A woman wearing a red sari with a gold and black pattern is standing in a field of tall grass. She is looking towards the left, where the sun is setting, creating a warm, golden glow. The background shows a line of trees under a bright, hazy sky.

The Ministry of *a* Pastor's Spouse

CONTINUING EDUCATION CURRICULUM FOR MINISTERIAL SPOUSES



The
Ministry *of*
a Pastor's Spouse

CONTINUING EDUCATION CURRICULUM FOR MINISTERIAL SPOUSES



Mission

The Mission of the Shepherdess International of East-Central Africa Division is to foster and empower ministerial spouses with Christ-Centered Ministry through networking resourcing and training.

Vision

To have a group of pastors' spouses who are mature and stable; spiritually, mentally, physically and socially motivated while focused on mission and influencing others to follow Jesus Christ.

Focus

- Holistic personal growth
- Ministry
- Family
- Interpersonal relationship

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Foreword

I am delighted to write this foreword because I am convinced that this book, *“The Ministry of a Pastor's Spouse”* is a valuable guide to a practical work in your pastoral ministry. I am fully aware of the importance and magnitude of the work you do as you team-up with your spouses in various forms of God's work which touches many lives.

Most of your work may not be seen by many, but none of it goes without being noticed by our heavenly Father. Your husband's ministry would not be manageable without you, whether he realizes it or not. Speaking of the work of a minister's spouse, Ellen White says, “The wife of a minister can do much if she will. If she possesses the spirit of self-sacrifice, and has a love for souls, she can with him do almost an equal amount of good. A sister-laborer in the cause of truth can understand and reach some cases, especially among the sisters, that the minister cannot” (GW 201,202).

Most of you may not have attended class room training to prepare you for the life of service. An appreciation of your important role in the ministry inspired the preparation of this curriculum.

I understand that the lessons in this book have been prepared by the Ministerial Department of the General Conference (GC) of Seventh-day Adventists through the Shepherdess International in collaboration with our own at the East-Central Africa Division (ECD) as the list of authors at the end of the book shows. The curriculum covers all aspects of your ministry; from your personal growth to your calling, your family relationships and your leadership skills. In short, the book is geared to equip you for ministry. It is an excellent source of information for those who have been in the

ministry for only a short time as well as those who have been in the ministry for many years. Even those who have retired from the ministry will find valuable information in this book. It is a powerful tool for the ministry of Ministerial spouses in the ECD.

The curriculum will help you to advance the shared vision with your husband in finishing the work our Master called us to do. With special joy I encourage you to read it diligently and live the message it shares.

It is my prayer, hope and desire that the book will provide an effective learning experience which will impact your ministry positively. May the training provided by this book increase your confidence and boldness as you serve the Master.

Dr. Blasious M. Ruguri,
President East-Central Africa Division of
the General Conference of the SDA Church

Introduction

East-Central Africa Division Continuing Education Curriculum for Shepherdesses

Sister Ellen G. White in the book *Adventist Home*, p. 355 says: “The wife of a minister of the gospel can be either a most successful helper and a great blessing to her husband or hindrance to him in his work. It depends very much on the spouse whether a minister will rise from day to day in his sphere of usefulness, or whether he will sink to the ordinary level.”

With this thought in mind the East-Central Africa Division Ministerial Association through Shepherdess International has seen it fit to embrace the continuing education for minister's spouses established by the General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists.

Continuing Education Curriculum for Shepherdesses in ECD intends to equip and build the confidence of pastors' spouses in the ministry as they team up with pastors to serve the Lord in the Adventist Church. It will help them to excel as individuals and as ministerial spouses.

It is well known that our pastors are trained for the ministry while their spouses are not.; It is equally known that the church expects high performance of the Shepherdesses in ministry regardless of their lack of training. There are also cases whereby pastors' spouses were not privileged to attain formal education as their husbands. It is the purpose of continuing education for pastors' spouses to minimize this gap that exists between the ministers and their spouses in order to strengthen the team ministry.

It is the intention of continuing education for Shepherdesses to pay heed to the challenges of ministers' spouses and to provide offerings which would meet the specific needs of this important segment of our ministerial force. The training includes topics on shepherdess personal growth physically, mentally and spiritually. It also covers the aspects of her calling in ministry, her leadership skills, how to effectively build her own pastoral home and the aspects of her human relationships in general. All lessons are prepared by Shepherdess International of the General Conference in collaboration with that of the East-Central Africa Division. Pastoral spouses who experience the thrill of mental and spiritual growth become more fulfilled in their daily living and are more effective in helping their families and church members.

The plan is that this course will have four modules (Levels) which may end after four years or less depending on how often shepherdesses are able to meet and how diligent the leadership and the shepherdesses themselves are. Unions Ministerial Secretaries and Shepherdess Coordinators are required to find means by which shepherdess meet either during their retreats, ministerial councils or establish training institutes for shepherdesses.

Upon completion of all four levels candidates will be given certificates of completion during their graduation.

It is my prayer that God will minister to us as we take this course faithfully.

ECD Shepherdess coordinator

LEVEL
- I -
*Shepherdess Personal
Development*



Lesson 101

Shepherdess as a Disciple of Jesus

A Disciple is defined as:

- A follower of the doctrines of a teacher or a school of thought-
British Dictionary
- One who embraces and assists in spreading the teaching of another
- A follower or a pupil. The word disciple occurs more than 250 times in the Bible, mostly but not exclusively in the Gospels and Acts (*Sabbath School Lesson April 18-24, 2015*).

Discipleship

The word discipleship refers to the relationship that exists between a teacher and Student.

“Discipleship is not self-made. It is a result of responding to the call of Jesus” (*Sabbath School Lesson April 18-24, 2015*).

Christian Discipleship

A disciple of Jesus is someone who follows Jesus. “Following Jesus is about doing the same things that Jesus does” (*Alan Knox Jun 4, 2009*).

We learn to be like Jesus by doing His will. “If you abide in my word you are My disciples indeed”. John 8:31. The Discipleship Handbook (a resource from Seventh-day Adventist church) elaborates so well this area of Christian Discipleship: “When Jesus called the disciples, He said “Follow Me”-not merely “Follow My teachings” but “Follow me” Discipleship is a process of becoming like Jesus by spending time with Jesus...The personal relationship that exists between disciple and Teacher is the heart of discipleship.” (*Discipleship Handbook, p.3*). *While every Christian is a believer; it should be understood that not every believer is necessarily a disciple. As disciples of Jesus it is important to know that we are not only called to learn the teaching of Jesus Christ but also called to live Him.*

This process of becoming like Jesus does not happen in one day. It requires the Christians to respond to the pleading of Holy Spirit's as they feed on the word of God and pray daily. This is how Sister White puts it: “A person may not be able to tell the exact time or place, or trace all the chain of circumstances in the process of conversion; but this does not prove him to be unconverted. Christ said to Nicodemus, “The wind blows where it wishes, and you hear the sound of it, but cannot tell where it comes from, and where it goes: so is everyone who is born of the Spirit” John 3:8. (*Steps to Christ 57*).

True Discipleship

True discipleship is manifested through a transformed life of a disciple 2 Corinthians 5:17. “Those who become new creatures in Christ Jesus will bring forth the fruits of the Spirit” (*Steps to Christ p.59*).

For a transformed follower, doing God's will becomes a delight and self-denial is experienced. “When He called the people to Himself,

The Ministry of a Pastor's Spouse

with His disciples also, He said to them, “Whoever desires to come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow Me. For whoever desires to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for My sake and the gospel’s will save it. For what will it profit a man if he gains the whole world, and loses his own soul? Or what will a man give in exchange for his soul? (Mark 8:34-38)- Self-love is against Christian discipleship . The desire of the true disciple is to please his Master by doing His will.

As we become more obedient to the Lord and learn to walk in His ways, our lives will change. The biggest change will take place in our hearts, and the overflow of this will be new thoughts, words and actions. The change we seek is done from the inside out, through the power of the Holy Spirit. It isn’t something we can do on our own. *“Those who become new creatures in Christ Jesus will bring forth the fruits of the Spirit, “love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance.” Galatians 5:22, 23. They will no longer fashion themselves according to the former lusts, but by the faith of the Son of God they will follow in His steps, reflect His character, and purify themselves even as He is pure. The things they once hated they now love, and the things they once loved they hate. The proud and self-assertive become meek and lowly in heart. The vain and supercilious become serious and unobtrusive. The drunken become sober, and the profligate pure” (Steps to Christ, p. 59). “Herein is My Father glorified, that ye bear much fruit; so shall ye be my disciples” (Sermons and Talks, vol. 2, 292).*

True Disciples of Jesus will love one another as the Lord has commanded. “ These things I command you, that you love one another” John 16:17, Love of other believers is the evidence of our being a member of God’s family. Love is defined and elaborated on in 1 Corinthians 13:1-13. These verses show us that love is not an emotion; it is manifested in actions. We must be doing something

and involved in the process. “The closer we come to Christ, the nearer we shall be to one another. God is glorified as His people unite in harmonious action (*The Adventist Home*, 179).

We need to live in close fellowship with God, that we may love one another as Christ has loved us. It is by this that the world is to know that we are His disciples. (*Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 9, 218, 219).

This same love will drive true disciples to engage in the great commission stated in Mathew 28:18-20. As a result of being a disciple of Jesus, Jesus leads you to influence the lives of many. The disciple cannot hold within him/herself the joy found in the friendship with the Master. True disciple shares his/her faith and tells others about the wonderful changes Jesus Christ has made in his/her life. No matter what our maturity level in the Christian life, we have something to offer. “Do not seek to shun responsibilities.

To do this is to dishonor the claim of discipleship. In His ministry on this earth Christ represented His Father. We are to follow in His steps” (*Letter 140*, 1901).

A Discippler

A disciple is expected to become a **Discipler**; “Someone who is ready to give the testimony of the reason for the hope that is in us.” 1Peter 3:15

Christian Discipleship starts with Jesus Christ. He is the standard. For Jesus, discipleship was more than an activity, but an expression of His Being. Everything He did was related to who He was, and it is the same with us! Discipleship begins with the Discippler, and rightly so. For when we pour our lives into another, we must ensure that it is a life worth duplicating. And it will be so only if

The Ministry of a Pastor's Spouse

it possesses the imprint of Christ! This begins with knowing who we are, for this knowledge will determine what we eventually do. Jesus was well aware of His identity as God's Son and that made His every decision clear.

The goal of discipleship is not only teaching ministry skills, but developing someone to be like Christ. You can teach ministry skills to almost anyone, but true discipleship is not so much what we do but who we are.

As Shepherdesses it is important to understand that we met Jesus first before we joined Pastoral ministry. Therefore, it is until we become His committed followers we can be able to lead others to him and support those who are in frontline in making disciples.

Michael Doernbrack says “Wherever you are in your ministry, ask God to show you people (newly baptized or longtime members, young or old) to start this journey with you. On this journey, you will see them grow in their love for Jesus and their everyday walk with Him. And at the end, you will be blessed to see new workers and be richly rewarded yourself” (*Ministry, May 2016*).

The cost of being a disciple

It is so important to understand that to accept the cause of Christ means to accept His cross. Being a disciple of Jesus is more than just bearing a name as a Christian or a Seventh-day Adventist. The true Christian regards his stewardship as a sacred thing. He perseveringly studies the Word, and yields up his life to the service of Christ (*Reflecting Christ, 287*).

Then he said to them all: “If anyone desires to come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily and follow me. For whoever desires to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his

life for My sake will save it. For what profit is it to a man he gains the whole world, and is himself destroyed or lost? For whoever is ashamed of me and my words, of him the Son of Man will be ashamed when He comes in His own glory and His Father's and of the holy angels. (Luke 9: 23-26).

Question for discussion

How does a nominal Christian differ from a true disciple?

Lesson 102a: **Prayer in the Lives of Women**

God's Wish

We were created so that we may come into fellowship with our creator. When we read the book of Genesis we find that from the beginning God longed to have an intimate relationship with our first parents. Even the entrance of sin did not stop Him from relating with the fallen human race.

Prayer and daily study of His word became another means of communication with human. He says:

“If my people which are called by my name, shall humble themselves, and pray and seek my face and turn from their wicked ways; then will I hear from heaven and will forgive their sins and will heal their land.” 2 Chron. 7:14. Truly this is God's wish.

Why pray?

Prayer Brings Increased Spiritual Strength—“Those who seek God in secret telling the Lord their needs and pleading for help, will not plead in vain.....The strength acquired in prayer to God, united with persevering effort in training the mind in thoughtfulness and care-taking, prepares one for daily duties and keeps the spirit in peace under all circumstances” (*Thoughts from the Mount of Blessing*, 85).



Prayer Keeps Us in God's Power—“The temptations to which we are daily exposed make prayer a necessity. In order that we may be kept by the power of God through faith, the desires of the mind should be continually ascending in silent prayer. When we are surrounded by influences calculated to lead us away from God, our petitions for help and strength must be unwearied. Unless, this is so, we shall never be successful in breaking down pride and overcoming the power of temptation to sinful indulgences which keep us from the Saviour” (*Messages to Young People*, 248).

Even a Brief Prayer Can Bring Spiritual Power—“I prayed,” he [Nehemiah] said, “to the God of heaven.” In that brief prayer Nehemiah pressed into the presence of the King of kings and won to his side a power that can turn hearts as the rivers of waters are turned. To pray as Nehemiah prayed in his hour of need is a resource at the command of the Christian under circumstances when other forms of prayer may be impossible (*Prophets and Kings*, 631).

In short why should We Pray?

- To open our hearts to God
- To seek for an answer
- To get help
- To connect with God

Men Who Prayed

Strong men of the Bible were men of Prayer. Think of David (2 Sam. 7: 18 – 29), Elijah (1 Kings 18: 36 – 38) and Enoch (Genesis 5:24) and many others.

Of Enoch this is what Ellen G. White said: **Prayer Was the Breath of His Soul**—“Communing thus with God, Enoch came more and more to reflect the divine image. His face was radiant with a holy light, even the light that shined in the face of Jesus. As he came forth from these divine communings’, even the ungodly beheld with awe the impress of heaven upon his countenance” (*Patriarchs and Prophets*, 86).

In this generation we are overwhelmed with struggles of this life and have become too busy to pray. Sometimes we are even busy doing God's work and forget to commune with God but Enoch never took such a risk. This is what the spirit of prophecy says:

The Greater Enoch's Labors, the More Earnest His Prayers—"In the midst of a life of active labor, Enoch steadfastly maintained his communion with God. The greater and more pressing his labors, the more constant and earnest were his prayers. He continued to exclude himself, at certain periods, from all society. After remaining for a time among the people, laboring to benefit them by instruction and example, he would withdraw, to spend a season in solitude, hungering and thirsting for that divine knowledge which God alone can impart" (*Patriarchs and Prophets*, 86, 87).

Women Who Prayed

- Hannah. 1 Sam. 1: 27 - "I prayed for this child, and the Lord has granted me what I asked of him."
- Esther 4: 15; 8: 16, 17 - "Then Esther sent this reply to Mordecai: ¹⁶ "Go, gather together all the Jews who are in Susa, and fast for me. Do not eat or drink for three days, night or day. I and my attendants will fast as you do. When this is done, I will go to the king, even though it is against the law. And if I perish, I perish."
- The importunate widow. Luke 18: 1 - 8: "..... And he spake a parable unto them to this end, that men ought always to pray, and not to faint."
- The Syrophenician woman. Matt. 15: 21 - 28: ²⁷..... "Yes it is, Lord," she said. "Even the dogs eat the crumbs that fall from their master's table.²⁸ Then Jesus said to her, Woman, you have great faith! Your request is granted." And her daughter was healed at that moment."

For all these women, and many more, their prayer life was not in vain. They were granted their requests.

ACTIVITY

In groups, discuss some things **men/women** are likely to pray for

What Happens When We Pray?

We learn Gods' will

We are forced to exercise patience

We get closer to God

We are willing to unite

Walls tumble down

Our faith is strengthened

Changes take place

“Our lives change, our families change, our communities change. Changes take place not when we study about prayer, not when we talk about it, not even when we memorize beautiful Scripture verses on prayer; it is when we actually pray that things begin to happen” (*What Happens When Women Pray*, p. 39).

LORD TEACH US TO PRAY!



Lesson 102b:

How to Study the Bible?

1. What is involved in Bible study?

- a. Critical (analytical) and thorough investigation
- b. Thoughtful contemplation
- c. Keen mental effort
 - i. Avoid skimming
 - ii. Truths are hidden
- d. Study for yourself. You cannot let another eat for you.

2. Principles of Bible study

- a. Study to become acquainted with God
- b. Check the context of passage
- c. Let the Bible explain itself
- d. Take the text literally, unless the context indicates otherwise
- e. Watch for idioms, groups of words that change in meaning with the passage of time
- f. Be alert for figures of speech
 - i. Metaphor
 - ii. Simile
 - iii. Hyperbole
 - iv. Parables
- g. Accept by faith what we can't understand
- h. Trust that someday we will understand what is not now clear

3. Put into practice what you have learned

- a. Study the following passages using the questions to guide you.

Bible text – Matthew 9:16. Find out the meaning of the key word, garment.

Conclusions:

i. Matthew 9:16 _____ = Luke 5:36

ii. New _____ with the old garment

Genesis 35:2

Zachariah 3:3

Isaiah 61:10

Conclusions:

i. Old garment = _____

ii. New garment = _____

iii. Since a 'patch' of the new garment won't repair the old garment, the 'acted parable' is instructing me that I must do one of two things, either:

- Continue to wear the _____, or
- Change garments and put on _____

iv. A change of garment = a change of _____

- b. Alternate group study

Bible text – Luke 5:37-39

Key word – bottle

Psalms 119:83

Jeremiah 13:12, 13

Jeremiah 19:10, 11

Conclusion:

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Bottle = _____

Old bottles = _____

New bottles = _____

Key word – wine

Deuteronomy 32:33

Romans 3:13

Isaiah 28:7, 15

Conclusion:

Old wine = _____

Deuteronomy 32:12, 14

Ecclesiastes 2:3

Song of Solomon 8:2

Conclusion:

New wine = _____

4. Using margins

- a. Cross references to lead you to other texts on the subject
- b. Can study by just using margins in the Bible

5. Using a concordance

- a. Two main exhaustive concordances that are used today are:
 - i. Strong's
 - ii. Young's
- b. Use a concordance in order to
 - i. Find a meaning of a word
 - ii. Find other texts using the same word
- c. Most concordances have a lexicon
 - i. Another word for dictionary
 - ii. Divided by Hebrew or Greek words

6. Steps to study a topic

- a. Choose the topic and a key word for this topic
- b. Choose the method of research
 - i. Concordance
 - ii. Margins
 - iii. Other helps you may have for text or passages on your topic
- c. Look up for texts shown in the helps you have chosen and examine the context around each text
- d. Write down the gist of the text and what you learned from it
- e. Ask questions, look for answers
- f. Mark your Bible and chain reference, if desired
- g. Summarize your research
- h. Apply what you have learned to your life

7. How to study a passage verse by verse?

- a. Survey the entire passage
 - i. Read the passage through several times
 - ii. Read the context
 - iii. Outline the passage to study
- b. Study in depth
 - i. Learn the customs of the day
 - ii. Pick out key words (nouns, verbs, etc.)
 - iii. Look up key words in the concordance, for meaning
 - iv. Look up other texts to find relationships to whole Bible
 - v. Determine if literal or figurative
 - vi. Mark Bible and chain reference
- c. Summarize
 - i. Reread the passage
 - ii. Summarize
- d. Apply to your life

8. Think and meditate

- a. A lot of our time needs to be spent in meditating

The Ministry of a Pastor's Spouse

- b. Let the Bible be the guide for meditating
- c. Put yourself in the place of the people in the Bible. How would you have felt? How would you have reacted?
- d. Put your thoughts down on paper—journal
- e. Ask yourself questions

9. Ask questions

- a. Of a Bible book
 - i. What is the central theme or emphasis?
 - ii. How is the theme emphasized?
 - iii. What does it tell me about the author, the circumstances?
 - iv. What does it tell me about the people to whom it was written?

- b. Of a chapter
 - Who is speaking in this passage
 - the key verse?
 - the main lesson?
 - revealed about God? About Jesus?
 - What is the main subject?
 - the key verse?
 - the main lesson?
 - revealed about God? About Jesus?

 - Is there
 - anything to apply to my life?
 - any instruction for me to follow?
 - any command for me to obey?
 - any example for me to follow/
 - any promise for me to claim?
 - any prayer that I should pray?
 - any warning for me to heed?
 - any sin for me to confess and forsake?

What problem does this passage answer?

What in this passage contributes to doctrine?

What other passage of Scripture sheds light on this passage?

Is there a difficulty for me to explore?

What is the main truth in this passage for my life?

10. Where and when to study?

- a. A regular place to study
 - i. At a desk (preferable)
 - ii. Quiet place
 - iii. With supplies at hand (colored pencils, pens, a ruler, computer, etc.)
- b. A regular time
 - i. Make an individual choice
 - ii. Ask God to help you find a definite time
 - iii. Aim for 15 minutes to begin
 - iv. Read when you feel like reading and when not
 - v. Make a sacred vow with God (no Bible, no breakfast, Job 23:12))
 - vi. Make no exceptions

11. Underlining Scripture: “Clean book ... empty mind”

Some ways people underline their Bibles include the following:

- Red - Warnings
- Green - Doctrine
- Blue - Promises
- Yellow - Talking with God
- * - Very important
- + - Something to do
- - Something not to do
- ♥ - God's love
- Underline - Important

12. Memorizing Scripture

- a. It gives victory over sin (Psalm 119:11)
- b. It helps overcome worry (Matthew 6:34; John 14:1; Luke 12:32)

- c. It prepares for service
 - Put portions to learn on cards
 - Review cards at odd moments
 - Review cards daily for seven weeks
 - Review once a month indefinitely
 - Aim to make and learn three new cards a week
- Read the verse aloud 10 times to fix in your mind
Connect each verse with some subject to aid in recall
Learn the reference along with the verse

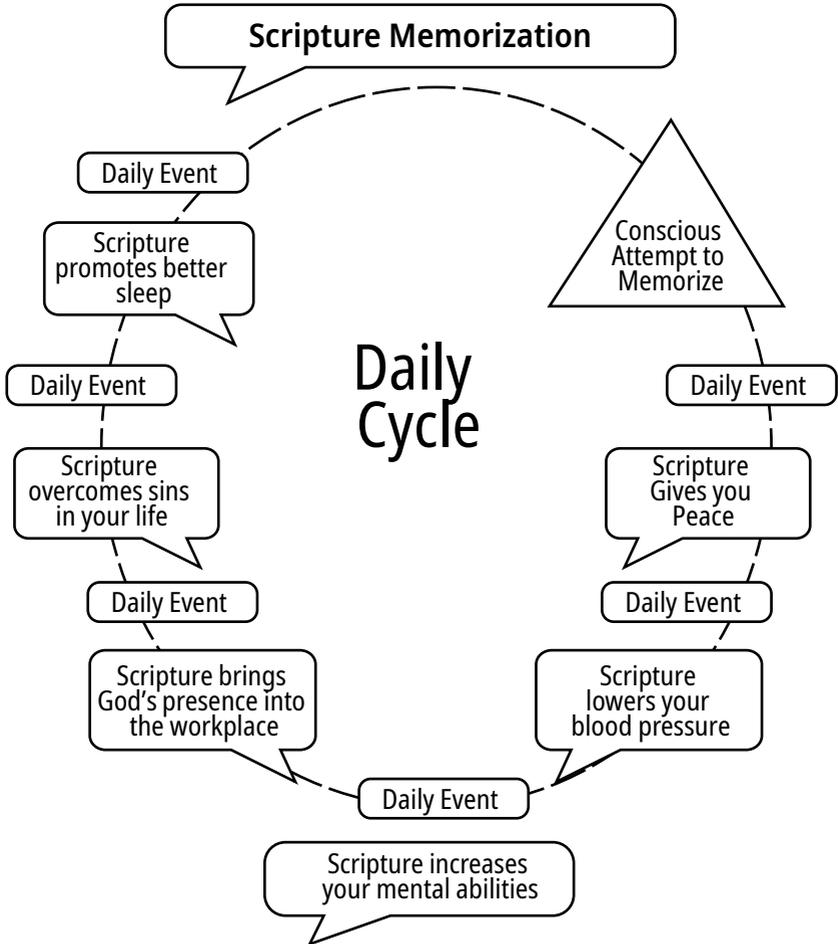
13. Family Bible study

- a. Keep your family Bible study reasonably short: one brief chapter or several paragraphs a day
- b. Have each member read a verse
- c. Appoint one family member to lead in worship each day and select the passage to read. This one may appoint others to help in the family worship.
- d. Read through a Bible book, a chapter or several paragraphs each day. As you read, together decide on a name or a title for each chapter and memorize this.
- e. After reading the passage, have each member in the family explain one verse or one paragraph.
- f. Let the leader prepare five or ten questions on the Bible passage and ask various members of the family to answer these questions after the passage has been read.
- g. Study Bible topics together. Assign verses concerning a topic to each member of the family. Let each read his/her verse and tell what this verse teaches about the topic or word.
- h. After the Bible reading, have each member tell what this verse means to him/her or how he/she believes it can be applied to his/her life.
- i. Make up Bible games by having each member make up questions to try to stump the others.

BACKGROUND		LISTENING and RESPONDING		
TELESCOPE	MICROSCOPE	ME	OTHERS	HIM
Overview Who? Where? When? Why? Circumstances?	Is it clear? Words Phrases Customs People Places Rites	Lord are You calling me to: Pray about ...? Confess ... ? Claim this promise ... ? Patiently wait ... ? Examine myself ...?	Lord, are You calling me to: Pray for ... ? Visit her ... ? Take her ... ? Invite her home? Encourage him/her? Phone, write him/her?	Thank You Lord, for: This promise Your love My family Answering me Listening Caring Eternity with You

“Study to show thyself approved ...” (2 Tim 2:15) Book: _____
 Chapter: _____

Verses	Text	Paraphrase	Immediate Thought	Personal Application



- Ps 119:1 Thy word have I hid in mine heart, that I might not sin against thee.
- Ps 119:16 I will delight myself in thy statutes: I will not forget thy word.
- Matt 4:4 It is written, man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God.
- John 17: 14 I have given them thy word; and the world hath hated them, because they are not of the world, even as I am not of the world.
- John 17:17 Sanctify them through thy truth: thy word is truth.
- Romans 10:17 So then faith cometh by hearing, and hearing the word of God.

Parable

of the Busy Housewife

CRYSTAL EARNHARDT

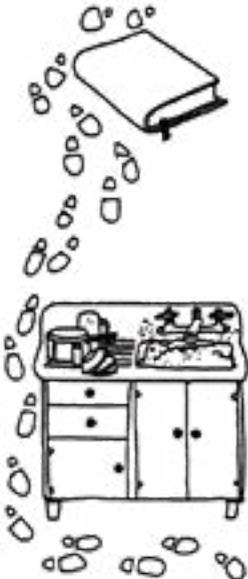
A busy housewife decided to spend one hour with Jesus each morning. As she sat down, Bible in hand, the thought occurred to her that the beans could be cooking for dinner while she read. She put her Bible down and walked to the kitchen cabinet to get a pot, but the pot wasn't there. It sat in the sink with the crusty remains of breakfast still in it.

"Might as well wash the dishes," she reasoned to herself. Fifteen minutes later the woman put the beans in the clean pot and carried them to the stove. But the oatmeal had bubbled over onto the burner that morning and if she didn't wipe that up right away it would harden. The gooey oatmeal on her dishcloth reminded the woman that the towels needed to be laundered. As she collected the dirty linen in the bathroom, she noticed that her husband had forgotten to rinse the sink after shaving that morning. While she was taking care of the sink she saw water spots all over the mirror, and in cleaning the mirror she caught sight of her own appearance.

"Oh dear," she groaned, "my hair looks terrible! I must style it before someone comes over and sees me. But where is my brush?"

After searching for some time the busy housewife found the brush in her daughter's bedroom under the covers of an unmade bed. As she smoothed the sheets and fluffed the pillow, she suddenly stiffened, sniffing the air. That odor—was something burning?

"The beans," she gasped.
"I forgot the beans!"



April 1989

Lesson 103

Enriching your Walk with God

Christian life involves a walk. This walk is more than just a physical walk; it is our spiritual walk with God. When we walk with God we yield to His leadership because His ways are not like ours. Therefore walking with God requires knowledge of His will in order to follow His leadership.

The psalmist says: “O God, Thou art my God, early will I seek Thee.” Psalms 63:1

“My voice shall thou hear in the morning, O Lord: in the morning will I direct my prayer unto thee.” Psalms 5:3

The Christian life ought to be an exciting, radiant adventure.

Many Christians fell out by the way because they experienced little or no joy in their walk with God. On the other hand, many have discovered the joy of living and walking with Jesus. The more we walk, the better it becomes. Success is much more likely if God is given a central place.

How to Enrich your Christian Walk with God.

1. Ask God to impress this need upon you. The passion for this walk will compel you to pursue it.



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2. Study and revise your present schedule. It is amazing how planning can make this walk possible.
3. Make a personal devotional covenant with God. God will increase your will and give you the strength to do your part.
4. Commune regularly with God through **prayer**. Prayer is defined as the “breath of the soul,” “talking to God as to a friend,” “the key that unlocks heaven’s storehouse.”

Elements of Enriching the Walk

Personal devotions. This is a time alone with God. It is a time for prayer and Bible study, as well as meditating.

Family devotions. At this time the family gets together to worship and praise God. Ideally it should be morning and evening. It should be “short, interesting, brief, full of life, most enjoyable time of the day.” E G White. It is a good idea to gear family devotions to the youngest member of the family.

Prayer is the most important element of the walk with God. One method of praying is using the ACTS method as a structure. The ACTS method:

- A** Adoration (praise)
- C** Confession
- T** Thankfulness
- S** Supplication

The Importance of a Devotional Life

- It fills a void in the human soul. We have a longing to connect with Jesus.
- It brings a closer connection to God.
“Those who devote some time every day to meditation will be connected to heaven.” 5T 607.
- It gives uncommon strength. There is a freshness and energy when we commune with God.
- It enhances our Christian witness. “No man high or low... can steadily maintain before his fellow men a pure forceful life unless his life is hid with Christ in God.” 7T 194
- It gives spiritual health. “Communion with God is highly essential for spiritual health.”

Some Examples of Prayers.

1 Thess. 5:17; Psa. 4:3, 4; 77:6; Matt.21:22

Daniel - Dan. 6:10

Jesus - Luke 6:12

Discern God's will through a study of His word.

Methods of Bible study - verse, chapter, book, topic, key words

Tools for Bible study - Notebook, Concordance, Bible Commentary

Jer. 15:16

Job 23:12

John 5:39

Psa. 119:105

Develop an attitude of gratitude, praise and thankfulness.

Praise God for what He is. Thank Him for what He does.

Psa. 9:1, 2

1 Thess. 5:16 - 18

Psa. 22:22, 25

2 Sam. 22:47 - 51

Psa. 30:12; 33:1; 34:1

Col. 3:15

Eph. 5:20

Phil. 4:6

Psa. 119:164

Psa. 22:25

Develop a sensitivity to sin and claim Christ's power to overcome it.

Isa. 6:5; Dan. 10:8; Luke 5:8; Jude 24; Phil 4:13; Dan. 10:8; Micah 3: 4. "If I regard iniquity in my heart the Lord will not hear me."

Psa. 66:18 Satan is the accuser of the brethren, but Jesus forgives completely. 1 John 1:9; Heb. 7:25

Trust completely in Christ's pardoning grace

Eph. 2:8

Eph. 1:7

John 20:28

Isa. 53:5, 6

Mic. 7:18

Isa. 55:7

Rom. 5:8, 9

Be ready to forgive as Christ forgives

Matt. 6:12 - 15

Eph. 4:32

Matt. 18:21f

Become a channel of God's blessings to others.

John 13:35

Matt. 5:14 - 16

Acts 1:8

Mark 5:18 - 21

Every Christian is called to share Christ.

Discover God's purpose for your life and fulfill it.

Prov. 3:5, 6

Psa. 16:7; 32:8

Enoch - The man who walked with God. Gen. 5:21 - 24

Enoch lived in an environment of evil. This did not interrupt his walk with God. The more sinful our surroundings, the more crucial it is to walk with God. So Enoch walked with God and "God took him." When you walk with God, burdens are lighter, days are brighter, the heart is happier and life is better.



Lesson 105

Shepherdess and Self-Esteem

Definitions/ Terms

1. **Self-esteem:** Is defined as confidence and satisfaction in one's own worth or ability, with self-respect. It is a regard of one self. As we study this subject it is also good to be aware of the following terms:

- **Self-image:** —what you think or believe of yourself
- **Self-concept:** —the mental picture you have of yourself
- **Self-worth:** —how valuable you think you are
- **Self-respect:** —the respect or honor you have for yourself

Low Self-esteem:— is the opposite of the above definition of self-esteem

Unfortunately, low self-esteem is the number one problem of women.

This is identified as:

A Feelings of inadequacy or not good enough in

A. Appearance /looks

- Feeling like a failure
- Dissatisfaction with our bodies
- Preferring to be someone else.

The negative thoughts and feelings a woman has about herself,

makes her behave in a way that reinforces her low self-esteem. Women **either** try to prove that their negative beliefs are correct, e.g. *no one loves me. I will behave ugly.* **Or**, some women are very accommodating, e.g. *If I am very generous, people will like me.* This does not help. People take advantage of such people.

2. Factors that Affect Self-esteem

- A. Performance, ability
- B. Status, level of importance
- C. Belonging, acceptance
- D. Competence, confidence
- E. Worthiness, value
- F. Love

3. What Low Self-esteem Does to a Woman

- A. Very shy
- B. Difficult to please
- C. Suspicious
- D. Critical
- E. Negative
- F. Inferior
- G. Feels Unloved

4. Low Self-esteem in the Bible Numbers 13: 30 – 33 2 Cor. 10:12

5. How Do We Show Low Self-esteem?

- A. Negative body image (comparing, criticizing)
- B. Inferiority complex
- C. Blowing up criticism out of proportion
- D. Inability to accept compliments
- E. Depreciating others
- F. Expecting perfection

6. How to Build Your Own Self-esteem

- A. Recognize the value God placed on you. 1 Peter 1:18, 19
- B. Love yourself. Lev. 19:18; Matt. 19: 19
- C. Don't compare yourself with anyone else. 2 Cor. 10:12
- D. Change whatever negative features you have that can be changed.
- E. Accept uncritically features that cannot be changed.
- F. Realize how fortunate you are and be thankful.
- G. Develop a self-improvement program.
- H. Take care of your grooming.
- I. Do not allow others to make you feel inferior.
- J. Value yourself as God values you.
- K. Watch your negative self-talk.
- L. Erase the past negative tapes.
- M. Learn to accept God's love and forgiveness and forgive yourself too.
- N. Have realistic expectations of yourself.
- O. Remember God is disappointed when you place a low estimate upon yourself.

Learn this

“The Lord is disappointed when His people place a low estimate upon themselves. He desires His chosen heritage to value themselves, according to the price He has placed upon them. God wants them else He would not have sent His Son on such an expensive errand to redeem them” (*The Desire of Ages*, p. 668).



Lesson 106

Advancing her Level of Education

Before we speak about advancing her level of education we need to talk about continuing education first.

What is Continuing Education?

Continuing education programs are educational opportunities offered to individuals throughout their lifecycle. These programs cover a range of experiences including courses, camps, formal training, seminars, conferences, and certificate or diploma programs. General continuing education is similar to adult education, at least in being intended for adult learners, especially those beyond traditional undergraduate college or university age. However, it is not normally considered to include basic instruction such as literacy, English language skills, or programs such as vocational training. Instead, as the term suggests, it is assumed that the student already has some basic education and is simply continuing it.

Continuing education courses are so critical in the 21st century for individuals who are seeking to upgrade their skills or expand their knowledge base. This education program is designed to educate an individual and give him or her practical skills or knowledge that they can apply in their line of work. Many universities with continuing education offerings provide flexible and innovative options, encompassing everything from one to one workshop in creative writing to intensive certificate programs for business leaders and other professionals.

Why Continuing Education?

The world and knowledge are constantly changing. Continuing education is required for workers and professionals to stay current with the latest developments, skills, and new technologies required for their fields. The pastors and shepherdesses in Africa and elsewhere in the world have to deal with an ever-changing pastorate that is well educated and informed. The pastor and the spouse should be on the cutting edge of knowledge, skills, and information, since their churches and members expect more than less.

Certain professions also require continuing education to comply with laws, remain licensed or certified, or maintain membership in an association or licensing body. Overall, continuing education is considered a way for professionals to keep abreast of their fields so they don't lag behind. Pastors and their spouses are not exempted from continuing education. The pastoral ministry is becoming so demanding, the knowledge and practices are fast changing and evolving, and the shepherdesses must not be left behind.

Many careers require continuing education. For example, teachers, real estate agents, and engineers are required to have a base of education and then receive updated education as they continue to work in their fields. Nursing, pharmacy, medicine, accounting, and criminal justice are additional fields in which professionals must continue to develop the skills necessary for ever-changing environments.

The Importance of Continuing Education

For nurses, there are typically two types of continuing education. The first is required for them to remain licensed in their countries or states. The second type of continuing education allows them to get more advanced degrees and qualify for higher-level nursing positions.

In the fast-paced pharmacy field, continuing education is important for career growth and licensure. Pharmacists need continuing education to renew their state licenses. Continuing education focuses on subject areas in health care, including pharmacology, patient counseling, regulatory issues, and other topics that contribute to professional pharmacy practice.

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Certified Public Accountants (CPAs) must meet continuing education requirements established by the Country or State Board of Accountancy of the states where their CPA licenses are held. The requirements vary from country to country. The American Institute of CPAs (AICPA) also requires certain continuing education for CPAs to maintain membership.

Today's professionals must, therefore, commit to a 'life-long learning' philosophy that enhances effectiveness in, diagnosing and solving problems more quickly, while moving away from the traditional autocratic management styles.

Meanwhile, criminal justice professionals need to stay up-to-date on the new laws, procedures, and technologies to reinforce the knowledge they have already gained.

Today, much is required of those in pastoral ministry. Pastors and their spouses have to come up with new plans and strategies of evangelism, nurture, retention, and care of their church members. Each pastoral team has to figure not only how to bring on board new members, but also on how to keep them in the church. This requires critical thinking, addressing unique community or individual problems, enhancing quality of life, serving an ever-changing, multicultural society, and coordination of sensitive multi-ministry operations and outreach.

It is therefore, critically important that pastors and their spouses stay current and in compliance with changes in methods and the best practices of ministry, as well as in technological advancements and knowledge in the information age.

Education requirements must be established for the continuous education.

However in many professions, continuing education is essential in any leadership and first-line supervision roles. Pastors and other professionals must consider and debate thoughts that are sometimes immensely different from their own. Today's pastors and shepherdesses must, therefore, commit to a 'life-long learning' philosophy that enhances effectiveness, diagnose and more quickly solves problems, while moving away from the traditional autocratic management styles that are so prevalent in Africa.

How Continuing Education Formats Works?

Continuing education is offered in different formats, with many being flexible to accommodate work schedules. These programs can take place at colleges and universities, training centers, or at the workplace. Continuing education is often delivered as degree-completion programs, certificate programs, and diploma programs at colleges.

Non-traditional higher and continuing education programs are available now to a greater degree than ever. In addition to the formats mentioned, e-learning (Blackboard and WebEx) is becoming more widespread, along with other technology-based, interactive instruction, and electronic conferencing. Whether it is required or not, continuing education can be important for career satisfaction. Continuing education can boost confidence and lead to opportunities for career advancement.

Continuing education is important and critical to the Seventh-day Adventist Church. And indeed, the church must work to ensure it provides pastors, spouses, and staff with many opportunities for continuing their education. It is critical that the pastors' spouses or shepherdesses are given many opportunities for continuing education.

How the Shepherdesses Could Advance their Education?

In the 21st century, the shepherdesses are expected to be well educated, professional, and informed. They are expected to have a certain set of skills, such as counseling, teaching, preaching, health education, entrepreneurship etc. It is therefore critical that a shepherdess makes effort to become a professional in a certain area of interest, in order to enrich her ministry, influence, and service.

The following professional levels of study could be considered: certificate, diploma and degrees. A shepherdess could advance their education either part time or full time in view of providing the needed support to the ministry of their spouse. Every pastoral couple has to carefully and prayerfully study their family situation, pastorate, and ministry before a decision is made on how a spouse will advance their education. Continuing education or part time study should always be given a priority.

Where to Study and Advance your Education?

There are various options that are available to a shepherdess that is noted below:

- Short online certificate courses for example in grief management, nutrition, parenting, anger management, economic empowerment, counseling and healthful living etc.
- Short certificate courses run and offered by recognized colleges and universities e.g. University of Arusha (UoA), Bugema University (BU), Ethiopia Adventist College (EAC), University of Eastern Africa Baraton (UEAB), Adventist University of Lukanga (UNILUK), Kamagambo Adventist College (KAC), Adventist University of Central Africa (AUCA), and Philip Lemon University (PLU) etc.
- Part time evening classes offering certificate and diploma courses in practical areas such as nutrition, cooking, tailoring, teaching, business study etc.
- School based programs—where a student is only expected to attend school 3 months in a year during school holidays (April, August & December)
- For those who do not have any formal education, make any possible arrangement available so that you may learn how to read and write. If there is any provision in your country for adult education you can advance your knowledge by doing high school education without any fear.
- Enrolling on an online program of a recognized university to study a certificate, diploma and degree program etc.
- The Unions in collaboration with ECD could organize short certificate courses for the shepherdesses in certain identified areas to encourage individual and professional growth.
- For the continuing education of the shepherdesses, the Unions could identify certain books and reading materials for the month or the year, in order to encourage a reading culture among the shepherdesses.

Each shepherdess could be encouraged to have a career, and at their own pace to advance their level of education, starting with a certificate, then pursuing a diploma, and finally a degree program. And thereafter they could pursue a master's and a doctoral program. God expects His servants to be well trained and best equipped for the work of the ministry.

Apart from a career, each shepherdess is expected to acquire and develop some practical skills that she could use in her ministry to build the Kingdom of God. It is very important that a shepherdess is able to equip her church members with useful training and practical skills. And this could only happen, if the shepherdess has an inquisitive mind, and she is continually reading books to increase her knowledge and equipping herself with new information and skills.

Group Questions

- What is continuing education?
- Why is continuing education important to the shepherdess?
- How could the shepherdesses embrace and benefit from continuing education?
- In which ways could the shepherdesses improve and advance their own education?
- How could a shepherdess develop an inquisitive mind and broaden her ministry?
- Discuss some of the ways the shepherdesses continuing education would benefit the shepherdess, her family, the church and community.

Individual Questions

- Knowledge is fast increasing and changing, how could I position myself to be on the cutting edge of knowledge and information?
- What are my own personal plans and goals for continuing education?
- How could continuing education improve my life and ministry?

LEVEL

- II -

*Shepherdess Call to
Ministry and Leadership*

Lesson 201

Experiencing the Call

Sources: Patriarchs and Prophets, Chapter 11 and Hebrews 11.

By: Elnorie Caballero, Administrative Assistant to Pr. B. M. Ruguri, ECD President

The Call and the Promise

Introduction:

Every call from God has an attachment, which is the promise and companionship of angels. In Matthew 28:20 it says, "Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world." Amen.

"When God calls them to action, they are ready, and heavenly angels can unite with them in the work to be accomplished on the earth." **Patriarchs and Prophets Ch. 11**

What stories in the Bible highlight God's call?

The call of Moses

The call of Abraham

The call of Elijah

The call of Esther
The call of the Apostle Paul
The call of Jonah
The call by the Sea

The Call of Abraham

Background:

“The call from heaven first came to Abraham while he dwelt in “Ur of the Chaldees” and in obedience to it he moved to Haran. Thus far his father’s family accompanied him, for with their idolatry they united the worship of the true God. Here Abraham remained till the death of Terah. But from his father’s grave the divine Voice bade him go forward. His brother Nahor with his household clung to their home and their idols. Besides Sarah, the spouse of Abraham, only Lot, the son of Haran long since dead, chose to share the patriarch’s pilgrim life. Yet it was a large company that set out from Mesopotamia. Abraham already possessed extensive flocks and herds, the riches of the East, and he was surrounded by a numerous body of servants and retainers. He was departing from the land of his fathers, never to return, and he took with him all that he had, “their substance that they had gathered, and the souls that they had gotten in Haran.” Among these were many led by higher considerations than those of service and self-interest. During their stay in Haran, both Abraham and Sarah had led others to the worship and service of the true God. These attached themselves to the patriarch’s household, and accompanied him to the land of promise. “And they went forth to go into the land of Canaan; and into the land of Canaan they came.”

The call of Abraham has 7 important points:

- 1. By Faith*
- 2. God has Spoken*
- 3. The Promise*
- 4. Trials and Test of Faith*
- 5. A Life of Prayer*
- 6. Dependence on God*
- 7. Perfecting Christian Character*

1. By Faith

“By faith Abraham, when he was called to go out into a place which he should after receive for an inheritance, obeyed; and he went out, not knowing whither he went.” Hebrews 11:8. Abraham’s unquestioning obedience is one of the most striking evidences of faith to be found in all the Bible. To him, faith was “the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen.” Verse 1. Relying upon the divine promise, without the least outward assurance of its fulfillment, he abandoned home and kindred and native land, and went forth, he knew not whither, to follow where God should lead. “By faith he became a sojourner in the land of promise, as in a land not his own, dwelling in tents, with Isaac and Jacob, the heirs with him of the same promise.” Hebrews 11:9, R.V.

By faith Sarah, went with her husband, not knowing whither she went. She became the “mother of faith”.

As a Shepherdess, we need faith, too, second to none. We all know that to become a pastor’s spouse is very challenging but very inspiring at the same time. It is a privilege to shepherd other women to have a closer relationship with the Great Shepherd, Jesus Christ. To become a Shepherdess is a divine calling.

2. God has Spoken

“God has spoken, and His servant must obey; the happiest place on earth for him was the place where God would have him to be.”

The happiest place for Sarah was the place where God would have her to be - at Abraham’s side supporting him and in the Promised Land - Canaan. It must be true to us, too. We must be happy where God sends us to work for Him.

3. The Promise

“There was given to Abraham the promise, especially dear to the people of that age, of numerous posterity and of national greatness: “I will make of thee a great nation, and I will bless thee, and make thy name great; and thou shalt be a blessing.” And to this was added the assurance, precious above every other to the inheritor of faith that of his line

the Redeemer of the world should come: “In thee shall all families of the earth be blessed.” Yet, as the first condition of fulfillment, there was to be a *test of faith; a sacrifice was demanded.*” [p. 126]

Hebrews 11:11 – *“By faith Sarah herself received power to conceive, even when she was past the age, since **she considered him faithful who had promised.**”*

Sarah was blessed! Sarah became the mother of Isaac, the grandmother of Jacob and the great grandmother of Joseph.

4. Trials and Test of Faith

“The Lord in His providence had brought this trial upon Abraham to teach him lessons of submission, patience, and faith— *lessons that were to be placed on record for the benefit of all who should afterward be called to endure affliction. God leads His children by a way that they know not, but He does not forget or cast off those who put their trust in Him.*”

Think of it: Abraham was asked to offer his only son, Isaac. As a father, how did he handle it? Heb. 11:17-19

Sarah has waited and suffered long by not having a child of her own. Her faith was tested, too.

Question and discussion: (Ice breaker)

Do you think Sarah knew of the plan to offer Isaac?

If yes, do you think she would have agreed to offer Isaac, her long-prayed for child?

5. A Life of Prayer

“Abraham, “the friend of God,” set us a worthy example. His was a *life of prayer*. Wherever he pitched his tent, close beside it was set up his altar, calling all within his encampment to the morning and evening sacrifice. When his tent was removed, the altar remained.

Sarah, too, lived a life of prayer. Belonging to a house of a praying man, makes her a praying woman, too. How about us Shepherdesses? How is our prayer life?

6. Dependence on God

“He calls them away from human influences and aid, and leads them to feel the need of His help, and *to depend upon Him alone*, that He may reveal Himself to them. Who is ready at the call of Providence to renounce cherished plans and familiar associations? *Who will accept new duties and enter untried fields, doing God's work with firm and willing heart, for Christ's sake counting his losses gain? He who will do this has the faith of Abraham, and will share with him that “far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory,”* with which “the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared.” 2 Corinthians 4:17; Romans 8:18.

7. Perfecting Christian Character

“God has always tried His people in the furnace of affliction. It is in the heat of the furnace that the dross is separated from the true gold of the Christian character. Jesus watches the test; He knows what is needed to purify the precious metal, that it may reflect the radiance of His love. It is by close, testing trials that God disciplines His servants. He sees that some have powers which may be used in the advancement of His work, and He puts these persons upon trial; in His providence He brings them into positions that test their character and reveal defects and weaknesses that have been hidden from their own knowledge. He [*p. 130*] gives them opportunity to correct these defects and to *fit themselves for His service*. He shows them their own weakness, and teaches them to lean upon Him; for He is their only help and safeguard. Thus, His object is attained. They are educated, trained, and disciplined, prepared to fulfill the grand purpose for which their powers were given them. *When God calls them to action, they are ready, and heavenly angels can unite with them in the work to be accomplished on the earth.*”

On Personal Reflections/Testimonies:

Our Call as Shepherdesses:

By Faith - time when you became a pastor's spouse or called to a foreign place away from home

1. God has Spoken - When God calls we cannot say no

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2. The Promise - "I will be with you"
3. Trials and Test of Faith- problems encountered as shepherdesses (sickness, disobedient/rebellious children, financial, new assignment, etc.)
4. A Life of Prayer - blessings of answered prayers
5. Dependence on God - Close relationship with God
6. Perfecting Christian Character - fitting for service and for heaven –patient, honest, loving, kind (co-workers, janitors, house help, gardeners, strangers)
7. The call for TMI – participating in prayers for TMI is much appreciated

Shepherdess Participation:

Choose two or more from the points above and relate your personal experience and reflections. (Suggestion: answered prayers, etc.)

May I kindly request (for 3 minutes each) every lady to say their personal experiences/testimonies on experiencing the call as Shepherdess?



Lesson 201B

Experiencing the Call

Testimonies from the Author (Elnorie Caballero)
Personal Reflections: (Each point is a sermon indeed)

By faith: I remember when God called us to Africa for the first time, we had realized that we could not say “No” anymore. Before that we were invited to join the missionary families many times but we said “No”. So in 1997, by faith my husband and I answered the call to serve as Assistant Treasurer and Accountant in the Eastern Africa Division in Harare, Zimbabwe, with heavy hearts we left our secure employment at Mountain View College, the place we had called home for almost 20 years. We left our families our, parents, brothers, sisters and relatives, like many of you here did. My husband was the Dean of the School of Business and I was the College Cashier. It was really hard to leave for the first time. The good thing is we came to Zimbabwe with our three children and each was given the chance to study in Maxwell Adventist Academy.

By faith again, we answered the call to teach in Ethiopia Adventist College for three years, 2000-2003. During that time, we had no cellphones because there were no *cell sites*. Imagine how hard it is to fall in line in one telephone booth in the college where the whole community is using the phone, and only on Sundays.

It was so hard. Sometimes we would have the money but nothing to buy in town like good rice, fruits, etc. We had local fruits and vegetables available in town. We occasionally went to Addis Ababa

City, but only for some important matters because it was a 6 hour drive from the campus on a rugged road. Those were wonderful years though before we went home to Mountain View College for another 6 years because we wanted to be with our children while they were in college. MVC again employed us. Michael became the Business Manager and I became the Accountant, and Cafeteria Manager. There was a need in ECD so we came back to Africa on time for the children to finish college and proceed to their doctorate and medical schools.

God's promise "I will be with you" kept ringing in my ears. We experienced two robberies in Zimbabwe, one when we were sleeping inside and they came through the kitchen door and broke our hallway door knob but they left with nothing in their hands. We were safe. The next time when we were away on annual leave, the thieves stole our TV but was replaced with a better one by the insurance. The Lord was so gracious that He also spared my life when I got sick of malaria in Ethiopia twice. We had no doctor on the campus and we had to travel to the next city through rugged and bumpy road. The Lord's promise is true if we remain faithful to Him.

On Prayers of faith.

1. I was healed in Harare through faith, from 20 days hemorrhage, by my whole night prayers for healing and by placing myself in the shoes of that woman who was sick for 12 years. She was healed by touching the hem of Jesus' garment. I touched the hem of Jesus's garment by faith that night in Harare, in 1999.
2. I was again healed in 2000, the second time I was bleeding because I was asked to pray for healing by Dr. Wangai, former EAD Health Director. And I asked him to pray for me, too. He said, every medicine has a side effect.

Dependence on God

For all the animals of the forest are mine, and I own the cattle on a thousand hills. Psalm 50:10 NLT

The children came from Maxwell Adventist Academy for their Spring break. We were scheduled to bring them to Langano Lake for swimming that Friday morning.

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Life in Ethiopia during those years was somewhat hard. We were 6 hours away from the city so we just bought our basic needs from a small town nearby.

That morning before we left the house we realized we had no money to buy food for Sabbath and weekend. We brought this concern to our Heavenly Father.

As soon as the children alighted from the car, they all dashed to the water for swimming. They all missed the lake, being away for many years. The 6 children belong to the three former missionary families in Ethiopia.

While the children were happily swimming in lake Langano, John Mark, our youngest boy, called me and said, "Mom, come over and see". In his hand was a wet one hundred Ethiopian Birr paper bill that stuck on his legs while swimming. *I should have kept that bill but as I said we had no money to buy food for our dear children and other missionary kids that came to visit that weekend.*

Lake Langano is the nearest lake in the campus and usually we spend weekend camping there. The lake is not clear because of the mineral content of the lake, so you could never see anything underwater but God sees. The Lord did provide in a mysterious way. Isn't God so wonderful?

TMI – Friendship or loving ministry

Laiser Hill – March 3-18, 2017

Baptism – 2 young men from Farm line workers in ECD
and AUA 5 Children of Catholic family friends

Lesson 202

So You Are a Shepherdess

Your husband was trained to be a pastor. There were no classes for you on how to become an effective pastor's spouse. So many of us are horrified at the assignment. Shakespeare said, "Some men have greatness thrust upon them." You had pastor's spousehood "thrust" upon you. Now where do you go from here? Perhaps we could call this lecture "Clergy Spouse 101."

Some of us wanted to marry a pastor. What could be some reasons that might prompt a young woman to want to marry a pastor? (A passion for fulltime ministry; a conviction to be of service; the influence of a mentor).

There are others who dreaded the thought of being a pastor's spouse. What are some things that could make a young woman fear this position? (Feelings of inadequacy; extreme shyness; considering herself to have poor interpersonal skills; reluctance to be in the eyes of the public; fearing the challenges that a pastor's spouse must face). Whether we love being pastor's spouses, or hate our fate, we are already in the situation. We are not hopeless. We can develop coping skills as we go along.

A pastor's spouse has many responsibilities.

The first of these is *commitment*. The clergy spouse must first be committed to God. She must put God first in her life. How can one

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put God first? There must be no idols (fashion, friends, possessions, etc). The woman of God must love God supremely and pledge to do His will. God will be first in her thoughts upon rising in the morning, and last in her heart as she goes to sleep. Her next commitment must be to her family.

The family is God's gift to us. Commitment to the family is demonstrated by sharing oneself, caring and nurturing the spouse and the children. A spouse who is committed to her family will not neglect her family because she is so burdened with obligations outside of her home. She will try to balance her non-domestic demands with her household responsibilities.

The pastor's spouse has a commitment to others. How can she fulfill this? Jesus urged us to love our neighbors as ourselves. In other words, we will ask ourselves, what are some of the things I would like for myself? Then we would wish those blessings for others. Try thinking of ways to show kindness and love to others. Visit the young, single mom. Send a meal to the elderly. Telephone the lonely. Pray for the sick. One cannot accomplish all of these manifestations of caring for others; but by keeping the motto, "I am my brother's keeper," before our minds, we will be able to keep our commitment to others. Opportunities will present themselves along the way. As for the strength, God will give us.

Sharing is another responsibility. The woman of God finds herself repeatedly sharing her husband. There is hardly a woman who relishes that. How can a woman be expected to share her husband? Actually, there are other professions that demand this. Think of the physician who has to leave his spouse at an event, and rush to the hospital because a patient needs him. The helping professions demand selflessness and sacrifice.

In the same way, a minister's spouse may need to spend many a night alone, totally not according to plans. She has to share the pastor with a bereaved member, a sick child, a discouraged soul. This also involves sharing the pastor's time, and the pastoral home. There is hardly a greater challenge than having to give up one's time with the spouse at a moment's notice. The wonderful realization is

that when we are tempted to complain, God gives us the grace and the peace. He may even send us a friend to keep us company. He reminds us that ministry is about sharing.

Taking care of the home. This seems as if one has to be a superwoman. The juggling act of a spouse, mom, mother and pastor's spouse is frightening. How can all of these responsibilities be met? The home has to be clean; the meals are to be nutritious; the children attended to; and the nagging telephone craves our attention. It almost seems as if there is a state of impending chaos. Of course, there is the possibility of having to do a spot of entertainment. This is a dizzying list of responsibilities.

We cannot do it all. Present your list to your heavenly Father who understands and is willing to help.

Taking good care of the children. How can the pastoral spouse take good care of the children? The parishioners have great expectations of the pastors' kids. They must be polite at all times, clean and tidy at all times, and beautiful jewels for Jesus at all times. Often we wish that our church members will pray for our children at all times. Amidst all this, our prayer is, "Lord, please help me grow normal children and please protect them from the enemy."

Other considerations. Involvement. Many pastors' spouses would like to know how involved they need to be in the work and lives of their pastor-husbands. That could be quite tricky. The level and nature of involvement are dependent on many factors: your health, the season of your life, the ages of your children, your feelings about the limelight, and the wishes of your spouse. If you are battling with an illness, it may be advisable to give your health priority. Of course, you will be the best judge of the extent of your involvement.

As for your season of life, your intensity of involvement will be influenced by your season of life. If you are a young mother with toddlers and an infant, you may find it difficult to engage in the same number of offices in the church, as the mother whose kids are all in high school. It is important that you do not allow anyone to make you feel guilty, or to compare you with other pastors' spouses.

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But, get involved in some way, however small it is. God has a niche for your service.

Your self-image. Ask yourself, who am I? Where do I want to go in life? How do I really feel about myself? If you are not sure of who you are, you will be miserable and wavering in your goals and behavior. Look at yourself and like what you see. Remember you were made in God's image. You need to know what you believe and what principles you stand for. This will earn you respect and your integrity will shine.

Grow. Be interested in your growth. Avoid social, intellectual and spiritual stagnation. Read and stimulate your mind. Take classes and expand your mind. Be open to change and discover your potential. This will improve your self-confidence. Set your goals and reach for the stars. Remember you are God's child. God who has placed you at this post of duty will sustain and guide you.

DISCUSSION: *What are your greatest fears about being a clergy spouse? Search your Bible for a text that could be a buttress for you. Share it with other pastors' spouses.*

Lesson 203

The Role of the Pastor's Spouse

Read the Scriptures and fill in the blanks.

1. Your role as a pastor's spouse is supported by the presence of the _____ **Acts 2:18**
2. Although you have not been elected, you are a _____ with your husband. **Phil 4:3**
3. The pastor's spouse must not be a _____. **1 Tim. 3:11**
4. The pastor's spouse must be _____. **1 Tim.3:11**
5. She must be _____ and _____ in all things. **1 Tim. 3:11**
6. She must be a model to women in the church in her _____, and _____ **1 Tim. 2: 9, 10**
7. She should teach the _____ **Titus 2:4**
8. List the qualities that the young women should be taught. **Titus 2: 4, 5**
9. Give some suggestions about how a pastor's spouse could go about teaching the young women?

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Answers

1. Holy Spirit. 2. Fellow laborer 3. Slanderer 4. Grave 5. sober, faithful 6. Dress, behavior 7. Young women 8. Be sober, love their husbands, love their children, be discreet, chaste, keepers at home; obedient to their own husbands



Lesson 204

Coping with the Challenges of being a Pastor's Spouse

“Being a pastor's spouse is the most hazardous and dangerous occupation a woman can have.”

Marion H. Nelson, *Why Christians Crack Up*

The joys of being a pastor's spouse

Before we examine the challenges of pastoral life, let us for a moment examine the joys of being a pastor's spouse:

Married to a man who loves Jesus. There are several stresses that accompany married life that having a Christian spouse should not be taken for granted. I still remember the thrill that coursed through my soul when I saw my new husband on his knees. “Lord, how I thank You,” I breathed. Just think of the multiple spouses who pray daily for the conversion of their husbands. Thank God for a man who loves Jesus! (Pause for a moment and think of women you know who carry the burden of their unsaved husbands on their hearts).

Caring and thoughtful church members. In every congregation, there are members who love our children and care about them. It is better to focus on those than to be stressed over others who criticize and put pressure on our children. Let us thank God for kind and caring church members. Also, we should teach our children to respect and appreciate kindness.

Living in a safe home environment. It is not common for the pastoral home to be unsafe and dangerous. While there are cases of domestic violence in some pastoral homes, these are few. Our church has zero tolerance for domestic violence among the clergy. This is a situation that should be exposed, addressed and attended to. Generally, though, the tone in the pastoral home is pleasant and peaceful.

Acceptance by church members. Church members usually like their pastoral families. There are sometimes, unfortunate problems in relationships. There are definite causes for rocky relationships. However, it is often the case that members like their pastoral families naturally.

Acceptance and privileges in the community. There are privileges that the pastoral family enjoys in the community. Preferred opportunities are given at civic events, community celebrations and other occasions that one is not easily given access to.

Knowing that she is needed and trusted. We all like to know that we are needed. A person will more readily hasten to seek counsel and share deep feelings with a pastor's spouse, than with a lay person. Therefore, a responsibility of confidentiality rests upon the shoulders of the pastor's spouse. Trust and respect and regard are not easily given. Trust must be earned. A pastor's spouse must be tight-lipped and tactful.

Opportunities for witnessing. The clergy spouse has a ready-made opportunity for witnessing. People are prone to accept her sharing the gospel with them, just because she is the pastor's spouse. On the other side of the picture, her witness is scrutinized.

Mentorship. It is not un-common for a young woman to want to be like the pastor's spouse. It is a good practice for a clergy spouse to look out for young ladies she can train and generally mentor. God has given us gifts to share. Examine what your gift is and make a plan to mentor a young woman or two. Many of our young women would love to do better in interpersonal relationships and in defining their goals, but they need guidance.

Unique challenges

Living under scrutiny. Why does everyone stare at the pastor's family? It is painfully natural. Do you remember when you did the same thing **before** you became a pastor's spouse? People are curious about the lives of celebrities. Yes, you are a celebrity. You are an ambassador for Christ, an apostle to be read of men. This places much strain on us and our families. What is a good strategy for dealing with this limelight? Accept it with prayer in your heart and a smile on your lips. Pray, "Lord, please let the beauty of Jesus be seen in me." God will place His armor snugly on you and you will not even feel the prying eyes piercing you.

Unrealistic expectations. Dealing with expectations is one challenge. Dealing with unrealistic expectations is a greater challenge. **Unrealistic** expectations are suffocating and unfair. They order us to walk on eggshells and dance on a tight rope. Some unrealistic expectations include, having the right answer for all occasions; knowing the perfect social behavior; being a scholar versed in the Scriptures; having a perfect church attendance record; being the ready entertainer, showing no emotions; having a purse full of dollars for sharing; sponsoring all church events; glorying in overwork; training angelic kids; being a mind reader; despising your privacy; always successfully making the current fashion statement. These are just a few. (Which of these or other unrealistic expectations irritate you most? Share some coping strategies for dealing with them).

Facing and Overcoming Challenges

What can I do about me? Love and accept yourself. Who am I? Sometimes we are so busy meeting expectations and people pleasing that we forget who we are. What is your identity?

Take a little time out and ask yourself and venture an answer or two. You may be more than you think you are. Prioritize your roles. Articulate your goals. First, you must be honest with yourself. "Just who am I, really?" Not who I would like to be. Then after you have answered the first question in all honesty, ask yourself the second question. Question Two is, *what would I like to be?* Work on self-improvement.

Write your goals on paper and attach a timeline to each goal. Present your list to God. God has great plans for you. (Jer. 29:11).

Determine not to let anyone veer you from your goals. Let service and unselfishness influence your desires. Understanding who you are, will develop a sense of confidence in you.

Take care of your appearance. This will make you feel good about yourself. There is no need to be extravagant in your dress. You just need to be clean and tidy in well-fitting clothes. Good taste in clothes is an asset to a woman. Do not be so busy keeping your husband smartly dressed that you neglect your own appearance. You are a daughter of the King!

Take care of your health. Do not neglect your routine medical check-ups and tests. You can best function if you are feeling healthy. Your health is everything.

Learn to be contented. Do not try to keep up with the Joneses. Ask God for wisdom in financial planning. Bit by bit you can achieve your dreams. Just be patient and wait on the Lord.

Make time for yourself. *This is wishful thinking* you may say. Take a few minutes. Time to read a paragraph of a magazine; fifteen minutes for some exercise, a nap. (How would you suggest a busy pastor's spouse could snatch a little time for herself)? This is the biggest challenge.

Be confidential. People who chat a lot are not respected. If you have difficulty being tight-lipped, work on it. Pray about it. Read and study about ways to develop confidentiality. Avoid encouraging persons to share with you until you master the art of confidentiality.

Develop entertaining skills. Since we cannot escape entertaining, let us learn the skills. There are many resources that can help us. Do not be intimidated. You can do it. Start small, with a couple of college or high school kids. They would love you for inviting them.

Learn to love all types of persons. There can be the tendency to choose special friends or become part of a clique. While there could be some members who will be closer to us, we need to try not to show favoritism or preference. Look out for the lonely, the elderly, the poor, and the bereaved. Your compassionate spirit will become contagious.

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Have a sense of humor. A stern, serious face can be repulsive. While we do not want to appear empty-headed and flippant, we can laugh at ourselves and smile at others. A bright countenance lights up a room.

Have realistic expectations. As you write your goals, be sure to examine the gifts God has given you. Take an inventory of your gifts. Our church has a Spiritual Gifts Inventory. Take the inventory and see what your gifts are. Concentrate on being the best you can be. Avoid the temptation to compare yourself with others. God made you unique.

Build your own spiritual life. Church services and events cannot build your spiritual life. They can crowd out our personal times with Christ. We have to find a plan and work the plan. Times with Jesus are so refreshing. As we build our spiritual life, there will be an inexplicable strength in us. Connecting with God always pays.

Work on your relationship with your spouse. Love and accept your spouse. This is not the time to try to change him. God made him different from you and from others. Appreciate and accept his uniqueness. Show him love and understanding. Be eager to let others know that you love and respect him. Try to understand your husband's ministry. This does not mean prying or criticizing, or comparing him with other pastors. Find out what his job entails and let him know how proud you are of him. Pray with and for him. Affirm him and support him. Your husband will not always be right. Establish such a relationship with him that he will allow you to be his honest, loving critic. Do not be reluctant to point out his mistakes in a tactful, loving way

What is your role as the pastor's spouse? Certainly not that of the assistant pastor. This means that meddling is not on our agenda. Respect your husband's need and responsibility to be confidential. An interfering spouse is a liability to her pastor-husband.

Sometimes spouses make the fateful mistake of trying to defend their spouses. This is humiliating to the pastor and unprofessional on the part of the clergy spouse. The pastor does not need his spouse to defend him. It is painful to see the methods employed by some shepherdesses to defend their husbands: confronting the

administration; being hostile to other spouses or other pastors; refusing to take office. The worst manifestation I have seen is pastors' spouses who refuse to talk to spouses of administrators or other pastors who have a tense relationship with their husbands.

Home and Family. Take care of your home and love your family. This is a tall order. We women have such a full plate, that balancing it is a challenge. It is difficult to keep our homes in perfect order. We need a plan which includes delegating chores. Our children can help with responsibilities in keeping with their ages. Our husbands can help us too. The trick is to communicate that we would like us all to enjoy a nice, clean, comfortable home, but we cannot do it alone. Be sure to affirm and express appreciation when we get help. Find ways to ease your burdens. Do not allow the kids to constantly make a mess. Teach them the satisfaction of cleaning up after themselves. Habits of cleanliness and order will be assets to them when they get older. Of course, an attractive and tidy home is expected of all women, not only pastors' spouses! So take care of your home.

Our children are on loan to us by God. We must train them and teach them courtesy and good manners. The Bible urges that they be polished. We have to teach them from an early age. Children grow quickly and soon they leave our care. We have only a short time to train them to grow "in favor with God and man."

See your office as a divine ministry. God placed you in that position. Thank God for the opportunity to serve in your capacity. God will give you the strength, skill and willingness to do His bidding. By developing an attitude of praise and thanksgiving, you will find the path less challenging, for He will carry you through it all.

Lesson 205

Teaming up in Ministry

The Concept of a Ministerial Team



“It is not good for the man to be alone. I will make a helper suitable for him.”
Genesis 2:18



“Two are better than one, because they have a good return for their work: if one falls down...” Ecclesiastes 4:9



They recognize that both are called by God to serve and assume that both are equally dedicated to the ministry.



The combination of the best abilities, gifts and strengths of both spouses, in the service for Christ, so that they may achieve a better result “together.”



Each pastoral couple is unique in their talents, abilities and interests.



It involves shared responsibilities and support: at home and in the church.



“The Lord would have ministers and their spouses closely united in the work. The husband and spouse can so blend in labor that the spouse shall be the complement of the husband.” 6 MR 43.



“Through her unselfish interest to advance the cause of God, the spouse has made her husband's work much more complete.” 6MR 43.



“When it is possible, let the minister and his spouse go forth together. The spouse can often labor by the side of her husband, accomplishing a noble work. She can visit homes of the people and help the women in these families in a way that her husband cannot.” EV 491.

Remuneration



“Injustice has sometimes been done to women who labor just as devotedly as their husbands, and who are recognized by God as being necessary to the work of the ministry. The method of paying men-laborers, and not paying their spouses who shared their labor with them, is a plan not according to the Lord's order... God is a God of justice, and if the ministers receive a salary for their work, their spouses, who devote themselves just disinterestedly to the work, should be paid in addition to the wages their husbands receive, even though they may not ask for this.” GW 452, 453.

Joys of the Ministry



Opportunity to meet many people.



Privilege of leading people to Christ.



Participation in the historical moments of the member's lives.



Influencing people.



Visiting church members.



Receiving many gifts.



Visiting many places.



Job and financial stability.



Recognition and appreciation from members.

The Spouse and the Ministry



She is a foundation of the family in the absence of the husband.



She cultivates an affectionate life that provides emotional balance to the husband.



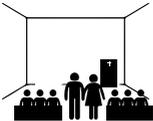
She goes to a church or special visitation with the husband (together).



She participates with ideas and evaluates the husband's sermon.



She listens to the sermons and makes observations regarding the quality, content, presentation, language and preparation.



She walks out the center aisle with the pastor after the worship service.



She stays with her husband at the door greeting the members.



Assisting in the ministry evaluation as a whole.

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Keeping a good relationship with church members.



She lives within the financial limitations.



She prays for her husband and his ministry.



She is involved in the church program.



You have to know who you are, what you want and where you want to go.



Support and inspire your husband, by loving him and participating in his ministry.



Be sensitive to the spouse's emotional signs (Stress, rejection, adaptation and need).

The Pastor and the Spouse



Consider the family as the first ministry.



Dedicate time for the spouse and family.



Be the spouse's best friend.



Invest in the spouse's academic knowledge and growth.



Invest in the spouse's appearance.



Express public and private recognition for the spouse.



Have a social life outside the church.



Plan vacations away from the in-laws.



Keep shared finances.

Relationships in the Pastoral Family



Family: “You must show in your family that kindly consideration, that tenderness, love, gentleness, noble forbearance, and true courtesy, that is becoming to the head of a family, before you can make a success of winning souls to Christ.” 3T 556.



Spouse: “The spouse of a minister of the gospel can be either a most successful helper and great blessing to her husband or a hindrance to him in his work.” AH 355



Spouse: “Treat your spouse tenderly. She needs all care and comfort and encouragement that you promised in your marriage vow to give her.” 6 MR 47.



Children: The first duty of ministers is to their children. No matter how great your ability, you are not best serving God while neglecting your own children.



Children: Sometimes visit church members with your children.

Share Responsibilities



“It is not so much the religion of the pulpit as the religion of the family that reveals our real character” (*Adventist Home*, p. 354).

God's Promise



“I will give them singleness of heart and action, so that they will always fear me for their own good and the good of their children after them.” Jeremiah 32:39

Lesson 206

The Shepherdess Role in Evangelism

Definition of terms

Shepherdess

- A female shepherd.
A woman whose job is to take care of sheep
- A shepherdess is the “pastor’s spouse” or “minister’s spouse.” A woman who is serving beside her husband in ministry

Evangelism

Evangelism is the announcement, proclamation, and/or preaching of the gospel (1 Corinthians 15:1-4), the good news of and about Jesus Christ.

The English word “evangelism” comes from the Greek word *euaggelion*. Most literally translated in the noun form, *euaggelion* means: “gospel” or “good news.” In the verb form (*euaggelizesthai*), the meaning of the word changes slightly to “announce” or “bring good news.” The Greek word is also translated as “preach.”

Evangelism, the communication of the gospel message, includes:

1. A warning
Evangelism includes warning people about sin and the consequences of sin (John 16:8; Acts 24:25; Revelation 20:11-15).

2. An explanation

It includes an explanation of God's remedy for sin—the gospel (Acts 8:29-35; Romans 3:21-26; 2 Corinthians 5:21).

3. And a call.

And it includes the clear call to repent (to turn from sin and to turn toward God) and believe the gospel, by faith (Mark 1:15; Luke 13:1-5; Acts 17:29-31; Romans 1:17; Romans 10:9-13).

II. Should shepherdesses be involved in evangelism?

Some, quoting Ephesians 4:11 claim that since only some people have the “gift of evangelism,” not everyone is obligated to witness. The biblical record reveals that even if evangelism is a spiritual gift, it is also a command for all believers, just like giving, serving, and so on. Not having “the gift of evangelism” does not excuse a believer from his or her call to share Christ with others. Here are two reasons:

1. The command to witness is given to all followers of Christ. Acts 1:8, for example, reads, *“But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you, and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth.”* This verse gives a command from the risen Lord to all his followers. It does not specify or discriminate on any group or individual.

In writing to the Corinthian believers, Paul maintained, *All this is from God, who through Christ reconciled us to himself and gave us the ministry of reconciliation; that is, in Christ God was reconciling the world to himself, not counting their trespasses against them, and entrusting to us the message of reconciliation. Therefore, we are ambassadors for Christ, God making his appeal through us. We implore you on behalf of Christ, be reconciled to God. (2 Cor. 5:18-20)*

The apostle Peter summarized the apostolic church understanding of evangelism, *“All believers are now priests and all of them are commissioned to declare the praises of him who called them out of darkness into his wonderful light”* 1 Pet 2:9

2. *The example of “ordinary believers” in the early church*

Second, consider the example of “ordinary believers” in the early church. As we follow the storyline of the early church it is obvious that the apostles sought to evangelize and disciple others. But we see ordinary believers sharing the gospel as well.

Following the stoning of Stephen, we read in Acts 8:1, “And there arose on that day a great persecution against the church in Jerusalem, and they were all scattered throughout the regions of Judea and Samaria, except the apostles.” And what did those ordinary believers do? Acts 8:4 tells us: “Now those who were scattered went about preaching (*euangelizomenoi*) the word.” They went about sharing the gospel with others.

The chief agents in the expansion of Christianity appear not to have been those who made it a profession or a major part of their occupation, but men and women who earned their livelihood in some purely secular manner and spoke of their faith to those whom they met in this natural fashion. Shepherdesses are therefore included in the mission of reconciling the people to God.

II. Expectations of an SDA Shepherdess in evangelism

The shepherdess is not a pastor, associate or assistant pastor. She is the spouse of a shepherd. Nothing more, nothing less. The Bible is clear as to the role pastors are to fulfill in evangelism. It is however silent on the role of the pastor's spouse in evangelism. In the absence of direct guidelines on the shepherdess involvement in evangelism, the pastor husband, children, extended family, church members believers and the community tend to develop a list of expectations:

1. She is the associate pastor – always acting as pastor whenever pastor is absent
2. She is in charge of women and children ministries
3. She is church the musician
4. She can preach, do counselling, visitation of members
5. She is in charge of the ministry of hospitality in the church
6. She is a leader in Dorcas Society or Community Services, among others

These expectations usually turn out to be unrealistic. How should we interpret this biblical silence?

Proposition #1: Her evangelism responsibilities are of the same nature as those of every other woman in the church.

- a. Since spouses are to support their husbands, her first ministry is to support the pastor husband in his ministry Gen 2:18; Proverbs 31:12,23;

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Genesis 2:18; “and the Lord God said, ‘it is not good that man should be alone; I will make him a helper comparable to him.’” The woman is therefore supposed to be a helper for her husband. The woman being “a helper comparable to him” means that she is appropriate to his needs. She is supposed to complement him.

In the *Adventist Home*, Ellen White writes, “The spouse of the minister of the Gospel can be a most successful helper and a great blessing to her husband or a hindrance to him in his work” (White 1952, p. 355).

Find a woman who genuinely loves God, who longs to serve him, and who glories in her God-given mission as her husband's helper. If she is willing to follow you anywhere God leads you and if she is willing to enthusiastically orient her life to yours as God-ordained helper, she is a theologian of rare quality and will minister with uncommon skill.

Supporting him will mainly involve:

1. Constant prayer and spiritual support for him.

Ellen White says that Satan is at work to dishearten pastors and lead them astray; constant prayer will make their call effectual (White, 1952, 355).

2. She should also serve as a source of encouragement for her husband in his ministry.

3. Provide basic needs for the family.

She should be caring for the needs of her husband and children as well as the extended family which sometimes include her siblings, nieces and nephews where it is inevitable.

4. An important quality that a pastor's spouse should exhibit should be hospitality.

Any stranger who comes to visit the pastor gets his first impression about the pastor from the reception he receives.

5. Stand beside him not above him.

- Avoid overshadowing your husband. Be content to let your husband's lifework be your lifework
- If a spouse has been blessed with abilities above that of her companion, she will do well to use them strengthening him and his program. To seek a career or position of her own apart from his inevitably detracts from his influence.
- Be willing to hold or relinquish any work or position for the sake of success in the winning of souls.
- Develop visual aids for him

6. Support in the development of his health

Nothing is more important than to see that the husband's health is kept up by a properly balanced diet, plenty of exercise, and rest.

7. Compliment the pastor

- a. During the meeting, she should listen attentively to the message, even if she has heard it a dozen times before
- b. A sincere compliment from a loving spouse means more to a husband than all the praise combined from others.
- c. A tactful suggestion or correction should not be withheld.
- d. On this point, always make sure you do all your tutoring in private
- e. Avoid affecting your husband's ministry negatively
 - By correcting him negatively in public
 - By praising him unduly in public

b. She is to diligently evangelize her children (1 Tim 3:1-7)

Her second ministry is to her children. She is a good evangelist in so far as she is a diligent keeper of her home, a godly mother to her children, and a solid force in keeping her husband qualified for ministry by building up his home. Her ministry responsibilities outside the home should never be permitted to overtax her ministry to her family

Support your children's ministries,

- a. exposing them to various ministries
- b. Support them do the ministries they enjoy
 - With your personal presence
 - With your means

Proposition #2: Her evangelism is to reflect the specific function for which God has uniquely qualified her. For this to be realized she must be a deeply spiritual woman:

- a. A shepherdess must be born again Jn 3:3-5
Being attached to the shepherd does not automatically make her spiritual. She must know Jesus Christ personally before she can explain Him effectively to others
- b. Knowledgeable of the word
A shepherdess must be a student of the bible
- c. Prayer life
A shepherdess has to be a woman of prayer for herself, husband, children, the husband's ministry, the church and community.
- d. Fellowship
A shepherdess should seek support from other shepherdesses. She should benefit from reading other resources for pastor's spouses
- e. A shepherdess must have a call
Some ministers' spouses have never heard a divine call; they have simply married men who have. Witnessing (Evangelism)
 - A shepherdess should share her knowledge of Jesus Christ with others. This will include: the husband, children, friends, relatives, neighbors, colleagues etc.
 - She needs to discover her own ministry and pursue it throughout her life in order for her to be fulfilled.
 - She should not live in the shadow of her husband for she has her own identity from that of her husband and others. In short, she should be herself even as she helps in her husband's ministry.

Like every other woman in the church, the pastor's spouse is to diligently pour out her life in service to God as He has fitted her to serve. She has to find her own ministry. 1 Cor 12:4-7, 18-20:

"Now there are varieties of gifts, but the same Spirit; and there are varieties of service, but the same Lord; and there are varieties of activities, but it is the same God who empowers them all in everyone. To each is given the manifestation of the Spirit for the common good . . . But as it is, God arranged the members in the body, each one of them, as he chose. If all were a single member, where would the body be? As it is, there are many parts, yet one body."

God has a specific purpose for the unique ministry capacities with which He has sovereignly equipped each pastor's spouse. She should thus serve in accordance with God's gifting as a member of the body in which He has placed her, not in accordance with human expectations of responsibilities inherent in her supposed position.

So, the crux of the issue is, what has God gifted her to do? She should be encouraged to do that. What God has given her to do may not be what the previous pastor's spouse was empowered by God to do.

Which methods are they supposed to use?

Guided by the Bible and the Holy Spirit, Seventh-day Adventists pursue this mission through Christ-like living, communicating, discipling, teaching, healing, and serving.

The methods are tailored to:

1. The area of giftedness of the shepherdess Eph 4:7-16
2. The needs of those to be evangelized

Guided by the Bible and the Holy Spirit, the list of methods is limitless. Let each shepherdess discern the most appropriate method for each potential convert and allow the Holy Spirit to innovatively use it to lead the contact to Jesus Christ

VIII. Assignment

1. How can you evangelize through supporting your husband's ministry? Gen 2:18; Prov. 31:10-31
2. How do you evangelize through home making? 1 Tim 3:4-5
3. Which are some of the personal ministries a pastor's spouse can engage?
4. What are the spiritual gifts or abilities that the Lord has given to you in doing His work. List these gifts. Ask the Lord to help you use these gifts to discover and start your own personal ministry Eph 4:7-16
5. How do you strike a balance between your various ministries?
6. What is total shepherdess involvement in evangelism? What role shall you play in making it a reality?

Lesson 207/208

What Every Pastor's Spouse Needs to know about Her Husband's Ministry

Pastors' spouses have to learn on the job. We learn by trial and error. We learn by being brave and observant. We just have to find ways to learn. Being a minister's spouse is one of the few professions where one is forced to learn on the job. The seminary does not offer classes on being a minister's spouse.

1. **They Want to be Men of God**

They don't want to be hypocrites. 1 Kings 12:22; 17:18 – “man of God” and unlike Balaam Numbers 22; 2 Peter 2:15 Numbers 20:11-12

2. **They are human too**

- They make mistakes like other people Numbers 20:11-12. Both of you need to admit that.
- Establish that between you. Do not treat him like a god.

3. **You are married to a man not an angel**

- Your husband is not always right
- Don't expect him to be perfect
- Do not expect others to consider him perfect either.



- 4. They need converted spouses to stand by their side**
 - Have your own connection with God and build your spirituality Prov. 31:30, 1 Timothy 3: 11, Titus 2:3-5.
 - It is through prayer where we know God's will.

- 5. They want spouses who are also looking for the return of Jesus**
 - They need to share the passion for the second coming of Jesus. Genesis 9:15, Luke 17:32-36, Remember Lot's spouse.

- 6. They need spouses to support them in their ministry**
 - Be like Noah's spouse Gen.7:7- and not like Sapphira Acts 5:1-11
 - The load is heavier when they have to bear it alone. Realize that he has been called. Help him in his responsibility.

- 7. They need regular assurance of your unfailing love**
 - Love him and show it often. Expect him to show you his love too.
Titus 2:4.
QUESTION: What makes a husband feel loved (Group Discussion)

- 8. Family is important to them and they want to be successful in this**
 - Both of you need to establish this belief from the start. Family should be the first mission field for both of you. The minister's first duty is to his family.
 - "Nothing can excuse the minister for neglecting the inner circle for the larger circle outside, the spiritual welfare of his family comes first." (*Adventist Home, p. 353*)

- 9. Their work is also important to them and they want to succeed in this too**
 - Do not underestimate the importance of his job. Encourage him in excellence.

- 10. They don't want you to get involved with their squabbles with members**

- Maintain Christ-like attitude even to those who are antagonistic to your husband Luke 26:27-29
- You should always know that he is able to defend himself.
- What he needs from you is prayer encouragement and support

11. They want their home to be pleasant havens of rest

- Ephesians 4:1-3 Peace in the home should be your greatest desire.
- Proverbs 15:16-17 Better is little with fear of the Lord....
- Proverbs 17:1 Better is a dry morsel with quietness than a house full of feasting with strife
- Proverbs 21:19 Better to dwell in the wilderness, than with the a contentious and angry woman
- Proverbs 25:24 It is better to dwell in a corner of a housetop than in a house shared with a contentious woman
- Let this be a family project. Strive together for a peaceful home. You are the pace setter.

12. They want their spouses to be examples to the other ladies in the church

- Exercise dignity, class, propriety and Christian womanhood 1Timothy 3:11, Titus 2:3-5

13. They need your help to remain spiritual leaders

- Do not overlook his tendency towards being careless about his spirituality. Yes, he is the spiritual leader, but look out for gaps and inconsistencies. Step in to gently remind him of his spiritual commitment.

14. They want their spouses to know that pastors have their own insecurities

- I Kings 19:9-10- They sometimes struggle with doubts, fears, worries temptation and sin.
- Encourage him to get professional help if he needs it. Do not be an enabler.

15. They want you to keep yourself looking attractive yet modest

- Mothers, make yourself as attractive as possible . . . Order and cleanliness is the law of heaven; and in order to come into

harmony with divine arrangements, it is our duty to be neat and tasty.” (*Adventist Home*, 254)

- Money is scarce but have a plan to buy yourself something nice. It is your responsibility to do this. Find a way to earn some money. 1 Timothy 2: 9-10, Proverbs 31:22

16. When they fail to meet your expectations, encourage them rather than criticize them

- Ephesians 5:33
- Proverbs 21:9
- Proverbs 25:24
- Proverbs 27:1
- Always affirm first. Speak the truth in love. “Reverence your husband” Eph. 5:33. No Nagging.

17. They want and they need sexually responsive spouses

- Sex is important to them, too. 1 Corinthians 7:3-5
- Sex is the number 1 need of a man. Your husband is a man. You need to be a sex partner.

18. They need you to help them manage their salary

- Proverbs 31:13, 27
- Philippians 4:11
- Hebrews 3:5
- 1 Timothy 6:6
- Try to Study money management, have a clear communication on money issues and be content.

19. They need your encouragement when they are depressed

- Even Moses and Elijah got discouraged and depressed at times: Exodus 32; 1 Kings 19:4
- Timing is important. Know what questions to ask. Men deal with problems differently. Allow them some time alone to sort things out.

20. They want you to communicate your needs clearly to them

- Proverbs 14:1 Do not assume that they can read your minds.
- We must not lose out by not being clear, honest and up front. State your expectations and feelings.

21. They want you to be their spouses and not their assistant pastors

- Proverbs 19:14 Observe boundaries. Be professional. Be prudent.

22. They expect you to use your gifts in areas where you are comfortable

- Everyone has some talent God expects you to use.
- Ephesians 4:8-12, Matthew 25:14-30
- Find out where your talent lies. You could even ask someone to help you. Hone your skills. Be the best of what you do.

23. God isn't finished with your husband pastor yet

- Every pastor is a work in progress. There is no perfect pastor or husband. Philippians 3:12-14
- Together let us grow to become what God wants us to be.

24. Jesus can help

- “Those things which ye have both learned, and received, and heard, and seen in me, do; and the God of peace shall be with you.” Philippians 4:9
- You may be feeling overwhelmed by all of your responsibilities and think you are drowning in a sea of expectations. You have a wonderful heavenly Father who is ready and willing to help you. All you need to do is go to Him, lean on Him. Cry to Him.

Lesson 209

Working Policy Highlights for Shepherdesses

Introduction

The Seventh-day Adventist Church mainly uses two policy documents, thus the Church Manual and the General Conference Working Policy. The Church Manual mainly regulates the operations of the local churches. The General Conference Working Policy governs the global leadership decisions regarding how entities live and work together. The Division Working Policy largely derives from the General Conference Working Policy and also performs more or less the same functions as the GC Working Policy, but within the context of the Division. The GC and Division working policies also regulate employment issues.

Why do we need the Working Policy?

The Church needs the Working Policy for many reasons. Some of these reasons are highlighted below.

1. The Working Policy provides a framework for making sound decisions. The Working Policy helps to and ensure that church entities are administered consistently. The Working Policy provides for the fair treatment of employees.
2. The Working Policy protects the church organization from unnecessary liabilities.

3. The working policy as a product of our unity as a church enhances that unity by helping the church entity to avoid widely differing patterns of action
4. The Working Policy helps to ensure that leadership decisions in the church respect organizational structure and procedures.
5. The Working Policy enhances smooth leadership transitions and processes since it provides the framework for dealing with those processes.

The Working Policy defines how we do our work. It represents a collective decision-making process.

Sections of the GC Working Policy

The General Conference Working Policy is divided into several sections as outlined below.

The General Conference Working Policy opens with the Constitution and Bylaws of the Seventh-day Adventist Church. The rest of the Working Policy is organized as follows:

Section A

- o Mission and Vision Statements
- o Values Statement
- o Total Commitment: Declaration of Spiritual Accountability
- o Mission to the World: Roadmap for Mission

Section B

Organization and Administration

- o Organizational and Operational Principles
- o Administrative Relationships
- o Organizational Authority, etc

Section BA

General Administrative Policies

- o Annual Council, Church Manual, Adult Bible Study Guides
- o Trademark policies
- o Institutions—composition of constituencies and boards
- o Human relations
- o Records management

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Section C

Division Administration

- o Division territories
- o Division councils and policy
- o Union and local conference sessions
- o Training of employees
- o Polygamy

Section D

Model Constitutions and Bylaws Operating Policies

Section E

Denominational employees

- Accrediting, Transferring, Employment Regulations
- Credentials and licenses
- Calls for interdivision service
- Employee service record
- Vacations and holidays
- Employees' Personal Finance
- Conflict of interest and/or commitment

F Policies: departments

- It is important to mention that departments were first introduced in the Adventist Church in 1901. Before then, there were no departments.
- There are fourteen departments listed in the SDA Yearbook. Nine of these are referred to as ministries. Four are not referred to as ministries. The fourteenth department is the "Ministerial Association." Although the ministerial association is not organized as a department per se, it is treated thus.
- The nine departments referred to as ministries include: Chaplaincy Ministries, Children's Ministries, Family Ministries, Health Ministries, Publishing Ministries, Sabbath School and Personal Ministries, Stewardship Ministries, Women's Ministries, and Youth Ministries
- Communication, Education, Public Affairs and Religious Liberty, and Trust Services are the four departments that are not referred to as ministries.
- The policies for the thirteen departments (excluding ministerial association whose policies appear under "L") are arranged as follows in the General Conference Working Policy:

FA – Adventist Chaplaincy Ministries

FB – Children's Ministries

FC – Communication

FE – Education

FF – Family Ministries

FH – Health Ministries

FL – Public Affairs & Religious Liberty

FP – Publishing Ministries

FR – Sabbath School & Personal Ministries

FS – Stewardship Ministries

FT – Legal Association & Trust Services

FW – Women's Ministries

FY – Youth Ministries

After the departmental policies, the rest of the Working Policy is organized as follows:

Section GE - Ellen G. White Estate Policies

Section HA - Adventist Development and Relief Agency

Section HB - Adventist World Radio

Section HC - Adventist Mission

Section HD - Hope Channel and Hope Channel, Inc

Section K - Supporting Ministries

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Section L - The Ministry and Ministerial Training

Section M - Interdivision Service Policies

Section R - Adventist Volunteer Service

Section S - General Financial Policies

Section SA - Auditing Policies

Section T - Division Financial Policies

Section U - Institutional Financial Policies

Section V - The Tithe and Offerings

Section W - World Mission Funds

Section X – Ingathering

Section Y – Remuneration of and Assistance to Employees

Section Z – Retirement

The outline presented in the preceding pages should help to demystify the Working Policy and enhance its appreciation as a requisite tool in the management of the church as an organization.

While all sections of the policy document are important and it would be good if we could look at each section in detail, time and space constraints would not permit us to do so. We will thus, select a few of those sections that we should know of necessity as shepherdeses. In my opinion, those pertinent sections include section L, section Y, and section Z.

As already highlighted above, section L deals with ministerial policies. Shepherdeses are more or less, associates in ministerial work and should thus be conversant with ministerial policies. In the following paragraphs, I will present a few relevant excerpts from the L section of the 2017-2018 edition of the *General Conference Working Policy*.

L 05 Ministerial training

The educational requirement for entrance into the pastoral ministry shall be the completion of the Ministerial Training Course as prescribed by the division committee. *In the ECD, the minimum educational requirement for entrance into the pastoral ministry is a bachelor's degree in theology or religion.*

L 10 Ministerial Internship

L 10 10 Definition of Term “Ministerial Internship”—“Ministerial Internship” as here used designates a period of service spent in practical ministerial training, to be entered upon after the completion of the prescribed Ministerial Training Course, this training period to be served under supervision in a local conference/mission/field, at a limited wage, for the purpose of proving the divine call to the ministry.

L 25 Licensed Minister—Role and Status

Ministerial employees either have a ministerial credential if they are ordained or a ministerial license. The ministerial license is issued to a ministerial employee who has demonstrated a divine call to ministry and has been assigned by the field/conference as a spiritual leader, pastor, chaplain, or evangelist.

L 25 05 Responsibility and Authority—The responsibility and authority of the licensed minister may in certain circumstances be extended to include the performance of specific functions of the ordained minister in the churches to which he is assigned. The authority for extending this responsibility belongs to the division committee which shall clearly outline for its territory the ministerial functions which may be delegated to licensed ministers, taking into account:

1. The length and extent of the ministerial training programs in its territory,
2. The needs of the fields in its territory, taking into consideration the distribution of membership, the number of churches and the ministerial help available,
3. Any circumstances that demand special consideration.

L 25 10 Delegating Ministerial Functions—The following shall be required in all divisions as a basis for delegating ministerial

functions to a licensed minister:

1. He shall have completed the prescribed ministerial training program of the Seventh-day Adventist Church as defined by the division committee for its territory. Any exceptions shall be approved by local and union committees within guidelines established by the division committee.
2. He shall hold a current ministerial license.
3. He shall have been appointed by the conference/mission/field executive committee to a ministerial or pastoral responsibility.
4. He shall have been elected as a church elder in the churches, or named as elder in the companies to which he is assigned.
5. He shall have been ordained as local church elder.

L 35 Qualifications for Ordination to the Ministry

L 35 05 Vital Concern of Church—The setting apart of men for the sacred work of the ministry should be regarded as one of the most vital concerns of the church. The spiritual growth of God's people, their development in the virtues of Christ, as well as their relationship to one another as members of His body, are all closely bound up with and in many respects dependent upon the spirituality, efficiency, and consecration of those who minister in Christ's stead.

L 35 10 Scriptural Counsel—The mind of the Lord concerning the qualifications for the ministry is clearly revealed in the Scriptures. Anciently the minister was known as “the man of God” (1 Kings 12:22), sometimes the man of the Spirit. Detailed instructions were given to Moses concerning the qualifications of the priesthood, with the priest's dress, demeanor, and spiritual understanding being emphasized. Then, in order to keep continually before the congregation the high calling of those who served in the tabernacle, the high priest wore on his miter the words “Holiness to the Lord.”

In the New Testament the picture is just as clear. The apostle Paul speaks of himself as “a servant of Jesus Christ, called to be an apostle, separated unto the gospel of God” (Rom 1:1). This matter of separation to the ministry was made very clear to him by the Lord Himself when, appearing to him on the Damascus road, He said, “I have appeared unto thee . . . to make thee a minister . . . ; delivering thee from the people, . . . unto whom now I send thee,

to open their eyes, and to turn them from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan unto God” (Acts 26:16-18).

He was delivered from the people, separated to the ministry, and then as the anointed representative of God sent back to the people to be God’s mouthpiece and to open their eyes to the glories of the gospel. Later in writing of the work of the minister he spoke of it as a high calling (Phil 3:14). In the Epistle to the Hebrews we read, “No man taketh this honour unto himself, but he that is called of God” (chap 5:4).

L 35 20 Examination of Candidates—This counsel lays a definite obligation on the leaders in charge of an ordination service. They should plan for the examination of candidates in such a way as to make this important procedure not simply perfunctory but a true evaluation of the candidate’s fitness. Sufficient time for careful evaluation should be made available, particularly in cases where a number of candidates are to be examined. Wherever possible the candidate should plan to have his spouse present for the examination, realizing that ordination affects not only the individual but the entire family.

L 35 55 Ministry a Calling—The ministry is not merely a profession; it is a calling. It is not for a period of time until some other more attractive occupation beckons a man, but it is a lifework. Having put his hand to the plow, he is not free to look backward except at the peril of his soul. The apostle Paul, like the prophets of old, felt himself “in bonds” (Col 4:3), and cried out, “Woe is unto me, if I preach not the gospel” (1 Cor 9:16). A man ordained to the sacred work of the ministry should feel the same responsibility as the apostle of old, and the conference/mission/field that employs him should feel the responsibility to see that he is free to do his God-appointed work.

The simple record of the ordination of the apostles is impressive: “And he goeth up into a mountain, and calleth unto him whom he would: and they came unto him. And he ordained twelve, that they should be with him, and that he might send them forth to preach” (Mark 3:13, 14). The first office of a man ordained to the ministry is that he should be with God. Only then is he qualified to go forth to men to preach the Word of God. A man who is thus consecrated

and who enjoys constant communion with his Lord rejoices in the privilege of rendering complete service, refusing to be entangled in business for personal gain and other things of this world in order that, by the grace of God, he may give complete devotion to the cause he loves. Even when he reaches his retirement years he should feel the call of God to the same standard of life as he did in his most active years, "that the ministry be not blamed" (2 Cor 6:3).

L 50 Examination of Candidates for Ordination

1. Before any ordination is carried out, there shall be careful, unhurried, and prayerful examination of the candidates as to their fitness for the work of the ministry. The results of their labor as licentiates should be reviewed, and the examination should cover the great fundamental facts of the gospel. Before the church sets a man apart by ordination he should have given satisfactory evidence of:

- a. A call to the ministry as a lifework,
- b. A belief in and knowledge of the Scriptures,
- c. An acquaintance with and full acceptance of the vital truths we believe we are called to proclaim to the world,
- d. An experience in various kinds of ministerial responsibility,
- e. Entire consecration of body, soul, and spirit,
- f. Spiritual stability,
- g. Social maturity,
- h. An aptness as a teacher of truth,
- i. An ability to lead souls from sin into holiness,
- j. Fruitage in souls won to Christ,
- k. A cooperative attitude and confidence in the organization and functioning of the church,
- l. A life of consistent exemplary Christian conduct,
- m. An exemplary family,
- n. Being a model steward in tithe and offerings,
- o. An understanding of and adherence to church principles as set forth in the Church Manual.

2. The examination of candidates for ordination is conducted by ordained ministers. Ordained representatives of conferences/missions/fields/institutions/unions/divisions/ General Conference, who are present, may be invited to assist in the examination. Where it is deemed advisable by the conference/mission/field executive committee, one or more laypersons may be selected to participate.

L 60 20 Reasons for Discipline of Ministers—Discipline shall be administered to an ordained/licensed/commissioned minister in the following circumstances:

1. Moral Fall—In the case of a moral fall in violation of the seventh commandment, including those violations involving sexual perversions, the minister has, by that transgression, made void his/her calling and, where applicable, ordination to the sacred office of the ministry.

2. Apostasy—In the case of apostasy whereby the minister falls away to the world, or identifies with, or gives continuing support to, any activity subversive to the denomination, and/or persistently refuses to recognize properly constituted church authority or to submit to the order and discipline of the church, he/she has, by such disloyalty, proven unworthy of a place or part in the gospel ministry of this Church.

3. Dissidence—Discipline may also be administered in the case of a minister who openly expresses significant dissidence regarding the fundamental beliefs of the Seventh-day Adventist Church. Continued and unrepentant dissidence may eventually be seen by the Church to be apostasy and identified as such by the minister's administrative organization after counseling with the next higher organization.

4. Embezzlement or Theft—Embezzlement or theft of funds or property to which the minister has no lawful right, or the willful misappropriation of the same.

5. Other Reasons—Any other conduct which is inconsistent with the high standards of the Christian ethic, and which casts a shadow over the integrity of the ministry, such as violence or other questionable activity, and which demonstrates that the individual is unworthy as a leader in the Church

L 60 25 Steps in Discipline of Ministers—When discipline must be administered in the case of a minister, four aspects of the minister's relationship to the Church may be affected: his/her credential/license, his ordination, his/her church membership and his/her denominational employment. The discipline and corresponding procedure for administering such discipline in relation to each of these aspects is as follows:

1. Credential/License—The credential/license of a minister who experiences a moral fall or apostatizes shall be withdrawn permanently by his/her employing committee, after consultation

with the next higher organization. His/her credential/license may also be withdrawn in the case of dissidence as defined in L 60 20, paragraph 3. above, after consultation with the next higher organization, but such withdrawal shall be reviewed by the committee after a stipulated period/periods which shall be determined at the time of withdrawal.

2. Ordination—a. A minister who experiences a moral fall or apostatizes has made void his ordination. This changed relationship shall be recognized and recorded by his employing organization with the approval of the respective union committee (General Conference or Division Committee in the case of a General Conference/division institution). He shall be ineligible for future employment as a Seventh-day Adventist minister.

b. A licensed minister who experiences a moral fall or apostatizes shall be ineligible for future ordination or employment as a Seventh-day Adventist minister.

3. Church Membership—The organization which has withdrawn a credential/license permanently and, in the case of an ordained minister has recorded the voiding of his ordination, shall inform the local church of which the offending minister is a member. It shall be the duty of the church to administer discipline as provided for in the *Church Manual* in the section “Reasons for Which Members Shall Be Disciplined.”

4. Denominational Employment—It is recognized that a minister who has experienced a moral fall or has apostatized has access to the mercy and pardoning grace of God and may desire to return to the Church. Such an individual must be assured of the love and goodwill of his/her fellow believers. However, for the sake of the good name of the Church and the maintaining of moral standards, he/she must plan to devote his/her life to employment other than that of the gospel ministry, the teaching ministry, or denominational leadership.

L 60 35 Rebaptism—A minister who has been removed from church membership because of a moral fall or apostasy, but who subsequently gives evidence of repentance, conversion and reformation of life, shall be rebaptized before rejoining the Church.

The “Y” section of the working policy

Having presented excerpts from the “L” section of the working

policy relating to ministerial issues, we now turn our attention to the “Y” section dealing with remuneration and assistance to employees. Even here, we will just highlight a few excerpts owing to time and space constraints. Here, I will present excerpts from the *GC Working Policy*, the *ECD Working Policy*. Where the excerpt is from the GC Working Policy, I will indicate so.

GC Y 05 15 Remuneration Defined—Employee remuneration encompasses a broad range of cash and noncash items such as gross salary, benefits, allowances (such as housing allowance, automobile depreciation, and employer provided housing), incentives, bonuses, etc. The particular combination of remuneration components will vary from division to division. It must be understood that in parts of the world where salary levels are relatively low in comparison to the value of employee benefits and allowances, certain benefits may have to be dealt with outside of the maximums defined in GC Y 05 25. Where deemed necessary, this will be approved by a major meeting of the division executive committee or, in the case of the General Conference, a Spring Meeting or Annual Council of the General Conference Executive Committee.

Where desirable and embraced within the division's remuneration plan, the controlling boards/committees may establish for support staff remuneration rates which are based on the average paid in the surrounding community for each job classification/category. This provision applies to those positions with a maximum remuneration level that does not exceed the remuneration, inclusive of all benefits and remuneration as defined in the above paragraph, for an ordained local church pastor.

GC Y 05 20 Objective—The objective of each remuneration plan is to provide employees with an adequate income, while endeavoring to provide a reasonable level of comfort. Because of the principles of equality and self-sacrifice, it is accepted that increased responsibility may require a greater level of sacrifice

GC Y 05 50 Remuneration of Pastors—Pastors are the spiritual leaders of the Church at all levels. Paying pastors with government or other non-church funds could place them in a situation where their allegiance and accountability are divided and threatens church autonomy. For this reason pastors employed at all levels, in church

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owned and operated institutions and organizations, should be paid from denominational funds. Any exception to this shall require prior approval by the executive committee of the next higher organization which shall consult with the General Conference through the division

Y 05 15 Continuation of Salary/Benefits in Case of Death of a Regular Worker in Active Service

Employing organizations shall continue the payment of salary and allowances to the surviving spouse and dependents of a deceased regular employee for the next six months from the time of death.

Y 10 05 Basis of Remuneration

In order that there may be an equitable basis for the remuneration of various classes of employees, a denominational wage scale, which applies in principle throughout the world, has been adopted. Minimum and maximum rates have been set for the different classes of employees, with the understanding that employees of long experience and tried service be rated at or near the maximum, whereas those of less experience and shorter service will be rated closer to the minimum.

Y 10 30 Non-Denominational Service

When individuals are called to denominational service from nondenominational employment, they may be granted recognition for at least 50% of the time served in non-denominational employment for the purpose of determining their salary percentage upon entering denominational employment. If their denominational employment is related or a continuation of their previous professional employment they may be given as high as 100% recognition of their time served (e.g. teaching to teaching post or accounting to accounting post). This recognition is only for determining the entry salary percentage but is not applicable for service credit unless otherwise provided by policy.

Y 10 35 Definition of Wage Factor

The wage factor (yearly rate factor) shall be understood to mean the figure at which is set the 100 percent salary amount (the ordained minister's 100%) for each organization. It is recognized that the wage factor may differ from union to union, because of differing circumstances within each union. The wage factor may also differ

between unions within the same country, as well as conferences/ fields within the same union.

Y 10 40 Establishing Wage Factor

In arriving at the actual figure which shall be regarded as 100 percent on the wage factor, union committees shall act in harmony with general practice in the denomination, relating wages paid to the average earnings in the country, while taking into account the standard of living and the earning power of church members, but bearing in mind that remuneration is on the basis of mission service. The Division Executive Committee shall approve the figure at which the wage factor is set, taking into consideration the financial ability of the organization concerned.

Y 10 45 Wage Scale

The wage scale shall serve as the basis throughout the Division for the wages to be paid to the various classes of employees in relation to one another. The following wage scales will be adopted in the Division:

- Scale A 100%
- Scale B 80% of Scale A
- Scale C 60% of Scale A

The following are the definitions of the above scales:

- Scale A: Minimum of Bachelor's degree or higher
- Scale B: Minimum of 3 years' post-secondary education diploma or equivalent
- Scale C: Minimum of 2 years post High School certificate or its equivalent

Y15 20 Spouse Travel Allowance

An annual travel budget shall be provided for the spouses of qualifying personnel for use in situations where it shall be necessary for a spouse to accompany his or her partner on official travel. Qualifying personnel will be determined by the relevant committee of the entity concerned. The travel may include itineraries within the East-Central Africa Division territory and special meetings outside the division. Each travel must be approved by the employing organization Administrative Committee subject to availability of funds, in accordance with the following limitations:

1. Spouses employed by East-Central Africa Division will be

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granted ten (10) working days per annum for the purpose of this travel. Any days beyond the ten days shall be approved by the Administrative committee.

2. The travel per diem allowance will be according to the authorized amount.

3. The request must be approved by the spouse's supervisor and the Administrative Committee.

4. Travel assistance shall not be granted in connection with annual leave or permanent return travel.

5. Any excess above the budget will be at the employee's personal expense.

6. An employee may personally fund the entire cost of spouse travel in any given year should he/she choose to do so.

7. A spouse that has a traveling budget shall not qualify for spouse travel.

8. Spouse travel allowance can be accumulated for up to a maximum of three (3) years. However the days remain the same. Any days in excess of 10 will apply to one's annual leave.

9. Any funds left in the spouse travel budget after the 10 days expense shall revert to treasury.

Unions and institutions may develop spouse travel policies in accordance with their situations.

Y 25 05 Medical Assistance

1. Employees having medical, dental, optical, obstetrical, or hearing expenses, including appliances, medical drug expense, laboratory and physicians' fees, may be granted up to 75 percent of the expense on receipted accounts and receipts for which actual payment has been made.

2. Assistance on the purchase of medicines, including vitamins, shall be allowed only if purchased on a physician's prescription, or with a physician's written order in the case of non-prescription purchases.

Prescription purchases should bear the prescription number or other identifying marks. However, in the case of persons having need to control chronic ailments by means of medicines not requiring prescriptions the treasurer shall exercise his/her discretion in allowing such expense without a physician's written order.

3. Assistance may apply to the expense of orthopedic appliances, when prescribed by a qualified physician.

4. Assistance may apply on expenses incurred for treatment by

registered chiropractic or osteopathic physicians and homeopathic practitioners.

5. An allowance of up to 90 percent shall apply in the case of hospitalization and hospital-related expenses. Ninety percent shall also be allowed on total medical expense in cases where costs arising from one illness, accident or series of treatments equal or exceed the employees' monthly salary rate. However, dental expenses are excluded from the 90 percent reimbursement except when required as a result of serious accident.

6. This policy provides assistance for the medical expenses of:

a. An employee

b. A spouse who may be eligible to receive medical assistance per policy if:

i. Unemployed

ii. Employed, and earning on an annualized basis from employment or self employment, no more than two times the equivalent of the relevant monthly wage factor of the employee.

iii. The employer of the spouse provides benefits, the benefits granted under this policy will be reduced by the amount received from the spouse's employer.

iv. The spouse of the employee is employed by another organization within the denomination, the employing organization for the spouse is responsible for the reportable medical expense for this person.

c. The unmarried dependent children of the employee up to 18 years ending on the 19th birthday unless the children are full-time students who may receive assistance up to the 24th birthday.

i. If the employee's spouse is not eligible for assistance, the children may receive 50% of the regular assistance.

ii. If the employer of the spouse of the employee provides medical benefits for the children, benefits from this policy will be reduced by the amount of such assistance.

7. The medical expense of an employee and dependents shall be reportable to the employing organization, except in the circumstance that the spouse works for another organization of the denomination, in which case each employing organization shall pay for its own employee's expense and 50 percent of the medical costs of unemployed dependents.

8. The employing organization may designate the institutions or doctors where employees should seek medical attention. Except in cases of emergency, where authorization should be sought as

soon as is practically possible, employees are required to obtain authorization from their employing organizations before arranging for major operations or other medical attention resulting in unusual expense.

9. The denominational medical assistance policy shall apply only to such medical expense as remains after first deducting sums reimbursed to the employee as medical payments by policies of insurance provided by the employing organization. In case of accidental death or total disability, the corresponding benefits shall accrue to the next of kin or designated heirs.

10. This policy shall become operative for permanent full-time employees at the beginning of such employment.

11. Employees' medical expenses should be reported month by month and supported by receipted medical bills from the institution or doctor recommended by the employing organization, covering at least the major items of expense reported. Receipts should not be accumulated for more than two months.

12. When it is necessary for an employee to travel in order to secure medical attention, it shall be the policy for such transportation to be included as part of the medical expense, as follows:

a. When public transport is available, travel by this means will be reportable

b. When no public transport is available and the round trip exceeds 50 kilometers, or when medical treatment is necessary outside the employee's city/town of residence, the relevant kilometer rate will be reportable.

c. When public transport is available and more than one patient travels in the same car for medical treatment, the cost of tickets by public transport up to the cost of the relevant kilometer rate may be allowed.

d. When the patient is an adult, the cost of only one fare by public transport will be allowed, except when the patient is unable to travel alone.

e. When long and expensive journeys are necessary or when a number of shorter journeys must be undertaken, employees shall counsel with the officers of their employing organizations before undertaking such journeys, except in those cases of emergency where this cannot be done.

f. The cost of travel, whether by public transport or by private car at a rate per kilometer fixed by the employing organization, shall be subject to the same percentage allowance as other medical expenses

in paragraphs 1 and 5.

13. Dental Work

a. The maximum allowable expense per year per person for dental work is 1.5 times the local category A wage factor. The total annual expense for a family is 3 times the local category A wage factor. This applies for curative dental care. The employee will be eligible for 75% reimbursement of the allowable expense in the above.

However, once a year the employee and his/her family are eligible for 100% coverage on dental preventative work such as annual check up and prophylaxis. This excludes pre-existing conditions, orthodontic treatment or cosmetic care.

b. For all dental work, with the exception of straight extraction of teeth, the employee shall obtain authorization from the employing organization prior to treatment.

c. The employee shall be reimbursed in accordance with the medical policy of 75% assistance for dental work involving only extraction.

14. Assistance for medical expenses incurred outside the country of employment may be limited to an amount consistent with good medical practice in the country of employment. Any deviation in the application of this policy should be approved by the Division.

Y 25 10 Periodic Health Evaluations

1. Frequency—Organizations shall authorize periodic health evaluations for each employee and spouse.

a. The frequency of authorized health evaluations shall be as follows:

- Age and Frequency
- 18-30 Once every six years
- 31-40 Once every three years
- 41-60 Once every two years
- 61+ Once every year

b. The special reimbursement for authorized health evaluations shall be applied on the above frequency.

c. The Division committees may adjust the above schedule where living conditions are unusually difficult.

2. Scope—Health evaluations shall include a complete history, physical examination and laboratory tests as determined essential by the examining physician. Physicians shall be encouraged to make this evaluation comprehensive and include the procedures that would identify early signs of disease or known risk factors that

may be correctable.

3. Report—A complete report of health evaluations shall be submitted to the employing organization for inclusion in the employee's medical file.

4. Additional Procedures—Where tests and procedures are indicated in addition to those provided above, reimbursement may be reported under terms of the health care assistance policy.

5. Travel and Accommodation- Travel and accommodation (excluding per diem necessitated by an employee's periodic health evaluation shall be reimbursed at 100%. Travel and accommodation for the additional procedures may be reported under the medical assistance policy.

Y 25 15 Fully Reimbursable Medical Expenses

1. The cost of drugs and related doctors' fees for the administration of malaria prophylaxis, hepatitis prophylaxis, typhoid prophylaxis, malaria, typhoid amoeba, bilharzia, rickettsia, hepatitis, and rabies vaccine/treatments may be fully reimbursable at the discretion of the employing organization. Authentic doctor's diagnosis specifying the ailment shall be required to qualify for full reimbursement of treatment expenses. However, the cost of any hospitalization in connection with the treatment of these diseases shall be dealt with as medical expense in terms of the regular medical expense policy.

2. All employees within the Division may be immunized with the Hepatitis B vaccine.

3. All expatriate employees situated in rural areas shall receive injections of gamma globulin at four-monthly intervals.

4. The cost of immunizations necessitated by an employee's travel in connection with his/her responsibilities shall be fully reimbursed.

Y 25 20 Medical Insurance

1. Where an employee's spouse is working for a non-denominational organization having a compulsory medical scheme in operation, he/she cannot claim from his/her spouse's employing organization for medical benefits if he/she has been reimbursed by the medical scheme. If the medical scheme does not pay the full amount of the medical expense involved, the percent of balance may be claimed from the employee's employing organization, according to the normal medical policy.

2. Employing organizations may consider as a legitimate reportable medical expense premiums for medical aid and similar compulsory

health schemes and others which may be approved by the organization, particularly as they may relate to an unemployed spouse of a denominational employee (see Y 15 20 6b).

Y 25 25 Accident Insurance

Employing organizations should arrange for appropriate accident and/or workmen's compensation insurance for their employees.

1. When the employing organization pays the premium the insurance settlement is adjusted as follows:

a. In making the adjustments, it is the right of the employee or his/her beneficiary to receive the full amount of insurance settlement granted by the insurance company covering death or permanent disability.

b. From those portions of the insurance settlement covering salary and medical expense, the employee shall, at the time of insurance settlement, first reimburse his/ her employing organization for the money advanced for salary and medical expenses during the employee's illness.

c. Should the amount granted as salary by the insurance company during the period of illness be less than the denominational salary for that same period, the employing organization shall reimburse the employee up to a denominational salary for the period during which the employing organization is responsible for the payment of the salary.

d. The portion of medical expenses not covered by the insurance settlement shall be subject to the regular medical expense policy.

e. Should the employee receive from the insurance settlement for salary and medical expense more than the employing organization has advanced for the said items, he/she shall refund to the employing organization only the amount originally advanced by the organization.

f. The basis of settlement does not affect any additional insurance policy the employee carries, for which he/she has paid the premium.

2. If the employee elects to take additional accident insurance coverage under the policy provided by his/her employing organization and the employee carries the increased premium expense, the additional benefits of the policy covered by the added premium shall accrue to the benefit of the employee.

3. When the employee and the employing organization share in the basic premium of an accident insurance policy, the foregoing provision shall apply, but on the same percentage basis as the

premium cost is divided, except that death or permanent disability portions of such settlements shall accrue in full to the individual employee or his/her beneficiary

Y 25 30 Medical Leave

1. Minor Illness—A maximum of two weeks' medical leave with full pay may be granted to regular denominational employees for minor illnesses. This provides for a total of two weeks' medical leave in any one calendar year and is designed solely as a safeguard to the employee's salary in case of illness. An absence of more than three days should be certified by an approved physician. For absences due to sickness beyond the two weeks' medical leave allowed, an equal amount of time shall be deducted from the annual leave.

2. Major Illness—In the case of an employee who does not qualify under retirement policies and has an illness requiring prolonged rest, the controlling committee in counsel with the employee shall select the attending physician and place of treatment. Up to a maximum of six months at full salary may be allowed. At the end of six months the case is to be reviewed by the controlling committee and the union. In such cases of prolonged illness, the employee shall not be eligible for annual leave in the same calendar year in which the illness occurs. In countries where social security plans and insurance benefits are available, these shall be applied for as soon as possible.

3. Maternity Leave

a. Maternity leave is a period of approved absence for reasons related to pregnancy and/or confinement. Normal conditions will allow an absence of two weeks before and four weeks after the delivery. For Caesarean section an absence of two weeks before and six weeks after delivery will be allowed.

b. In areas where government laws regulate maternity leave, the denomination shall abide by and apply such laws. If the law provides less than this policy, the employee shall benefit from the difference. (In Kenya, the law provides a a maternity leave of three months).

c. In cases where employees may benefit under the unemployment insurance provided by the employing organization, they may opt to secure such benefits for a minimum of four weeks, but without pay from the employing organization. Their annual leave will not be affected.

Y 25 35 Orthodontic Care, Elective Plastic/Cosmetic Surgery, Unusual Treatments

1. Cost may be considered reportable as follows:
 - a. To correct congenital defects that interfere with normal functions.
 - b. To correct defects that produce severe emotional trauma.
2. Application must be made in writing to the employing organization and be accompanied by an estimate of the cost from the surgeon/ orthodontist, which shall include diagnosis, indications for surgical and other treatment, and prognosis. Authorization must be received in writing prior to undertaking the proposed treatment.
3. Reimbursement of reportable medical expense for this policy may be up to the 75% rate.
4. Maximum annual reportable orthodontic expense shall not exceed 200% of the monthly wage factor for a family, and 100% for a single employee.

Y 35 05 Education Assistance – Denominational School

1. General Application- Education assistance may be granted to regular fulltime denominational employees and credentialed literature evangelists towards school fees for their children who are enrolled in Seventh-day Adventist schools on the primary, secondary, or tertiary levels, or professional schools on the tertiary level. Such assistance shall not be given for more than four children at a time.
2. Dependent Age Limit – If the unmarried dependent child is a full-time student in a Seventh-day Adventist school, the education assistance may be continued up to the 22nd birthday or for a maximum of four years of undergraduate study, or five years for certain authorized curricula, but should not go beyond the 24th birthday, except as provided in paragraph 3 below.
3. Extension of Age Limit – If the dependent cannot complete his education within the limits defined in Y 35 05 2 due to years spent in Adventist Volunteer Service, local language study due to transfer of parents to another union whose language is different from the language of instruction, due to medical reasons that require a long period of recuperation, or because of government regulations or military service, these years may be added to the above maximum for eligibility for education assistance. The controlling committee will review each case and approve the application of this provision of the policy.

4. Ceasing of Assistance – This arrangement ceases to apply when the dependent marries, accepts regular employment or fails to enroll for full load schooling for at least three consecutive school terms/sessions excluding “summer school” session.

5. Schools Outside of Union – Employees’ dependent children attending denominational schools outside the base union or overseas may benefit, by union/ controlling committee approval, from the provision of this policy to the equivalent of the amount they would have received in their base country if they had remained in the primary, secondary or college (post secondary) authorized schools of their base union.

6. Assistance – The organization employing the parent of the student may grant assistance of up to 70% of the tuition, required textbooks and all required fees for dormitory students and up to 60% for day scholars.

a. Music Lessons—The education assistance shall not include charges for private music lessons except where such lessons are required for credit toward music majors or minors, in which case the above percentage may be applied on the basis of the tuition ordinarily charged for an equivalent number of credit hours.

b. Methods of Payment—The organization granting the assistance under the terms of this policy shall make payment directly to the school for credit to the account of a student who enrolled in secondary/academy or college/university. The method of payment for those attending primary schools shall be arranged by the organization providing the assistance.

c. Pre-school—One year of pre-school before primary will be included in the application of this policy.

d. Repeating a Class—In the primary and secondary school, education assistance shall not apply when a student is repeating a class. On the college (post secondary) level, education assistance shall not apply to courses that are being repeated. Where a student repeats a class or course for reasons other than as stated in Y 35 05 3 above, the controlling committee shall study the documented evidence and make a decision.

e. Government Assistance—Where government assistance for education is available to children of an employee sending his/her children to denominational schools, the assistance shall not apply, except when the assistance granted is less than that provided in this policy, in which case the employee is eligible for education assistance with the difference, according to policy.

Y 35 10 Education Assistance —Non Denominational School

1. Primary and Secondary School—Where no Seventh-day Adventist primary and secondary schools are accessible in the place where the employee resides and there is no alternative but to attend a non-Adventist primary or secondary school, assistance may be granted subject to the approval of the controlling committee on the following basis:

- a. The children shall uphold the standards of the Church with special reference to Sabbath observance.
- b. The employee shall present satisfactory evidence that application was made to attend a Seventh-day Adventist secondary school but admission was refused for valid reasons.
- c. The maximum amount of the assistance shall not exceed the cost of a primary or secondary authorized school within the union or conference/field.

2. College and University – Education assistance as provided for children attending denominational schools shall also apply to those studying at a recognized non-Adventist college or university subject to the following conditions:

- a. The course of study is not available at the authorized school of the employing organization.
- b. The approved course of study and the individual student's application is authorized by the employing organization.
- c. The assistance shall be based on the provision of assistance on Y 20 05 6 but should not exceed the cost of attendance at the Division/union authorized college or university.
- d. The union will determine the ceiling for the assistance for the board and lodging up to what it would cost in the Division/union authorized college or university.

Y 35 15 Child Adoption

Employees without children of their own may legally adopt two children and those with one child may legally adopt one child to whom all relevant allowances may apply. Any children adopted outside of this policy will not receive the relevant allowances given to the dependent children of the employee.

Y 40 05 Funeral Allowance

An allowance shall be granted toward the funeral expense of a full-time denominational employee or his/her spouse or dependent children. Wherever the family of the deceased may need financial assistance, the maximum assistance for the union, Division and

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Division institutions shall not exceed the equivalent of three times their respective wage factor. In a situation where the amount provided for in this policy does not provide reasonable relief, the leadership of the relevant entity shall make a decision on the amount to be added which shall not exceed the equivalent of the wage factor.

Y 40 10 Compassionate Leave

In the case of serious illness or death involving the immediate family of an employee or an employee's spouse, the administration is authorized to grant compassionate leave with pay to a maximum of ten working days in a calendar year for the employee and the spouse if employed. The purpose of the compassionate leave is to visit, assist and make funeral arrangements that are necessary.

In the case where more than one member of the immediate family of an employee or an employee's spouse should be critically ill or die in the same calendar year, the employing organization will decide on a case-by-case basis whether to grant additional compassionate leave days beyond the ten working days provided in the preceding paragraph, it being understood that no more than five working days can be added in the same calendar year.

For the purpose of this policy, immediate family shall be defined as biological parents, biological children, legally adopted children of an employee, and spouse. In case of a single employee whose parents and/or biological brothers or sisters are deceased, the immediate family may be defined as foster parents as declared in the personal information document.

Y 40 25 Entertainment Allowance

When an employee is expected to entertain official visitors in his/her home, he/she will be granted an entertainment allowance for meals and lodging that are provided. Each organization within the Division will develop a policy on entertainment allowance and set the amount of the allowance for meals and lodging at the time of the year-end meeting.

The final section of the working policy (ECD) I want to highlight here is the "Z" section that deals with retirement issues. It is important that shepherdeses understand the policies relating to

retirement since retirement affects all the members of the family—father, mother, and children.

Z 25 05 Criteria for Recognizing Service

Employees shall be eligible for service credit according to the following:

1. Minimum and Maximum Ages

- a. Employees are eligible to earn service credit from the first of the month in which they attain the age of 18 until the first of the month in which they attain the age of 65, up to a maximum of 40 years of service. No additional service credit toward retirement benefits is earned after 40 years of service.
- b. Any service after the age of 65 shall be by mutual consent of the employee and the employer, but the final decision shall rest with the employer. In a situation where an employee who has not served for 40 years is requested by the employer to continue serving beyond the age of 65, he or she shall earn service credit toward the maximum of 40 years of service. Such an arrangement shall continue at the discretion of the employer.
- c. Church retirees who are invited to serve the organization shall be remunerated according to the regular wage and benefit provisions of the entity concerned. The employer shall pay the difference between the retirement benefits and the regular remuneration.

Z 25 10 Settlement

Service credit shall not be granted for the number of months of remuneration that are paid to an employee as a financial settlement at the time of termination of employment

Z 25 20 Educational Employees

Full-time employees of educational institutions who have the option to be off duty during the vacation period between school terms shall be granted service credit for twelve months if they serve during the full school year.

Z 25 25 Literature Evangelists

Regular literature evangelists shall be granted service credit for each calendar year their records show that they have met the minimum requirements for service as defined in FP 80 as follows:

1. All years prior to 1981: A full-time literature evangelist should

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complete a minimum of 1200 hours and at least 40 weekly reports annually.

2. From January 1, 1981 a full-time literature evangelist shall be granted a full year of service credit for each calendar year they work a minimum of 1600 hours and submit at least 44 weekly reports.

3. From 1981 onwards, a literature evangelist who completes 800 hours of work within a calendar year shall be credited with 50% of a year of service plus proportionate credit for hours between 801 and 1600.

4. Students – Students on the scholarship plan are not eligible for service credit.

Z 25 55 Service Credit During Study Leave

1. Employees who break their service for further studies shall be granted full service credit for time spent in obtaining the intended qualifications, whether sponsored or not by the employing organization.

a. The study leave must have been approved by the employing organization before the employee left for studies.

b. Credit shall be granted for each year of study, up to a maximum of the normal duration of the program of study.

c. The employee must return to full-time denominational service within one year of the awarding of the degree.

d. To earn credit the employee must serve for a minimum of five years after completion of study.

e. The qualification/degree must be awarded before service credit is granted.

2. Contributions to Retirement Plan Fund—Where applicable the employing organization shall be responsible to pay to the Retirement Plan for the time granted as if the person had been on its payroll.

Z 25 65 Employed Spouse of Beneficiary

The Division Retirement Plan Committee shall determine whether the employed spouse of a beneficiary is eligible to earn service credit while the retired spouse is receiving retirement benefits.

Z 30 05 Service and Age Requirements—1. Minimum Years of Service— Denominational employees are required to have a minimum of 15 years of service credit in order to be eligible for admission to the East-Central Africa Division Retirement Plan.

2. Normal Retirement Age—The normal retirement age is 65 years or 40 years of service, whichever comes first. An employee who meets the service credit requirement and who retires on his/her normal retirement date shall be entitled to receive retirement benefits.

3. Employer Initiated Continuation—a). In exceptional cases the employer may request an employee to continue beyond 65 years of age or 40 years of service.

b). Any service after the age of 65 and/or beyond 40 years of service shall be by mutual consent of the employee and employer, but the final decision shall rest with the employer.

c). In a situation where an employee who has not served for 40 years is requested by the employer to continue serving beyond the age of 65, he/ she shall earn service credit toward the maximum 40 years of service.

d). An employee who has reached the age of 65 and has put in 40 years of service may continue to serve as a regular employee, if requested by the employer, but shall not earn service credit beyond 40 years of service.

4. Early Retirement—An employee who has reached the age of 60 and has 35 years of service credit may elect to retire and receive benefits.

5. Employer Recommended Retirement—An employing organization may also elect to recommend an employee for retirement benefits who has reached the age of 60 and who has 35 years of service credit provided the organization pays to the retirement plan the equivalent of his/her basic remuneration for two months and one additional month for every year short of either 65 years of age or 40 years of service.

This provision is not a guarantee of continuous employment to the age of 65.

6. Termination of Employment Before Age Requirement—An employee who has put in a minimum of 15 years of service but does not desire to continue serving shall wait until the normal retirement age of 65 before he/she can apply to receive retirement benefits. Otherwise, such an employee will be eligible for benefits according to policy Y 50 05.

Z 30 10 Disabled Employees

1. Eligibility—An employee with a minimum of 15 years of service

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credit who becomes disabled before qualifying for regular benefits on the basis of age may apply for temporary benefits on the basis of disability. A medical report from a qualified physician shall accompany the application.

2. Temporary Benefits—The granting of temporary benefits on the basis of disability before retirement age will be limited to those who experience the disability while in full-time denominational employment. Exceptions may be made for employees who voluntarily discontinue service in an effort to find employment that is compatible with their health condition and who apply for benefits within two years.

3. Reemployment—Disability beneficiaries who have regained their health to the degree of being able to resume full-time employment in the denomination or elsewhere shall be expected to accept employment until such time as they are eligible for regular benefits. Such reemployment shall require a doctor's certification.

Z 30 25 Surviving Spouse

The surviving spouse of an employee may qualify for benefits under the following provisions:

1. Eligibility —If the individual served with the deceased for not less than 15 years, or shared in the employee's active service for less than 15 years but was in service prior to marriage or after the active service of the employee ceased, and personal service added to the service of the employee during their married life amounts to 15 years or more. Such surviving spouses must also meet the age requirements. Care should be exercised that a surviving spouse, whose total service credit is short, not be admitted to the Plan until it has been found that no other provision can be made for the individual's support.

2. Dependent Children—If the surviving spouse is not eligible for retirement benefits under paragraph 1 above but is left with one or more dependent children up to a maximum of 4, the individual may be granted assistance from the Plan until such time as the children have reached the age of 18 or 24 if still a full time student and qualified to receive educational assistance, provided the deceased served a minimum of 15 years.

3. Employment —A surviving spouse, if employed full time at the time of the death of the employee, shall not be eligible for retirement benefits if in good health and able to continue employment. If because of age or disability it becomes necessary for a surviving

spouse to cease work, the person may be admitted to the Plan in the same way and under the same conditions as other employees.

4. Age 55—Special Provisions — The surviving spouse of a denominational employee may be granted retirement benefits following the decease of the employee even though the person does not have dependent children if the spouse has not been employed on a regular basis and does not have adequate employable skills, provided the person is at least 55 years of age and meets the minimum service requirement. When a surviving spouse has not reached the age of 55 and because of lack of training is unable to secure suitable employment, the individual may be granted temporary benefits for a period of up to 18 months to enable him/her to secure the necessary preparation in order to obtain proper employment.

5. Unemployable Widow/Widower – If a widow/widower is under the age of 55, has no training or employable skills, and has no reasonable expectation of acquiring employable skills, the committee shall have the power to grant his/her retirement benefits on the basis of his/her deceased spouse's service credit or as circumstances may indicate.

6. Employment With Dependent Children — When a surviving spouse who is a beneficiary of the Retirement Plan because of having been left with one or more dependent children secures full-time employment, the benefits will be terminated; but the Retirement Plan Committee may continue the retirement allowance for dependent children on the following basis:

- a. 1 – 2 children 40% of family rate
- b. 3 children 60% of family rate
- c. 4 children 80% of family rate

Under these conditions the employer should pay his/her salary or wages without taking into account the fact that he/she is receiving assistance from the Plan, and the period of time during which he/she serves as a full-time employee will be added to any service credit which he/she may already have

7. Remarriage of Temporary Beneficiary — The benefits of a surviving spouse, who is a temporary beneficiary because of having been left with dependent child/ children, shall be terminated at the time of remarriage. The retirement allowance for children may be continued if the deceased employee had 15 or more years of service credit.

8. Remarriage of Regular Beneficiary — A surviving spouse either

receiving or eligible for regular benefits on the basis of personal service, the deceased employee's service, or a combination of both, will receive benefits from the Plan at the single rate after remarriage.

9. Orphans – When children became orphaned by the death of the last surviving parent who was either an employee or a beneficiary, the benefits due to the family on the basis of years of service rendered may be granted to the children on the following basis:

- a. Where there are two or more children, the full family rate will apply.
- b. Where there is only one child, 75% of the family rate will apply.
- c. Medical and education assistance shall be applied according to the service credit of the deceased beneficiary (parent).
- d. Regular benefits shall cease when the child can no longer qualify as a dependent.

Z 30 30 Review of Temporary Beneficiaries

Once each year the Division Retirement Plan Committees shall review the cases of temporary beneficiaries within their territories to determine which beneficiaries shall continue to receive benefits from the Plan. In cases of disability, medical reports shall be submitted in support of continued benefits.

Z 40 05 Monthly Rates

The regular benefits payable to an eligible employee shall be based on the following formula: (Salary percentage times Relevant Monthly Wage Factor times Benefit Rate).

1. Salary Percentage – The salary percentage shall be the average of the last ten years of active service while earning service credit or the last salary rate, whichever is higher.
2. Relevant Monthly Wage Factor–The factor on which the employee's salary was based at the time he/she ceased employment, in its current (updated) form. In the case of an intradivision and/or interdivision employee from the Division who has served in another Division, the wage factor of the base union/country shall be the basis of the monthly wage factor (see provision of Z 40 15 for intradivision and interdivision employees desiring to retire in another country). The retirement benefits of a person who continues to serve beyond the age of 65 (see Z 30 05 paragraph 2) will be based on the current wage factor.
3. Benefit Rate – The benefit rate is determined by applying the employee's service credit to a scale which provides 2 per cent per

year of service commencing at 30% for 15 years and ending at 80% for 40 years.

a. Family Rate — The family rate benefits shall be 100% of the monthly benefit rate but, shall not exceed 80 percent of the employee's actual remuneration. The family rate only applies when the employee and spouse have been serving together. It does not apply when the spouse worked for a non-church organization. The family rate only applies when the employee and spouse have been serving together. The family rate shall not apply when the spouse is eligible for an external retirement plan.

b. Basic Rate — The basic rate (or single rate) of benefits shall not exceed a maximum of 75% of the family rate.

c. Separate Benefits — Separate benefits at the basic rate may be granted to a husband and spouse who have both been employed in the denomination, provided each meets the requirements for eligibility according to the respective personal service records. In case of the death of a spouse beneficiary, the surviving spouse may elect to receive the deceased's benefits if it is higher than his/hers, if he/she is vested as a spouse.

d. Community Rate – Employees who are not audited annually according to the Division approved wage scale but are remunerated on a community wage rate that is less than the Division wage scale shall have their benefits calculated as follows: The amount they received for each year shall be divided by the 100% of Scale C wage factor for their conference/field/institution to arrive at their wage scale rate. This wage scale rate shall be considered equivalent to their audited rate for the year.

4. Literature Evangelist's Retirement Rate—The maximum retirement rate for literature evangelists shall be 100 percent. The literature evangelist's annual sales shall be the basis of calculating his/her benefit rate based on the following formula:

a. Credentialed LEs Actual annual sales x 45% divide by (basic wage factor times 10)

b. Licensed LEs: Actual annual sales x 45% divide by (basic wage factor times 9)

5. Continuance of Family Rate — In case of the death of a spouse, the family rate shall be continued to the surviving spouse for three months.

6. Basic Rate Beneficiaries — Single beneficiaries and eligible surviving spouses shall receive benefits at the basic rate.

7. Marriage— Single Individual — A single individual receiving

benefits on the basis of his/her own service record shall continue to draw benefits from the Plan at the basic rate after marriage.

8. Divorce Situations — In cases where the courts have not made a determination of the ex-spouse's rights to retirement benefits, and the two parties are unable to reach a mutual agreement at the time of admission to the Plan, the Committee is empowered to allocate the benefits between the two parties in harmony with the following guidelines:

- a. The ex-spouse makes application to the Retirement Plan Committee for a share of the employee's retirement benefits, and
- b. If the ex-spouse was married to the employee during at least 15 years of his/her valid service.
- c. The ex-spouse shall be granted 50 percent of the retirement benefits that the employee earned during the years of marriage.
- d. The ex-spouse who qualifies for a portion of the employee's retirement benefits shall also be eligible for a prorated portion of health care expense assistance and funeral allowance.
- e. These provisions shall also apply in cases of legal separation.

9. Lump Sum Option — Retirement benefits may be granted, in full or in part, as a lump sum in countries which that require employees to provide this option to their employees.

Z 40 10 Dependent Allowances

Beneficiaries of the Division Retirement Plan who are receiving the family rate benefits are given medical and education assistance for their children according to the following provisions:

1. Eligibility—The children are unmarried and unemployed and have not reached their 18th birthday.
2. Status of Parents—The employee died while in denominational service after 15 years of service or the beneficiary was admitted to the Plan directly from active employment.
3. Medical Assistance—Medical assistance shall be paid in harmony with the provisions of Z 40 20 up to the age of 18 or 24 if still a full-time student and receiving educational assistance.
4. Educational Assistance— Full-Time Student—If the unmarried, dependent child is a full-time student in a Seventh-day Adventist school, education assistance may be continued after 18 years of age up to a maximum of four years of undergraduate study, or up to the 24th birthday. Should the student go to school other than in his home country, the benefits will be based either on the cost in his homeland or where he is going to school, whichever is

least expensive. Where the student attends a non-denominational institution, the assistance shall be based on the policy of the base union.

b. Amount of Assistance—The amount of assistance shall be prorated based on the service credit of the beneficiary. To beneficiaries with 35 years of service or more, 100 per cent of the policy will be given. For those with less than 35 years, the assistance shall be 100% multiplied by the service credit divided by 35.

5. Exceptions—Dependent allowance is not granted for children that are born or adopted after the beneficiary discontinued full-time denominational service. However, an exception may be made for children born to a beneficiary during the time he/she is receiving disability retirement benefits provided the disability occurred before the normal retirement age.

Z 40 25 Medical Assistance

Beneficiaries having medical, dental, optical, and/or hearing aid expenses are granted assistance on the following basis:

1. Amount of Assistance—The amount of medical assistance shall be on the following basis:

a. No medical assistance with less than 15 years of service except those who were employed (in Eritrea, Ethiopia, Kenya, Tanzania, and Uganda) between January 1, 1981, and June 30, 1987, whose vesting period shall be 10 years.

b. After 15 years of service, the outpatient expense will be paid at 30% assistance plus 2 1/4% for each year of service credit above 15, rounded up or down to the nearest number of years, up to a maximum of 75%.

c. An additional 15% assistance shall be granted on hospitalization, including professional fees and hospital related expenses.

2. Non-routine Expenses—Non-routine specialized kind of medical expenses shall be referred to the Retirement Plan Committee for approval before any assistance is granted. The Retirement Plan may establish maximums to which assistance is applied on an individual case basis.

3. Dependent Children—A beneficiary with dependent child/children is granted assistance on their medical expenses. If the beneficiary's spouse is employed, assistance is granted on the children's expenses that are not otherwise covered by insurance provided by the spouse's employer.

4. Employed Beneficiaries—Beneficiaries who are employed and

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who are being provided medical insurance by their employer shall be granted assistance on the expenses that are not covered by such insurance.

5. Assistance While Residing or Visiting Abroad—If a beneficiary travels to or lives in another country that has a higher level of medical charges, the medical assistance policy shall be applied against 30 per cent of the total amount of medical bills as paid by this beneficiary while he/she is residing or visiting abroad up to a maximum of 20 times his/her monthly retirement benefit per year. If the beneficiary returns to his/her base union and incurs medical expenses in his/her base country, he/ she may submit all of these expenses through his/her base union for assistance under the regular policy.

6. Evidence of Payment—Assistance is granted only on satisfactory evidence of actual payment made by the beneficiary for medical expenses.

7. Different Guidelines and Limitations—With the approval of the Division Retirement Plan Committee, unions may apply different guidelines and limitations.

8. Reimbursement—Requests for reimbursement of medical expense shall be submitted to and calculated by the respective conferences/ fields, institutions or unions no later than six months beyond the date incurred.

Z 40 30 Funeral Allowance

A funeral allowance may be granted in the case of the death of a beneficiary or a dependent spouse. It shall be paid to the surviving dependent or, if there is no surviving dependent, to the person who has undertaken the responsibility for the funeral arrangements. The amount shall be actual expenses up to three times the deceased's relevant wage factor at the time of death. Claims must be made within six months of the death of the beneficiary or dependent spouse or dependent child.

Z 45 15 Service After Retirement

A Church retiree who is invited to serve the organization shall be remunerated according to the regular wage and benefit provisions of the entity concerned. The employer shall pay the difference between the retirement benefits and the regular remuneration.

These notes are only excerpts from some portions of the working

policy, and are not to be perceived as eliminating the need to read the policy book itself. Rather, these notes should enhance our desire to study and understand the policies used in the governance of God's church.

Review Questions

1. List at least four functions of the working policy.
2. Provide an outline of the arrangement of the GC working policy.
3. In the ancient days, the minister was known a "the man of God" or sometimes "the man of the Spirit" (True/False)
4. The ministry is not merely a profession; it is a calling (True/False)
5. It is okay to perceive the ministry as a stop-gap occupation until some other more attractive occupation comes along (True/False)
6. Pastors are the spiritual leaders of the Church at all levels (True/False)
7. Pastors' salaries can be paid from non-church funds without any approval from the General Conference (True/False)
8. An annual _____ budget shall be provided for the _____ of qualifying personnel for use in situations where it shall be necessary for a _____ to accompany his or her partner on _____ travel.
9. The normal retirement age for regular denominational employees is _____
10. Denominational employees cannot earn service credit beyond _____ years.
11. Denominational employees are required to have a minimum of _____ years of service credit in order to be eligible for admission to the East-Central Africa Division Retirement Plan
12. Under what circumstances would the surviving spouse of a deceased employee be granted retirement benefits even though the person does not have dependent children?

LEVEL
- III -
*Shepherdess and her
Family*



Lesson 301

Ministerial Family and its Influence

Influence is defined as the ability to produce an effect on others. It is the capacity to have an effect on the character, development, or behavior of someone or something. All people, especially leaders have the capacity to influence others either for evil or for good. God recognizes the power of influence for good when he sends us as His servants to be the light and salt to the world (Mathew 5: 13-16).

In the great commission when He says: “go and make disciples of all nations” He is giving power and authority to his followers to influence the entire world to accept God’s unfailing love and live as His children in this world while waiting for the promised world to come. All Christians, all church members are involved in this great commission but a pastor with his home stands as a leader who sets the church in motion (Joshua 24:14-15). God desires that the stand and commitment of a pastor’s home is firmly established and well defined. Pastor’s family life, his ministry and lifestyle are looked upon as a direction of the journey he wishes his members to venture in.

Ellen White comments as follows, “It is our own character and experience that determine our influence upon others. In order to convince others of the power of Christ’s grace, we must know its power in our own hearts and lives. The gospel we present for the saving of souls must be the gospel by which our own souls are saved. Only through a living faith in Christ as a personal Saviour

is it possible to make our influence felt in a skeptical world. If we would draw sinners out of the swift-running current, our own feet must be firmly set upon the Rock, Christ Jesus" (*Ministry of Healing, 469*).

If the ministerial family is heading in a wrong direction (not walking the talk) definitely some members will follow and may perish as a result, but God will hold the minister and his family accountable for their blood (Ezekiel 3:18). What qualifies us for ministry is not our skills, education, gifts and talents, not even religious practices that we are used to (though all these are not bad in themselves); it is our likeness to Christ. As pastors spouses we minister to His precious flock daily. It is His desire that we become His heart, His hands, His feet, His mouth and His everything as we touch the perishing world. When we are like Him our ministry will be easy.

God is not sending us, so that we imitate the ways of the world, He is sending us there to make a difference. Our work is becoming hard; we are using a lot of energy and resources because we have not stood like His ambassadors. "What a man is has greater influence than what he says. The quiet, consistent, godly life is a living epistle, known and read of all men. True character is not something shaped from without, or put on; but it is something radiating from within. If true goodness, purity, meekness, lowliness, and equity are dwelling in the heart, the fact will be manifest in the character; and such a character is full of power. (*Gospel Workers, 243*).

This does not suggest that we live a gloomy life in our ministry; the Lord of our lives wants us to enjoy life and to be happy, fulfilled servants. He wants us to laugh, to celebrate, and to glory in our assignments. He wants us to rejoice in our ministry; but whatever you do, do it all for the glory of God" *1 Corinthians 10:31*

It is my prayer that our families will influence others for good. Let there be many who will find themselves in the kingdom of God as a result of our influence on them.

Group Exercise

1. Discuss ways of the world that pastors spouses tend to imitate
2. What can we do to make us live in the world but not of the world? John 17:16

Lesson 302

What Husbands want their Spouses to Know About Men

Jansen & Gloria Trotman

Men often complain that their spouses just don't understand them. Men would like their spouses to know them better so that they can enjoy each other's fellowship more.

1. A man constantly needs to have his self-esteem enhanced. Successful spouses are ego-builders.
2. A husband needs to feel loved, appreciated and accepted.
3. He wants to be made to feel important, competent and worthwhile.
4. He needs to feel that he is in charge of his home.
5. He needs a spouse who complements him, not one who competes with him.
6. He needs a spouse who is feminine and is proud of her femininity.
7. He needs a spouse who keeps herself desirable and attractive.

8. He needs a spouse who takes care of her home.
9. He needs a spouse who understands how important his job is to him.
10. He needs a spouse who fulfills his sexual needs.
11. He needs a spouse who supports him emotionally and spiritually.
12. He wants a spouse who knows how to harness her moods.
13. He wants a spouse he can trust.
14. He wants a spouse who treats him like a king and makes him feel like superman.
15. He needs a woman who is happy to be his spouse.

Lesson 303

Challenges Facing Marital Relationships in Pastoral Families

Pastoral families live in the same fallen world. Their marriages face many of the same challenges as other marriages. Things like lack of communication, money issues, parenting, personality issues, sex, and competing commitments, among other issues, are experienced in pastoral homes. This fact, leads us to understand that they are human too in need God's grace. Being in ministry does not make them holier nor does it make them immune to temptations. Just by saying yes to ministry and devoting themselves to serving the Lord does not make them automatically superheroes. As much as they are shepherding the sheep, they need to bear in mind that they are also sheep vulnerable to attacks of the wolves. To be honest marriage is difficult to everyone but when it comes to pastoral families, we discover that, they have added pressure to their marital conflicts. The following are some of the unique pressures they experience

- **Living in a fishbowl with high expectations from parishioners and employers to be all things to all people.**

It is common for a pastoral family to be looked at as spiritual champions in every situation, especially in the way they disciple their children to be true followers of Jesus Christ, what they wear, how they spend their money and where they go. Sometimes even the things that a pastor's family has nothing to do with, still affects them. It is very true, that God expects them to live an exemplary

life, to reflect Christ and to make their homes little heavens on earth, a fact which applies to all Christians. Ellen White says that, "The more closely the members of a family are united in their work in the home, the more uplifting and helpful will be the influence that father and mother and sons and daughters will exert outside the home (*Adventist Home* 37.5). While this fact remains to be true, being monitored and gossiped around increases pressure to the pastoral home that other homes do not experience. Pastoral ministry is the only profession where by life at home is associated closely with the life at work.

- **In most cases families get the left overs of the ministry**

Sometimes when ministry becomes a life style, a pastor being at home may not necessarily mean being out of work. A pastor is subjected to responding to calls, attending to emergencies, praying for those who may request for it and attending to many other unplanned duties which normally interfere with his time for the family. His spouse and children are continually craving for attention and competing with parishioners. It is very common for pastors' spouses and children to only receive the exhausted and emotionally drained father and husband. This condition puts the pastoral family at risk of having a family with broken relationships.

- **When spouses are exposed to challenges the pastor is experiencing at work**

Pastors share a lot of their challenges and frustrations they are going through with their spouses who on the other hand have nowhere to share their burdens. No one can blame him for that because he also needs an outlet, some where he can ventilate, and the only place is to his partner in ministry and to God the owner of the mission. When the pastor is stressed and is experiencing emotional fluctuation from ministry, children observe. This situation costs both spouse and children emotionally.

- **Frequent transfers**

Moving from one place to another in the course of ministry becomes a reality that cannot be easily altered. Each move is challenging and, in some cases traumatic. One PK shared her experience saying that before she finished her elementary school, they had moved seven times which meant seven schools. This demanded a lot of adjustment, socially, emotionally, physically and

even academically. It meant, new friends, weather, new culture, teachers and sometimes new curriculum and many other new things, pleasing and unpleasing.

WAY FORWARD

Lamenting against challenges will not solve anything in your marriage or ministry, doing something about it will make a difference. First and foremost, you should be aware that having healthy marriage is an important asset in ministry. Whatever you do should be to glorify God. The following are some of the things that can bring about victory to your marital relationship and ministry.

- **Thank God for having a family.**

It is a gift one should not take for granted because not everyone has it, value and cherish it as much as God's grace will permit you. Counting the blessing will give you strength to move forward and trust in the power of God who called you. Doing this will help you to have a positive attitude against the challenges you may face because ministry can have a positive effect on marriage and family.

- **Be encouraged by the words of 1Peter 5:4 “And when the Chief Shepherd appears you will receive the crown of glory that does not fade away.”**

If you remain committed to the divine assignment your reward is sure. Let this rich reward motivate us to persevere in service and love the Savior who gave sacrifice beyond measure.

- **Stay in Prayer Roman 12:12. “Rejoicing in hope, patient in tribulation, continuing steadfastly in prayer”**

Ellen White reminds us in the book *Steps to Christ* that, “There is no chapter in our experience too dark for Him to read; there is no perplexity too difficult for Him to unravel. No calamity can befall the least of His children no anxiety harasses the soul, no joy cheer, no sincere prayer escapes the lips, of which our heavenly father is unobservant, or which He takes no immediate interest.” Claim the promise that he will be with us till the end (Mathew 28:18-20). Pray earnestly for your husband's ministry.

- **Set firm boundaries**

Sometimes be ready to disappoint others for the wellbeing of your family, because that is your first mission field. “Our work for Christ

is to begin with the family, in the home.... There is no missionary field more important than this" (*Christian Service, 206*). Always remember that it is not Ministry vs Marriage/Family. Both should be part of your ministry. As pastoral couple, create more time in order to have quality relationship. As much as we cannot add hours to our day but we can add order and priority to those hours so that we are able to maximize the time we have with our spouses each day to have the kind of relationship that will give honor and glory to God.

- **Share ministry partnership with your spouse**

This depends on your spiritual gifts, interests, age of children, your health etc. There is no formula for this. Partnership in ministry strengthens bonds of relationship as well.

GROUP QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION

1. *What are some ways of setting boundaries in ministry?*
2. *Despite the presence of challenges in ministry, mention blessings that pastoral couples are more likely to enjoy compared to other couples.*

Lesson 304

Signs of Trouble in a Pastoral Marriage

Submitted by pastoral couples

1. Decreasing time spent with each other
2. Diminishing sex life or no sex life at all
3. Being quickly agitated and overly sensitive
4. Infrequent church attendance by spouse
5. Husband does not help with household chores anymore
6. Reduced response to affection of spouse
7. Lack of interest in things previously considered interesting
8. Loss of enthusiasm for each other (“numbness”)
9. Break in accustomed habits, e.g. no longer going to bed together.
10. Extreme privacy habits like not allowing one's spouse to answer the other's cell phone
11. Not traveling together to common destinations
12. Poor interest in one's self
13. Appearing bored in each other's company
14. Constant, sharp criticism
15. Deterioration in all aspects of relationships (conversation, mealtimes, etc.)
16. Spending more time outside the home with other persons, besides the family



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17. Deliberately failing to fulfill roles or lack of interest in commitment
18. Reduction of attention to the spouse
19. Verbal, physical or emotional abuse whether small or great
20. Unresolved negative issues
21. Comparing the spouse to others outside the home in a negative way
22. Withdrawal or separation from each other emotionally and/or physically
23. Lack of cooperation
24. Lack of meaningful communication
25. Loss of interest in family devotions
26. Spouse's loss of interest in housework
27. Excessive time spent on the computer viewing pornography, or chatting online with a person other than your spouse
28. Mechanical sex
29. Too much time spent with church members and on the job
30. Name calling or addressing each other coldly
31. The pastor always has certain members in his/her car
32. Problems with in-laws at home when previously there were none
33. Giving more attention to another party than to one's spouse
34. Refusing to seek counseling or to work together on solutions for problems and issues
35. Silent treatment/withdrawal
36. Lack of interest in spiritual things:
 - Not going to church together
 - Not sitting in church together
 - Not getting together for morning and evening devotions
 - One spouse leaves the church when the other gets up to preach or take part
37. Less couple time to do fun things
38. No more love talk
39. Less affection shown

40. Reduced feelings of being romantic
41. Abandonment of common interests
42. Distrust and suspicion
43. No more celebrations of special occasions (birthdays, anniversaries)
44. Sleeping in separate beds/rooms
45. Refusal to be seen in public together
46. Frequent quarrels

Collected by Jansen and Gloria Trotman at Pastoral Workshops

Lesson 305

Managing Conflict Creatively

1. The Inevitability of Conflict in Relationships

The only persons who do not experience conflict are dead persons. There are many reasons why conflicts arise between individuals.

- A. Different backgrounds
- B. Different training
- C. Different orientation
- D. Different ways of viewing things
- E. Different temperaments
- F. Different mind set
- G. Different past experiences
- H. Different sexes
- I. Difficult persons to get along with

II. Conflict Defined

A conflict is “a situation in which two or more human beings desire goals which they perceive as being attainable by one or the other but not by both” (McSwain, Treadwell, *Conflict Ministry in the Church*, p. 25).

A conflict is “a struggle over values and claims to scarce status, power and resources, in which the aims of the opponents are to neutralize, injure or eliminate their rivals” (Coser, *The Functions of Social Conflict*, p. 8).

III. Typical Conflict Situations

- A. Conflict over money
- B. Conflict over child training
- C. Conflict over in-laws
- D. Conflict over positions

IV. Getting Along with Those People No One can get Along With Difficult types of people to get along with

- A. Over-sensitive
- B. Jealous
- C. Competitive
- D. Gossipy
- E. Unforgiving

V. How to Handle the Difficult Types

- A. Draw on your spiritual resources.
- B. Wear them out with love and kindness.
- C. Don't judge the other persons too quickly or too harshly.
- D. Be patient under pressure.
- E. Try to see the other person's point of view. Try to be understanding. Each one has his/her story.
- F. Try to see the good in the problem. It will help to build your character.
- F. Take a long view of the situation.
- G. Study and employ the best strategies of successful people.
- H. Realize that all that annoys is but for a moment.
- I. Be professional in all your dealings with colleagues, subordinates, or supervisors.
- J. Be mature even when others behave childishly.
- K. Be supportive even when others let you down. Teamwork is essential to success.
- L. Don't let others dictate your behavior by responding in kind.
- M. Be respectful even to the ill-mannered.
- N. Communicate. Many problems evaporate when we listen to the other person.
- O. Make the most of listening opportunities.
- P. Be friendly even to the indifferent.
- Q. Do not be afraid to confront but do it with love, kindness and compassion.
- R. Be ready to admit your mistakes and to forgive the mistakes of others.

VI Steps in Settling Conflicts

- A. Admit that there is a conflict. Conflicts do not disappear by denying they exist.
- B. Identify who has the need. The person who is bothered by the issue is the one who has the need.
- C. Brainstorm to find as many possible solutions. Randomly jot down possible solutions. Do not discuss them yet.
- D. Discuss the possible solutions and pick the best one.
- E. Follow through.
- F. Reassess to see if the solution is working.
- G. If the solution is not working, try another solution.

Don't be afraid or reluctant to seek the help of your pastor or another trained professional, if your own attempts to settle the conflict prove futile. (Eph. 4:11 - 13). God has a deep and abiding interest in the happiness and success in our relationships..



Lesson 306

A Pastor's Spouse's Nightmare: LONELINESS

Many ministerial spouses complain of loneliness. What definition would you give of loneliness? What does loneliness look like/feel like?

Definition: "Isolation; longing for friends, company; unhappiness at being alone." *Webster's New World Dictionary*.

A. Reasons for Loneliness

1. Moving to a new location is a common cause. Most people resent moves. The pastor's spouse has a life of moving from one place to another. Moving disrupts relationships and causes uprooting of plans, habits and sometimes goals. Some people are slower than others in making new acquaintances. If the pastor's spouse is not a gifted social mixer, but likes relationships anyway, her new life could be tinged with loneliness.
2. Traveling husbands can also be a contributing factor to loneliness in the life of a pastor's spouse. Many spouses have expressed their dread of having husbands who travel extensively. Some of these spouses do not enjoy sound sleep when their husbands travel. Some are scared and others just cannot settle into a normal routine when the pastor is away. Two recommended texts for sleeplessness and fear when the pastor is absent are the following:
"I will both lay me down in peace, and sleep; for thou,

Lord, only makest me dwell in safety.” Ps. 4:8 “I laid me down and slept; I awaked; for the Lord sustained me.” Ps. 3:5

3. Lack of adult company can also lead to loneliness. If a mom has a brood of preschoolers as her only companions, she could easily long for someone of a more mature age to share her thoughts with. The lack of adult interaction can be quite disconcerting.

B. Some ways to beat loneliness:

1. Try to find ways of being more occupied. Pick a project and work on it. Give yourself a realistic deadline. The sense of fulfillment that follows is invaluable.
2. Do something for somebody. Turning the focus away from ourselves is a wonderful deterrent for loneliness.
3. Develop a skill. There is always room for self-improvement.
4. Discuss your feelings of loneliness with your spouse. Do not complain, but share your feelings with him. Let him know that you understand the demands of his job. However tell him that you think it is really important that he at least admits that you are the best judge of your own feelings. Ask him to give you some suggestions to help you overcome your loneliness.
5. Make some friends. Allow people to catch a glimpse of your friendliness.
6. Learn to appreciate and enjoy your own company.
7. Talk to God about your loneliness. He created you a social being.

FOR DISCUSSION: What is the difference between loneliness and solitude?

Loneliness is painful and sometimes is spawned by our own attitudes. Loneliness can lead to self-pity and personal discomfort.

Solitude is a state of being alone, but is a gift that can be of great benefit to us. Through solitude we can find out whom we are. Through solitude we can connect with God. Through solitude we are refreshed and renewed to improve our own lives and to serve others. Creativity and determination can help us beat the state of loneliness.

Lesson 307

Money Management

One of the most frightening experiences is living a life that is loaded with financial stresses.

Financial challenges are a known cause of marital breakdowns.

FOR DISCUSSION: What are some of the problems that arise from financial stress?

A. Causes of financial problems

1. Lack of communication about finances. A couple needs to establish early in their marriage the benefits of discussing money matters. Making a budget. How are the expenses to be handled? What does each partner earn? A savings plan. Goals. Personal allowance.
2. Insufficient knowledge on financial planning. Attend seminars, read books, watch videos that instruct on the importance of handling money carefully. It might even be necessary to see a financial counselor.
3. The tendency to keep up with the Joneses. Realize that each person's situation is unique. Do not try to compare ourselves with others. Use our resources to meet our needs.
4. An attitude of discontentment. Be thankful for what you have got and ask God for the wisdom to get more. Do not underestimate the benefit of patience and waiting. However, do not be slow to see opportunities for improvement.



Budget

House	—
Food	—
Medicine	—
Savings	—

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4. An attitude of discontentment. Be thankful for what you have got and ask God for the wisdom to get more. Do not underestimate the benefit of patience and waiting. However, do not be slow to see opportunities for improvement.
5. Impulsive spending. Plan before you spend. Prioritize. Look out for bargains, but do not be a prey of sales. Shop with care and thought.

B. Solutions

1. Seek God's wisdom and guidance. Claim His promise to supply wisdom and instruction.
2. Always put God first in your financial planning. We never lose by returning a faithful tithe and offering. "But remember the LORD your God, for it is he who gives you

- the ability to produce wealth... (Deut. 8:18)
3. Have a family meeting and discuss financial goals and plans for improving your financial position. Discuss your financial plan. Make a budget and stick to it.
 4. Do not be snared into credit card debt. Make effort to pay off the debt incurred promptly. Some purchases can be delayed until the funds are available.
 5. Teach your children the importance of taking care of finances. It is not fair to let our children grow up unaware of how important it is to use money carefully. Let them know how our finances work. Do not burden them with your financial problems, but make them aware of how carefully the family needs to spend money.
 6. Remember the poor. "Suppose a brother or a sister is without clothes and daily food. If one of you says to them, "Go in peace; keep warm and well fed," but does nothing about their physical needs, what good is it? (James 2: 15, 16 NIV).
 7. Have a definite plan to improve your situation. Complaining will not help.
 8. Cultivate a spirit of thankfulness. A thankful heart and a habit of singing God's praises lightens the load.

Lesson 308

Help, Lord! I'm a Parent!

Parenting is not what it used to be. There are more and different challenges that exist today.

The Challenges

Lack of Preparation. One of the challenges is that children are getting children. One in ten American teen girls is a parent with little knowledge of what is involved. It is an era of lost childhood. How can a teen parent rear a child of her own? A parent with such aborted education and limited job skills, in addition to the lack of parenting skills, is preparing to feel helpless and inadequate. This state of inexperience and immaturity makes it almost impossible for the young parent to succeed.

Single Parent Families. There are large numbers of families that are headed by single parents. Parents are made single because of different circumstances: death of a spouse, abandonment of a spouse, divorce, separation, children born out of wedlock, incarceration of one parent. This places a strain on the one parent. Also, limited finances and lack of emotional support from another adult in the family is a threat to the stability of the family.

The Importance of Parents

Physical support. God gave children parents for parental support. Children need food, shelter and protection. The present economic crisis makes it difficult for some parents to provide all or some of these necessities.



Guidance. Children are unable to wing it on their own. They need parents to guide them. Sometimes, the challenges are so huge that even parents are unable to provide the necessary guidance needed. It is at this time that parents need to claim the divine help offered, or assistance from a “village.”

Emotional support. Children need to be able to lean on their parents for emotional support. A child who is left to cope with pain and disappointment on his/her own will seek that emotional support from any source. There are predators waiting to seduce a child who is lonely and unloved.

Spiritual training. “Start children off on the way they should go, and even when they are old they will not turn from it.” Prov. 22: 6. NIV. Parents are to grab every opportunity to train their children. Morning and evening worship are a dying art, which must be revived. In addition to this, incidental training and biblical instruction must take place. God knew that the busyness of our lives would make structured instruction difficult. That is why in His Word God advised parents to instruct as the opportunity arises. Biblical precepts and social values must be presented at all times. “Impress them on your children. Talk about them when you sit at home and when you walk along the road, when you lie down and when you get up.” (Deut. 6:7 NIV). Other sources of spiritual training are parental example, the school, Christian books and videos.

Major Influences in a Child's life. One of the major influences in a child's life is **heredity**. It is startling to see some of our own character traits reflected in our children's behavior. Our tendencies, whether strengths or weaknesses, are passed on to these young ones. “The physical and mental condition of the parents is perpetuated in their offspring . . . The nobler the aims, the higher the mental and spiritual endowments, and the better developed the physical powers of the parents, the better will be the life equipment they give their children” (*Adventist Home*, 172).

Environment is another major influence on a child's life. While we cannot determine our own heredity, we have a choice in the

environment in which we place our children. There may be, however, circumstances that dictate a situation where the environment is not as desirable as we would like. In such a circumstance, we should endeavor to do the best we can so that our children will not be exposed to surrounding evils. “We should choose the society most favorable to our spiritual advancement, and avail ourselves of every help within our reach” (*Adventist Home*, 131).

Training is another major influence on a child's life. “Train up a child in the way he should go; and when he is old he will not depart from it.” (Prov. 22:6). Too often we think we need to wait until the child gets older to start our training. This is not so. As the child grows he should be taught. Waiting for the child to be older and smarter is not a good plan. Children are smarter than we think, and they develop much faster mentally than we sometimes expect.

Influence of God. The influence of God plays a great role in the character molding of our children. We cannot take care of our children without the help and influence of God. “We never needed close connection with God more than we need it today” (*Child Guidance*, 471). We need to keep our children as close to the environment of holy things as much as we could. Bible classes, church attendance and other religious events will put the children in contact with the divine presence. Study Bible stories with the children. Help them memorize Bible texts. Teach them to appreciate nature. Nature is a bold revelation of God.

Personal Choice. When we have employed all of the techniques and tried everything, how is it that some children do right while others go astray? Why is it that some children who “raise themselves” blossom into respectable adults, while others who are nurtured do not turn out to be successful? In addition to the sin problem, personal choice plays a major role. This is why parents who have worked hard with child training and are disappointed, should not blame themselves. There is the profound effect of personal choice.

Basic Child Training Techniques

Begin early. It is never too early to start training. The earlier we begin the more time we have to instill values. “Too much

importance cannot be placed on the early training of children. The lessons that the child learns during the first seven years of life have more to do with forming its character than all it learns in future years. From babyhood, the character of the child is to be molded and fashioned in accordance with the divine plan. .

. The parents' work must begin with the child in its infancy that it may receive the right impress of character, ere the world shall place its stamp on mind and heart" (*Child Guidance, 193*). Child psychologist, *Dr. Paul Meier* submits that 85% of a child's personality is formed by age 6.

Unity is a must. It is essential that parents unite in their child training. Before issues arise, parents need to agree on standards and guidelines that they would follow. It is not a good idea to be vacillating in decisions in the presence of a child. Present a front of unity in the presence of a child. That will prevent the child from pitting one parent against the other. Trash out differences in discipline and other issues behind closed doors. Parental unity in child training is not only an asset, it is a responsibility.

Discipline with love. Discipline is not punishment. It is a means of teaching. "The object of discipline is the training of a child for self-government . . . self-reliance and self-control. . . The true object of reproof is gained only when the wrongdoer himself is led to see his fault and his will is enlisted for its correction" (*Child Guidance, 223*).

Following are elements of discipline:

1. Respect. Respect the child's feelings and be sure to earn respect from the child.
2. Set limits. Children expect and enjoy boundaries, although they will try to see how much they can get away with. Be firm and clear in stating your boundaries.
3. Teach reason. Take time to do this. Also give reasons for your discipline. Children may not perceive your insights.
4. Be patient. If you have to punish, never do it in anger. It can lead to unnecessary violence and even abuse. "You should correct your children in love. Do not let them have their own way until

you get angry, then punish them. Such correction only helps on the evil, instead of remedying it” (*Child Guidance*, 245).

5. Be decisive. Firmness and consistency will reinforce your discipline. Lack of consistency is confusing to the child. Be predictable.
6. Natural consequences. Natural consequences teach sound lessons. Disobedience and willfulness have their reward.

More Child-training Techniques

1. Build your child's self-esteem. Help him/her know that he/she is special because God made him/her. Emphasize that you love him/her because you are the parent. You, as a parent, can best foster your child's self-esteem by cherishing your own.
2. Provide belonging and love. Tell him/her that you love unconditionally. Stress that your child belongs to you and has a place in your heart. Your child cannot earn your love. That is how Jesus loves—unconditionally.
3. Recognize the child's uniqueness. He is a designer original. God made him/her with unique fingerprints. He is like no one else. You love him just the way he is. Take time to understand and appreciate your child's temperament. “Marked diversities of disposition and character frequently exist in the same family; for it is in the order of God that persons of varied temperament should associate together. . . each member of the household should sacredly regard the feelings and respect the right of the others” (*Child Guidance*, 205).
4. Communicate with your child. Do not be too busy to listen to his/her hopes, fears and dreams. Be a sincere listener. If you are too busy to listen at the moment your child comes to you, say something like this: “I see you really need to talk. I want to give you my undivided attention. However, I cannot leave what I am doing now. Could you give me ten minutes to complete this? Then I will be all yours.” Then be sure to keep your word.
5. Guard against favorites. Favoritism caused a great problem in the Bible. Jacob clearly showed that he preferred Joseph above his other sons. Sometimes, one child may tend to be closer to the parent than the other siblings. Do not let this influence your relationship with the others. Be vocal about your love for all

of your children. Shun the tendency to have favorites. It breeds disfavor in the family. Give each child unconditional love.

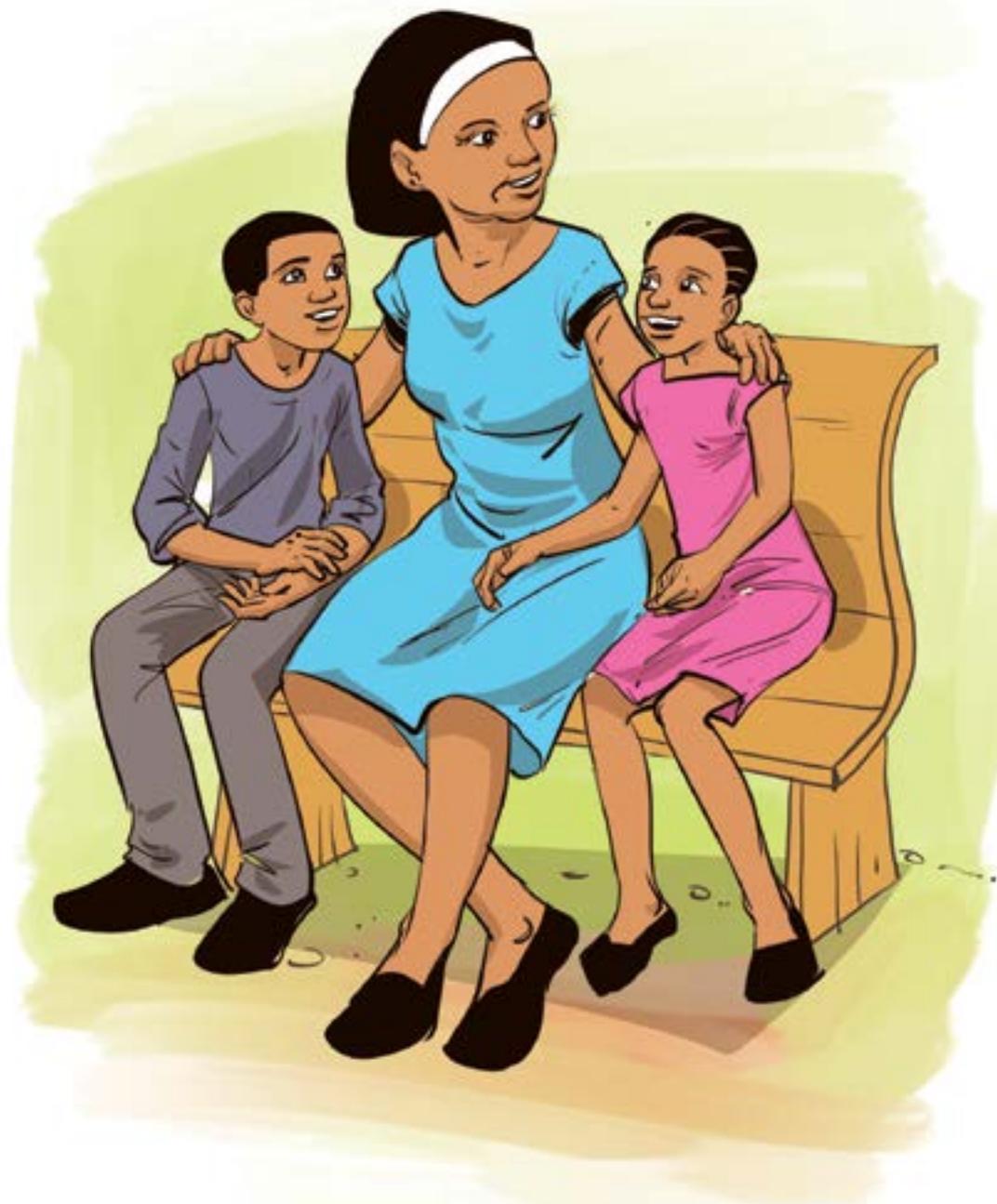
6. Recognize your child's God-given potential. Keep encouraging and affirming. Be your child's most avid cheerleader.

Conclusion

The greatest need of a child is godly parents. A child needs parents who love God and who love each other. A child needs parents who love him/her. A child needs parents who recognize that God has placed him in a home so that he could be prepared for heaven. Successful parenting takes time and energy. God who is the model Parent understands the challenges and offers hope and help. There is hope for parents.

“I will contend with those who contend with you,
and your children I will save.” Isa.49: 25 NIV

“So there is hope for your descendants,”
declares the LORD. “Your children will return to their own
land.” Jer. 31:17



Lesson 309

Raising Responsible Children

A. There are five major forces that help to shape your child's life and determine his/her destiny.

1. **Heredity.** "As a rule, children inherit the dispositions and tendencies of their parents and imitate their example so that the sins of the parents are practiced by the children from generation to generation" (*Mind, Character and Personality, Vol. 1, p. 142*).
2. **Environment.** "The sinful conduct of his [Lot's] daughters was the result of the evil associations of that vile place. Its moral corruption had become so interwoven with their character, that they could not distinguish between good and evil ... Few realize the importance of shunning, so far as possible, all associations unfriendly to religious life. In choosing their surroundings, few make their spiritual prosperity the first consideration" (*Mind, Character and Personality, Volume 1, p. 147*).
3. **Training.** Parents need to exert their energy to nurture and train the children. Deut. 6:6 - 9; 11:18 - 21; Prov. 22:6; Eph. 6:4
4. **Divine agencies.** The Heavenly Father, the Divine Son, the Holy Spirit and the heavenly angels are all working together to help us in this great task of child rearing
5. **Personal choice.** In the end, everyone has freedom of choice. "I have set before you life and death, blessing and cursing:

therefore, choose life, that both thou and thy seed may live.”
--- Deut. 30:19 “Choose you this day....” --- Joshua 24:15

B. Principles for effective child training

1. Enlist divine help from the start. Pray for divine help from the beginning. 1 Sam. 1:27
2. Prepare before the birth of the child. . Judges 13:8
3. Begin to train early. 2 Tim. 3:15. Child Psychologist, *Dr. Paul Meyer* states that 85% of a child's ultimate personality is formed by the time the child is 8 years old. “While the mother is molding and fashioning the character of her children, she is educating them. As soon as the child is capable of forming an idea, his education should begin. The parents' work must begin with the child in its infancy, that it may receive the right impress of character, ere the world shall place its stamp on mind and heart. It is during the first years of a child's life that his mind is most susceptible to impressions either good or evil” (*Child Guidance, p. 193*).
4. Discipline yourselves first. “Never give your child a passionate blow unless you want him to learn to fight and quarrel. As parents you stand in the place of God to your children, and you are to be on guard” (*Child Guidance, p. 251*).
5. Establish a climate of **LOVE** and **CARING**. “Encourage the expression of love toward God and toward one another. The reason why there are so many hardhearted men and women in the world is that true affection has been regarded as weakness and has been discouraged and repressed (*Mind, Character and Personality, p. 212*).
6. Teach him/her early to love God and His church. Take him/her to church early. Teach him/her songs and Bible stories and the Word of God.
7. Realize that unity of mother and father is a necessity. It takes two hands to clap. The mother and father must unite in their efforts to train their children. Teamwork is important. Work with each other, not against each other.
8. Understand the unique position your child is in and the peculiar stresses he/she experiences. He/she is one of a kind. Don't try to destroy his/her individuality. Your child can be his own self best.

9. Give your child adequate companionship, time, and friendship. Spend time with your child in his world. "Parents should never hurry their children out of their childhood" (*Child Guidance, 206*). Do things together regularly. Children grow up all too quickly.
10. Teach them values to live by, not merely to behave because of their parents' position. Teach your child the importance of values to live by and not merely to obey instructions or be like robots.
11. Encourage communication with you. Spend time listening to what your child has to say and also share your own stories.
12. Give your child scope to develop his/her individuality. Encourage his talents and creativity. Help them to develop their talents and become what they feel called to be, not necessarily what the parents want.
13. Provide character building material and experiences for him/her. Many Christian books and videos are available.
14. Be aware of your child's needs (emotional, spiritual, and physical) and seek to satisfy them.
15. Physical needs: In church, school and at home. Children need comfort, recreational facilities, furnishings, permission to participate, and safety.
16. Social Needs: Love, belonging, social support. If they do not get these at home, they will connect with gangs and undesirable companions.
17. Spiritual needs. Participation in church, an attractive and child-friendly worship style, lessons in faith.
18. Special Needs must be attended to:
 - Physical disabilities
 - Visual impairment
 - Hearing impairment
 - Learning disabilities
 - Child abuse
 - Illness/loss
19. Christian Education. A Christian education is your child's birthright. Send your children to our Seventh-day Adventist schools whenever possible.
20. Home Environment. Make the home a peaceful and welcome place. It ought to be a refuge from the crazy world. Make home

a joyful and pleasant shelter from the world, a happy place to be.

21. Friends. Guide the child in the choice of friends. The right friends will help your child heavenward.
22. Authenticity. Be a model of Christian integrity and authenticity. Model the virtues you want them to develop. Children can easily detect a hypocrite.
23. Discipline with Love. Know how to handle conflicts lovingly. "Whipping may be necessary when other resorts fail, yet she [the mother] should not use the rod if it is possible to avoid doing so. But if milder measures prove insufficient, punishment that will bring the child to its senses, should in love, be administered. Frequently, one such correction will be enough for a lifetime to show the child that he does not hold the lines of control" (*Child Guidance*, p. 250).
24. Importance of prayer. Pray with and for each of your children.
25. Train your child for independence. Release him gradually according to his/her maturity. Learn to let go.

Our children have freedom of choice. They are the architects of their own destiny. As parents, we must do our best and leave the outcomes to God.

"We will go with our young and with our old, with our sons and with our daughters" (Ex. 10: 9),

Lesson 310

Strengthening and Enriching Relationships Within the Family

I. Kinds of parent-child relationships

- A. The Open War. Parent and child are openly hostile to each other.
- B. The Cold War. There is known tension, but no fighting, although the relationship is icy.
- C. The Invisible War. There is a silent, strained relationship and no outward manifestation. The child is waiting to explode.
- D. The Uneasy Peace. There is no explosion, but both parties are walking on eggshells.
- E. The Truce. The child is seething underneath with hostility, but will “cooperate” with the parent for the benefits he/she could enjoy.
- F. The Intimate Relationship. This is the ideal relationship where parent and child enjoy each other.
 - 1. Marks of an intimate relationship
 - a. Unconditional love
 - b. Mutual respect
 - c. Mutual support
 - d. Communicates freely and respectfully with each other
 - e. Enjoy spending time together
 - f. Share a common religious faith
 - g. Face challenges together
 - h. Commitment

II. What causes parent-child conflicts?

A. Generation gap

Generation gap is due to rapid cultural change during the modern era. This leads to the increase of the differences between the two generations.

Generation gap refers to the differences in ways of thinking and behaving that exist between older people, considered to be from the earlier generation, and the younger people, considered to be from later generations. This often leads to lack of communication and understanding between people of different generations.

This different thinking of the people is shaped by the environment they face and the experiences that they go through. Particularly the impressions formed in the earlier years of the life are more enduring than the ones formed later in life. Thus the impressions and feelings developed by older generations do not change that easily with changing times. At the same time the younger generations that have never been exposed to the environment faced by the earlier generation are not able to appreciate the impact of such environment.

B. Faulty discipline (Discipline Vs punishment)

“The goal of discipline in the home is to train the child to become a well-adjusted and responsible adult. (Healthy spirituality, healthy self-esteem, respect for authority, ability to make wise choices, self-discipline, acceptance of consequences of his/her actions, responsible attitude to work and life.)” *Lisa Whelchel, Creative Correction.*

Major types of discipline.

Permissive. Laid back parent. Produces unruly, manipulative children.

Authoritarian. Iron-rod parent. Produces rebellious children who hate authority.

Neglectful . “I do not care.” Produces children with lack of motivation, low self-esteem.

Authoritative. Tough love and firmness. Produces self-respect, respect for authority, responsible children.

The Ministry of a Pastor's Spouse

- C. Not recognizing personality differences. When parents tend to compare their children and do not recognize that each child is unique, the children can become rebellious. There is need for different approaches to different children.
- D. Parental disharmony. Dissonance (lack of agreement, conflicting ideas). This is often the result of **cognitive dissonance** within the parent. This is a discomfort caused by holding conflicting cognitions (e.g., ideas, beliefs, values, emotional reactions) simultaneously. Parental disharmony causes confusion in the minds of the children.
- E. No clear boundaries. Children like and expect boundaries. Boundaries should be clear and well defined.
- F. Influence of society. Never before has society been so strong an influence on our children. Diluted values and low moral standards have a loud voice. The influence is powerful.
- G. Influence of peers and friends. Children have greater confidence and trust in the judgment of their peers and friends. This underscores the importance of placing our children in environments with Christian standards.
- H. The sin problem. Sin influences our actions.
Rom. 7:14-25; Rom. 3:23
- I. The Son solution. Jesus is the Answer.
2 Cor. 5:17; John 8:36

III. Specific areas of conflict

- A. Disobedience. Disobedience in a child saps the parent's energy. Obedience should be prompt and quick or else it borders on disobedience. Watch for subtle manifestations of disobedience: dawdling, tuning out, detours etc.
- B. Associates. The influence of associates is often stronger than the teachings of the parents.
- C. Drug use. Drugs are so easily accessible. The predators are on the increase. Experimentation is a great temptation.
- D. Internet use. The positive use of the internet often gives way to its dangers.

Understanding How the Internet Affects Children

(NAPSA)—Between surfing the Internet, visiting chat rooms and sending text messages, children spend a great deal of time in cyberspace—and it's up to parents to make sure their kids spend that time safely. Consider the following statistics:

- **Approximately 90 percent of children ages 8 to 16 have viewed pornography on the Internet.**
- **Approximately 70 percent of sexual advances on the internet happens while children use a home computer.**
- **Only 25 percent of children will tell a parent about an online encounter with a sexual predator.**
- **An alarming 75 percent of children willingly share personal information about themselves over the Internet in exchange for goods or services. In addition, approximately 75 percent of online teenagers use instant messaging (IM).**

Why is this important for parents? Because 37 percent of online teens have used IM (instant messages) to write something they would not have said in person. There are both personal and technological dangers associated with a child's Internet use. Not only might the child access websites containing inappropriate material, but sometimes the simple act of visiting a malicious website can cause spyware, worms or other digital threats to be downloaded and installed on your computer.

Protecting children should be a parent's primary concern. There are several ways to accomplish this.

First, establish boundaries.

Decide what websites and content you feel comfortable letting your children see, then take steps to filter or block everything else. You can find out what sites your children have visited by reviewing their Internet history. Internet Explorer contains a feature called the **Content Advisor** that enables parents to control the Web content that children see. Similar to the "V-chip" found in many new televisions, the Content Advisor uses a rating system to help you set the level of language, nudity, sex and violence that is acceptable in your home.

--Taken from the free publication "*A Parents' Guide to Internet Safety*" developed by Geeks On Call—a national company

providing on-site computer services. *The Parents' Guide* is part of an educational program called "Kids Club" created by Geeks On Call to teach children and parents about Internet safety and to donate money to local schools. To download the free Parents' Guide or to learn more about Kids Club, visit www.geeksoncall.com/kidsclub

- E. Church. Sometimes there are battles over church attendance. Kids sometimes tend to feel that they have outgrown church.
- F. Curfew. Children have different ideas from their parents about the right curfew times. It is a good idea to communicate on this issue.
- G. Dress is often controversial. Lay down clear standards of modesty and appropriate taste. The teen years to teach the importance of purity.
- H. Education. Teach that getting an education is important preparation for life.

IV. Improving parent-child relationships

Parenting is not a hopeless venture. The following are steps that can be taken to improve parent-child relationships:

- A. Enlist divine aid.
- B. Put priority on Communication.
- C. Understand the importance of touch.
- D. Give the gift of time
- E. Enter the child's world
- F. Love unconditionally
- G. Be reasonable and fair
- H. Understand and accept the child's uniqueness.
- I. Be aware of the pressures on your child.
- J. Avoid extremes in discipline.
- K. Boost your child's self-esteem.
- L. Understand the stages of child development.
- M. Have realistic expectations.

V. Divine Help is available.

"I will contend with him who contends with you, and I will save your children." Isa.49:25 NKJV

"Thus says the Lord, 'Refrain your voice from weeping, and your eyes from tears; for your work shall be rewarded, says the Lord; and they shall come back from the land of the enemy.

There is hope in your future,' says the Lord, 'that your children shall come back to their own border.'" Jer. 31:16.17 NKJV

Notes:

Let Children Learn From Life (Taken from Home Improvement the Parenting Book You Can Read to Your Kids)

Parents can sometimes accomplish more by allowing life to be the teacher. We all want our children to grow up to be wise. Wisdom sometimes means that kids struggle with life by themselves and then come out victorious. In order for this to take place, however, parents must give up the role of problem solver and take on the role of coach or counselor.

It's a challenge to know when to solve problems for children and when to let them struggle. We don't like to see our children frustrated or suffering. Sometimes though we, as parents, suffer more just watching our children deal with life. One mom said, "I can't stand to watch my four-year-old tie his shoe. I just want to grab it and say, 'Here, let me do it.'" But allowing our children to struggle through a problem to a solution or experience the consequences of foolishness often results in more effective learning than we could produce otherwise.

We can't abandon our children though. When undue frustration builds or a situation becomes dangerous, we need to step in and help. Stepping in as a counselor or coach is the best way. Jesus used this approach with his disciples. He allowed Peter to walk on the water and fail but was close by to pick him up again. When the disciples failed at healing the epileptic boy, Jesus taught them a more complete way.

Some of the most valuable lessons come from experience. If parents can make the switch from rescuer to coach, children will learn more and develop wisdom. So the next time you see your child struggling, put on the coach's hat and watch learning take place.

LEVEL

- IV -

*Shepherdess and her
Human Relations*



Lesson 401

The Shepherdess Power of Influence

The Importance of the Ministry of Influence

The calling to be the spouse of a pastor is a very significant ministry. Her influence, if used wisely, will be used by God for His glory, and the redemption of many souls. As other lessons in this series have pointed out, a pastor's spouse must, herself, be a devoted disciple and follower of Christ. Without this vital relationship, the ability of a pastor's spouse to be used by God to positively influence her husband and his ministry will be severely limited. If you are walking with Christ, you will have virtually unlimited influence and can declare confidently "I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me." (Phil. 4:13)

Proverbs 18:22 says that "Whoever finds a spouse finds a good thing, and obtains favor of the Lord." This suggests that your healthy influence will lead to the favor of the Lord for your husband. The kingdom success of your husband's ministry will benefit from the Lord's favor through you. Remember that while the success of the ministry that God has called you and your husband to could never depend solely upon you, the Bible is clear that you have a significant influence on it.

The Importance Being Passionately In Love With Christ

As I write this section I am praying for you. I'm praying that as

you read, that the Holy Spirit will speak to you about whether you truly have met Jesus, or not. Some of you have followed tradition or expectations into the church. Others may have simply followed a man into the church. Some readers are those who believe in Christ, but have not surrendered to Him because they want to feel free to live in whatever way they want. You could also be one who believes in Christ, but because of the things you've done or the circumstances of your life, you have convinced yourself that you are not worthy to be considered a close friend of God. Still others may have once known the Savior, but have lost the passionate devotion they once had for Christ.

My dear sister, take a moment right now and ask the Lord to show you His beauty and to help you to fall deeply in love with Christ as your Savior. Ask the Lord to move in your heart so that He actually becomes your first love in life, not because you're supposed to, or because you're expected to love Him, but because He has actually become precious to you. Remember, that the One who placed the very stars in the sky, and commands the winds and the sea; the One who uses mountains as His footstool was thinking only of you, personally as he bled to death on a cruel cross because He loves you so much! You don't have to understand why He loves you that way, but you can believe that He does! Christ wants to give you such great joy and peace in your heart that it will spill out of your heart and life in a way that influences and blesses everyone you will ever meet!

Christ desires that the very thought of Him should be something that brings joy and comfort to your heart. Remember that the reason that God wants this is because that is exactly how He feels about you!

Will you talk to Christ right now and say "Yes" to Him?, Will you accept his love? Will you trust Him and give Him your heart and life? He promises that no matter what, He will never leave you, nor forsake you!

The Importance of Using Your Call to Ministry as a Guide

As a follower of Christ, it is helpful to see your ministry of influence in the context of your own calling to ministry. Your calling to ministry was issued when you first trusted in Christ for salvation.

The Ministry of a Pastor's Spouse

Remember that God has called not only your husband, but you personally to “make disciples of all nations” (Matt. 28:19).

Because you have been given that call, it is important to realize that when it comes to your marriage, your primary ministry for Christ is to influence your husband in his journey of discipleship. By giving you a pastor for a husband, God has entrusted you with a critical ministry of trust. The result of your use of the influence you have in his life should be that he is a man who walks more closely with Christ each day.

Show your husband through your encouragement and your example:

- The value of praying over the details of your lives
- The importance of being guided to trust in the Word of God
- How to surrender to Christ by giving mercy, forgiveness and sacrificial love to others with humility.

There is no one on Earth who has been given a better opportunity to do this in your husband's life than you.

The Value of having Godly Influence Rather Than Trying to Manipulate or Control

There are two very important things to notice about influence. The word “influence” means “the capacity to have an effect on the character, development, or behavior of someone or something.” The first thing we should notice is that “influence” is not the same as “control.” Your spouse should not be under your control, but rather, under the control of the Holy Spirit. It should be only the Holy Spirit who will guide, counsel, refine, correct and reprove. When He asks, you should be willing to allow the Holy Spirit to use you and your influence to do those things. But when those things are not happening in the way that you would like, it is not a part of your role to manipulate, punish or try to coerce your husband to follow the path that you desire.

Your role is as an instrument of the Holy Spirit. But remember, the Holy Spirit has many tools that He will use to shape and guide your husband. Just because your efforts don't appear to have completed the work that the Spirit is doing in your husband's life does not mean that the Spirit is finished with your husband. It definitely does not mean that it is up to you to force your husband to change. Remember, the Holy Spirit is working to influence you, as well.

The circumstances that you face are also being used by God to teach you, and to bless you, as well.

The Importance of Evaluating Your Influence

The second thing that must be noted about the word “influence” is that it can be used for good or for evil. There is no way to avoid having an influence on your husband and his ministry. But through the Holy Spirit, that influence can be a holy and inspirational blessing.

Carefully and Prayerfully consider that without a firm reliance on the Holy Spirit, your influence could lead toward the destruction of much that God is trying to do through your husband. For example, in Genesis 3, we see Eve using her considerable influence to draw her husband's allegiance to herself rather than toward God. In Job 2:9 grief and suffering drove Job's spouse to use her influence to try to convince her husband to end their suffering *by committing suicide* by cursing God. In Matthew 14, Herodias used all of her influence to try to silence John the Baptist, and ultimately went beyond influence to efforts to manipulate and control her husband, King Herod.

Personal Discipleship and Your Influence

These examples demonstrate why your influence will be a direct result of the purity of your relationship with God. As a spouse, you hold an almost irresistible power of influence over your husband, and you are accountable to God for how you use it. The Bible says that even though he was the wisest and most powerful man on earth, King Solomon's “spouses turned his heart away.” (1 Kings 11:4) Whatever your heart desires will be the source of power behind your influence in your husband's life. Eve wanted power *and to avoid being alone*, and Job's spouse wanted an end to their suffering, and both of them used their influence to try to fulfill their desires. If your heart's desire is to enjoy being known by your Creator and Savior, your influence in your husband's life will reflect that.

Can you think of other women in the Bible who attempted to influence their husbands based on their own desires, rather than the desires and purposes of God? What other examples are there?

God's Method for Godly Influence

The Word of God teaches that your influence can be used for great blessing in your husband's life and in the ministry that he has been given. 1 Peter 3:1-2 says that spouses should "be submissive to your own husbands so that even if any of them are disobedient to the word, they may be won without a word by the behavior of their spouses, as they observe your chaste and respectful behavior." By refusing to try to control your husband, your respect and submission can be used by the Holy Spirit to bring your husband to be obedient to the word of God. This is an important method of encouraging your husband in the path of discipleship.

The Importance of Your Personal Influence in the Community

The influence of your calm, chaste and respectful behavior is not only limited to your husband. Your influence will reach far beyond the marriage relationship. For spiritual leaders, this demeanor is essential to ministry success. Your ability to patiently endure the trials of ministry will assist your husband in being able to calmly listen to the voice of the Spirit as he serves. This will have a powerful effect on every person related to the ministry and on the impact of the ministry in the world!

Through your influence, your husband can become a respected spiritual leader, and you can influence others toward him and toward God by your actions as well. Of the virtuous woman in Proverbs 31:23, Scripture says that "Her husband is respected at the city gate, where he takes his seat among the elders of the land." Many times in ministry, there is little earthly support for doing what is right. Your husband regularly faces pressure and temptation to do what people want him to do rather than to listen to the voice of God. Your support and encouragement to stand humbly before God can be a powerful influence for good in ministry. Reward virtue with kindness, affection and warmth. Where complaints will drain a minister of the gospel, support and encouragement by his spouse will help make a man strong enough to weather many storms or trials in ministry.

Finally, remember that you are called to ministry as a team. This means that your example is intended to have a powerful impact on the ministry and on the community as well. Yes, it is true that you have been given a special calling to make disciples as a

shepherdess. But remember that you are given that calling not only as a shepherdess, but as a Christian. Your calling is to use your life to make disciples. Not as a duty or as an obligation, but as the joy and great pleasure of trusting in Christ who loves you, and who is mighty to save overflows out of your life. God will use you, your gifts, your talents, your desires and, yes, even your pain to reap a bountiful harvest of souls for His kingdom! God truly loves you so much! Holding that truth in your heart will give you the greatest influence of all.

Question for discussion

1. *Discuss areas in your ministry and personal life that are tempting when it comes to influencing others*

Lesson 402

The Pastor's Spouse and Her Dress

While God looks and judges from the heart, man looks on our appearance. This is why our dress is so important. Dress is not everything; but dress is significant. People place much weight on our appearance because they cannot quickly and easily see our hearts. True beauty is internal and inner beauty is authentic. However, we see the external, first, and first impressions are lasting. Also, our appearance can affect our performance. It is important for us to feel good about how we look. It boosts our confidence. "Their dress should be an example" (*Adventist Home* p. 355).

Fabric and Style. One of the determining factors of how well we look is how we choose our style and fabric based on our shape. We have different body shapes, therefore, some styles that look stunning on some ladies would be less flattering on others. (*See power point presentation*). Heavy, coarse material makes us look fat. Shiny material, satin, velvet make us look bigger. Gabardine, cotton knit, not shiny material look good on everyone. Sheers, ruffles, frills add size to our bodies. Clothes that cling to our bodies show our real size. We look either too fat or too skinny. Our choice of colors, also, influences how heavy or slim we look. Knowing our unique personality type, should serve as a guide in our fashion choice. Perhaps you may have walked into a store and seen a mannequin that looked just like someone you know. Or, you bought a blouse as a present for a friend because you were able to picture the person in that blouse. If you are a serious-minded person, frequent frills and ruffles will not match your personality.



Modesty and Appropriateness. Did you know that we knowingly or not, dress to meet the expectations of others? Of course, our better judgment must prevail. Modesty and Christian standards will guide our choice of apparel. Our choice of dress is also dependent on the occasion, place of event, season and sometimes the people we expect to meet! Avoid over dressing or under dressing. This makes people uncomfortable.

Color. Color influences how we feel and how others feel: quiet, calm, or cheerful. Try the color test. Fashion experts can give this. Or you can stand before a mirror in natural light. Put different colored cloths near your neck and face and observe the effect. You will see what colors set off your skin tones well. Sometimes when we wear a certain dress/blouse, we get many compliments. And that happens every time you wear that color. Make a note of that. That color matches your skin tone well. Your feelings also influence the color you wear. Wear brighter colors when you feel down.

Accessories are anything that is more than our basic outfit – suit and blouse, or dress. Belts, brooches, scarves, etc. are examples of accessories. Do not use too many additions to your basic accessories, like a scarf with a blouse that has a frilly collar, or patterned hose with patterned shoes. Use the point system when you dress. Any eye-arresting feature is considered a point in this system. To be well dressed a woman should try to wear **between 8 – 14 points**. Fewer than eight points would be boring and more than fourteen points would be overdoing it.

The Point System

- Each color in the outfit = 1 point
 - Plain simple shoes = 1 point per pair
 - Open toes, buckles, metal, multi-colored shoes = 1 point extra
 - Colored or patterned stocking (skin tones are O) = 1 point per pair
 - Every item of jewelry (except wedding and Engagement rings) – (pairs = 1point) = 1 point each
 - Simple handbag = 1 point
 - Any tri or multicolor on handbag = 1 point extra
 - Brightly colored nail polish = 1 point
 - Contrasting buttons, belt, buckle, bows, ruffles = 1point each
 - Red hair = 1 point
 - Eyeglasses = 1 point
- Accessory Magic*

Think about what fits your personality. Think about the mood you want (business, casual, party going, beach)

Dressing without much Money. Activity: If you had only \$500 to upgrade your closet. What kinds of clothes would you buy for your job? For church? Basic accessories? Quality of clothes?

Dressing at Home. Dress comfortably, attractively and suitably at home. All day nightgowns and bath robes give a sloppy, lazy impression. They make you look unattractive. Ellen White is firm in her comment on women who do not take care of their appearance at home: "Sisters, when about their work, should not put on clothing which would make them look like images to frighten the crows from the corn" (*Adventist Home*, p. 252, 253).

Modesty. The most important thing for us to think about is, "Is this modest?" Take the Modesty Test:

1. Is it so tight that it clings and has no "pinching space?" Fits like a body suit? Imprints/outlines the private parts?
2. Is it so low that the cleavage is daring?
3. Is it so short that you have to keep tugging at the hem to lengthen it?
4. Does it show parts of the underwear?

The Ultimate Dress is Christ's robe of righteousness. The beauty of Jesus in our hearts and lives will be the best adornment for our dress.

Lesson 403

Effective Communication Tips

Communication keys

This lesson is geared mainly towards marriage and family relationships. However, the principles can be applied to other interpersonal relationships as well.

1. Communication is one of the most essential skills for successful marriage or family living. Poor communication skills are a menace to interpersonal relationships.
2. We started communicating from the moment we were born. Yet we are so poor at it. It is a mistake to think that effective communication comes naturally. This belief prevents us from exerting the energy and effort to hone our communication skills. What is good communication? By good communication we mean that the message you want to convey is received and understood the way you intended. We then see that all communication is not good.
3. What is involved in effective communication?
 - a. The ability to share - a learned ability. Sharing is easier for some persons than for others. It has to be practiced and then is learned. It helps when parents encourage their children to express their feelings. As adults, we would benefit from trying to articulate our feelings clearly.
 - b. The ability to listen – a practiced skill. This is very difficult.

We are usually in such a hurry to get our points across, that we feel that the other person's ideas are not very important. This leads to tuning out or interrupting.

- c. The ability to settle conflicts - conflict resolution. This is the most difficult technique. This is why there is so much universal hate and hostility. Some are not even willing to settle conflict.

4. Communication Needs

- a. Mastery of speaking and listening skills. We need not only to speak clearly and describe our ideas; but we need to make a greater effort to listen.
- b. Daily sharing of intimate feelings. It is OK to express how we feel. Use feeling words like, "I am **sad** today," "I have a **happy** feeling," "I am **thankful**." The trick is to pause a while and examine how we feel. Then say how we feel. Here's a secret. Express more positive feelings than negative ones. Feel the difference!
- c. Dynamics of settling conflicts. We should be uncomfortable when we are involved in unresolved conflict. Seek for a resolution quickly. That is why the Apostle Paul urged, "Be ye angry and sin not; let not the sun go down on your wrath." Eph.4:26. Notice the implication that we need to work on resolution in a hurry! Seems like we have less than one day! There are definite steps for conflict resolution. Do not underestimate the power of the following words:

"I was wrong." Even if you are not the offender, realize that in some measure, you may have contributed to the state of affairs.

"I am sorry." Say with sincerity and without offering an excuse, rationale or reason.

"Please forgive me." Express your desire for restoration of the relationship. Do not be ruled by the reaction or attitude of the other party.

5. Factors affecting good communication.

- a. What is said. Remember that words don't mean. People mean. Therefore, the message intended is of more

- importance than the actual words.
- b. What is meant. The meaning conveyed has a great influence on the words used. Often it is the meaning of the statement that causes problems.
 - c. What is heard. When the receiver hears the message, some concepts are formed in his/her mind. A reaction begins to be formed.
 - d. What is understood. This is a critical dimension. The hearer's reaction is based greatly on his understanding. Understanding of the message influences one's feelings.
6. A guide for communicating
- a. Do I have to say it at all? Some things are better left unsaid.
 - b. Do I have to say it now? Some things seem less threatening after a good night's rest.
 - c. Is this the best way to say it? It is always better to think before speaking.
 - d. What would I gain if I say it? If the answer is "nothing," then do not say it.
7. **ACTIVITY: Search Proverbs Chapters 15 - 18 for communication principles.**
8. Five love languages - Gary Chapman. Gary Chapman enumerates five love languages that enhance relationships. A love language is one's perceived way of feeling loved. Below are the love languages that we speak. As in actual language situations, some persons "speak" more than one language.
- a. Affirmation. This is the love language of one who thrives on affirmation. He/she enjoys being recognized for accomplishments or deeds. The service or performance does not have to be of great magnitude. All the person craves is the awareness and affirmation from others.
 - b. Quality time. This is the love language of persons who enjoy being given time and association. They are not interested to a large extent, in gifts and significant treats. Just give them some of your time and that makes them feel loved.
 - c. The giving and receiving of gifts. (Not necessarily money) These persons are excited not only when they get gifts; but they take pleasure in giving gifts.
 - d. The act of service. Gal. 5:13. These have a passion for

service. These are the church members who willingly serve on your hospitality committee, and serve meals, and decorate the church with a smile. They are the first to volunteer for the food pantry and visitation. If a clean-up day is announced, the service lovers will be there.

- e. The art of touch. Songs of Solomon. Some persons crave touch more than others. They are the huggers and enjoy touch. This makes them feel loved and they are convinced that this is the most important way to show or receive love. Learning to “speak” the language of our colleagues and family members is an asset to our improved communication.

ACTIVITY: List ten affirmations you can give your spouse and other family members.

9. Communicating about money –a major marital problem.

- a. Set a good time.
- b. Don't wait until the problem is too huge.
- c. Get all the facts.
- d. Discuss as equal partners. Each has rights.
- e. Review regularly - buying, spending, bank books.
- f. Write down agreements.
- g. A financial plan (budget) is useful (indispensable).
- h. Have a specific time each month to discuss money matters.

10. Communicating feelings - practice to unlock and share.

- a. Understand male and female differences. Men and women have different ways of speaking and interpreting. Men hear and perceive differently. Women express themselves and react in a different manner.
- b. Use “I” messages. The benefit of an “I” message is that the brunt of an accusatory approach is removed. The “you” approach is reduced, thereby preventing the offender from getting on the defensive. There are three elements in an “I” message: **a feeling word, a statement of the offence and a request.** Suppose little Johnnie is in the habit of slamming doors. Instead of saying, “Johnnie, you are always slamming the doors. You must stop it!” By using an “I” message you would say, “I get scared (upset, disgusted) when you slam doors like that because that could cause some damage to the house. Would you please try to close the doors more gently?”

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- c. Active listening. Pay undivided attention. Look the person in the eye. Rephrase for clarification. Avoid interrupting.
 - d. Speak the truth in love. Eph. 4:15. The truth does not have to be brutal. Consider the other person's feelings. Think before speaking.
 - e. Control emotions (negative, anger). Breathe deeply. Count to ten. Say a prayer. Then confront in a soft voice.
 - f. Get it all out, but don't overkill. This will prevent you from having to revisit the problem. Do not judge.
 - g. Ask for feedback. Remember the other person has something to say, too. Listen respectfully and without interrupting.
11. Communicating about sex - not during the act on sensitive issues
- a. Realize that sex is a healthy topic. Give it due attention.
 - b. Choose the right time for sensitive issues.
 - c. Be careful with the other's feelings.
 - d. Rehearse what you will say, if it is a criticism.
 - e. Find the issue hidden in the criticism and express it positively. Introduce it with an affirmation.
 - f. Ask open-ended questions in order to invite comments; instead of a question that requires a "Yes" or "No" answer. Say something like, "Tell me about ..."
 - g. A good book could be used for discussion. There are many Christian books on the subject of marriage and sex.
 - h. Respect each other's opinions and feelings. Good communication involves fairness.
12. God has promised to give us the wisdom for all we need to know. The Bible is full of passages that teach about good communication. Let our prayer be "Let the words of my mouth and the meditation of my heart be acceptable in thy sight . . . Psalms 19:14.



Lesson 404 & 405A

Enriched Relationships

Slides 2 – 4

God made a world full of people because He knew the importance of relationships. He knew that our physical and emotional health would be enhanced by healthy relationships.

Slide 5

A. Friends.

The Bible gives us several examples of friendships. **Slides 6, 7**

1. Biblical examples of friendship
 - Ruth and Naomi Ruth 1:14-18
 - David and Jonathan 1 Sam. 18: 1-3
 - Jesus and Mary, Martha and Lazarus John 11: 1-5

Slide 8 THINK

2. There are several factors that hinder lasting friendships. **Slides 9, 10**
3. Hindrances to friendship
 - a. Lack of love for oneself Luke 10:27. If we do not love ourselves, and regard ourselves as God's unique creatures, what measure could we use to love others?
 - b. Smothering Pro. 25:17. We need to leave spaces in our relationships. We must not be constantly spending time with our friends. They need some time by themselves.
 - c. Fear of relationships. Some have had bad experiences

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3. Hindrances to friendship
 - a. Lack of love for oneself Luke 10:27. If we do not love ourselves, and regard ourselves as God's unique creatures, what measure could we use to love others?
 - b. Smothering Pro. 25:17. We need to leave spaces in our relationships. We must not be constantly spending time with our friends. They need some time by themselves.
 - c. Fear of relationships. Some have had bad experiences with friendships. This makes them afraid to make friends.
 - d. Competitiveness 2 Cor. 10:12. The apostle, Paul, warns against this.
 - e. Lack of confidentiality James 3: 3-5; James 1:19; Pro. 25:11. This leads to lack of trust; and destroys friendships.
 - f. Insensitivity Eph. 4:15; Gal. 6:2. Understanding and empathy are important ingredients in a friendship.
 - g. Fear of the past Phil. 3: 13. We need to learn to forget.
4. Characteristics of a good friendship. **Slide 11**

True friendships have the following:

 - a. Commitment Ruth 1 – 4. Ruth is a sterling example of this.
 - b. Love 1 Cor. 13: 4-8. We should remind ourselves daily of these characteristics.
 - c. Support James 5: 13-20. Good friends support each other.

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- d. Perseverance—"Hanging in there." Pro. 17:17; 18: 24.
- e. Affirmation Num. 6: 22-27. This cements friendships.
- f. Truthfulness Pro. 27:6. This is the foundation of a good relationship.
- g. Godly influence Pro. 27: 17-19; Phil. 4:8. We should always consider the impact of a Godly influence.
- h. Forgiving spirit Rom. 7: 21; 8:5; Eph. 2: 1-10; Col. 3: 12,13. Jesus stresses this.

B. Family. Slide 12

- 1. The purpose of family
 - a. To provide a loving, caring environment
 - b. To train and nurture
 - c. To give support
 - d. To protect
- 2. Getting along with the family
 - a. Our children
 - b. Our parents
 - c. Our in-laws
- 3. God's regard for family **Slides 13, 14**

The family was God's idea. He made it.

 - a. God's creation of the family
 - b. A refuge for the lonely Ps. 68:6
 - c. Elijah's message
 - a. Malachi 4:5,6
 - b. A message of family restoration and heart turning

C. Neighbors. Slides 15-17

Jesus gave a graphic illustration of a neighbor. Luke 10: 25-27.

- 1. Show our neighbors what we believe.
- 2. Snatch opportunities to be a good neighbor.
 - a. Make effort to remember their special dates. (birthdays, etc.)
 - b. Share recipes, household tips, and flowers or vegetables from our garden.
 - c. Have a generous heart.
 - d. Celebrate with them.
 - e. Sympathize with them in their losses.
 - f. Give them space.
 - g. Accept and respect their being different.
 - h. Smile with them.

Remember that Jesus is counting on us to be good neighbors.

D. Professional Relationships. Slides 18-21

1. Our performance Pro. 22: 29
 - a. Honesty Pro. 11:1; 12: 22; 12: 19
 - b. Integrity Pro. 28: 6; Job 27: 5, 6
“The greatest want in the world is the want of men who will not be bought or sold . . . who will stand for the right though the heavens fall.”
 - c. Excellence Pro. 20: 12; 22: 29
 - d. Respect Rom. 2:11; Eph. 6: 9
 - e. Team work 1 Cor. 12 14 – 22, 27
 - f. The Golden Rule Matt. 7:12

E. Dangerous Relationships. Slides 22-24

God warns us about the types of relationships we need to avoid. God's love in our hearts will not permit us to hate them. They are included in His grace.

1. Women or men who chat too much. Persons who talk a lot, do not have time to think before they speak.
2. Designing men or women. There are those who are in the habit of scheming and plotting. Often, they are manipulative and seek only their own goals.
3. Clinging vines. These are a drain on our emotions. It helps if we could spot them easily and set up some barriers.

F. Handling unhealthy relationships.

1. Focus on God's plans for you. 1 Sam. 25; Jer. 29:11
2. Ask for appropriate help. James 1: 5.
3. Be alert and perceptive. Matt. 10: 16.
4. Remember that evil connections mar our relationship with God Pro. 4: 14; 15.

G. Mending Broken Relationships. Slide 25

As Christians, we should make every effort to mend broken relationships. There are health and emotional benefits that can be derived.

1. Handling conflict (Pro. 15: 18; 16: 32; 19: 11; 27: 4; Eccl. 7: 9; Eph. 4: 26, 27; Col. 3:8). Conflict is inevitable. A willingness to handle conflict properly is crucial.
 - a. Admit there is a conflict.
 - b. Identify the source of the conflict.
 - c. Communicate in love and respect.
 - d. Control your anger.

H. Dealing with Anger.

Slide 26

1. Admit that you are angry.
2. Verbalize your anger
3. Determine if you have a right to be angry.
4. Find out which is the most appropriate way for you to handle your anger.
5. Deal with the root cause. **Slide 27**
6. Explore problem-solving solutions.
7. Seek professional counseling if necessary.
8. Work on solutions.
9. Pray earnestly about the conflict.

I. Mending Broken Relationships. Slides 28-30

It is important for us to try to mend a broken relationship. Sometimes our best efforts fail, however God knows our hearts.

1. Release the grudges. Lev. 19:17, 18.
2. Avoid making a public scene about the conflict.
3. Examine your contribution to the problem. Luke 37 – 42.
4. Forgiveness
 - a. Carefully process the wrong done.
 - b. Evaluate the pain and anger.
 - c. Release the pain and anger to God. 1 Peter 5:7
 - d. Think of what Jesus would do. Phil.2:5
 - e. Be willing to forgive as Christ forgave. Eph. 4:32
 - f. Pray for the offender.
 - g. Forgive the offender. Luke 23; 34
 - h. Be willing to forgive yourself. Phil. 3: 12-14

Forgiveness is not always easy but it is always beneficial. Our health improves. We have the assurance of God's forgiveness. We enjoy the peace from the joy of a restored relationship.

CONCLUSION

Slide 31, 32

Jesus understands about our relationships. If we seek His wisdom, He will guide us and keep us. The nature of our relationships will determine our happiness. Our heavenly Father wants us to be happy. He is forgiving, loving and merciful. If we turn our relationships over to Him, He will enrich our lives.

Lesson 406

The Shepherdess and Her Relationship with In-Laws

Introduction

In the beginning, when God had created all things, God said, “It is not good for man to be alone. I will make a helper suitable for him” (Genesis 2:18). “Then the Lord God made a woman from the rib he had taken out of the man, and he brought her to the man. The man said, ‘The narrative continues: ‘This is now bone of my bones and flesh of my flesh; she shall be called woman, for she was taken out of man.’ For this reason a man will leave his father and mother and be united to his spouse, and they will become one flesh” (Gen. 2:22-24).

We all know that the Bible calls on husbands to leave their parents and cleave unto their spouses (Gen. 2:24). But this leaving and cleaving doesn't mean that they aren't still a part of their larger families as well. Their parents will always be their parents, although the roles and interactions will definitely have to change after marriage.

In many marriages, bad relationship between daughter-in-law and mother-in-law is a constant reality. How should the new spouse relate to the in-laws in the family? In fact, I heard some ladies discussing about the plan of marriage and wish that the mother-in-law should have died so that she lives well with the husband! A lot

of marriages fail because of this. But still there are some examples of good relationship between daughters-in-law and mothers-in-law both in the Bible and in modern times.

In some instances, people have misused Micah 7:6 to justify their bad relationship, which is far from the truth of the Bible. God's intention in marriage was that marriage should be a source of happiness, and not of suffering and quarrels. The Bible gives a good example of Ruth and Naomi who lived happily even after the death of Mahlon and Kilion. "Naomi said to her two daughters-in-law, Go back each of you, to your mother's home. May the Lord show kindness to you, as you have shown to your dead and me." (Ruth 1:8). "Don't urge me to leave you or turn back from you. Where you go I will go, and where you stay I will stay ... Your people will be my people and your God my God. (Ruth 1:16). The relationship between Ruth and Naomi was good, that need to be followed. What was the secret that brought good relationship?

Here are a few reasons:

1. Ruth accepted Naomi's people to be her people, they belonged together –Ruth 1:16
2. Ruth accepted Naomi's God to be her God, they believed together –Ruth 1:16
3. Ruth agreed to go with Naomi anywhere, they behaved together – Ruth 1:17
4. Ruth and Naomi were friends, staying together- Ruth 1:17-18

Marriage is where we cross into boundaries and relationships with different family members including mother-in-law, different characters of people with different behavior and habits. You are married to a man loved by two women: you and his mother. When two women who love the same man are thrown together, conflicts may arise. The mother-in-law can have trouble to let go of her sons. The daughter-in-law can struggle to embrace her husband's family. In that matter there will always be friction. Sometimes it is said that two foreigners are fighting each other, since both of them have their places of origin. The mother-in-law came earlier and daughter-in-law joined later. Mutual understanding and wise negotiations are required to help mother-in-law and daughter-in-law to stay together.

When you are married, you automatically become part of another family with its own set of expectations. You need to recognize and respect those limits. What are the limits?

Here are three things that “honoring” your in-laws does not mean:

1. It does not mean that you submerge all your feelings, desires, preferences, and needs in the service of “doing things their way.
2. It doesn't mean you must permit them to disrespect, control, or manipulate you for their own selfish ends.
3. It doesn't entail “obeying” all their “parental” requests or requirements –which, in some instances with some in-laws, may get pretty crazy.

The most honoring response is to be diplomatic in answering any question yet need to be firm. If you say “no” say it firmly. This helps your in-laws not to manipulate you.

- Do not make your spouse to sympathize with his parents or family at large. Conflicts with in-laws always become complicated when the spouse seems to side with his or her parents and goes against his or her mate.
- If the spouse remains too dependent upon his parents, that needs to be addressed in a straight forward way. If you are blaming your in-laws for a disagreement, the problem must be dealt with, before it becomes conflict.
- If you've become engaged in a quiet or open war with your in-laws and maybe also with your spouse – about these tangled issues, don't let it erode your marriage further. Do the healthy thing and seek out a Christian therapist.

Here are some additional tips on how to get along with your mother-in-law or daughter-in-law:

1. Act in love
Don't depend on your feelings to guide your actions. Follow God's guidance instead, “for the heart is deceitful” (Jeremiah 17:9). It's rare to go against love.
2. Be patient with each other.
Don't expect to be close right from start. Give your relationship time to grow.
3. Bless your mother-in-law
4. Bless your daughter-in-law
5. As a mother-in-law lead by letting go.

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Don't harbor bitterness in your relationship

6. As a daughter-in-law choose respect
7. Respect the power of words
8. Resolve conflict –by using wisdom; - “wisdom that comes from heaven is first pure; then peace-loving.” (James 3:13-18)
9. Set the boundaries, by clearly defining what is acceptable in your relationship.

WHAT IF THE AN IN-LAW DOESN'T ACCEPT ME?

You may have a mother-in-law who is openly rude to you. Remember this: You can't change her. She can change herself.

1. What you can do is to love her son and love her. God commanded us to love others and this is a great example of ministering at home.
2. Speak only in kindness. Don't engage in arguments with your in-laws or complain about your husband to your mother-in-law.
3. Listen to her advice – even if you don't take it.
4. Go out of your way to help her
5. Cultivate a relationship with her
6. Don't talk bad about your in-laws to your spouse.
7. Thank your in-laws for the way they raised your husband.

Conclusion

I believe that Naomi's example of loving the Lord was in large part why Ruth would not leave her mother-in-law behind. Naomi and Ruth have a unique relationship, but one that I think we can learn much from.



Lesson 407 & 408

The Other Women in Your Husband's life and Relationships with Opposite Sex

The pastor is a public personality who is forced into meeting and working with several types of people. His operation includes interaction with women in varying positions and responsibilities. It is important that both the pastor and his spouse observe professional standards. The pastor's spouse needs to be tactful and careful in handling relationships with the women in the church.

1. Negative Coping Styles of Pastors' Spouses with Women in the Church
 - a. Unwanted suspicion and jealousy. Some pastors' spouses are uncomfortable whenever they see their husbands in conversation with a female. This could be the result of the insecurity of the pastor's spouse.
 - b. A standoffish stance. The pastor's spouse is reluctant to associate with the women.
 - c. "Forbidding" the pastor to associate. Some spouses insist that their husbands do not associate with the ladies in the church. This can be awkward, especially since many church officers are female.
 - d. Being over-friendly in order to compensate. Always

remember that “familiarity breeds contempt.”

- e. Open hostility. In cases of broken relationships, some pastors' spouses display hostility.

2. Types of Women in the Church:

Following is a sample of the ladies in the church you have to interact with:

- a. Active Alice. This is the very busy lady. She holds multiple offices in the church and serves on several committees.
- b. Brooding Brenda. Her moods get the better of her; and she often finds things to complain about.
- c. Critical Christine. She is known for her critical attitude. This makes her unpopular, especially since she is not usually a worker.
- d. Designing Debbie. Beware of this woman! She feels a strong need for male attention. This lady is able to “dream up” reasons for a pastoral visit.
- e. Efficient Elsie. She is hard working and effective. There may be times when in her zeal she may even offend some others.
- f. Fashionable Flora. She is the fashion model of the church. Her emphasis is on the latest trends. She is hardly known for contributing her energy to helping in the church.
- g. Gossipy Gertie. Another red flag!! Her mission is to circulate stories—factual or fictitious.
- h. Hounding Hyacinth. She follows closely behind others, in search of an opportunity to exploit.
- i. Indiscreet Indra. She is risky and careless in her relationships with both men and women.

3. Coping with the Various Types of Women

- a. Be confident about who you are. Hold your head high, and realize that your role is that of servant leader.
- b. Be determined to set a godly example. Ask yourself, what would Jesus do?
- c. Be transparent, while at the same time veiling your emotions when things do not go well. Keep calm. Never let them see you sweat.
- d. Maintain a high level of professionalism. Carry out your tasks thoroughly and conscientiously.
- e. Be respectful. Earn respect from others.

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- f. Be alert and perceptive. Do not let situations take you by surprise.
- g. Be careful about the friendships you form.
- h. Do not indulge in gossip. Avoid the tendency to freely share your comments and impressions.
- i. Pray for God's wisdom.

4. Sex in the Forbidden Zone

Pastors are exposed to various kinds of temptations, including those in the area of sexuality. Because pastors are often in the public eye, there are some predators who are ready to lure them into sexual temptation. Here are some pastoral statistics from *Barna, Focus on the Family, and Fuller Seminary and FASICLD (Francis A. Schaeffer Institute of Church Leadership Development)*:

Of 1050 pastors surveyed from two pastors' conferences held in Orange County and Pasadena, CA -**416** in 2005, and **634** in 2006, three hundred fifteen (315 or 30%) said they had either been in an ongoing affair or a one-time sexual encounter with a parishioner.

According to *Barna, Focus on the Family, and Fuller Seminary*, fifteen hundred pastors (1500) leave the ministry each month due to moral failure, spiritual burnout, or contention in their churches. Fifty percent of pastors' marriages will end in divorce.

- a. Why are Pastors and Pastors' Spouses Lured into Infidelity?
 - i. Environmental factors. The attention the pastoral couple gets from the parishioners and community. The society is more liberal today.
 - ii. Personal factors. The myth that the "grass is greener on the other side of the fence." The effects of burnout and overwork threaten fidelity; and there is carelessness in our intimate relationships.
 - iii. Specific marital factors:
 - Boredom
 - Sexual deprivation
 - Emotional deprivation
 - Mid-life crisis
 - Deterioration of spouse's attractiveness
 - Escape from intolerable partner or marriage
 - iv. The sin principle. Satan is the attacker of God's people. He devises ways of making our leaders fall.

b. Steps in Infidelity

- i. "Just good friends." Sometimes this relationship can be suspicious. If you have to give this explanation, perhaps the signals are threatening.
- ii. Emotional attraction. The behavior is not immoral; but the persons really enjoy each other's company and look forward to their interaction.
- iii. Sexual attraction. At this stage, the two persons feel a strong sexual magnetism between each other.
- iv. Sexual involvement. This is the ultimate stage of adultery. Feelings of guilt begin to disappear and there is little fear of consequences.

5. Safeguarding Your Husband from Infidelity

- a. Be a visible spouse. Accompany your husband on visits when possible. Attend events with him.
- b. Keep yourself attractive. Take care of your appearance, health and hygiene.
- c. Do not offer your husband's services to ladies. Help them find a handyman.
- d. Keep your eyes open for possible predators. Help keep him on his guard.
- e. Give him love, appreciation and affirmation.
- f. Pray with and for him.
- g. Make time for meaningful communication.
- h. Show genuine interest in his work and other activities.

6. Safeguarding Yourself from Infidelity

Sometimes pastors' spouses fall prey to indiscretions. Here are some tips for safety in relationships:

- a. Never say it can never happen to you. Pray that God will guard your footsteps.
- b. Be professional in your dealings.
- c. Remember you are a Christian woman with strong moral convictions.
- d. Occupy and develop your mind. Transform your thoughts: **"Let this mind be in you,** which was also in Christ Jesus." Phil. 2:5
- e. Affirm your husband in public.
- f. Make your husband your best friend.

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- g. Be aware of lurking predators. Run, if you need to.
- h. Let hugs from the opposite sex be few. Beware of lingering handshakes.
- i. Trust and obey your intuition. Be on the alert to see the problem coming.
- j. Accept responsibility for your feelings and responses at all times.

7. Breaking off a Dangerous Relationship

- a. Confess to God and pray for strength. "Teach me to do your will, for you are my God; may your good Spirit lead me on level ground" Psa.143:10. NIV
- b. STOP! Don't try to taper off.
- c. Keep away from the person.
- d. Praise God for the victory.
- e. Claim God's promise for future strength and victory.

"Now unto him that is able to keep you from falling, and to present you faultless before the presence of his glory with exceeding joy."

Lesson 409

Anger and Forgiveness

DEALING WITH ANGER FORGIVENESS

Discussion Quiz

True or False

Write T (True) or F (False) in the blank beside each of the following statements:

- _____ 1. True Christians are never hurt by what others do to them.
- _____ 2. Forgiveness is a decision, not a feeling.
- _____ 3. Forgiveness is more beneficial to the forgiver than to the receiver.
- _____ 4. Anger is always sinful.
- _____ 5. If one has not forgotten the injury done to him/her, he/she has not truly forgiven the perpetrator.
- _____ 6. Forgiveness is surrendering the right to hurt back.
- _____ 7. There are some injustices that are impossible to forgive.
- _____ 8. The spirit of retaliation and revenge originated with Satan.
- _____ 9. Forgiveness is risky business.
- _____ 10. God does not expect us to forgive everyone who has done us injury.
- _____ 11. The best way to handle anger is to bottle it up.
- _____ 12. If I forgive a person I will have to reinstate the person to his/ her former position.
- _____ 13. Praying for someone who has injured me is not only beneficial, it is right.

- _____ 14. Forgiveness is easier to preach than to practice.
_____ 15. If I suspect that my forgiveness will be abused, it is better to withhold it.

Read the Bible references below. What light do they shed on the subject of anger and forgiveness?

Psa. 103:3; Eph. 4:32; Col.3:13; Matt. 6:12-15; Matt. 18:21; Psa. 86:5; Ex. 4:14; Num. 11:10; James 1:19; Prov. 21:19; Matt. 5:22; Eph. 4:36; Luke 6:27-36

(Answers to True or False Quiz are at the end of the lesson.)

Text: Ephesians 4:26: “Be ye angry and sin not; let not the sun go down upon your wrath...”

Anger is a basic human emotion like joy, sadness, or fear. Some theorists say anger comes from within the individual. Others contend that frustration creates anger. Still others believe anger is a learned behavior. Whatever the source, how are we to deal with our anger as Christians?

Even saints got angry. Moses sometimes became angry (Ex. 11:8; 32:19). The Bible repeatedly tells of times when God became angry. (Ex. 15:7; 22:24; 32:10, 11; Num. 11:1, 10; 12:9; 22:22; 25:2; Ex. 4:14; Deut. 9:20; Joel 7:1.)

“Be angry and sin not,” Eph. 4:26, suggests that there is a **right** and **wrong** way to express anger. Most of us are guilty of expressing our anger in wrong ways. We need to learn how to deal with our anger appropriately so that we do not sin.

We are all born with the potential to feel and express anger. The way we respond when angry is learned. What situations make you angry? What is your usual behavior when you are angry?

The Bible on Anger

The Word of God has a great deal to say on the subject of anger. Here is a sampling:

Pro. 15:18 “...he that is slow to anger appeaseth strife.”

Pro. 16:32 “He that is slow to anger is better than the mighty.”

Pro. 19:11 “The discretion of a man defereth his anger.”

- Pro. 27:4 "Wrath is cruel, and anger is outrageous."
Pro. 21:19 "It is better to dwell in the wilderness than with a contentious and angry woman."
Eccl: 7:9 "Be not hasty in thy spirit to be angry: for anger resteth in the bosom of fools."
Eph. 4:26, 27 "Be angry, and sin not: let not the sun go down upon your wrath: Neither give place to the devil."
Eph. 4:31 "Let all bitterness, and wrath, and anger, and clamour, and evil speaking, be put away from you, with all malice."
Col. 3:8 "But now ye also put off all these; anger, wrath, ... out of your mouth."
James 1:19, 20 "Wherefore, ... let every man be ... slow to wrath; for the wrath of man worketh not the righteousness of God."

The Many Faces of Anger

Anger may be displayed in many ways. It may be cold or hot.

Cold Anger may display itself in the following ways:

- Silence, Internalizing
- Depression, anxiety
- Sleeplessness
- Self-sabotage
- Overworking
- False peace
- Pretending
- Flight
- Sickness
- Withdrawal

Hot Anger displays itself in the following ways:

- Quarrelling
- Shouting, blowing up
- Violence
- Bullying
- Put downs
- Tantrums
- Cursing, swearing
- Verbal abuse *ways of dealing with anger will often leave the angry person*
- Emotional abuse
- Competitiveness

These inappropriate ways of dealing with anger will often be disadvantageous to the angry person. In the life of a Christian, the Holy Spirit bears His fruit of love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness and temperance (Gal. 22:23).

When Anger Becomes Sinful

The Bible admonishes, “In your anger do not sin” (Eph. 4:26, *New International Version*). When is anger sinful? Anger is sinful when it is accompanied by rage, violence, vengeance, or abusive behavior. Moses sinned when in anger he disobeyed God and struck the rock instead of speaking to the rock as God had ordered. Solomon warns, “Make no friendship with an angry man; and with a furious man thou shalt not go: Lest thou learn his ways, and get a snare to thy soul” (Pro. 22:24, 25). He further declares, “An angry man stirreth up strife, and a furious man aboundeth in transgression” (Pro. 29:22).

Abusive behavior is prevalent in society, **but it has no place in a Christian home.** The counsel of the apostle Paul is, “Let all bitterness, and wrath, and anger, and clamour (quarrelling), and evil speaking, be put away from you, with all malice: and be ye kind one to another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, even as God for Christ’s sake hath forgiven you” (Eph. 4:31, 32).

If Christian homes were to live by this rule, peace, harmony, and happiness would flood them. Husbands and spouses could make these verses a part of their mission statement and regularly read them until this behavior becomes the norm in their homes. No man deserving of the name “husband” or “Christian” would be abusive to his spouse.

And likewise, no woman deserving of the name “spouse” or “Christian” would be abusive to her husband. Spouses are for loving, not abusing. If you have ever abused your spouse or children, confess and forsake the behavior as you would any other sin. One husband asked, “Do you mean that I should not even spank my spouse as I would a child if she were rude to me?” Your spouse is not your child. A spouse is her husband’s equal.

Husbands are to love their spouses as Christ loves His church (Eph. 5:25). “To love and to cherish” is the opposite of abusing. Children

are not for abusing either. Parents need to learn to discipline with love. The widespread evil of abusing children has led many countries to enact laws against abuse. But when the love of God is in our hearts, we do not need the laws of society to tell us not to abuse our loved ones.

Abuse may take many forms. It may be physical (hitting, beating), verbal (saying hurtful and denigrating things to the person), mental or emotional (silence, ignoring, withdrawal, mind games), or sexual (using sex in inappropriate or harmful ways). Any form of abuse is out of place in the Christian home. No one deserves to be abused. Do not tolerate it. If you are abused, or if you are an abuser, get help quickly.

How Is the Christian to Deal with Anger

No matter how saintly we are, there will be times when we become angry. What are we to do at such times? Your spouse just put a huge dent in your new car. Your neighbor's dog just destroyed your flower garden. Your co-worker has spread a falsehood about you. Pretending to be not angry will not solve the problem. Face up to it. Here are some suggestions that work:

First, admit it; recognize it; verbalize it.

Second, identify the source. Why am I angry? What is causing the feeling of anger? The one toward whom we may be displaying the angry feelings may not be the cause. There may be a root cause somewhere else. Retrace your steps. Is there a specific event that caused it?

Third, determine if you have a right to be angry. Get all the facts. Jonah was angry because God was merciful (Jonah 3:10 - 4:11). Henry's spouse, Susan, expected him to pick her up from the supermarket at 4:00 p.m. He turned up at 5:00 p.m. She was very angry until she learnt that the car broke down and he had tried desperately to contact her to alert her.

Fourth, ask yourself, "What is the most appropriate way to express this anger?" Moses made the big mistake of expressing his justified anger in an inappropriate way (Num. 20:7-12). It may be necessary to wait until your anger subsides before expressing yourself.

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Fifth, deal with the root cause. If it is something that you have control over, correct it. If you need to confront someone else, do so with dignity, professionalism, class, and love.

Sixth, ask God's help to express your anger in the best way. Sometimes the best way is to bury it at the foot of the cross. It is sometimes better to suffer an injustice than to inflict upon ourselves the torture of retaliation. Jesus, when He was reviled, reviled not again.

Seventh, forgive the offender. Jesus is the supreme example of this. On the cross He pleaded for forgiveness for His executioners (Luke 23:34). He admonishes us to do the same (Matt. 6:14, 15; 18:35). Divine help is available for dealing with anger (Phil. 4:13). If a person wants to be helped in overcoming a bad temper and uncontrolled anger, God is ready to help. He did it for Moses who became the meekest of men. He did it for James and John, the Sons of Thunder. He will do it for you.

But it is not enough simply to control our anger; it is also necessary to forgive those who made us angry. One of the hardest Christian principles to practice is forgiveness. It is natural to want to hurt back those who hurt us.

Jesus, however, set a high standard for those who bear His name. In His timeless sermon on the mount, He declared, "Ye have heard that it hath been said, 'An eye for an eye, and a tooth for a tooth:' But I say unto you, that ye resist not evil: but whosoever shall smite thee on thy right cheek, turn to him the other also. And if any man will sue thee at the law, and take away thy coat, let him have thy cloke also. And whosoever shall compel thee to go a mile, go with him twain. Give to him that asketh thee, and from him that would borrow of thee turn not thou away. Ye have heard that it hath been said, Thou shalt love thy neighbour, and hate thine enemy.

But I say unto you, love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which despitefully use you, and persecute you; That ye may be the children of your Father which is in heaven: for he maketh his sun to rise on the evil and on the good, and sendeth rain on the just and on the unjust. For if ye love them which love you, what reward have ye? Do not

even the publicans the same? And if ye salute your brethren only, what do ye more than others? Do not even the publicans so? Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect” (Matt. 5:38-48).

Forgiveness is not always easy, but it is always right. Some hurts go deep down. A spouse whom you have loved dearly for years leaves you for another person. Your best friend in whom you confided, betrays you and tells others the carefully guarded secret of your life, and now everyone knows about it. At the church election someone deliberately told a lie to the nominating committee that caused the members to decide against electing you for a certain position. Your child, in whom you invested for many years becomes pregnant out of wedlock during her third year of college and has to drop out of school.

It must have been hard on Jesus when His disciple, His treasurer Judas, went out and sold Him to His enemies for US\$25.00. It must have been hard on Jesus when all His disciples abandoned Him when He was arrested and needed their support. It must have been hard on Jesus when many whom He had helped and healed joined with the crowd and shouted, “Crucify Him! Let Him be crucified.” It must have been hard on Jesus when those He came to save nailed Him to the cross. But Jesus responded to these ultimate insults with a plea for their forgiveness.

Stephen, when he was being stoned to death, also begged the heavenly Father to forgive his persecutors. Forgiveness is not always easy, but it is always beneficial. One brother became ill when another member of his church spread a falsehood about him. He was filled with anger and desire for vengeance. The more he dwelt on the injustice that was done to him and the unkindness of life, the more ill he became. However, when the brother released the matter to God and started praying sincerely for the offender, not only did the peace of God fill his heart, but also the illness disappeared.

Forgiveness does not mean that we completely forget the wrong that was done to us, but we give up our right for retaliation or vengeance. We no longer dwell on the injustice with feelings of anger and pain. We turn the matter over to the righteous Judge who says, “Vengeance is mine” (Rom. 12:19).

Feelings of forgiveness may not be instantaneous, depending on the depth of the hurt. But time is a great physician. As we keep going to God, He will provide the healing and the spirit of forgiveness. We do not have to feel guilty because the hurt does not disappear overnight. However, when we have experienced hurt we must eventually rise above it, like Joseph, and genuinely forgive those who injured us. This is the result of the work of the Holy Spirit who produces His fruit in our hearts (Gal. 5:22-25). When we are truly surrendered to the Holy Spirit, He enables us to love even our most terrible enemies.

“We know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren. He that loveth not his brother (or sister) abideth in death. Whosoever hateth his brother is a murderer: and ye know that no murderer hath eternal life abiding in him” (1 John 3:14-15). “If a man say, I love God, and hateth his brother, he is a liar” (1 John 4:20).

When we have been severely hurt we should see it as a challenge and a test and determine that we will not allow the hurt to destroy our joy. The apostle James gives this encouragement, “Consider it pure joy, my brothers, whenever you face trials of many kinds, because you know that the testing of your faith develops perseverance. Perseverance must finish its work so that you may be mature and complete, not lacking anything” (James 1:2-4, NIV).

We should ask God specifically for His sustaining grace to see us through the hurt. (2 Cor. 12:7-10). There is no trial that you can face that God cannot give you the strength to bear it (1 Cor. 10:13). Do not allow the hurt to make you become bitter and lose faith in mankind, in God, or His church. “Let all bitterness and wrath, and anger . . . be put away from you,” is the counsel of Paul (Eph. 4:31).

Make your persecutor a matter of prayer. “Pray for those who mistreat you,” says Jesus (Luke 6:28). Praying for one's enemies is not just to effect a change in the enemies, but it does wonders for the one who does the praying. Focus not so much on the hurt but on God's deeper work in you through the hurt. If we look long and hard enough we can see what God is trying to do for us and in us. We do not have to wait for the one who has wronged us to seek our forgiveness in order to offer it.

While Stephen was still being stoned, he prayed for the forgiveness of his persecutors (Acts 7:54-59). There is a freedom that the soul receives when one extends forgiveness. The peace of God floods the chambers of the soul and the spirit soars on joyful wings.

In the parable of the two debtors, Jesus shows that there is no one who has wronged us as terribly as we have wronged God. And if the great Jehovah can forgive us for our many sins against Him, we can also forgive those who have wronged us (Matt. 8:23-35).

Our God is a forgiving and merciful God. We rejoice in the assurance of sins forgiven through the blood of Jesus. Let us truly be ready to forgive others as we expect God to forgive us.

Answers to True or False Quiz

1. False 2. True 3. True 4. False 5. False 6. True
7. False 8. True 9. True 10. False 11. False 12. False
13. True 14. True 15. False

WE'RE PASTORS' SPOUSES

M.J.M

Magulilo J. Mwakalonge
April' 25th 2018

♩ = 88

1. We're Pas-tors' spouses stand-ing firm, to lift the fight-ers' hands; The foe is strong and bat-tle fierce, but
2. We're Pas-tors' spouses stand-ing firm, to lift the fight-ers' hands; In joy or sor-row we will go, His

7

vic-t'ry will be ours; Come we join our hands let us lift their hands; Giv-ing strength to war-riors to
grace will be our strength; Though the way gets wear-y with pierc-ing thorns; With the tears of suff'r-ing and

12

fight till end; The foe is strong and bat-tle fierce, but
pain-ful cross; in joy or sor-row we will go, His

15

1. vic-t'ry will be be our strength (be ours); Come we ours (be ours)
2. grace will be our strength (our strength); Though the strength (be ours) strength

TU WENZI WA WACHUNGAJI

M.J.M

Magulilo J. Mwakalonge
April' 25th 2018

♩ = 88

1. Tu wen-zi wa wa - chu-nga - ji, msa - a - da vi - ta - ni; Ja - po a - du - i ho - da - ri u - shi - ndi ni we -
2. Tu wen-zi wa wa - chu-nga - ji, msa - a - da vi - ta - ni; Ra - ha - ni ha - ta shi - da - ni Mu - ngu ngu - vu ye -

8
tu; Tu - wa - i - nu - e - ni ma - je - me - da - ri, wa - pi - ga - ne vi - ta - ha - di wa - shi - nde; Ja -
tu; Ha - ta mii - ba mi - chu - ngu i - tu - cho - me, kwa ma - cho - zi na ma - u - mi - vu me - ngi; Ra -

13
po a - du - i ho - da - ri u - shi - ndi ni we - tu we - tu Tu - wa tu, we - tu
ha - ni ha - ta shi - da - ni Mu - ngu ngu - vu ye - tu ye - tu Ha - ta tu, ye - tu

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