don't hesitate to see your physician if symptoms become serious, such as high fever, difficulty breathing, vomiting, and/or significant pain.
- 3. Sore throat:** This depends on whether your throat hurts a little bit or if you feel as if you've been swallowing razor blades. A severe sore throat, especially if you also have a high fever and swollen glands, could mean strep throat, which is quite contagious as well as very painful. Untreated strep throat can lead to ear or sinus infection, tonsil abscess, or inflammation of the kidneys. Rheumatic fever and scarlet fever can also follow a severe strep throat in-

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fection. Go to the doctor for a throat culture and wait for the results before returning to work. If you have a positive result, he or she will prescribe an antibiotic and tell you when you can return to work

4. **Fever:** A fever indicates that your body is trying to fight off an infection. The infection may or may not be contagious or communicable, so don't take a chance of sharing it with your co-workers. Besides, a fever usually makes you feel pretty miserable, and you won't be productive anyway. Fever is the body's method of burning off heat-sensitive germs and viruses. It triggers the immune system into action. It's best to let the fever run its course, and a fever of 101° to 102° F. is not dangerous. Support your body's battle by drinking plenty of fluids, conserving the energy your body needs to fight the disease by getting plenty of rest, and eating a light diet. Take fever-lowering medications judiciously.
5. **Rash:** Until you know the cause of a rash, avoid contact with other people. If you know the reason for the problem, the rash isn't communicable, and you're not too uncomfortable, you can probably go to work. Follow your doctor's advice.
6. **Conjunctivitis (also known as pink eye):** Conjunctivitis is an eye infection or inflammation. Its symptoms can include eye redness or swelling, and you may feel like you have sand in your eye. It can be extremely contagious, so you should not have contact with other people until you've visited a doctor. If he or she determines that it is contagious, you will have to use antibiotic eye drops for 24 hours before returning to work.
7. **Significant Pain:** Even if you have seen your physician and you know the cause of your pain isn't anything that will endanger your or someone else's health and well-being, you should consider staying at home. Depending on the severity and type of pain you have, you may have trouble focusing on anything else but your discomfort, which will impact your co-workers as well as your productivity.
8. **Common Cold:** Whether or not you should call in sick because you have a cold depends on its severity. If you are rapidly emptying boxes of tissues, coughing, and sneezing very frequently, you've got a pretty bad cold. You will have trouble concentrating and will likely spread germs to others. If your cold is not that severe and you must go to work, wash your hands frequently, keep your phone and computer germ free by wiping them down with alcohol wipes if others use them, and remember to flush your tissues as opposed to trashing them. If your co-workers keep their distance, don't be offended.

What symptoms are normally OK to go to work with?

- You are sniffing but don't have a fever. You could have allergies.
- Your throat tickles or you have a postnasal drip.
- Your ear aches.
- You have a sinus infection.
- You have a dry cough with little or no mucus.
- If you are recovering and are no longer infectious—and feel up to it—you should be able to go to work. Tell your colleagues that you are getting better and no longer pose a threat to their good health.

What should I do if my co-worker is exhibiting symptoms but insists on coming to work?

- Avoid direct contact with your ill co-worker.
- Do not use their telephone or workstation.
- Wash your hands frequently or use a hand sanitizer.
- If the symptoms are obviously intense, speak with the co-worker or your supervisor about encouraging medical evaluation.

What can I do to avoid getting sick at work?

- If someone has a cold, don't shake hands with them or kiss or hug them.
- Wash your hands frequently, employing proper hand washing techniques (plenty of soap and warm water, rubbing your hands together vigorously for at least 20 seconds—long enough to sing the song "Happy Birthday").
- Avoid surfaces that may be contaminated—a telephone, desk, stair railing, etc.
- Use hand sanitizer.
- If you haven't washed your hands or sanitized them after touching a surface you're not certain about, avoid touching any part of your face.
- Best of all, follow the advice of this little nursery rhyme quoted in *What the River Knows*, 1990. 🐾

*The best six doctors anywhere
And no one can deny it
Are sunshine, water, rest, and air
Exercise and diet.
These six will gladly you attend
If only you are willing
Your mind they'll ease
Your will they'll mend
And charge you not a shilling.*

REMEMBERING THE SOURCE

by Heather Shurtliff



It really doesn't matter how much money we have.

Whether there is plenty to spare or just enough to get by, finances can be one of the most stressful parts of life. In a global economy that is beginning to unravel at the seams, each one of us has to come to terms with an uncertain financial future as well as our attitude about our resources. As children of God, we are not at the mercy of this world's financial rollercoasters. We have a solid-backed guarantee that as we

TRUSTING IS NOT ALWAYS EASY, ESPECIALLY WHEN GOD SEEMS TO WAIT TILL THE LAST POSSIBLE MOMENT.

place our trust in Jesus, He will supply our every need.

Granted, trusting is not always easy, especially when God seems to wait till the last possible moment to make His move. During these times He has given us ways to fight off feel-

ings of worry and anxiety. This article does not offer a comprehensive list of stress management tools, but here are three simple steps we can use to start on the path to freedom from financial worry.

STEP 1: REMEMBERING

"Remember the Sabbath day by keeping it holy.... For in six days the Lord made the heavens and the earth, the sea, and all that is in them" (Ex. 20:8, 11).

What does keeping Sabbath have to do with managing financial stress? Think about it for a moment. What are we called to remember on the seventh day? The first six days of creation Jesus spent all His energy sculpting the world to meet the needs of Adam and

Eve. He spared no pains in creating an environment to nurture the first couple. Then, on Sabbath, Jesus ended His work and asked Adam and Eve to join Him in celebrating His ability to provide for and sustain life.

A true observance of the Sabbath helps us to remember and reflect on the fact that Jesus is our Creator and Sustainer. When financial pressures seem to pile up, Sabbath is a chance to refocus our perspective. If Christ is our ultimate provider, then we can rest knowing that His creative power will uphold us in every area of our lives, including our finances.

Why not spend this next Sabbath and the ones to come meditating on Jesus? Celebrate how He has already provided and rest in the knowledge that He will continue to do so!

STEP 2: ACKNOWLEDGING

It's so easy to get caught up in the rat race. Every day seems filled with an unending list of duties. Subconsciously, we may start to feel that our needs are met through the work of our own hands, but in reality everything we possess comes from God. Tithing is a perfect reminder of this fact.

It's not that God really needs 10 percent of our income. After all, heaven's streets are already paved with gold (Rev. 21:21). God asks us to give back a little part of what He has given, purely for our own good. We might never verbalize it, but occasionally some of us may wish we could just mentally acknowledge God

WHEN FINANCIAL PRESSURES SEEM TO PILE UP, SABBATH IS A CHANCE TO REFOCUS OUR PERSPECTIVE.

as our ultimate provider without having to put any tithe in the offering plate. This temptation comes from believing the lie that we are really the ones responsible for maintaining our own wellbeing. Being wise financial stewards is definitely our duty, but ultimately our help comes from God! He is the one who sustains us.

Returning a faithful tithe is an acknowledgement of God's care and kindness to ourselves and our families. Financial peace flows from recognizing that God is the one backing all our needs. It's reassuring to know that He who clothes the lilies of the field so beautifully is the one who has promised to clothe us (Matt. 6:28-30).

STEP 3: GRATEFULLY GIVING

A last step to worry-free finances comes in the form of a grateful heart. When we rest and remember Christ as our Provider and Sustainer and acknowledge His provision through tithing, our natural response will be one of gratefulness. Giving our offering becomes an

GIVING TAKES OUR EYES OFF OUR OWN TROUBLES AND REFOCUSES THEM ON OTHERS' NEEDS.

expression of our appreciation for all God has blessed us with. No matter how much or how little we may possess, each of us owes a debt of gratitude. Offerings are a way for us to link hands with Jesus in ministering to the needs of those around us. Giving has a by-product; it takes our eyes off our own troubles and refocuses them on others' needs. As a result, the stressful anxiety we feel about our own resources (or lack of them!) fades away in contrast to the joy we experience in giving.

Let us trust God to provide and sustain. Hasn't He been faithful before?



HEATHER SHURLIFF is a pastor's wife and a stay-at-home mother of two. Growing up a pastor's daughter, serving as a missionary to India, and living in a single-income home all taught her something about economy. One of her passions is discovering and sharing creative ways to maximize one's financial resources to the glory of God.

OCCASIONALLY SOME OF US MAY WISH WE COULD JUST MENTALLY ACKNOWLEDGE GOD AS OUR ULTIMATE PROVIDER WITHOUT HAVING TO PUT ANY TITHE IN THE OFFERING PLATE.

HEALTH TIP

Amazing Water

by Rachel Petersen, RN

Do you drink enough water every day? Chances are, you don't. The human body needs to replace the fluid that it loses through natural functions like sweating. Research shows that even a 1 percent loss of body weight due to mild dehydration can lead to increased fatigue and difficulty concentrating.¹ The recommended minimum is eight glasses of water daily.

Do you need a little encouragement to drink enough water every day? If you don't like the taste of tap water, or it isn't safe where you live, you can:

- use a distiller to make the water taste cleaner
- add a little lemon to improve the flavor
- make unsafe water drinkable by bringing it to a boil and then letting it cool²
- drink it cold (I tend to drink more if I keep a chilled water bottle at my side)
- find a drinking buddy (my husband and I race to see who can drink the most throughout the day)

Don't underestimate the benefits of water while exercising! Keeping hydrated can improve the function of your joints, leading to a better workout. Water also decreases the risk of kidney stones, so if you are at risk, drinking plenty of fluids can help prevent stones from forming.

Did you know that drinking water can help you lose weight? If you have stubborn pounds that won't budge, you may find that drinking water will help them disappear. Combined with a proper diet, exercise, and plenty of rest, water has been shown to help decrease weight. Some people think they feel hungry when they need a drink, even though it's actually thirst. Drinking a glass of water 30 minutes before meals can help you eat smaller portions and have more appetite control.

So raise your glass or water bottle, and toast to drinking more water this year!

¹ <http://www.shapefit.com/water-benefits.html>. Accessed 7 November 2011.

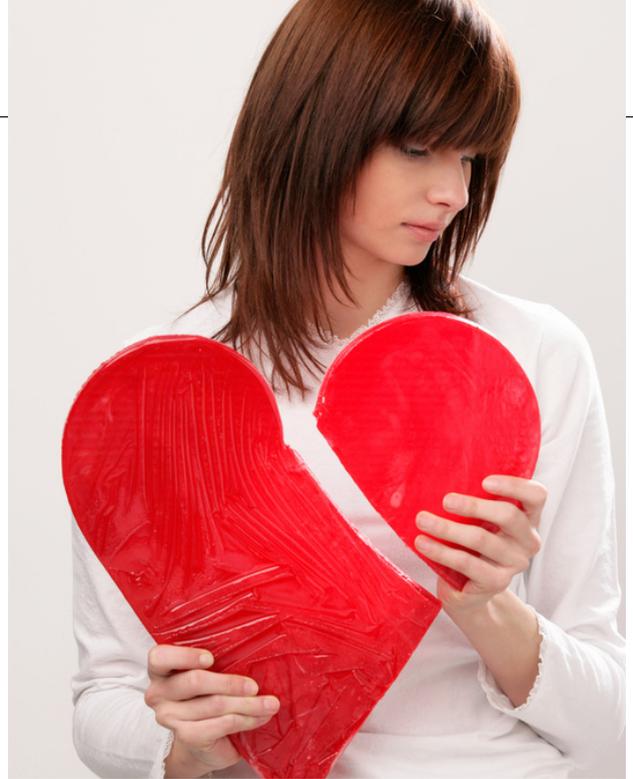
² <http://www.survivaltopics.com/survival/how-long-do-you-need-to-boil-water>. Accessed 8 November 2011.



YOU HAVE THE POWER TO LOSE YOUR MARRIAGE

> Part 2 of 3

by Sarah K. Asaftei



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FIRST QUARTER 2012

You have half the power to keep your marriage. And *all* the power to ruin it. In most Western cultures, losing your marriage is easy. It's staying married that's the hard part. And in cultures where divorce is anathema, staying *happily* married still requires a lot of work.

I know God called my husband to be a pastor. Since God also let me marry him—I choose to believe God called me to ministry too. I don't think God would bring us together and then only call *one* of us. Ministry works best when the whole family is on board. God doesn't make random mistakes—so if your husband is called to ministry, and you're his wife, then God has called you too.

"No thanks," I hear you saying. "That's my husband's job. I've got my own career, my own interests."

Yes. Well. Good for you. You are truly a liberated woman.

Except, that kind of liberation tends to endanger marital satisfaction.

Good marriages thrive on common interest. Strong relationships grow out of shared passion. Lifelong commitment comes easiest when there is mutual respect.

Yes, you can be your own woman. Go ahead, enjoy your career. Or you might be choosing to stay at home and raise your babies—which is a worthy career in its own right. But antagonism (or even casual disinterest) toward your husband's ministry will bring guaranteed repercussions.

When you can't find something, *anything*, to love about life as a pastor's wife, you're effectively making your husband choose between pleasing you and obeying God. He faces a crisis of decision.

Who does he value more, you or God? Whose daily wrath can he endure most easily? Sooner or later, he'll wonder if he's failed as a husband because you're so unhappy and disinterested. This kind of tension can become a dark cloud over your home.

That feeling of failure is definitely going to affect your married life. Sure, it might stay contained in the realm of general misery and discontent. Or it might spill over into something worse.

I'm not writing this to make you feel threatened. It's not about changing who you are just so you can save your marriage. Or maybe it is. I guess that all depends on who you are, and on the direction your marriage is headed.

I wouldn't urge you to pretend to be someone you're not, just to make things peaceful. Be who you are. But, if who you are is a woman at odds with your husband's identity and calling, if who you are is causing stress and friction in your marriage—then maybe God wants to transform you into someone new.

I freely admit that being a pastor's wife isn't the easiest of identities to embrace. We don't get regular weekends off. We share our husbands with an entire congregation. We pick up the ball when it's "family

**WHO WANTS
TO JUST BE
NORMAL,
ANYWAY?**



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WHEN YOU CAN'T FIND ANYTHING TO LOVE ABOUT LIFE AS A PASTOR'S WIFE, YOUR HUSBAND MUST CHOOSE BETWEEN PLEASING YOU AND OBEYING GOD.

an incredible plan for you that includes this reality of life as the pastor's wife? What if you are just one heart-change away from experiencing something amazing?

If you ask me, the hardships are a small price to pay for the adventure of being married to a leader of God's people. Oh sure, I'd like more uninterrupted family time. Yes, I would enjoy not having to pinch every penny, and he could make far more money doing something else. Of course I'd love to be able to sit *with* my husband in church. Some days it'd be *really* nice to blend in with everyone else. But who wants to just be normal, anyway?

When I was a newlywed, one wise older pastor's wife told me that her dearest friend was married to a doctor. She said they could relate in ways that other women didn't comprehend. Both shared their husbands with large audiences. Both endured time alone at home while the men worked unusual hours. Both had learned how to cook and entertain groups in their homes because of their husbands' jobs—not because they naturally loved being a hostess. Both had fallen in love with men of influence who lived to serve other people.

Every woman married to a man of influence has unique duties that come with her role. Senators' wives. Lawyers' wives. Executives' wives. Doctors' wives. And yes, pastors' wives too.

How often do you stop to think of your husband as a "man of influence"? How often do you treat him

day" and a church member calls from the hospital needing an emergency pastoral visit. We spend evenings at home alone with the kids while other families are eating supper together. We sit through the sermon alone, managing the babies as best we can. (I'm getting a lot of practice with this right now!)

But take a moment and look at the big picture. Are all these inconveniences worth risking your marriage? What if God has

with honor? The health of your marriage depends greatly on how you express your support to this man you chose to marry. Sure, he could do something horrid that would destroy your relationship, but so can you. Steady nagging or silent antagonism over his pastoral identity will erode your marriage just as surely as something big and flamboyant like adultery.

You are the wife of an influential man.

Even if he's young. Even if he's quiet. Even if he sometimes forgets that you (and your kids) should be his top priority. Next time you see him walk through the door, pause a moment and just look at him. Remind yourself that this man is called by God.

It's that very calling that makes your husband different, special. It's what makes him the man you love.

How much is that worth to you?



A family splintered by feuding will fall apart.
Mark 3:25 (NLT)

Tips

FOR DISCOVERING (AND EMBRACING) YOUR CALLING AS A PASTOR'S WIFE...

- **MENTORS** - Find a pastor's wife whom you admire, and who enjoys her role. Ask her questions about her journey. Ask if she would pray for you or mentor you. Be humble enough to accept advice from those who have made it work.
- **WRITE** - Sit down and make a list of the good things that come from being a pastor's wife. You may not be able to sit in church together as a family, but are your weekdays more flexible than other families? Or maybe you can't spend evenings together because of your husband's church meetings, but can you get quality time in the mornings?

LOVE IS... MEETING EACH OTHER'S NEEDS

by Karen Holford



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FIRST QUARTER 2012

Lori was on the phone to her mother, Rachel. “But Andy should know exactly what I need because he loves me!”

Rachel was quiet for a moment. Then she said, “When Tyrell cries, do you always know what he needs?”

“No, of course not, but he’s just a baby!”

“Maybe, but you love him, so doesn’t that mean you know *exactly* what he needs *all* the time?”

Lori thought for a moment. “OK, I get what you’re saying!” Rachel could sense the unseen smile on Lori’s face as she realized her expectations were unrealistic.

“It would really help if Tyrell could tell me what he needed. My life would be so much easier. Maybe it would help if I explained to Andy what I need from him. And maybe I should ask him what he needs from me?”

Believing that those who love us will automatically *know* what we need, *and* be able to provide it for us whenever we *want* it, is completely unrealistic. The more intimately we know each other, the more we may understand each other’s needs. But it’s much more effective if we can talk to each other about our needs and discover the best ways to meet them.

UNRAVELING MUDDLED MISUNDERSTANDINGS

Understanding what love is really all about was a bit of a mystery during the first few years of our marriage. We loved each other, and we tried to care for each other, but we’d often mess up or find ourselves in a muddle of misunderstandings and disappointed expectations.

So it was a great relief to us when we met Dr. David Ferguson from Intimate Life Ministries and his wife, Teresa, who taught us about relational needs. They gave us a whole new way of looking at our relationship and talking about how we could love each other

in deeper and more practical ways. This perspective has also helped us in our relationships with our children, our colleagues, our church members, and even the strangers we meet in the street.

The Fergusons explained that, just as there are ten important life commandments in Exodus 20, there are at least ten important relationship instructions that Paul mentions in the New Testament. But unfortunately he didn’t put them all in one chapter and explain how important they were for strengthening our relationships! If we re-described Paul’s instructions as relational needs that we all have to some degree, we could name them as needs for acceptance, affection, appreciation, approval, attention, comfort, encouragement, respect, security, and support. We find these described in different ways in different Bibles and languages, but they are all vital for building strong and healthy relationships. Ellen White

also describes these needs and stressed their importance in creating an attractive atmosphere of love and happiness.

These relational needs are also relationship-strengtheners—different actions that help us to feel loved. Without these basic building blocks in a relationship we can soon feel unloved, unappreciated, and uncared for. When we feel safe, respected, and loved, we usually feel much freer to talk

THERE ARE AT LEAST TEN IMPORTANT RELATIONSHIP INSTRUCTIONS THAT PAUL MENTIONS IN THE NEW TESTAMENT.

WHEN WE FEEL SAFE, RESPECTED, AND LOVED, WE USUALLY FEEL FREER TO TALK AND DEVELOP SPIRITUALLY.



KAREN HOLFORD is a freelance writer and family and couple therapist living in Scotland. Her husband, Bernie, is the president of the Scottish Mission. They also lead out in special weekends for married couples and couples in ministry. They have three adult children and are expecting their first grandchild!

about the things that we really need to talk about as a couple, and even freer to develop spiritually, as we understand more about the way God meets our relational and spiritual needs.

INSIGHTS IN THE KITCHEN

One day, before we understood the concept of relational needs, I was cooking alone in the kitchen. I was feeling emotionally out of sorts after a difficult day. I wanted Bernie to “connect” with me, but I wasn’t sure what I needed or how to ask for it. So I was grumpy and miserable, and as I cooked I banged the pots and pans and cupboard doors and didn’t care how much noise I made. Bernie heard me crashing around and decided, understandably, that it was better to leave me alone. Of course, that didn’t help, because what I really needed was Bernie!

A few weeks after learning about relational needs I was in the kitchen again, feeling tired and discouraged. As I stood at the sink I ran through the list of relational needs, wondering which ones I needed the most. I felt as if I needed all of them, but the ones I needed most were support, encouragement, and comfort. Put into practical terms, I needed Bernie to come and make

INSTEAD, WE ASK OURSELVES THE QUESTION, “WHICH RELATIONAL NEEDS AREN’T BEING MET, AND WHAT CAN I DO TO MEET THEM?”

supper with me, talk together about how our day had been, say one encouraging thing, and give me a hug.

Bernie was also looking out for my relational needs. When he heard me struggling in the kitchen he realized that I probably needed support, so he came and made a salad. As we chatted together I was able to tell him that I needed some

encouragement, and I asked him for a hug. When Bernie talked about his day, it sounded as if he needed some comfort too. He’d been on a difficult committee, so he needed the comfort of a shoulder rub, a refreshing walk together, and some chamomile tea.

A GOOD QUESTION

These days, when either of us behaves in an unexpected or frustrated way, we no longer think our spouse is overreacting. Instead, we ask ourselves the question, “Which relational needs aren’t being met, and what can I do to meet them?” It also works well with our children and with our church members. I realize that when my colleague seems angry, he might really be feeling unsafe or disrespected in some way, and when my friend sounds discouraged she might need some support as well as encouragement.

Why is “relational need-meeting” important?

- **We need to know that God loves us.** God works hard to provide for our needs—physically, spiritually, and relationally, and God’s love becomes more real when another human being tries to minister to us in the way God ministers to us. *My God shall supply all your need (Phil. 4:19, KJV).*
- **We need to know that other people love us and care for us.** *It is not good for the man to be alone (Gen. 2:18).*
- **When others take the time to meet our needs** it builds our self-worth in a positive way and we start believing we are valuable. We believe that we’re worth loving, not only by another human being but also by God. *Build each other up (1 Thess. 5:11).*
- **When we feel loved and valued** we have healthier thoughts about ourselves. We feel more hopeful, happier, less alone, and more able to meet other people’s needs and minister to them. *As I have loved you, so you must love one another (John 13:34).*
- **We grow spiritually as we understand** and experience more about God’s love for us and how we can share that love with others. *May the Lord make your love increase and overflow for each other and for everyone else, just as ours does for you (1 Thess. 3:12).*

THREE BARRIERS TO MEETING EACH OTHER’S NEEDS

Ideally we learn how to recognize our own needs, and we discover the best ways to ask each other to meet those needs if the other person hasn’t been aware of them. We can also learn how to discover



what our partners need and how to ask them what we can do to help.

But there are three unhelpful and unhealthy barriers to meeting each other's needs:

1. We think our needs are more important than theirs (selfishness and greed).
2. We think we can meet all our needs all by ourselves (self-sufficiency and pride).
3. We feel guilty if other people try to meet our needs because we believe we should be the one who meets everyone else's needs (overly self-sacrificial).

If other people don't meet our needs we soon become self-sufficient. "Well, if no one's going to meet my needs, I'll just do it myself!" But in the world of relationships, this doesn't work very well. Try comforting yourself when you need a hug, or paying attention to yourself, or helping yourself feel secure. These are all hollow experiences when our needs aren't being met by other caring human beings.

THE DANGER FOR MINISTRY MARRIAGES

Ministry couples often find themselves in relational tangles or in a hurtful experience of aloneness. Ministers can easily and unintentionally give the message that their work is super-important because it's God's work, and everything else in the home and family is less important. This can leave the minister's wife feeling hurt and insignificant because she has to put her needs lower than her husband's needs. Everyone in the congregation seems to be more important than she is. Everyone else's needs are greater than hers. Eventually she feels lonely, overwhelmed, and uncared for because she *does* have needs that *do* need to be met by others for her own relational, emotional, physical, and spiritual health. Neglecting the importance of each other's relational needs can quickly damage a marriage.

OUR TOP TEN RELATIONAL NEEDS

So what are some of these relational needs? Here's what the Bible and *Adventist Home* have to say:

Acceptance – willingly and warmly welcoming a person who has made a mistake

- "Accept one another, then, just as Christ accepted you" (Rom. 15:7).
- "Let all seek to discover the excellencies rather than the defects. Often it is our own attitude, the atmosphere that surrounds ourselves, which determines what will be revealed to us in another" (*Adventist Home*, p. 105).

Affection – expressing care through warm and gentle touching

- "And he took the children in his arms" (Mark 10:16).
- "Let the husband aid his wife by his sympathy and unfailing affection" (*Adventist Home*, p. 218).
- "Love cannot long exist without expression" (*Adventist Home*, p. 107).

Appreciation – expressing thanks or praise to each other

- "I praise you for remembering me" (1 Cor. 11:2).
- "The husband should let his wife know that he appreciates her work" (*Adventist Home*, p. 114).
- "Make your home atmosphere fragrant with tender thoughtfulness" (*Adventist Home*, p. 16).

ASKING YOUR SPOUSE TO MEET YOUR NEEDS

ATTENTION

I'd really like you to come for a walk with me, even though I know you have other things to do.

RESPECT

Please let me tell you some of my thoughts and ideas.

ACCEPTANCE

I need to know that you still care about me, even when I get things wrong and make mistakes.

AFFECTION

Please can I have a hug?

ENCOURAGEMENT

I feel as if this project is taking forever! Your encouragement would mean so much to me!

APPRECIATION

I washed your car for you because I know you like to drive a clean car.

SUPPORT

Please can you help me for a few minutes?

COMFORT

I'm feeling really sad. Can you just hold me for a while?

SECURITY

Can I trust you not to tell anyone?

APPROVAL

Tell me three reasons why you're glad you married me!

Approval – blessing, building up, or affirming each other

- “Building others up according to their needs” (Eph. 4:29).
- “Watch well your words, for they have a powerful influence for good or for ill” (*Adventist Home*, p. 107).

Attention – being interested in each other and focusing on each other

- “There should be no division in the body, but that its parts should have equal concern for each other” (1 Cor. 12:25).
- “Determine to be all that it is possible to be to each other. Continue the early attentions” (*Adventist Home*, p. 106).

OFFERING TO MEET YOUR SPOUSE’S NEEDS

ATTENTION

I want to spend time with you, doing whatever you’d like to do.

RESPECT

I really value your opinions and ideas.

ACCEPTANCE

It doesn’t matter that you made a mistake. It’s only human! Nothing you could do would ever stop me from caring for you!

AFFECTION

What can I do to help you feel especially loved?

ENCOURAGEMENT

I know it’s hard work, but you’re doing such a great job! I’m so proud of you!

APPRECIATION

Thank you for washing my car and filling it up with petrol!

SUPPORT

What’s the best thing I could do to help you right now?

COMFORT

I can see how upset you are. What can I do to comfort you?

SECURITY

You can trust me. I won’t let you down.

APPROVAL

I’m so glad I married you! I couldn’t have a better husband/wife!

Comfort – responding sensitively to each other’s pain with words, feelings, and touch

- “Who comforts us in all our troubles, so that we can comfort those in any trouble with the comfort we ourselves have received from God” (2 Cor. 1:4).
- “Let not the heart of one connected with you starve for the want of kindness and sympathy” (*Adventist Home*, p. 107).

Encouragement – helping each other to persevere toward their goals

- “Therefore encourage one another and build each other up” (1 Thess. 5:11).
- “His kindness and loving courtesy will be to her a precious encouragement, and the happiness he imparts will bring joy and peace to his own heart” (*Adventist Home*, p. 218).

Respect – valuing each other highly

- “Honor one another above yourselves” (Rom. 12:10).
- “Never should either party indulge in a joke at the expense of the other’s feelings. Never should either the husband or wife in sport or in any other manner complain of each other to others” (*Adventist Home*, p. 177).
- “Do not try to compel each other to do as you wish” (*Adventist Home*, p. 107).

Security – enabling each other to feel peaceful and safe in the relationship

- “Live at peace with everyone” (Rom. 12:18).
- “Anything that would mar the peace and unity of the family should be firmly repressed, and kindness and love should be cherished” (*Adventist Home*, p. 120).
- “Let neither husband nor wife harbor the thought that their union is a mistake or a disappointment” (*Adventist Home*, p. 106).

Support – coming alongside and helping each other

- “Carry each other’s burdens” (Gal. 6:2).
- “Let the wife feel that she can lean upon the large affections of her husband—that his arms will strengthen and uphold her through all her toils and cares, that his influence will sustain hers—and her burden will lose half its weight” (*Adventist Home*, p. 216).



FOR FURTHER INFORMATION READ:

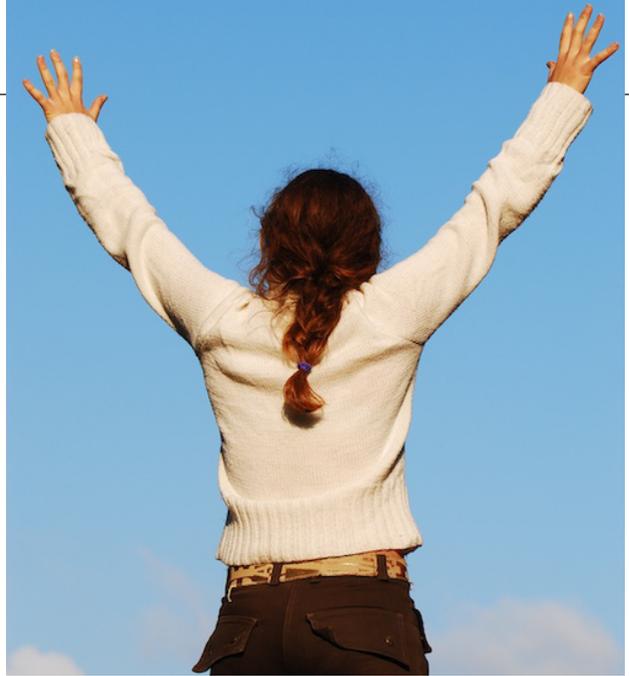
Never Alone, by David and Teresa Ferguson

Never Alone Devotions for Couples, by David and Teresa Ferguson

THE VICTORIOUS LIFE

by Ellen G. White

Testimonies to Ministers and Gospel Workers, p. 516-520



The last of Mrs. White's writings before her death.

Dear Friend:

The Lord has given me a message for you, and not for you only, but also for our faithful souls who are troubled by doubts and fears regarding their acceptance by the Lord Jesus Christ. His word to you is, "Fear not: for I have redeemed thee, I have called thee by thy name; thou art Mine." You desire to please the Lord, and you can do this by believing His promises. He is waiting to take you into a harbor of gracious experience, and He bids you, "Be still, and know that I am God." You have had a time of unrest; but Jesus says to you, "Come unto Me, ... and I will give you rest." The joy of Christ in the soul is worth everything. "Then are they glad," because they are privileged to rest in the arms of the everlasting love.

PUT AWAY YOUR DISTRUST OF OUR HEAVENLY FATHER. INSTEAD OF TALKING OF YOUR DOUBTS, BREAK AWAY FROM THEM IN THE STRENGTH OF JESUS.

Put away your distrust of our heavenly Father. Instead of talking of your doubts, break away from them in the strength of Jesus, and let light shine into your soul by letting your voice express

confidence and trust in God. I know that the Lord is very nigh to give you victory, and I say to you, be helped, be strengthened, be lifted out of and away from the dark dungeon of unbelief. Doubts will rush into your mind, because Satan is trying to hold you in captivity to his cruel power; but face him in the strength that Jesus is willing to give you, and conquer the inclination to express unbelief in your Saviour.

PEACE COMES WITH DEPENDENCE ON DIVINE POWER.

Do not talk of your inefficiency and your defects. When despair would seem to be sweeping over your soul, look to Jesus, saying, He lives to make intercession for me. Forget the things that are behind, and believe the promise, "I will come to you," and "abide with you."

God is waiting to bestow the blessing of forgiveness of pardon for iniquity, of the gifts of righteousness, upon all who will believe in His love and accept the salvation He offers. Christ is ready to say to the repenting sinner, "Behold, I have caused thine iniquity to pass from thee, and I will clothe thee with change of raiment." The blood of Jesus Christ is the eloquent plea that speaks in behalf of sinners. This blood "cleanseth us from all sin."

It is your privilege to trust in the love of Jesus for salvation, in the fullest, surest, noblest manner; to say, He loves me, He receives me; I will

trust Him, for He gave His life for me. Nothing so dispels doubt as coming in contact with the character of Christ. He declares, "Him that cometh to Me I will in no wise cast out;" that is, there is no possibility of My casting him out, for I have pledged My word to receive him. Take Christ at His word, and let your lips declare that you have gained the victory.

Is Jesus true? Does He mean what He says? Answer decidedly, Yes, every word. Then if you have settled this, by faith claim every promise that He has made, and receive the blessing; for this acceptance by faith gives life to the soul. You may believe that Jesus is true to you, even though you feel yourself to be the weakest and most unworthy of His children. And as you believe, all your dark, brooding doubts are thrown back upon the archdeceiver who originated them. You can be a great blessing if you will take God at His word. By living faith you are to trust Him, even though the impulse is strong within you to speak words of distrust.

Peace comes with dependence on divine power. As fast as the soul resolves to act in accordance with the light given, the Holy Spirit gives more light and strength. The grace of the Spirit is supplied to cooperate with the soul's resolve, but it is not a substitute for the individual exercise of faith. Success in the Christian life depends upon the appropriation of the light that God has given. It is not an abundance of light and evidence that makes the soul free in Christ; it is the rising of the powers and the will and the energies of the soul

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to cry out sincerely, "Lord, I believe; help Thou mine unbelief."

I rejoice in the bright prospects of the future, and so may you. Be cheerful, and praise the Lord for His loving-kindness. That which you cannot understand, commit to Him. He loves you and pities your every weakness. He "hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ." It would not satisfy the heart of the Infinite One to give those who love His Son a lesser blessing than He gives His Son.

Satan seeks to draw our minds away from the mighty Helper, to lead us to ponder over our degeneration of soul. But though Jesus sees the guilt of the past, He speaks pardon; and we should not dishonor Him by doubting His love. The feeling of guiltiness must be laid at the foot of the cross, or it will poison the springs of life. When Satan thrusts his threatenings upon you, turn from them, and comfort your soul with the promises of God. The cloud may be dark in itself, but when filled with the light of heaven, it turns to the brightness of gold; for the glory of God rests upon it.

God's children are not to be subject to feelings and emotions. When they fluctuate between hope and fear, the heart of Christ is hurt; for He has given them unmistakable evidence of His love. He wants them to be established, strengthened, and settled in the most holy faith. He wants them to do the work He has given them; then their hearts will become in His hands as sacred harps, every chord of which will send forth praise and thanksgiving to the One sent by God to take away the sins of the world.

Christ's love for His children is as tender as it is strong. And it is stronger than death; for He died to purchase our salvation, and to make us one with Him, mystically and eternally one. So strong is His love that it controls all his powers, and employs the vast resources of heaven in doing His people good. It is without variability or shadow of turning—the same yesterday,



today, and forever. Although sin has existed for ages, trying to counteract this love and obstruct its flowing earthward, it still flows in rich currents to those for whom Christ died.

God loves the sinless angels, who do His service and are obedient to all His commands; but He does not give them grace; they have never needed it, for they have never sinned. Grace is an attribute shown to undeserving human beings. We did not seek after it; it was sent in search of us. God rejoices to bestow grace upon all who hunger and thirst for it, not because we are worthy, but because we are unworthy. Our need is the qualification which gives us the assurance that we shall receive the gift.

It should not be difficult to remember that the Lord desires you to lay your troubles and perplexities at his feet, and leave them there. Go to Him, saying: "Lord, my burdens are too heavy for me to carry. Wilt Thou bear them for me?" And He will answer: "I will take them. 'With ev-

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erlasting kindness will I have mercy on thee.' I will take your sins, and will give you peace. Banish no longer your self-respect; for I have bought you with the price of My own blood. You are Mine. Your weakened will I will strengthen. Your remorse for sin I will remove."

"I, even I, am He," the Lord declares, "that blotteth out thy transgressions for Mine own sake, and will not remember thy sins. Put Me in remembrance: let us plead together: declare thou, that thou mayest be justified." "I have not spoken in secret, in a dark place of the earth: I said not unto the seed of Jacob, Seek ye Me in vain: I the Lord speak righteousness, I declare things that are right." "Look unto Me, and be ye saved, all the ends of the earth: for I am God, and there is none else." Respond to the calls of God's mercy, and say: "I will trust in the Lord and be comforted. I will praise the Lord; for His anger is turned away. I will rejoice in God, who gives the victory." 



MORE THAN JUST A NEW YEAR'S RESOLUTION

by Lisa Clouzet



If you're like me, sometimes you find your life "stuck," and at the same time spinning out of control. Life's demands push us to do more and more until we're pretty much undone. Something tells us it would be good to slow down, take time to reflect on what we're doing and where we're going, but the

SOMETIMES IT'S GOOD TO JUST STOP AND BE STILL.

clock just keeps ticking louder and faster. Sometimes it's good to just stop and be still.

A couple years ago, I heard Don MacLafferty share his experiences of having "24 Hours with God." His genuine enthusiasm inspired me to try having my own personal spiritual retreat. I am a firm believer in making plans, but I have to admit that my decision to "retreat" was made rather spontaneously.

I awoke to an empty house one snowy Michigan Sabbath and found myself wishing I had planned a retreat (like somewhere in warm, sunny California). As I began my prayer time, it dawned on me that this very day was the perfect day. It was one of the first Sabbaths of the year—what better time! To avoid putting it off and becoming distracted, I found the suggestions Don had shared (see next article) and began to get ready for my 24 hours with God.

As he suggested, I kept it simple and relaxed. I called a close friend and asked her to intercede for me throughout the day. I soaked in a warm bubble bath and then put on comfortable clothes and slippers. My retreat supplies consisted of my Bible, a pen, some scratch paper, water, fruit, and nuts. I decided to spend most of the time in the downstairs guest room where it was comfortable and free from distractions. I dimmed the lights and lit a few scented candles to give the room a cozy feel, and then curled up in a soft, warm afghan.

What a treat it was to just *be*! To spend hours and hours of uninterrupted time alone with God! I kept the retreat suggestions close by to use as reference. After spending time pouring out my heart to God and listening to His still, small voice, I went into another room to

reflect on how He had led me in the past year, where I was currently, and what He might have in mind for me throughout the coming year.

I did this for each role in my life. Some things I wrote down were affirming and easy to celebrate. Others were challenging. It was comforting to remember that God loved me as I was, yet had areas of growth He desired to help me reach.

Because I wanted to remain in the warmth of my house, I didn't go outside for a walk but instead went upstairs and made a cup of herbal tea. As I sipped the tea, I had time to think about what I had experienced and learned so far. The warm tea and comfortable surroundings were just the invitation I needed to take a little nap.

IT WAS COMFORTING TO REMEMBER THAT GOD LOVED ME AS I WAS, YET HAD AREAS OF GROWTH HE DESIRED TO HELP ME REACH.

When I awoke, I spent time rededicating myself to God and asking His help in carrying out the plans He had laid before me. I read from my Bible and jotted down additional thoughts that came to mind. All too soon, the day was over and it was time to go to bed. The next morning, I ended my retreat with a time of praise and thanksgiving.

That 24 hours was just what I needed! I believe God enjoyed it too. It was such a blessing that daily devotions now seem like mini-retreats. God and I met again at the beginning of this year, and we're planning to make it a tradition: alone with God for 24 hours.

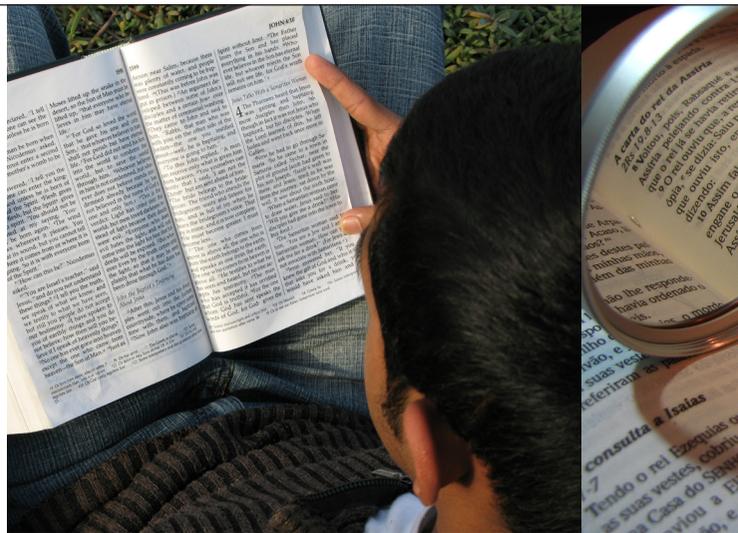


LISA CLOUZET has been happily married to Ron for 30 years, and they have three wonderful adult children: Christoffer, Alex, and Stefani. She is a chaplain and licensed counselor and currently teaches at the SDA Theological Seminary at Andrews University in Berrien Springs, Michigan. She enjoys spending time with family and friends, traveling, reading, and window shopping.

PERSONAL SPIRITUAL RETREAT

24 HOURS WITH GOD

by Don MacLafferty



WHY WOULD YOU WANT TO GO ON A PERSONAL RETREAT WITH GOD?

- To experience more of God
- To enjoy His peace and rest
- To review how God has provided for you in the past
- To receive God's perspective on your life's roles
- To discover more of God's agenda for your life
- To engage in Holy Spirit-led planning

Henry Blackaby, in *Spiritual Leadership*, states that we often make plans and then ask God to bless our plans. Seek God's agenda first, and then ask His blessing on it.

WHAT CAN YOU DO TO PREPARE?

1. **Environment.** Choose a distraction-free environment (examples: out in nature, motel near a state park, cabin in a state park, etc.). Go overnight somewhere. Plan for two parts of a day with a night in between.

2. **Prayer Partners.** Ask the treasured people in your life to intercede for you during your retreat. You may want to also pick a prayer partner who will intercede during your retreat and with whom you can get together after the retreat to debrief your experience. Choose someone of your same gender who is faithful to God and knows God's Word. Get their honest feedback on what happened.

3. **Food.** Bring your food and water with you. Do not go out to eat in a restaurant. Free yourself of distractions. Eat simply. Avoid excessive sweets and oils. Eat basic fruits, nuts, grains, vegetables. Consider fasting.

4. **Media.** Fast from the media.

5. **Materials.** A Bible and a journal. (If you keep a prayer journal, bring it to reflect on what God is doing in your life. If you do not keep a journal, take one to record your reflections and ideas that God brings to your mind.)

HOW CAN YOU MAKE THIS RETREAT MEANINGFUL?

1. **Be.** Slow down from your busy pace. Hike. Take time to just BE. This may take an hour or two. (If you have a long drive to your destination, that may be your slow down time.) Let go of business and pressures. Make yourself available to God. (Tell Him that.) See Ps. 46:10.

2. **Praise.** Spend time praising God for who He is and, secondly, celebrating what He's presently doing in your life. Note the times over the past year that God has provided for you, blessed you, and encouraged you. See Ps. 92: 1, 2.

3. **Confess.** Make things right with God. Surrender your attitude, desires, and heart to Him. You may need to make a call to someone you have wronged. Go into the rest of the retreat feeling good and restful in spirit. See 1 John 1:9.

4. **Feed your mind.** After confession, spend time in the Bible. This is God's Word to you. Read His promises to you. Reflect on stories of Bible characters of great faith. Here are a few options for promises and stories to study and reflect on in God's Word:

- Ephesians 3:20
- Philippians 4:13, 19
- James 1:5; 4:2
- 2 Corinthians 9:6-11
- Noah – Fearless end-time prophet who took God at His word



- Joseph – Fierce loyalty to God in the midst of darkness and injustice
- Job – Faith during adversity and loss
- Ruth – Devotion, investing in relationships, love story
- Nehemiah – Building what others say cannot be built
- Esther – One who seized the day for God
- Daniel – Integrity, strategic influence for God's purposes
- Elijah – Faced a showdown with God's strength
- Paul – Bold pioneer for the Good News of Christ
- Philip – Following the Holy Spirit to “barren” places

5. **Dialogue.** List your life roles. (Examples: disciple of Christ, spouse, parent, son, daughter, grandparent, neighborhood friend, leader, coach, etc.) Concentrate on your top four to eight roles. Review your roles with God and what is happening in these roles right now. Ask God what you can celebrate. Ask God what He thinks needs to change. Ask God which one or two things you need to do in each role to be faithful to what He has entrusted to you. God has vision for the roles He has entrusted to you ... so ask Him.

6. **Listen, Plan, and Reflect.** Take breaks to hike, listen, and pray. Jot down reflections on what God brings to your mind. Sleep on it. Spread out your reflections and convictions before God. Ask God: “This is what I am seeing—am I understanding what You want me to see?” Review and add to what you have. Let God’s wisdom on your life roles impact the way you accept or reject the opportunities before you. Will your life decisions help you be more or less faithful to the roles He has entrusted to you? Always test

the insights you receive with the written Word of God.

7. **Claim** God’s promises to accomplish His will. Thank him. See Phil. 4:13, 19.

8. **Debrief** with one of the prayer partners who prayed for you while you were on your retreat. Share how God blessed you. Share what God is asking of you in your life roles for the coming year. Invite honest feedback. Ask him/her to pray that you will follow through with God’s leading in your life.

You may find that the Holy Spirit may impress you to spend this retreat in other ways than you have planned. Please take this process and outline as simply a place to begin. May God richly bless your retreat with His peace, guidance, and Presence.

If you would like me to be praying for you on the day of your retreat, e-mail me with your date. May the time lead you to be fearlessly faithful to God.



DON MACLAFFERTY. Don’s top four roles in his life are: a disciple of Jesus Christ; a husband to his wife, April; a dad and life mentor to their three children; and a visionary leader in discipling children, youth, and families to Christ. Don has celebrated over 23 years

with April as his wife. They have served God together in pastoral ministry for most of those years. In 2002 Don founded Kids In Discipleship as a pastor at the Collegedale Seventh-day Adventist Church. Don is passionate about family, leading young and old to discover and live God’s dreams, and developing leaders who are called by God to champion these priorities. Don lives in Ooltewah, Tennessee, with April, Jason, Julie, and Jessica. As a pastor in the Georgia-Cumberland Conference he continues to pioneer intergenerational discipleship with families, churches, and schools. Don can be reached at dmac@kidsindiscipleship.org.

KINDNESS COMES BACK

HOW ONE SHEPHERDESS BEFRIENDED REBELS

by Gina Wahlen



Ninfa Guillem Bindosano serves with her husband, Yotam Samuel Bindosano, at the East Indonesia Union Conference.

Ninfa Guillem's childhood dream was to become a missionary doctor on the island of Papua New Guinea. Inspired by reading missionary books such as *Impaled* and *Yesterday's Tears*, Ninfa longed to minister to these island people.

Born in the Capiz Province of the Central Philippines, Ninfa spent her early years in the Southern Philippines before attending boarding school at the West Visayan Academy in Iloilo. She then studied biology at Mountain View College, hoping to pursue her dream of becoming a physician.

After graduating from Mountain View, Ninfa wanted to go to medical school in Iloilo, but she was impressed that "God had other plans." Instead, she was invited to teach at the Layman's High School in the town where she grew up, and so decided to accept the challenge for a year. The following summer she worked as a literature evangelist in Manila before pursuing graduate studies at Philippine Union College (PUC) in 1988.

MEETING IN THE LIBRARY

It was while studying at PUC that Ninfa met her future husband, Yotam Samuel Bindosano. Yotam, who was from the Irian Jaya Mission (Indonesia, but sharing the same island as Papua New Guinea), was studying theology and spent many hours in the graduate library. Ninfa, who worked as a graduate assistant in the biology lab, would hurry to the library after work. Interestingly, she always found a place reserved for her across the table from Yotam! The two also noticed that they attended classes in the same building, went to the same church on Sabbath, and both were members of the International Graduate Choir. After a year of spending time together and asking for God's guidance, Ninfa and Yotam were married on May 31, 1990, in the Finster International Church on campus.



The Bindosanos have five children. Pictured here are the three eldest: Bryant Samuel, 20, now studying at Asia-Pacific International University in Thailand; Cherish Lovely Jo, 17, a senior at Harbert Hills Academy in Tennessee; and Chilsea Julianne, 14, a freshman at Harbert Hills Academy.



GINA WAHLEN enjoys meeting people from around the world and has lived in many wonderful places, such as Russia, England, the Philippines, California, and Nebraska. She currently lives in Maryland, where she writes about people, adventures, and God. She and her husband, Clinton, have been married for nearly 26 years and have one son, Daniel, 19, and one daughter, Heather, 13.

SERVING IN IRIAN JAYA

Following their graduate studies, Yotam was called back to his home mission in Irian Jaya, where he served as a district pastor and Church Ministries director for the mission.

“To keep me busy and not think of going back home to the Philippines, the mission decided to let me teach English in the academy,” remembers Ninfa. The following year, enrollment at the academy doubled because so many students wanted to learn English!

In 1995 Yotam was called to be Global Mission director and teacher at the Global Mission missionary training school in Irian Jaya. During that time Ninfa cooked in the training center’s cafeteria, feeding over 60 students and staff each day. She also helped accommodate visitors from the jungle, including those who were ill.

“Our home became the shelter of those who were working in the jungles of Irian Jaya Mission when they came to get supplies in town, or when a family member got sick,” recalled Ninfa, who often hosted these families alone while her husband was “walking across the dark jungle for days, supervising volunteers, building churches, and holding evangelistic meetings.”

By then, the family had grown to include the couple’s two eldest children—Bryent Samuel, born in 1991, and Cherish Lovely Jo, born in 1994.

Eventually, three more children would arrive—Chilsea Julianne in 1997, Rose Jennifer in 2003, and Grace Allyn in 2005.

Coming from the Philippines, Ninfa was used to large Christmas celebrations every year. However, some of her warmest memories were when her family would spend the holiday times participating in evangelistic meetings, so that she would not feel homesick. “It brought many blessings to me,” she said, “spending those moments with the people who do not know Jesus yet.”

AN ACT OF KINDNESS

However, one of her most striking memories of ministry comes from a time when she had no idea how a seemingly small act of kindness would one day save the lives of her entire family. She shares the story in her own words:

HE WAS DIRTY, PERSPIRING, AND YOU COULD TELL THAT HE HAD NOT BATHED FOR DAYS.

“One sunny day in 1999 as I was hanging the clothes on the line in front of our house, a rugged man came carrying a bunch of young bananas. He approached me, asking if I would buy his bananas. Looking at those bananas, even if he had intended to give them to me I wouldn’t have



Ninfa shares the joy with baptismal candidates in East Indonesia.



Ninfa with her two youngest children, Rose Jennifer, 8, a fourth grader at the Tikala Adventist School in Manado, Indonesia, and Grace Allyn, 6, a second grade student at Tikala.

accepted them! But when I looked at his face, compassion filled my heart.

“He was dirty, perspiring, and from the odor about him you could tell that he had not bathed for days. I asked him to wait while I finished hanging the clothes, so he put down the bananas that he was carrying on his shoulder and waited.

“I invited him to come inside our house and offered him bread and soy milk that I made that morning. He ate like he had not eaten anything for days. I gave him another glass of soy milk and asked him how much I needed to pay for his bananas. Sweating profusely, he told me the cost was Rp. 15,000 (US\$ 1.67). I gave him Rp. 20,000 (US\$ 2.23). The man told me that he didn’t have any money for change, but I told him that it was all for him.

“Then he looked longingly at the leftover bread on the plate and asked if he could have some for his wife. I went to the kitchen, got a plastic bag, and filled it with more bread plus his leftovers. He was so happy and told me that his wife had been sick for days and they had no money to buy food or medicine. His wife had malaria and he needed to buy her medicine, so that was why he had to sell the bananas even though they were not yet ripe. Malaria is very common in Irian Jaya, and I always keep supplies of medicine on hand, so I gave this man chloroquine, paracetamol, and vitamins. He was so glad and went home running. Many months passed. I forgot all about that incident and did not see the man anymore.

A DANGEROUS JOURNEY

“The following year our visas (mine and our two eldest children) expired, and we had to exit the

country to renew them. The nearest and cheapest place was to go to Papua New Guinea (PNG), but on December 1, the day we needed to leave, the West Papuans who were against Indonesia decided to fight for their freedom and they were assembled at the border between Irian Jaya (Indonesia) and PNG.

“Government officials warned us that we could not go to the border since the Indonesian military post had been withdrawn. We prayed and prayed, but going to PNG was the only way we could afford to renew our visas. My husband told me to stay home with the children while he went alone to renew our visas because he has the same color of skin as the rebels. But I was not at ease. I said that it would be better for the whole family to travel together so that if anything would happen, like taking us hostage, at least we would all be together.

“That morning we prayed for safety and God’s protection and headed for the border. Our friend from PNG would be there to meet us and take us to the nearest town, Vanimo. On the way, we stopped to buy food, and I bought sacks of fresh corn, bunches of bananas, oranges, vegetables, and goodies to eat so that in case something would happen my kids would not starve.

“The road was quiet on our three-hour ride, but when we reached the border it was crowded with armed rebels. They stopped our car and asked my

THAT MORNING WE PRAYED FOR SAFETY AND GOD’S PROTECTION AND HEADED FOR THE BORDER.



Ninfa, who serves as Health Ministries and Women’s Ministries director as well as Shepherdess coordinator for the East Indonesia Union Conference, enjoys conducting seminars on health and family.

husband to go with them. Before going out of the car he told us to pray for him and not to ever open the car door until he returned. The rebels interrogated him and asked him to support them. While they were arguing, he saw me get out of the car. He was so scared, but he could not come near us. He did not understand why I was getting out of the car.

“While we were waiting for my husband, another rebel came near to our car and knocked on the window. It was the same man who had come to our house to sell his young bananas a year earlier! He called me “mama” (a title given to a respected person even if they are younger than the person addressing them) and asked me to come out of the car. He introduced me to one of the rebel captains, who spoke in English. He told their captain that “mama” helped him and was the only one who invited him inside the house and offered him bread and milk. He told the captain that this “mama” was very kind so they should let us pass and should protect us!

FEEDING THE REBELS

“After we talked for a while, I opened the trunk of our car and distributed the fruits and gave them all the food they needed, since they had been camping there for days. Everyone came to have a share of the goodies I brought. They offered to give us tents if we would stay with them until things became peaceful. My husband, along with the officer who had been interrogating him, came back, and how glad he was that the rebels had become friendly to us.

“We were allowed to cross the border but were told to be sure to return before 4 p.m. because they were going to burn the houses and kill people on the way. We arrived back home safely after getting our visas, just as we saw smoke rising up from the burned houses and buildings of the town we had passed, but we thanked God for preparing the way for us.

“At home, we wondered at how God leads. I was filled with awe at the knowledge that God had prepared our way long before we knew it. What would

have happened to me and my family if I had turned that man away, spoken unkind words to him, and did not offer any help? If I did not listen to the voice of the Holy Spirit within me that day then it would be a different story.

“But what I dread to think of is that someday when Jesus comes, will He say, ‘I was hungry and you fed me, I was thirsty and you gave me water to drink’? Or will He say, ‘Depart from me’?

“This experience taught me to be kind, compassionate, and loving to everyone, especially to those whom we don’t know, because they may be angels in the form of a dirty, rugged, old, and smelly beggar. “Trust in the Lord with all your heart, and lean not on your own understanding, In all your ways acknowledge Him, And He shall direct your paths” (Prov. 3:5, 6, NKJV).

The Bindosano family now live in Manado, where Yotam is the Secretary of the East Indonesia union Conference and Ninfa serves as the director of the Health Ministries and Women’s Ministries departments, and is the Shepherdess coordinator for the union.



MIXED VEGETABLES

- 7 oz. (200g) squash (or pumpkin)
- 3.5 oz. (100g) potatoes or sweet potatoes
- 2 eggplant
- 2 bell peppers
- pack of tofu
- 3.5 oz. (100g) string beans

Slice the above ingredients and put in a pan. Add spices such as onions, garlic, ginger, red chili, yellow ginger leaf, mint, and 2-3 whole tomatoes. Add a teaspoon of olive oil, soy sauce, and salt to taste. Cover the pan and cook over a slow fire until the potatoes are soft. Serve while still hot.



EAST-CENTRAL AFRICA DIVISION

RWANDA UNION MISSION



Shepherdesses had flowers to present to the pastors' wives at the ordination. Twenty pastors were ordained last June 4.



Antoinette Mwangachuchu, ECD Shepherdess coordinator (4th from right), with union coordinators at the ECD Advisory held June 28-July 3, 2011.



ECD leaders along with GC Ministerial representatives.

NORTH AMERICAN DIVISION

ALLEGHENY EAST



Allegheny East Conference held a ministers' wives appreciation weekend retreat May 13-15, 2011, in Virginia Beach, Virginia.



Pastors' wives in Wisconsin Conference enjoyed a weekend of prayer and fellowship September 16-18, 2011.

INTER-AMERICAN DIVISION

GUATEMALA UNION COORDINATOR: ELDA LETICIA DE HERNANDEZ

Each year the Guatemala Union hosts a three-day spiritual and social retreat for the children of Bible workers. This year the union directors and local field chairmen participated with their wives, forming a very dynamic and united group.



PKs enjoying a time of fellowship together.

**ATLANTIC CARIBBEAN UNION COORDINATOR:
DENISE JOHNSON**

The Atlantic Caribbean Union has launched a Pastors' Kids Association (PKA) with a group of excited and purpose-driven young people. They shared candidly about the advantages and disadvantages of their unique positions as children of clergy. PKA will provide opportunities for them to:

- Share ideas
- Encourage each other positively through their experiences
- Share their familiar Christian legacy
- Form bonds of friendship



PKs sharing music at the conference.

This group also encourages leadership development. Each participant, regardless of age, will have a role in the group.

Daran Clarke, a PK, preached at the Cayman Islands Conference and is leader of the PKs. He has started a youth group called iServe, where other young people come together on Friday evenings for group discussion, drama, and other activities. Clarke encourages his peers to positively use their cell phones to text both non-Adventist and Adventist friends, inviting them to church and encouraging them respectfully.



Daran Clarke, a PK, preaching at the Cayman Islands Conference.

**HONDURAS UNION COORDINATOR: DEL DELKER
HOWELL**

In Honduras, a two-day camp gave PKs a chance to come together and fellowship through sports, games, seminars, workshops, praise, and worship.

SOUTH PACIFIC DIVISION

**PAPUA NEW GUINEA UNION MISSION
COORDINATOR: RUTH OLI**

The first ever retreat for PNGUM ladies included pastors' wives, female workers, and their daughters. Women leaders from the local churches were also invited to attend, along with their daughters. Each category of women attended workshops created for their unique roles and needs.



Ladies enjoying boat ride to the meetings.

ADRA sponsored the retreat in full, allowing the women to travel by boat to the camping area and providing all the equipment and food.

Despite rain soaking the tents, everyone had a wonderful time and asked if they can have this kind of retreat again in the future.

Workshop facilitators included:

1. Ms. Barbara Parkins came from North New South Wales Conference in Australia. She is the Women's Ministries volunteer coordinator for the conference. She was the guest speaker who took all the worship services.
2. Miss Emma Wurr came from the Public Solicitors Office in Port Moresby. She is the principal lawyer for human rights. She talked on laws in the country and what their office offers to the citizens.
3. Mrs. Lynette Bokope from Lufa in the Eastern Highlands Province talked about herbs.
4. Mrs. Melrose Tovirika did some cooking demonstrations and talked about grooming.
5. Mrs. Judy Ponduk talked about hospitality.



One of the presenters during the retreat.



PNGUN ladies at the retreat in Salamaua.

SOUTHERN ASIA DIVISION

ADVISORY OF SOUTHERN ASIA DIVISION HELD AT KANYAKUMARI

The three R's—Repentance, Revival, and Reformation—was the theme for the third Shepherdess Advisory of the Southern Asia Division held October 26 - 30, 2011, at Kanyakumari, the southernmost tip of India where the Bay of Bengal, the Indian Ocean, and the Arabian Sea meet. While people from all over the world flocked to see the breathtaking sunrise and sunset, 52 Shepherdess coordinators from all over the division gathered to review the work of the previous quinquennium and to lay plans for the present period.



Shepherdesses singing together at the advisory.



Presentation during the advisory in India.



SUD Shepherdess Advisory held in November 2011.

The meetings began with a “wake up call” from Hepzibah Kore, the division Shepherdess coordinator, based on Ezekial 33:2-9. Gnanaraj Kore, SUD field secretary, led in devotions connected to the theme. Further, the delegates were blessed with the presence of Janet Page, the new GC Shepherdess director. She led the group in spirit-filled sessions on prayer, praise, and thanksgiving based on her personal experience, which enriched each one. Other special features were:

- Prayer sessions
- Strategic planning by the unions
- Prayer partner and secret friend
- Eye testing for reading glasses by Dr. Alice Joseph
- Skits
 - (1) the Shepherdess clinic—depicting the spiritual healing the various organs of the body need
 - (2) Love not the world—depicting how the bridegroom Jesus will be disappointed when He comes to take his bride home because she was not faithful Him

The delegates departed with renewed strength and vitality in leading people to Repentance, Revival, and Reformation while preparing a people for God’s kingdom.



Hepzibah Kore, SUD Shepherdess coordinator, speaking at the advisory.



Hepzibah Kore (in lavender), SUD Shepherdess coordinator, and Janet Page (center), GC Shepherdess coordinator, with SUD union coordinators.

SURVIVAL TIPS

For the New Pastor’s Wife

So you’re a new pastor’s wife?

This little series offers tips to help you survive the world of ministry, from other pastors’ wives who’ve been on this journey for a few days longer.

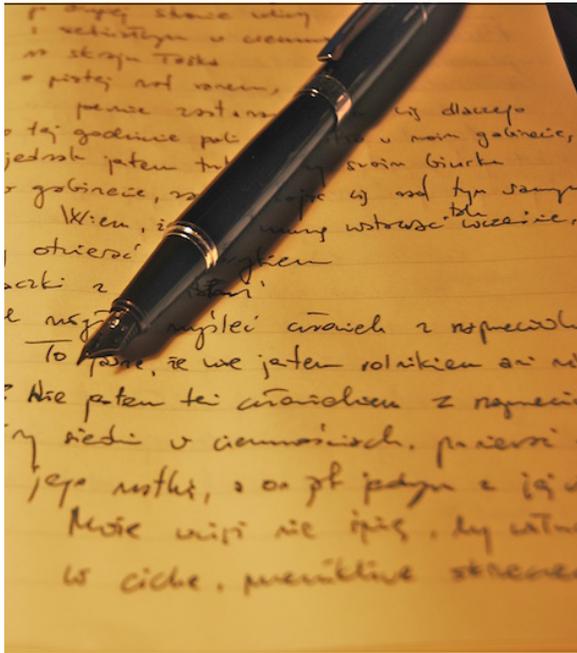
TIP #1: Don’t accept any church jobs for the first six months in any new church. (Make it one year if you have a new baby or very small children.)

When you and your pastor husband start serving at a new church, tell people that for the first 6 months to a year, you won’t be considering any roles of service because your first job is to get to know everyone. Tell them you need to get your family/household settled, learn your way around, and build relationships with people.

Taking a church position too quickly can put you in the crosshairs of conflict. You don’t know who else might be desperately wanting the role, or what the expectations of this unique congregation will be, or the history of who was doing the job before. And you might get pressured into doing something you’re neither good at *nor* passionate about.

If you take a few months to get to know people first, you’ll be more free to accept ministry roles that you are passionate about and gifted in. And you’ll be much more aware of the dynamics involved.

Got a survival tip that someone shared with you once upon a time, or that you have learned along the way? Send it in to share here at: development.gc.ministerial@gmail.com.



Dear Abigail,

What should I do if I feel that my pastor husband is in need of a spiritual revival?

I don't want to judge his personal relationship with the Lord, but as a mom who spends a lot of time at home, I know his schedule quite well. From what I can see, he does not commit much time to personal Bible study and prayer outside of sermon preparation (which is not much time some weeks). We don't have a consistent schedule for worship and prayer as a family. When we do worship or pray together as a family, it seems that I am the one to initiate it most times.

I want my husband to be the spiritual head of our home regardless of his profession, but it makes me all the more frustrated when there are days he has had prayer with members of the church and not members of his family. I know I need to pray about this a lot more because I feel myself getting bitter sometimes—and that doesn't make for a great attitude. Perhaps I'm looking at this the wrong way.

I'm not sure what to do. I just want our family to be saved in God's kingdom, and I know that comes from accepting God's sacrifice and having a real relationship with Him. Please advise.

Thank you,

Wisdom Wanted

Dear Wisdom Wanted,

I think every pastor's wife (PW) can relate to your question on some level, even if it's only for periods of time in between spiritual vibrance. It's understandable to feel bitter or frustrated when our pastor husbands (PHs)—who are supposed to be spiritual leaders to everyone else—drop the ball at home. After all, no matter who they pastor “out there,” they are first and foremost the husbands and fathers and priests of our homes. It is a good thing that you are sensitive to your family's need for spiritual growth.

The way we live our lives indicates our priorities, and our children are the first to be able to identify what our real priorities are (versus what we say they are). It's true that our PHs spend a lot of time in “spiritual matters,” but they will become more successful in every area of their lives if they spend quality personal and family time in worship and prayer. Obviously, you already recognize this, or you wouldn't be longing for more.

Is your PH burnt out in ministry from working too hard and not staying balanced with his rest, exercise, and family time? Is he only holding it together for his public ministry and then letting it collapse at home because he's overwhelmed? Have you/he recently weathered a crisis that has left him dried up in his relationship with God?

Or is his personality quiet and laid-back, where after spending his days talking and listening to others he has nothing left to say at home? If your personality is more bubbly and talkative, he might be perfectly willing to just let you lead at home since he is outside his comfort zone all day every day—and he might have no idea that it bothers you or that he is letting down his family.

Whatever the reason, the first thing to do is pray for your PH. Ask God to work on his heart, and on yours too, so that you'll have a Christlike spirit when you communicate about it. When the time is right to bring it up, try expressing your concern and asking if he would pray with you about where the Lord is leading your family spiritually. If you seek God together, it might be a smoother transition than if you take the lead or verbalize criticism.

Build him up in front of your kids, and make sure he can hear you when you do. Tell the kids how lucky they are to have such a great dad, or get them involved in doing something special for him. If it works best for you and your family's personality, get the whole family to show support for daddy as the well-respected priest of the home. Your children will naturally mirror your attitude of respect or disdain for their father.

Here's the advice of two seasoned PWs:

1. *Pray for your husband.* We know our husbands like no one else. We know their schedules and their “comings and goings,” but we cannot know their hearts like God does. Our prayers on our PH's behalf will guard us from becoming overly judgmental and will assure us that the Holy Spirit is working. Pray for his spiritual well-being and that God will convict him to lead more at home. Pray for creative, gentle ways to express your longing to him. Pray for your own response when he begins to try!

2. *Talk to your husband.* He may also be wishing things were different, or he might not even know how strongly you feel. Share how important it is to you that he initiates (versus putting him down or condemning him). Tell him how your admiration and respect for him grows when he leads at home. Tell him it's sexy when he takes charge. (And then be alert to when he *does* take charge and applaud him for it—whether it's exactly how you imagined it or not.)
3. *Have your own devotions.* When your PH sees you reading your Bible, hopefully he will eventually start thinking about reading his Bible as well. With small children you might be lucky to have 10 minutes a day in the Word, but try to aim for at least a little time each day—when your husband is home and can see you praying and reading. You can also try asking your PH to read and pray with you sometimes in the evening if he doesn't get home too late.
4. *Keep up daily family worship.* Usually it is possible to be all together in the morning around breakfast. You may have to keep initiating but also ask your PH if he has any new ideas he might like to try. (Being confrontational is usually not the answer.) Continue having evening worship with the kids at bedtime and share with your husband the cute things that they say during prayers. Worship doesn't need to be long, dull services, just meaningful praise to God and simple spiritual instruction for the children. Including a song and prayer, 10 minutes is plenty. The habit of worshipping and praying together as a couple and family in the early years will likely prevent conflicts in later years. It's a ritual worth cultivating!
5. *Affirm his smallest attempts to take charge.* If he tries to call the family for worship, gather the kids immediately and urge them to listen and respond to daddy—even if it is at an inconvenient time of day or isn't what you'd planned. Some men give up easily if their efforts to lead are ignored, rejected, or criticized. Leave the constructive comments for a few months down the road and rejoice when he tries to fulfill his role at home.

Remember, things may not get better right away (they may even get worse), but don't get discouraged. And by all means, when God works out a change in your family, let ABIGAIL know so we can rejoice with you!



DEAR ABIGAIL is a new advice column where pastors' wives can ask for biblical wisdom about their situations, challenges, and difficulties.

In the Bible, ABIGAIL was a woman known for her generosity, intuition, industry, discernment, hospitality, loyalty, strength, and wisdom. DEAR ABIGAIL is about learning to cultivate those same qualities as we journey in ministry with our husbands. Write to DEAR ABIGAIL at dear.abigail.letters@gmail.com

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The Journal: A Shepherdess International Resource for Ministry Spouses is a quarterly publication produced by Shepherdess International, an entity of the General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists Ministerial Association.

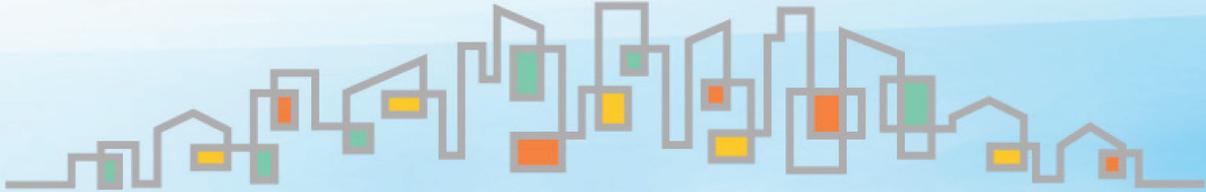
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www.ministerialassociation.com/shepherdess

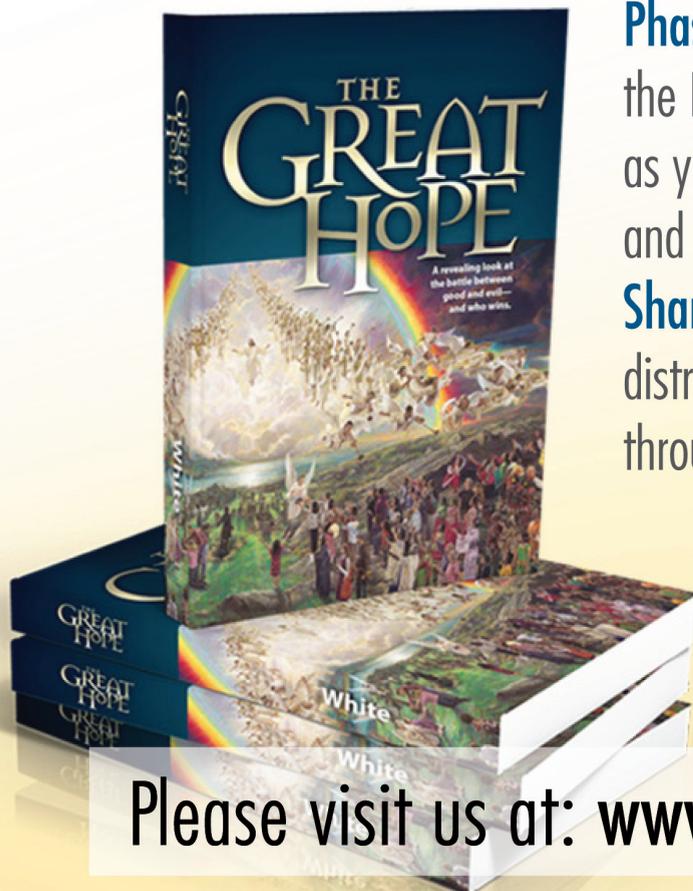




GREAT CONTROVERSY PROJECT

HOPE INTO EVERY HOME

The Great Controversy Project (GCP) is a Spirit-filled witnessing opportunity of the Seventh-day Adventist Church. The purpose of GCP is to spread the life-changing message of *The Great Controversy (The Great Hope)*, by Ellen G. White, around the world. Members are personally invited to join with their Division, Union, Conference and church as each makes plans for mass distribution of this powerful volume.



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