# THE

A Shepherdess International Resource for Ministry Spouses

VOL. 29 - THIRD QUARTER 2012

## THE YEARNING

## THE JOURNAL

- 4 WAIT ON THE LORD
- 5 BRAVE ENOUGH TO PRAY
- 6 HOME SAFE HOME?



- 9 UNCOMPLICATED LIVING
- 12 HOW TO PRAY WITH YOUR SPOUSE
- 15 THE GIFT OF FORGIVENESS



- 17 GOD STILL ANSWERS PRAYERS
- 20 THE YEARNING
- 22 MISCONCEPTION OF THE MOTHER'S WORK
- 24 WAYS TO PRAY FOR (& WITH) CHILDREN



- 27 FROM THE FIELD
- 29 DEAR ABIGAIL

#### **BIBLE CREDITS:**

Scriptures guoted from TLB are from The Living Bible, copyright © 1971 by Tyndale House Publishers, Wheaton, IL. Used by permission. Scripture quotations marked ESV are from The Holy Bible, English Standard Version® (ESV®), copyright © 2001 by Crossway, a publishing ministry of Good News Publishers. Used by permission. All rights reserved. Scriptures credited to NIV are from the Holy Bible, New International Version. Copyright © 1973, 1978, 1984, International Bible Society. Used by permission of Zondervan Bible Publishers. Scriptures quoted from NKJV are from the New King James Version, copyright © 1979, 1980, 1982, Thomas Nelson, Inc., Publishers. Scripture quotations marked NLT are taken from the Holy Bible, New Living Translation, copyright © 1996, 2004. Used by permission of Tyndale House Publishers, Inc., Wheaton, Illinois 60189. All rights reserved. Scripture quoted from NASB are from The New American Standard Bible®, Copyright © 1960, 1962, 1963, 1968, 1971, 1972, 1973, 1975, 1977, 1995 by The Lockman Foundation. Used by permission. Scriptures credited to ASV are from the American Standard Bible. Used by permission. AVS Bible Version. Used with permission. All scriptures are NIV unless otherwise stated. All articles are printed with permission.

## MINISTRY TO PASTORAL SPOUSES AND FAMILIES DIVISION COORDINATORS:

East-Central Africa: Antoinette Mwangachuchu Euro-Africa: Maria Brito Euro-Asia: Liliya Krupskaya Inter-American: Leticia Delos Santos North American: Donna Jackson Northern Asia-Pacific: Lynn Ripley South American: Wiliane Marroni South Pacific: Carol Tasker Southern Africa-Indian Ocean: Patricia Papu Southern Asia: To be appointed Southern Asia-Pacific: Helen Gulfan Trans-European: To be appointed West-Central Africa: Josephine Wari

#### **EDITORIAL OFFICE:**

12501 Old Columbia Pike Silver Spring, MD 20904-6600 Phone: 301-680-6513 | Fax: 301-680-6502 Email: lowes@gc.adventist.org

Executive Editor: Janet Page Associate Editor: Sarah K. Asaftei Editorial Assistant: Shelly Lowe Features Editor: Gina Wahlen Layout & Design: Erika Miike Printed in the U.S.A. www.ministerialassociation.com/shepherdess

Cover Photo: © sarah k asaftei photography

*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.



## Sharing the Journey



e left late from our motel. I had to drive because Jerry's driver's license had just expired. The notice to renew had somehow fallen to the bottom of his stack of papers.

Driving was difficult for me because of a recent car wreck. I was still struggling with neck and back pain.

I had been driving about 30 minutes when the cars ahead of me began slowing to a stop. There were road signs about construction ahead. The right lane was ending and cars needed to merge into the left lane. I was politely waiting in line in the left lane.

But many drivers were pushing ahead in the right lane as far as possible before merging left, ahead of those who were politely waiting. I watched car after car speed by. Looking at my watch, I realized we would barely make our speaking appointment in time.

This was a huge problem for me. After driving all this way with my neck and back pain intensifying, I needed to lie down and rest for a while. But we would be fortunate if we made it in time to change clothes before we spoke.

I looked over at my husband, who was sound asleep. I sighed with frustration. I was rear-ended in that car wreck while working for God, and now I was driving because my husband had not paid attention to his driver's license renewal notice.

What am I going to do? If I don't get to lie down and rest my neck and back, spasms will begin and I won't be able to speak.

Then I remembered Philippians 4:4: "Rejoice in the Lord always," and 1 Thessalonians 5:18: "In everything give thanks" (NKJV).

Well, I did not feel like rejoicing.

Then I had an idea. Out of my bag, I pulled index cards on which I had copied Psalm 34—a chapter I have been trying to memorize for the past 20 years. No joke—and, yes, it is hard for me to memorize!

I decided to focus on praising God with Scripture and to forget about what was happening. On the first card I read Psalm 34:1: "I will bless the Lord at all times: His praise shall continually be in my mouth." The second card read: "My soul shall make its boast in the Lord; The humble shall hear of it and be glad." The third: "Oh, magnify the Lord with me, And let us exalt His name together." And the fourth card: "I sought the Lord, and He heard me, And delivered me from all my fears" (Ps. 34:1-4, NKJV).

I felt like singing to my God! But I couldn't because Jerry was asleep. So I just kept reading the scripture cards.

Finally we made it past the road construction and arrived at our motel just in time to change clothes. I did lie down for three minutes. As we rode to the meeting, I was praying for the Lord's help. I was really hurting.

What happened to me was amazing. As I spoke I felt suddenly energized, and I had no pain. That night God blessed me with more power than I had ever had in the past. Many people confirmed that.

What I want to remember is this: when life's problems come at me, God is not limited by my circumstances or my weakness or by anything. He is God! He *can* do anything.

And no, I still have not memorized all of Psalm 34. But what a blessing it is to carry Bible texts, written on small pieces of paper, wherever I go. I can read and meditate on them each day.

In The Ministry of Healing, p. 122, Ellen G. White writes about the power of God's promises in Scripture: "In them He is speaking to us individually, speaking as directly as if we could listen to His voice. It is in these promises that Christ communicates to us His grace and power. They are leaves from that tree which is 'for the healing of the nations.' Rev. 22:2. Received, assimilated, they are to be the strength of the character, the inspiration and sustenance of the life. Nothing else can have such healing power. Nothing besides can impart the courage and faith which give vital energy to the whole being."

I know you are very busy. But reading and meditating on God's Word through the day surely is healing and powerful. We are working hard to make the JOURNAL meaningful and practical for ministry families. Please let us know your ideas for subjects and needs. And please send us news, pictures of ministerial families' activities, or articles God leads you to write. We do join in praying for you and your families.

Janet Page Associate Ministerial Secretary for Prayer, Pastoral Spouses, and Families



### **INSPIRATION**

May this be our experience more and more as the Day draws closer—

## WAIT ON THE LORD

Manuscript Release, Vol. 15, p. 266, 267 by Ellen G. White

My brother [sister], you will be sorely tried and tempted at times; but ever remember that Jesus Christ is at your right hand to help you. Cast all your burdens upon the Lord, for He hath promised, "I will never leave thee nor forsake thee." Rest yourself wholly in the hands of Jesus. Contemplate His great love; and while you meditate upon His self-denial, His infinite sacrifice made in our behalf in order that we should believe in Him, your heart will be filled with holy joy, calm peace, and indescribable love.

As we talk of Jesus, as we call upon Him in prayer, our confidence that He is our personal, loving Saviour will strengthen, and His character will appear more and more lovely. We will understand that He does not "afflict willingly, nor grieve the children of men." We may enjoy rich feasts of love; and as we fully believe that we are His by adoption, we may have a foretaste of heaven.

Wait upon the Lord in faith. The Lord draws out the soul in prayer, and gives us to feel His precious love. We have a nearness to Him, and can hold sweet communion with Him. We obtain distinct views of His tenderness and compassion, and our hearts are broken and melted with contemplation of the love that is given to us. We feel indeed an abiding Christ in the soul.

We abide in Him, and feel at home with Jesus. The promises flow into the soul. Our peace is like a river, wave after wave of glory rolls into the heart, and indeed we sup with Jesus and He with us. We have a realizing

sense of the love of God, and we rest in His love. No language can describe it; it is beyond knowledge. We are one with Christ; our life is hid with Christ in God. We have the assurance that when He who is our life shall appear, then shall we also appear with Him in glory. With strong confidence we can call God our Father. Whether we live or die, we are the Lord's. His Spirit makes us like Jesus Christ in temper and disposition, and we represent Christ to others.

The Lord draws out the soul in prayer, and gives us to feel His precious love.

## Brave Enough to Pray





### "The harvest is great, but the workers are few." (Matt. 9:37, NLT)

s a pastor's wife, I'm always looking for opportunities to be involved in ministry. At the beginning of 2008, the Sabbath School committee in our church asked me to be the leader of the cell group in our neighborhood.

This was a challenge for me—to win people to Jesus through our cell group. For the first and second months, we had no guests. It was difficult to invite anyone at all. Most of our neighbors are Muslim, and in our area they have no sympathy toward Christian people. Also, some other Christian denominations in our neighborhood always have a meeting at the same time, so they weren't interested in coming either.

I almost gave up until one afternoon, I asked my two little children to come with me and invite people from around our neighborhood. First, I had my children join me to kneel down and pray. We asked the Holy Spirit to guide us to someone who would really need and accept our invitation.

There was a big house near ours that we hadn't visited yet, but I had already met the old lady who owned the house when we chatted on the street. I felt the Holy Spirit speak to my heart and urge me to knock at the door.

When we knocked, a younger woman opened the door and said that the old lady wasn't home. Disappointed, I asked her if I could leave the invitation card for the owner, the young woman's mother-in-law.

To my surprise, she read the card and asked if she could attend the meeting also. "Of course!" I said. She told me that she had been Muslim until she married the old lady's son and became a Christian, but she had never studied the Bible seriously. I could see she was hungry to know more.

At our next cell meeting, she was there. She shared about having dreams leading her to find the truth. She became a member of our cell group, attending regularly. After six months, she gave her life to Jesus and was baptized at the end of a big series of evangelistic meetings in our city.

One year later, by God's grace and with the friendship and caring of our cell group, her husband, who had been a drunk, was also baptized. The next year another young woman gave her life to Jesus through our cell group.

I'm really glad that Jesus used me to find people to come to Him. If you really have a great desire to find and bring people to Jesus, just tell Him so. Tell Him how you want Him to use you, and then surrender all your wishes and your heart and your life to Him. He is waiting now for more of us to work with Him.

Ellen Malau and her husband, Urbano, are at AIIAS in Indonesia. They have two children, Zephaniah and Zaneta.

### Lifestyle

## HOME, SAFE HOME?



by Rae Lee Cooper

### "The door to safety swings on the hinges of common sense."

-Author Unknown

She caught my eye, making her way slowly, painfully up the sidewalk toward the big double doors of the emergency department. It was early morning, and I had just assumed my post as triage nurse for the day. The waiting room was empty, and all was quiet and peaceful, at least for the moment. I got up out of my chair and, reaching for a wheelchair, went out to meet the young lady.

"What happened?" I asked as I helped her sit in the wheelchair.

She laughed. "Oh, you won't believe what I did!" "Tell me," I encouraged her as I pushed her toward the double doors.

Deciding to trim some branches from a tree in her yard the afternoon before, she had taken her kitchen stool out into the yard, climbed up on it, and reached with the sheers to trim some branches way above her head. The stool, which had been placed on uneven ground, tipped over. She fell, injuring both ankles. She laughed as she told me about it, admitting to her hurry and carelessness. The pain and swelling had encouraged her to seek medical evaluation. Several hours later I met her again, now walking with crutches as she was leaving the emergency department. This time she was not laughing. On x-ray one ankle showed a fracture, and the other was diagnosed as a severe sprain.

#### THERE REALLY IS "NO PLACE LIKE HOME"

Our homes represent a refuge from the busy, hectic world of bustle and stress. For most, they are havens of comfort, restoration, and peace. Perhaps this quote by Maya Angelou (an American author and poet) sums up our feelings best: "The ache for home lives in all of us, the safe place where we can go as we are and not be questioned." Notice the phrase "the safe place." Perhaps it is a wonderfully "safe place" for us emotionally and psychologically, but what about the actual *physical* safety of our homes?

Did you know that home accidents are responsible for more fatal injuries than any other cause except perhaps motor vehicle accidents? Although home accidents are often caused by human error and typically can be prevented, they amount to approximately 18,000 deaths and nearly 13 million injuries a year in the U.S. The five leading causes of accidents and deaths include falls, poisonings, fires, suffocation, and choking. Many, many minor injuries also occur, such as bumps and bruises, cuts and scrapes. Have you ever jammed your toe on the vacuum cleaner? (My toe still hurts!) Or have you reached into a sink full of soapy water to find the pieces of a broken glass and come up with a nice slice to the finger?

Maybe you have suffered an injury of some type in your home. Or maybe you have friends who have slipped and fallen, suffering broken bones, torn ligaments, or concussions that cause pain, surgery, and weeks of disability. Often we bring these situations upon ourselves by momentarily disregarding common safety sense-such as carrying too big a load while going downstairs (or upstairs), rushing about in socks on a slippery floor, talking on the phone while working in the kitchen, not testing the temperature of the water before stepping into the bathtub, using a "little bit" of gasoline to get the fire in the fireplace started, climbing on a swivel chair (with wheels) to put up Christmas lights, finding and drinking an unattended glass of water found on the kitchen counter (and discovering later it had contained someone's contact lenses), and so on.

## CHANGING THE THEME TO "HOME, (SWEET) SAFE HOME"

We are often instructed in ways of being safe while driving, flying in airplanes, swimming, biking, and while doing most activities *outside* our homes. Here are a few home safety suggestions that may help cut down on those potential annoying and inconvenient accidents which can happen *inside* our home environment.



#### CUT YOUR RISK OF FALLING BY:

- Clearing walking areas of electrical cords, slippery throw rugs, toys, or other clutter
- · Cleaning up spills immediately
- Ensuring stairways have handrails
- Purchasing a sturdy stepstool
- Following ladder safety rules
- Installing nightlights near stairways, hallways, and in dark areas
- Applying nonskid strips and grab-bars to bathtubs and showers
- Being aware of potential side effects of medications such as dizziness
- Using baby gates where necessary
- Wearing socks or slippers with non-slippery soles
- Being aware of potential fall risks, especially with elderly persons around household pets
- Keeping an eye open to potential areas of risk inside the home and in the yard outside which could result in a fall



#### AVOID POTENTIAL POISONINGS BY:

- Keeping medications and poisonous products in their original containers
- Carefully supervising children at home



KEEP HARMFUL HOUSEHOLD CHEMICALS AND MEDICATIONS OUT OF REACH OF CHILDREN OR IN LOCKED CUPBOARDS

- Installing carbon monoxide (CO) detectors
- Keeping the phone number of the local poison control center near the home phone (or programmed in your cell phone)



#### **REDUCE FIRE HAZARD BY:**

- Installing smoke alarms in hallways, bedrooms, and on each level of your house (replace units older than 10 years with new ones and check the batteries every year)
- Keeping matches and candles away from flammable objects and beyond the reach of children
- Staying in the kitchen and staying focused while food is cooking
- Keeping flammable things like curtains, furniture, and bedding away from heaters
- Allowing air space around the TV, stereo, or other major electrical appliances
- Setting the water heater temperature to no higher than 120 degrees Fahrenheit
- Avoiding overloaded electrical outlets
- Developing and practicing fire drills with your family and establishing a safe meeting spot



- Never leaving buckets of water or other liquids unattended when small children are present
- Never leaving non-swimming adults unattended while in a pool
- Never leaving children unattended in the bathtub, in a swimming or wading pool, hot tub, or anywhere near water
- Taking a cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR) class (with certification for infant, child, and adult)



#### **AVOID CHOKING RISK BY:**

- Taking small bites when eating
- Chewing food thoroughly
- Being aware of how and what you are eating, especially when engaged in laughing and talking with family and friends during mealtime
- Cutting foods like bananas, hot dogs, grapes, etc., into small pieces for small children



SUPERVISE SMALL CHILDREN WHEN THEY ARE EATING AND WHILE PLAYING

- Giving children age-specific toys as gifts to help reduce choking potential
- Knowing the first aid approach in assisting an infant, child, or adult if choking occurs

These are just a few home safety reminders. Getting right down to it, the old saying really does ring true: "An ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure." Being aware of safety issues, using common sense, supervising children, and using a handson approach to injury prevention can help protect yourself, your loved ones, and guests from the most common causes of household accidents.



**RAE LEE COOPER** is a registered nurse. She and her husband, Lowell, have two adult married children and three adorable grandchildren. She spent most of her childhood in the Far East and then worked as a missionary with her husband in India for 16 years. She enjoys music, creative arts, cooking, and reading.

#### **INFORMATION SOURCES:**

www.icPRi.com (CPR certification online)

www.huffingtonpost.com (search for "10 Ways to Prevent Accidents at Home)

www.homeminders.com/Articles/HomemindersArticle/ tabid/77/Articleid/245/Default.aspx

How to Avoid Choking | eHow.com



Say nothing to which you wouldn't happily sign your name and post in the church entryway for all to see.

JUST. DON'T. PEOPLE REPEAT STUFF. STUFF GETS TWISTED.

You'll end up having to explain something you never meant "that way." Or, you totally meant it that way, but you were trusting that person to keep it to themselves, and they didn't.

If you wouldn't want it printed in the worship bulletin for everyone to read, just skip it. Odds are, saying it out loud won't be helpful to anyone anyway. That goes for pretty much all categories – from joking about your spouse's foibles, to sharing an opinion on someone's performance in church, to chatting about the decisions made in a recent church meeting.

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.

### LIFESTYLE

## UNCOMPLICATED LIVING



ife today seems increasingly complicated and more stressed, with less time to accomplish all that we wish. How can this be, with increasing technological advances and labor-saving devices? In studying housework practices since the seventeenth century, Ruth Cowan found that every major "improve-

### A return to simpler living is closely tied to the priorities we choose.

ment" in technology raised expectations and standards to even higher levels (e.g., whereas muddy overalls in your grandma's day might have just been brushed off and worn a few more days, now a slight spill sends the garment to the laundry<sup>1</sup>). These "labor-saving devices" mean higher costs, more repair bills, more time taken for maintenance, more space needed for storage, and if we talk about kitchen appliances—more cleaning! The trusted sharp knife has been superseded by the whizz, the blender, and the chopper, each with many movable parts to clean, wash, and dry.

A return to simpler living is closely tied to personal choices and the priorities we choose for our lives. These are reflections of the value we place upon God, ourselves, and others. In turn, these choices influence our motivations, levels of contentment, goals, influence on others, and—ultimately our destiny.

#### WHAT MATTERS THE MOST?

While many people get caught up in the multiplicity of things available, Jesus encouraged us to "seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added to you" (Matt. 6:33, NKJV). Christians are reminded that ultimate reality does not consist of things we see around us. "Let heaven fill your thoughts; don't spend your time worrying about things down here. You should have as little desire for this world as a dead person does. Your real life is in heaven with Christ and God" (Col. 3:2, 3, Living Bible). Here is contrasted transitory, earthly existence with eternal, ultimate reality. As a result of this eternal perspective, David Livingstone was able to say, "I will place no value on anything I have or may possess except in relation to the Kingdom of Christ. If anything I have will advance the interests of that Kingdom, it shall be given up or kept, as by keeping or giving it I shall most promote the glory of Him to whom I owe all my hopes, both of time and eternity."2

It was not really our car; it was God's. Since everything belongs to God in the first place, why do we get so possessive about "our" things? In our family, life got much simpler when we decided to dedicate our car to God, recognizing His ownership. When we offered an out-of-town mis-

sionary the use of our car, he was reluctant to borrow in case "anything happened to it" while he was using it. We told him it was not really our car; it was God's. When he returned, greatly concerned about a stolen stereo, there was wonderful freedom in telling him that we were not worried because God was the true owner anyway.

Simplicity also has a great impact when shifting houses. Our move to the United States for further study involved dozens of decisions regarding our worldly

further study involved dozens of decisions regarding our worldly possessions. We knew we could only bring two suitcases with us. We would need to dispose of most things. At times I thought how much simpler it would be if a firebomb destroyed the lot!

The more

complex

situation,

the more

potential

the

The greatest difficulty comes while you still possess the article. The greater the attachment, the greater the sense of loss when it goes—yet once it is gone, there is a feeling of freedom. Perhaps it was the pain and discomfort of losing all that was familiar and treasured that made Lot's wife look back. It has been suggested that "because we lack a divine Centre our need for security has led us into an insane attachment to things."<sup>3</sup>

Who (or what) is really at the center of our lives?

#### EFFECTS OF MODELING SIMPLICITY

Practicing the discipline of simplicity not only frees the individual from the bondage of clutter (whether physical or mental) but may also encourage others to experience the benefits. For example, my friend Velda told me that their family decided to dispense with soft drinks. They were feeling stressed by the constant clutter of empty bottles by the back door waiting to be returned to the store for a refund. As she thought further she saw many other benefits: fewer trips to the store, improved nutrition, healthier teeth, plus saving time and money.

## RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN STRESS AND SIMPLICITY

The more complex the situation, the more potential for stress. Parenthood stress is real and debilitating, and one of the chief causes is the lack of control which parents often feel. Try simplifying routines:

- shop less often
- do the laundry only once a week
- reduce the number of toys to be played with at any one time (divide toys into seven boxes—one for each day of the week), which not only reduces clutter but also makes sure



- menu to reduce the time spent cooking
  create hospitality routines so that you are ready for guests at any time
- lower unrealistically high expectations of yourself

Other ways to simplify household tasks and reduce stress could include canceling or reducing subscriptions to newspapers or magazines and not entering your name and address for prize drawings, which become the basis for junk mail advertising.

And one of the very best ways to reduce stress and simplify life? Sell the television! Most of the time our two boys were growing up we survived without a television. We appreciated the quieter surroundings and added possibilities for family activities. With Internet news, there isn't even any reason to feel deprived during highly newsworthy events. And the advantage is that you can choose what you want to watch.

#### STEWARDSHIP DIMENSIONS OF SIMPLICITY

Christian simplicity is "an *inward* reality that results in an *outward* life-style,"<sup>4</sup> and that freedom from anxiety is characterized by three inner attitudes:

- We must acknowledge that what we have is a gift from God.
- b. We must know that it is God's business to care for what is ours.
- c. We must make our goods available to the community.

Individualistic, Westernized society emphasizes the importance of maintaining personal insurance policies and accumulating a bank account that can

One of the very best ways to reduce stress and simplify life? Sell the television!

provide for the crises of life. But in my experience with customs in Pacific Island communities, they share resources for weddings and funerals-and it does more than just connect families. Perhaps these cultures can teach Westernized cultures something, for they invest in their future not by personally accumulating wealth but by constantly giving to those in need. They know that in their own time of need, they can rely on help from the com-

munity into which they have poured their resources. In King Solomon's magnificent dedication prayer for the temple, the reason for God's wealth is given: "Wealth and honor come from you; you are the rulAre there ways of simplifying your daily routines and lifestyle to make more space for God? er of all things. In your hands are strength and power to exalt and give strength to all" (1 Chron. 29:12, NIV). Whatever He has, it is clearly for the purpose of exalting and benefiting others.

We need God's perspective when it comes to the goods and talents He gives us to manage, especially as we approach the end times. "It includes all gifts and endowments, whether original or acquired, natural or spiritual. All

are to be employed in Christ's service.... to be used for His glory in blessing our fellow men."<sup>5</sup> This includes our speech, influence, time, health, strength, money, kindly impulses and affections, and mental faculties. All would be sharper instruments of service if we employed the discipline of simplicity. We need to put aside all the distractions that hinder us and focus on Jesus, the Author and Finisher of our faith (Heb. 12:1).

While we are to enjoy God's blessings and share them generously with others, it is with the understanding that our lives here on earth are transitory, and we know that "He has also set eternity in the human heart" (Eccl. 3:11, NIV).

Where are the stress points in your family at the moment? Are there ways of simplifying your daily routines and lifestyle to make more space for God?

Ask Him, then share your plans to simplify with someone else. Such an announcement may be just what's needed to inspire them to join you in a major sorting operation! Discovering ways to bring simplicity into family living is to experience truly liberating freedom.

<sup>1</sup> Deborah Shaw Lewis, *Motherhood Stress* (Dallas, TX: Word Pub., 1989), p. 160.

- <sup>2</sup> Studies in Christian Living, book 6, "Growing in Service" (Colorado Springs, CO: Navpress, 1964), as cited in Gien Karssen, Her Name Is Woman (Colorado Springs, CO: Navpress, 1975).
- <sup>3</sup> Richard J. Foster, *The Celebration of Discipline* (Downer's Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1988), p. 80.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid., p. 79.

<sup>5</sup> Ellen G. White, *Christ's Object Lessons* (Washington, DC: Review and Herald, 1900), p. 328.



CAROL TASKER serves as the Partners in Ministry coordinator for the South Pacific Division in Australia.

## Relationship



## How to Pray with Your Spouse

by Geneva Cobb lijima

ouple prayer can add intimacy, both to your marriage and to your relationship with God. Here's how to get started.

"If two of you shall agree on earth as touching anything that they shall ask," Christ promised in Matthew 18:19 (ASV), "it shall be done for them of my Father who is in heaven."

This promise, of course, is not limited to married couples, but who else has the capacity to agree so deeply? And who else needs such prayer so badly?

Couple prayer, as I call it, can be a powerful tool in deepening communication and commitment to each other. Here are some ideas to help you and your mate along the road to openness in prayer.

#### **BEGIN GENTLY**

Ann and David hadn't always prayed together. They knew they should. They both wanted to, but Ann suffered from low self-esteem.

"I always felt David was more spiritual than I," she explains. "I thought he wouldn't think the things I prayed about were important. He'd criticize my prayer, maybe even diagram it in his head." The time came, however, when David persuaded her to try. "This is something we must do. Our kids need it," he insisted.

"We began with just a few sentences each," Ann remembers. "David was very gentle with me, and gradually I began to feel more comfortable about praying with him. If we couldn't have prayed through these last crises, I don't know how we'd have made it."

If your spouse is like Ann, here are some ways you can help:

- 1. Don't push. If you're eager to pray together, but your spouse is not, go easy. This sounds simple, but it's very difficult when you know how necessary and how powerful couple prayer is.
- 2. Be sensitive. Your spouse may want to pray with you but find it hard. It is harder for some people than it is for others. Often, as you become more open in other areas, however, you will become more open in prayer as well.

- 3. Let your spouse know you value his or her prayers. "I'd really appreciate it if you'd pray for me as you go through the day. I'm scared about...."
- 4. Mealtime prayers are an easy way to start. Hold hands around the table. You may be able to introduce a little more depth by suggesting, "Honey, when you pray at dinner, would you thank the Lord for helping Angie with her test?" Or, "Would you mind praying for the medical tests I'm having tomorrow?" Go easy, though. Remember, don't push!
- 5. Pray with the children. Some spouses feel more free in praying aloud with the children than alone together. If your spouse does, be grateful for that, at least.
- 6. Share prayer requests and pray together silently before going to sleep. If the reluctant spouse doesn't feel his prayer is being judged, he or she may be more willing. This was our first step back into praying together.
- 7. Pray together in times of crisis. "When there is a specific need," one woman told me, "we pray better." When you have children, that can be most of the time.

#### MAKE TIME

In these days of two-career families and busy schedules, making time for couple prayer can be a formidable hurdle, but others have succeeded, and you can too. It's really a matter of priorities. If prayer is important to both of you, you'll make the time.

Pray about finding a suitable time. If possible, pray together about it. Then start experimenting. One of these options may work for you.

- Set the alarm a few minutes earlier in the morning. Catherine Marshall and her husband, Len Seurd, would set their coffeepot timer each night. In the morning they woke to the aroma of fresh coffee perking. They'd pour a cup of coffee and sit propped up in bed as they prayed and studied the Scriptures together.
- 2. If you breakfast together, pray then. We do this, though it's not our main prayer time. I feel good about the day when I've heard Pete pray for me and the children. He appreciates my prayers then too.
- Pray before going to bed. It can be very comforting to share with God about both the day's blessings and problems before going to sleep.
- 4. Pray on the telephone together at lunch or another convenient time during the day. You can also do this when one spouse is out of town—it's a lovely way to keep in touch. Many businesses pay for calls home.

- 5. Take time for spontaneous prayers whenever a need arises. This may even be several times a day.
- 6. If you absolutely do not have a time when you can pray together on a daily basis, agree to set aside a time once a week when you can pray. Make it special. Share a scripture or two to set the tone.
- 7. List prayer requests and praises for each other, then pray separately, but at the same time if possible. You can be close in spirit, even when you are not together in body. If you are accustomed to praying together at 10 p.m., and one spouse is out of town, try to continue the practice. Just meet in spirit at God's throne.

#### **EXPERIMENT**

Once you've incorporated couple prayer into your schedule, experiment with different prayer styles to find the one that fits your needs. When you find it, you may want to occasionally use a different method to add variety.

- 1. *Conversational prayer*. Begin with praise and thanksgiving. Continue to confession of specific sin, and end with requests. Let the conversation flow back and forth, with each partner praying spontaneously. Recognize God as a participant; accept short silences as times when He may be speaking.
- 2. Structured conversational prayer. As with conversational prayer, begin with praise, thanksgiving, and confession of sin. When you are ready to make requests, one spouse leads out with a concern. The other then continues that prayer from his or her own perspective. Suppose Johnnie is having trouble with mathematics at school, for example. The husband may pray for him to be able to concentrate and understand the concepts better. The wife continues by praying for patience on the part of the teacher or herself in working with him. The wife then prays about a subject of concern to her. When she finishes, her husband continues that prayer, adding his own thoughts about it. He then introduces another prayer request. This method of prayer helps each partner concentrate on the prayer of the other, since he will continue the same subject.
- Traditional prayer. In this style of prayer, one person prays about all of his/her concerns. Then, the other prays about all his concerns. If you have been brought up on this kind of prayer or like things very structured, you may



feel more comfortable with this style. This type of prayer requires more concentration on the part of the agreeing (listening) spouse, however. So avoid lengthy prayers, unless they are meaningful to both of you.

Ideally, prayer times should include praise, confession, requests, and listening to God's voice. Practically, it's more important that you pray than that you get all the parts incorporated properly. If there's only time for a short sentence or two, God understands.

#### PRAY WITH (NOT AT) YOUR SPOUSE

My husband Pete and I faced our own crisis over prayer in the first month of our marriage. Each evening we'd kneel by the sofa for our prayer time. I treasured those minutes as we poured out our hearts to God, telling Him our needs and desires.

Then one night before we prayed, Pete looked at me and said, "Sometimes I feel like you pray at me." "What?" I asked. "I just tell the Lord the needs as I see them."

"But, when you pray, 'Lord, help us do this or that,' I feel like you are really pointing out what you think I should be doing," he insisted.

Deep inside, I knew he was right, but how could he criticize my prayers to God: How could I ever again be spontaneous in our prayers together?

Devastated, my emotions erupted in uncontrollable sobbing. Pete looked on helplessly. When there were no more tears, we discovered that our ability to If you absolutely do not have a time when you can pray together on a daily basis, agree to set aside a time once a week when you can pray. Make it special.

be vulnerable in prayer together had disappeared. Many years passed before it was restored.

Here are some suggestions on how to keep your prayer time a positive experience:

- Don't scold or nag. Unless your spouse asks for prayer in an area where you think he or she needs improvement or help, it's wise to keep quiet. Reserve those prayers for private time with the Lord. No one likes to be preached at—especially in prayer.
- 2. Find common ground. You don't have to agree with your mate on everything about a situation in order to pray together over it. You may need to sort through the pieces, discuss, perhaps even vent your anger or get counseling in a crisis. But at prayer time, decide what the bottom line is.
- 3. Accept yourself and your mate. Some people, for instance, are naturally more reticent to pray with their spouse than are others. Perhaps they consider prayer a private thing, or maybe they are more regimented. These people are often matched with more open, spontaneous mates. Learn to appreciate these differences.
- 4. Focus on Jesus. One wife told me, "Sometimes I feel like we're praying to each other, rather than to God." To avoid that danger, take a little time to center your thoughts on Jesus. Sing a worship song, read a Psalm, have a short praise time together.
- 5. *Persevere*. Anything new feels difficult and awkward. Then too, I'm convinced that Satan will prevent any kind of prayer if he can—but how much more so couple prayer! Whatever you do, don't get discouraged if you miss a day or two.

Again, don't give up! Things that are worthwhile usually do take time. I pray that the day will come when you will say to your spouse, "I don't know how I'd have gotten through this day (or week) without your prayers."

GENEVA COBB IIJIMA lives in Oregon City, Oregon. This article originally appeared in *Signs of the Times*, January 1991. Copyright 1990 by Geneva Cobb lijima.

## THE GIFT OF FORGIVENESS

by Karen Holford



## "A happy marriage is the union of two good forgivers!"

Some tears were angry and some were sad, and she her shoulders, and cried. Her sobs were loud and painful, and her tears were hot. Some tears were angry and some were sad, and she hurt so much she didn't know what to do. Today was their wedding anniversary, and she'd taken the day off work. They were going to hike around a mountain lake and stop for dinner in their favorite restaurant.

Then Luke received a call from Jason. "Hey, Pastor Luke! My truck's broken down, and I need help getting to a roofing job. I promised to finish it by this afternoon. I'm already late! I'll lose my contracts if I can't complete this one in time!"

"Don't worry, Jason! I'll bring my truck over right away and I'll stay and give you a hand so you get it done on time!"

Sarah stared at Luke, silenced by his complete lack of consideration. "Well, of course I have to help him! He's struggling to get his business going! It's much more important than having a nice day off. Just call the restaurant and cancel the table, and I'll see you later."

Sarah wiped her tears with the edge of the quilt. This wasn't the first time Luke had let her down badly. How was she ever going to forgive him?

#### THE VIEW FROM HERE

One of the obstacles to working through our hurt and forgiveness is that we often limit our view of the situation to our own perspective. If we've hurt someone, we can become self-defensive. And if we've been hurt, we can be absorbed in our own pain.

#### THE FOUR PLACES

There are four places we need to go and reflect before we can thoughtfully ask for forgiveness—or offer it to others:

#### Forgiveness place #1: The heart of God

Before we can understand how to respond to a painful situation we need to spend time alone with God. We need to be still and listen to His love for us and our spouse.

If you're the "hurter" you need to remember how much God loves you and is willing to forgive you. You also need to understand that God hurts because your spouse hurts, and you caused that hurt. This is a vital part of the process because it helps you to understand the spiritual significance of your actions. Jesus died so that you could be forgiven for the hurt you caused your loved one. Don't rush through this place on the forgiveness journey. It's the most important one because this is where you face the truth about your actions.

If you've been hurt, you need to remember how much God loves you, and how sad He is that you're hurting. You also need to see that God loves your spouse too, and He wants to use this experience to help you both understand more about His love and forgiveness.

## Forgiveness place #2: The other person's shoes

It's important for each of you to understand what the other person is experiencing.

If you're the "hurter" you need to understand how much your actions have hurt and affected your spouse so you can fathom the depth of the forgiveness you need. This will help you to avoid repeating the same mistake.

If you've been hurt, it's helpful to wonder why your spouse made the mistake so you can pray for them in a focused way. Does Luke need help exploring his priorities? Does he help others because he needs to feel valued? Does he need to understand that he may be hiding in his work to avoid closeness in his marriage?

#### Forgiveness place #3: The relationship

Each of you needs to ask yourself what your relationship most needs from you to help it heal. If you're not sure what to do or say, pray for wisdom and ask, "Will this help our relationship, or will it cause more pain?"

#### Forgiveness place #4: The future

This is often a place we forget to explore when we're working out how to help our hurting relationship. Think about your hopes for your marriage and the commitment you've made to cherish each other. What do you both need to do now to protect your relationship from future hurts? What plans can you make to help your marriage grow stronger and closer?



If you're the "hurter," what decisions can you make to ensure you don't hurt your loved one in the same way again?

If you're the hurt person, how can you respond to your spouse in a way that will help you to grow closer and not damage your future relationship?

#### **CARE-FUL CONVERSATIONS**

Care-ful conversations are calm, kind, clear, and hopeful.

After spending prayerful time in the four places of forgiveness, Sarah could say, "When you chose to help Jason rather than spend our anniversary with me, I was very sad and hurt because it felt as if I wasn't very important to you. I felt lonely, abandoned, and disappointed. I need to know you value our relationship. Next time please could you stop and ask me first before making choices that affect me? I am also wondering how we can take care of our own relationship by making it more of a special priority in our lives."

Luke could say, "I am so sorry Sarah. I realize that I hurt you and God very much when I chose to help Jason rather than spend the day with you. I need to understand just how much my ministry choices hurt you at times. I was wrong. Please forgive me. What can I do differently in the future to show you how special you are to me?"

Some things are very hard to forgive, such as adultery, domestic violence, abuse, continuous neglect, betrayal, or being seriously shamed, bullied, or ridiculed. When we cause such deep wounds, we can expect healing to take a long time. If someone tripped you and broke your leg, you might forgive the person immediately, but the fracture would still need six weeks to mend.

Forgiveness is also like a journey. It may take a while to arrive at the destination, but as long as we're on the forgiveness road we're moving in the right direction. It's not kind or respectful to expect immediate forgiveness for a serious offense.

Hurts, resentments, and grudges fracture the oneness that God wants us to experience in marriage. Forgiveness binds the relationship together again, like a plaster cast, so that our hurting hearts can be healed and become stronger than ever before.



KAREN HOLFORD lives in Scotland where her husband, Bernie, is the mission president and pastor of the Crieff SDA Church. Even after 28 years of marriage they are still learning about the profound mystery of forgiveness.

### Profile



## GOD STILL ANSWERS PRAYERS

by Gina Wahlen

## "We should not only depend upon our spouse's faith-we need to wrestle with God. He is ready to honor our little faith."

argret Mutembo Muzyamba Mulambo was born in a village of the Monze District of Zambia and grew up with her grandparents, who were Seventh-day Adventists. She attended the Adventist church in Chipaba, where she was active in the youth group. During that time, Margret became acquainted with Passmore Mulambo, who was a district youth leader and led the church's singing group.

One day as she was walking home from school, Margret noticed Passmore seated under a nearby tree. Seeing her, Passmore got up and asked if he could accompany her home since "it was the same direction he seemingly was heading to," Margret remembers. "To my amazement, before my acknowledgement, he was already following!"

On April 13, 1986, the couple were married at the Chipaba Seventh-day Adventist Church and held their reception at Passmore's father's farm near the village of Chitantalyafusha.

Early in their marriage, Margret developed the habit of praying for her husband as he worked as a

literature evangelist, then regional publishing leader, a district pastor, the publishing director for the Zambia Union Conference, and eventually also a weekly radio and television evangelist.

Beginning in 2007, Passmore served as president of the Central Zambia Conference until he was called to be the Sabbath School and Personal Ministries director for the Southern Africa-Indian Ocean Division in 2010.

The Mulambos have four children: Michelo, 24, a business/IT student at the University of Eastern Africa in Kenya; Miyoba, 23, a medical student at Lyceum University in the Philippines; Mutinta, 20, planning on entering university this year; and Mwaka, 11, a sixth grade student at the PRESDA School in Pretoria.

#### POWER OF PRAYER

As the children were growing up, Margret encouraged them to learn the strength of prayer, and the family often sang and prayed together. The power of prayer was especially evident one time when Passmore was away due to work responsibilities.

"We had run out of food," recalled Margret, "and I decided that we would not disturb Passmore with issues of food at home since he had done his best to provide before he left. I called my daughter Mutinta for prayer. I believed that God would act. After prayer, I said to Mutinta, 'There will be enough for us tomorrow.' The following day someone walked to our home with all that we needed."

Reflecting on that experience, Margret reminds us that God still answers prayers. She also shares some advice: "As pastors' wives, we should not only depend upon our spouse's faith—we need to wrestle with God. He is ready to honor our little faith."

#### **TYPICAL CHALLENGES**

Margret has also faced some of the typical challenges that pastoral families around the world seem to experience, including high expectations from church members, and "yet you find yourself limited in some aspects." Margret notes that "church members always look to see what a pastor's wife is doing—how she looks and how she is dressed, the way you teach your children, watching to see if they have good manners, even though they face the same challenges as other children."

Other challenges include frequently having her husband away from home as he travels and coping with a myriad of changes when transfers come. But "in all these challenges," says Margret, "I have learned to pray, asking the Lord to guide me in knowing His will. God is faithful. He has seen us through, and we have been in ministry for 25 years."

As a pastor's wife, Margret believes that it is good to love your church members, "and yet remain yourself and disciplined. Regardless of where my husband is serving, we have learned that we need to be there for each other."



Pastor and Mrs. Mulambo at church.

Margret expresses the joy of having an extended church family and acknowledges how being a part of ministry has expanded their worldview. "We have learned to live with and among people from different backgrounds, and eating strange foods."

But most of all, Margret wants to encourage other wives to "love the Lord, not because you are a pastor's wife, but because Jesus is your personal Savior. Getting involved in sharing the gospel with others in every way possible should characterize our lives. I also believe that it is very important to read and study God's word and talk with Him every day in prayer."



**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 one son, Daniel, and one daughter, Heather.



Pastor and Mrs. Mulambo

### **MY TRADITIONAL SABBATH LUNCH**

My favorite Sabbath meal is *samp* mixed with grains and legumes. I like to prepare it two different ways:

1) **Musohya wa Mabisi** can be made with pounded dry maize or corn. You boil the pounded samp until is soft. Add *mabisi* (sour milk). Normally we eat it just like that, without sweetening it, although some may add sugar.

2) The other kind is **Musohya wa Bulyolyo**. You will need: dry maize (pounded or unpounded), cowpeas, peas, beans, *mbwiila*, and groundnuts. I cook it for about 2 hours. Put in water first and add your maize, cowpeas, peas, and groundnuts, then let it boil until it is ready. You may add a little salt and sugar.

We eat both kinds of Musohya with spoon, fork, or hands. Ready for a wonderful Sabbath meal!

## The Yearning

by Sarah K. Asaftei

n hour ago, I was supposed to be writing this article. Instead, I was rocking my son to sleep. My husband even volunteered to put the kids to bed so that I could go write. (He knows this article was due more than a week ago!)

While he was feeding the baby, I decided to go and say "goodnight" to our two-year-old before settling down to write.

As I open the door, a soft little voice begs, "Mommy, rock you." Two enormous dark brown eyes plead up at me as I bend over his crib. "Rock you in da big chair, p'eeze." He's only two—he still gets his pronouns mixed up. What article could be more important than a few quiet moments with my son?

His yearning little face transforms into elation as I reach out for him. He bounds up from his pillow, ragged stuffed ducky in one hand, favorite blanket in the other. Wiry toddler arms cling to me as we settle into the rocking chair.

"Mommy, sing p'eeze. Sing 'little boat' song." And so I begin to rock in time with the rhythm of the lyrics. This is a new song; he's just learning it this week.



When Jesus lived on the earth long ago And taught the people here He sailed in a boat on the blue Galilee With his disciples dear.

Rock, rock, rock Little boat on the sparkling sea Rock, rock, rock Dear Jesus rides in thee Rock, rock, rock O'er the waters swiftly flee For Jesus sleeps in the little boat On blue Galilee.

He melts into me as the song and the rocking lull him toward sleep. Little hands twirl in my hair. "Sing da song again, p'eeze. Jesus in da little boat. Rock, rock, rock." I sing it again. And again. And just when I think he's fading, his baby voice warbles along with me.

When the song is over, I stroke his hair and kiss his cheek. He senses that I'm about to stand up and put him back in bed. His head pops up and one dimpled hand presses my shoulder back into the chair. "Rock you, Mama. Sing anudder song, p'eeze. Yes? Okay?"

His yearning for my presence, my companionship, is palpable. No matter how energetic and

> "Truly, I say to you, unless you turn and become like children, you will never enter the kingdom of heaven" Matt. 18:3, ESV

wiggly he may be all day long, at bedtime he just wants to be hugged. Snuggled. Secure. At peace in his little world.

Finally, I tear myself away and put him back in his bed. "Snuggle wif Mama? Cup uh water? Where's ducky?" Any excuse he can think of to keep me there a few moments longer.

I tiptoe out, closing the door behind me. And suddenly I know what I want to write this article about.

The yearning.

Jesus said, "Truly, I say to you, unless you turn and become like children, you will never enter the kingdom of heaven" (Matt. 18:3, ESV). Little children aren't particularly complicated. They have simple wants, simple needs. They don't get bogged down in the nuances of things; they aren't yet jaded and numb.

At the end of a busy day, my son just wants time with me. He wants to know that I'm there, that I love him, that I'm not too busy to sit and rock him and sing him a song. He wants to hear my voice and feel my arms wrapped around him and listen as I whisper in his ear that I love him. He wants to hear me pray over him, asking God's blessing on his boyish interests and inviting his angel to protect him through the night.

I can't help but ask myself: When was the last time I had that same yearning for special time with my heavenly parent? How often do I ask God to stay just a few moments longer?

Sing to me, Jesus, through your nature and your birdsongs and your breathtaking sunsets. Hold me. Rock me. Intercede for me, even though I don't deserve it.

The duties and responsibilities of mommying are not something I take lightly. It's a huge job to be in charge of shaping the character of the next generation. But my son has no idea how much he also teaches me. Seeing his sweet longing reminds me of my own. And more than anything else, I never want to lose the yearning.



SARAH K. ASAFTEI is a pastor's wife and mother of two living in Tampa, Florida. She works as development specialist for the General Conference Ministerial Association and does marketing at skaMEDIA productions. She grew up a missionary kid and loves international travel, photography, blogging, and film production—especially when it is about

making strong families for Jesus.

### MINISTRY



## MISCONCEPTION OF THE MOTHER'S WORK

by Ellen G. White Adventist Home, pp. 244-247

Editor's note: So often, pastors'wives who stay at home with their children may feel isolated and alone in their journey of motherhood. We've put together these quotes in the hope of encouraging you! Monther Tempted to Feel That Her Work Is Unimportant—The mother's work often seems to her an unimportant service. It is a work that is rarely appreciated. Others know little of her many cares and burdens. Her days are occupied with a round of little duties, all calling for patient effort, for self-control, for tact, wisdom, and selfsacrificing love; yet she cannot boast of what she has done as any great achievement. She has only kept things in the home running smoothly. Often weary and perplexed, she has tried to speak kindly to the children, to keep them busy and happy, and to guide their little feet in the right path. She feels that she has accomplished nothing. But it is not so. Heavenly angels watch the careworn mother, noting the burdens she carries day by day. Her name may not have been heard in the world, but it is written in the Lamb's book of life.

The true wife and mother . . . will perform her duties with dignity and cheerfulness, not considering it degrading to do with her own hands whatever it is necessary to do in a well-ordered household.

Regarded as Inferior to Mission Service—What an important work! And yet we hear mothers sighing for missionary work!

If they could only go to some foreign country, they would feel that they were doing something worth while. But to take up the daily duties of the home life and carry them forward seems to them like an exhausting and thankless task.

Mothers who sigh for a missionary field have one at hand in their own home circle. . . . Are not The humblest talents, if the heart of the recipient is given to God, will make the home life all that God would have it.

the souls of her own children of as much value as the souls of the heathen? With what care and tenderness should she watch their growing minds and connect God with all their thoughts! Who can do this as well as a loving, God-fearing mother?

There are some who think that unless they are directly connected with active religious work, they are not doing the will of God; but this is a mistake. Everyone has a work to do for the Master; it is a wonderful work to make home pleasant and all that it ought to be. The humblest talents, if the heart of the recipient is given to God, will make the home life all that God would have it. A bright light will shine forth as the result of wholehearted service to God. Men and women can just as surely serve God by giving earnest heed to the things which they have heard, by educating their children to live and fear to offend God, as can the minister in the pulpit.

These women who are doing with ready willingness what their hands find to do, with cheerfulness of spirit aiding their husbands to bear their burdens and training their children for God, are missionaries in the highest sense.

Religious Activities Should Not Supersede Care of Family—If you ignore your duty as a wife and mother and hold out your hands for the Lord to put another class of work in them, be sure that He will not contradict Himself; He points you to the duty you have to do at home. If you have the idea that some work greater and holier than this has been entrusted to you, you are under a deception. By faithfulness in your own home, working for the souls of those who are nearest to you, you may be gaining a fitness to work for Christ in a wider field. But be sure that those who are neglectful of their duty in the home circle are not prepared to work for other souls.

The Lord has not called you to neglect your home and your husband and children. He never works in this way; and He never will. . . . Never for a moment suppose that God has given you a work that will necessitate a separation from your precious little flock. Do not leave them to become demoralized by improper associations and to harden their hearts against their mother. This is letting your light shine in a wrong way, altogether; you are making it more difficult for your children to become what God would have them and win heaven at last. God cares for them, and so must you if you claim to be His child.

During the first years of their lives is the time in which to work and watch and pray and encourage every good inclination. This work must go on without interruption. You may be urged to attend mothers' meetings and sewing circles, that you may do missionary work; but unless there is a

During the first years of their lives is the time in which to work and watch and pray and encourage every good inclination. This work must go on without interruption. faithful, understanding instructor to be left with your children, it is your duty to answer that the Lord has committed to you another work which vou can in no wise neglect. You cannot overwork in any line without becoming disqualified for the work of training your little ones and making them what God would have them be. As Christ's co-worker you must bring them

to Him disciplined and trained.

Much of the malformation of an ill-trained child's character lies at the mother's door. The mother should not accept burdens in the church work which compel her to neglect her children. The best work in which a mother can engage is to see that no stitches are dropped in the training of her children. . . . In no other way can a mother help the church more than by devoting her time to those who are dependent upon her for instruction and training.

### MINISTRY

## WAYS TO PRAY FOR (& WITH) CHILDREN



by Randy Maxwell

Recently, one of our local Christian radio stations had a prayer and praise day. For 12 hours straight, the phone lines were open and listeners could call and praise God for an answered prayer and also make prayer requests. During one segment of the day, listeners were invited to call in and nominate someone for the Faith Hall of Fame—someone whom they felt demonstrated faith by the way they lived. One little boy called in and nominated his mom. When the announcer asked this youngster why his mother qualified, he answered, "Because she prays for me every day."

How I wish this were the proud boast of every child! At the risk of offending those of my generation, I have to say that on the whole, we've done a lousy job of parenting. Determined not to grow up, and mired in materialistic self-indulgence, this generation has neglected their children, spoiled them, modeled alcohol and drug use in front of them, and failed to provide the moral boundaries that teach them what is right and wrong.

I realize this is a generalization. Of course there are exceptions. Many of us provide computers and private-school education for our children to give them a head start on a successful adulthood. But of all the things we do for our children, prayer is the most important.

Why pray for our children? Because Satan wants them! Jesus told Peter, "Satan has asked to

Strive to be a praying parent, not a perfect parent. sift you as wheat,"<sup>1</sup> and this is what the enemy wants to do to our children in these last days.

But we are not helpless in this struggle for the souls of our children! Lamentations 2:19 (NIV) gives us a plan: "Pour out your heart

like water in the presence of the Lord. Lift up your hands to him for the lives of your children."

At this point in our discussion, I need to say something very important. *Strive to be a praying parent, not a perfect parent.* It's not being a perfect parent that makes the difference in a child's life. None of us are perfect, so how can we be perfect parents? It's the *praying* parent that makes the difference. And that's something we *all* can be.

Here are five ways we can pray for and with our children.

## 1. Pray a prayer of blessing on your children.<sup>2</sup>

How important it is that our children receive God's blessing! Our kids hunger to know that they are loved, that there's no one else who owns the key to our hearts in exactly the same way. And they hunger to know that God is their Friend and that His smile, not His frown, is on them. We have the



incredible privilege as parents and New Testament priests<sup>3</sup> to administer blessing to our children.

Call your children to your side at least once a year—perhaps on their birthdays or on New Year's Eve. Place your hands upon their heads, representing God's hands of provision and protection. Thank God for each unique child of yours, and then, inserting his or her name in the text, repeat the words of blessing found in Numbers 6:24-26 (NKJV): "The Lord bless you and keep you; the Lord make his face shine upon you, and be gracious to you; The Lord lift up His countenance upon you, and give you peace."

Parents, don't miss out on one of your highest privileges—that of blessing your children. You don't have to do it exactly as described above, but find your way to communicate God's approval and delight in your sons and daughters, be they four,

Don't burden prayer with negative pressure to perform. fourteen, or forty! And do you know what? God promises to put His name on your children and to bless them.<sup>4</sup> What more could you want for them?

## 2. Make personalized prayer lists for each child.

The credit for this idea goes to Stormie Omartian,

author of *The Power of a Praying Parent*.<sup>5</sup> Designate a time each year, perhaps at the beginning of summer vacation, to make a prayer list for each of your children. Take pencil and paper in hand, and ask God to show you how to pray for each child over the next twelve months. Claim Psalm 25:14 as you do this, believing that He will reveal your children's needs to you when you ask.

This exercise may take several days. Feel free to add to the lists as needed throughout the year.

#### 3. Pray, claiming promises from Scripture.

Add gifts to the list you created in step two, and claim the associated Scripture verses:

- A. Protection—Psalm 17:8, 9; 91:1, 2, 9, 10-12; Isaiah 54:17.
- B. Love and acceptance—Isaiah 41:9; Jeremiah 31:3; Romans 5:8.
- C. Respect for parents and other authorities— Proverbs 1:8, 9; Isaiah 30:1; Ephesians 6:1-3; Colossians 3:20.
- D. Godly friends and role models—Psalm 1:1; Proverbs 4:14; 12:26; 22:24, 25.
- E. A hunger for the things of God—Psalm 86:11, 12; 119:2; Proverbs 14:27; Matthew 5:6.
- F. Recognition of God-given gifts and talents— Proverbs 18:6; 22:29; Romans 11:29; 1 Peter 4:10.
- G. Freedom from fear Romans 12:2; 2 Corinthians 10:4, 5; Ephesians 4:17, 18, 22-24; Philippians 2:5; 4:8; 2 Timothy 1:7.
- H. A sound mind—Romans 12:2; 2 Corinthians 10:4, 5; Ephesians 4:17, 18, 22-24; Philippians 2:5; 4:8; 2 Timothy 1:7.
- Freedom from alcohol, drugs, and other addictions – Deuteronomy 30:19; John 8:36; Romans 8:13.
- J. Sexual purity—1 Corinthians 6:13, 18; 10:13;
  1 Thessalonians 4:3-5; James 1:2; 1 Peter 2:11.
- K. The right mate-Psalm 127:1; Proverbs 3:5, 6; 18:22; Malachi 2:13-16; Hebrews 13:4.

#### 4. Make it real.

Children do what they see. If prayer is to be real to them, it must first be real to their parents. So model time alone with Jesus. Let your children "catch" you on your knees during times of private prayer and devotion. In this way, they'll see that prayer is important to Mom or Dad.

Pray after the TV news. This will bring a sense of reality to prayer. Prayer becomes relevant when you make the real-life problems you've seen the subject of your talks with God.



Children do

see. If prayer

is to be real

to them, it

what they

Don't fuss when your children don't feel like praying. Pray for them aloud during those times, and give them space as they develop their relationship with God. A forced prayer through pouting lips and tear-streaked cheeks won't benefit anyone. Don't burden prayer with negative pressure to perform.

eeks won't Don't burith negaperform. **must first be real to their parents.** 

#### 5. Make it simple and fun.

Keep prayer with the children simple and short. Teach them to be as specific as possible, and let them know that it is appropriate to pray anytime and anywhere. Use creative approaches to prayer, like "prayer balloons." Write your prayer requests on slips of paper, insert them into uninflated balloons, and fill the balloons with helium. When released, the balloons become a visual object lesson teaching that our prayers ascend to God.

In our home, we enjoy creating "prayer stars." Everyone kneels in a circle on the carpet with our folded hands touching at the fingertips. When we finish praying, we drop our still-folded-and-touching hands to the carpet, and then everyone leans back, pulling their hands apart in a v-shape along the carpet. The result is a starburst pattern on the carpet—a visible mark on the spot where we had family prayer.

Place a prayer or Scripture verses in your children's lunch pails so that when they open them around noontime, they'll know that you're thinking and praying about them.

These are just a few of the ways to make prayer an important part of your children's lives. Experiment. Be bold and creative. Just remember that of all the things we do for our children, prayer is the most important. It may be the thing that gets you a nomination into the "faith hall of fame" from a grateful child—and from Jesus, who prays for you without ceasing.<sup>6</sup>

This article is an excerpt from the book 5 Steps to Christlike Living.

- <sup>1</sup> Luke 22:31, NIV.
- <sup>2</sup> Numbers 6:22-27.
- <sup>3</sup> 1 Peter 2:9.
- <sup>4</sup> See Numbers 6:27.
- <sup>5</sup> Eugene, Oregon: Harvest House Publishers, 1995.
- <sup>6</sup> Hebrews 7:25.



Randy Maxwell is the pastor of the Kuna Seventh-day Adventist Church in Kuna, Idaho. Prior to this he served as the Creative Director for advertising at Pacific Press Publishing Association in Nampa, Idaho. Randy is an author, speaker, and the founder of IF MY PEOPLE PRAY MINISTRIES, through which he conducts prayer and revival seminars across

North America and internationally. Randy's six books include *If My People Pray, Bring Back the Glory, On Eagles' Wings,* and 5 *Steps to Christlike Living.* Randy and his wife, Suzette, live in Nampa, Idaho, and have three adult children and one son-in-law.

## EURO-AFRICA DIVISION

In January 2012 Ministerial and Shepherdess leaders from all over Euro-Africa Division came together in France for a Ministerial Advisory. There were good presentations on what is happening throughout EUD. Praise God for their ministry.



Gloria Ramirez, Spanish Union Shepherdess coordinator, speaks during the Shepherdess meetings at Cologne.



Discussion groups in France.



Alexandra Waespi, Swiss German Conference co-shepherdess Coordinator, and Evelyne Reischach, Baden-Wuerttemberg Conference Shepherdess coordinator, gave presentations at the meetings at Cologne.



EUD Shepherdess coordinators.

## SOUTH AMERICAN DIVISION

In February 2012, 260 pastoral couples met for a ministerial assembly in Santiago with the theme of "Ministering in the Presence of the Lord." Pastors and wives searched for revival and reformation through the Holy Spirit to aid them in fulfilling the mission of a great reward in heaven.



Chile Union pastoral couples.



Chile Union pastoral couples.

## SOUTHERN AFRICA-INDIAN OCEAN DIVISION

In February 2012 SID held a Ministerial Advisory for the pastoral couples in South Africa. Elize Baron, Southern Africa Union Shepherdess coordinator, coordinated a day for the Shepherdess union coordinators to spend time together praying, sharing, and sharing goals for the union.



Shepherdess coordinators meeting together in South Africa.



Ladies enjoying discussion groups in South Africa.



Shepherdess coordinators in South Africa dressed in traditional attire.



Ladies enjoying discussion groups in South Africa.

## SOUTHERN ASIA-PACIFIC DIVISION

Sri Lanka held a Women's, Shepherdess, and Ministerial retreat March 7-10, 2012. The theme was "Revived and Changed Lifestyle."



Church members after the Sabbath service in Sri Lanka.



Raquel Arrais, Women's Ministry associate director, speaking in Sri Lanka.

### Dear Abigail

lei 2 nop

## Dear Abigail,

Three years ago I went to a European country on a teach-abroad program, planning to stay for seven months. Seven months turned into a lot longer because I met my husband, a European-American pastor in the downtown of a large local city.

We've been married about eight months, and in some ways it's been the most overwhelming time I've ever experienced. Relationally we're enjoying married life, but on every other level I'm really struggling.

I find myself resentful of so many things: attempting to minister in a language that's not my own, pressure to entertain in a way that's up to local meal standards, missing friends and family back home (feeling very lonely!), unspoken pressure at church to be more involved in church activities, disliking my church's style and wishing I could have chosen my church, and alternating between feeling invisible and like a celebrity next to my husband.

All this is added to the stress of learning a new language and culture. Sometimes it just makes me want to scream or cry, or both! I want to rise above these feelings and really love the church rather than resent my new role, but I just don't know how. Any advice? THIRD QUARTER 2012 55 THE JOURNAL

~ PW Far Away From Home

## Dear Far Away,

I know firsthand how it feels to marry into another culture. The different ways of communicating, the unexpected expectations, the feeling that you are always stepping on eggshells to keep from unintentionally offending someone at church or in your extended family—it can be overwhelming! After nearly ten years in a cross-cultural marriage, I can tell you that the first years are the hardest—and if you work at it together as a team the culture shock will eventually fade.

When it comes to being "the foreign PW," sometimes it can feel as if you're wearing a bulls-eye. Everyone watches the PW in a normal church, but when you're crossing cultures it seems that the expectations can be even higher. You are not alone!

Here are a few ideas for making your new life a little easier:

- Make sure you stay connected with the "folks back home." Use Skype to webchat for free, or keep a blog to show them your photos of daily/weekly life and share what has been happening.
- Check around to see if there are any other expat PWs in your area. Ask if they'd be willing to get together sometime. See what advice they may have to share (if they've been living there for a while), or they might become a partner in the process if they are new at it too.
- Observe the ladies in your church and ask one or two to be your "culture mentors." Ask them to teach you the art of local cooking, or if they'd be willing to have a regular lunch date so you can practice your language skills. Pick women who are great at the things you want to learn and ask them to help you "become more local"! They'll likely love the opportunity to "improve" you, and you can gain new friends and cultural insights in the process.
- Don't give in to the pressure to do or be more than you are able right now. Those abilities will come as you grow. Try selecting just one (two at the most) church activities in which to involve yourself, and politely decline other requests. (You may need to solicit your

husband to be your protector in this. People will probably take it much better if he is the one urging them to respect your boundaries.)

- Remember that going to a church that's "not your style" isn't unique to ministry in another country. That's just part of being a PW in general. Lots of PWs show up every weekend to minister beside their husbands in churches that they wouldn't pick if they were just members. And almost every PW on the planet has probably had to do it at some point or another. Remember that this congregation isn't necessarily a lifetime assignment, but your relationships with the people in this church can be for life. Eventually your husband will pastor elsewhere, and most likely you'll miss some things about this church very much.
- Focus on the things you can change. You can't change living in a different country right now. You can't change the fact that your husband is a pastor. You probably can't change how much you desperately miss home. But you can change the way you cook for others, the language you speak, and maybe even your fashion style—in order to become closer to the people around you. Try to make those things as enjoyable and social as possible, and you might even learn to like new ways of doing things. Most of all, don't let other people's cultural expectations come between you and your PH.

#### Abigail

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

In the Bible, ABIGAIL was known for her generosity, intuition, industry, discernment, hospitality, loyalty, strength, and wisdom. Write to DEAR ABIGAIL at dear.abigail.letters@gmail.com. Until the judgment you will never know the influence of a kind, considerate course toward the inconsistent, the unreasonable, the unworthy. When we meet with ingratitude and betrayal of sacred trusts, we are roused to show our contempt or indignation. This the guilty expect; they are prepared for it. But kind forbearance takes them by surprise and often awakens their better impulses and arouses a longing for a nobler life.

The Ministry of Healing, p. 495

Let mothers come to Jesus with their perplexities. They will find grace sufficient to aid them in the management of their children. The gates are open for every mother who would lay her burdens at the Saviour's feet.

The Adventist Home, p. 274

A word of approval will bring sunshine to the heart for hours. Many precious beams of light and gladness can the mother shed here and there among her precious little ones. How closely can she bind these dear ones to her heart, that her presence will be to them the sunniest place in the world.

The Adventist Home, p. 241

Not by painful struggles or wearisome toil, not by gift or sacrifice, is righteousness obtained; but it is freely given to every soul who hungers and thirsts to receive it.

Thoughts From the Mount of Blessings, p. 18

Nothing will give such clear views of self as secret prayer. He who seeth in secret and knoweth all things will enlighten your understanding and answer your petitions. Plain, simple duties that must not be neglected will open before you.

Testimonies for the Church, Vol. 5, p. 163





THIRD QUARTER 2012 THE JOURNAL



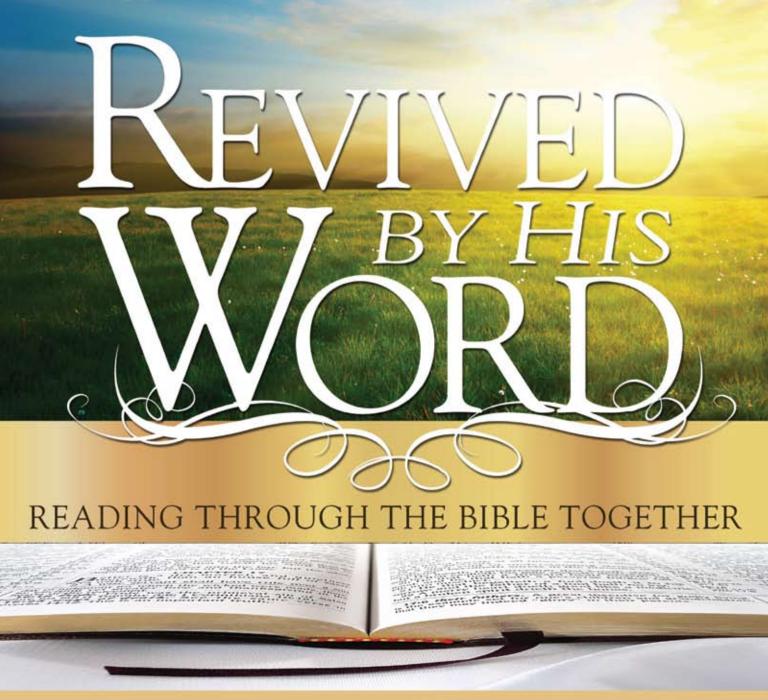


www.RevivalAndReformation.org

fellowship . share . connect

Oministryspouses

facebook.com/groups/ministerialspouses



## JOIN THE MOVEMENT! SIGN UP TODAY!

Church members are encouraged to read or listen to one chapter of the Bible each day. On April 17, 2012, the reading plan began with the division presidents reading Genesis 1 responsively. The division presidents will conclude the initiative by reading Revelation 22 during the 2015 General Conference Session in San Antonio, Texas.

By reading one chapter each day and two chapters during the General Conference Session, millions of participating members will complete their journey through the Bible. Thousands around the world in over 150 countries are reading the same chapter each day! You can go to the website below and sign up at any time to have a chapter of the Bible sent to you each day to your email. If are just starting you can easily read a couple chapters each day to catch up. Plan now to join others in reading God's Word.



### www.RevivedByHisWord.org