

The Journal

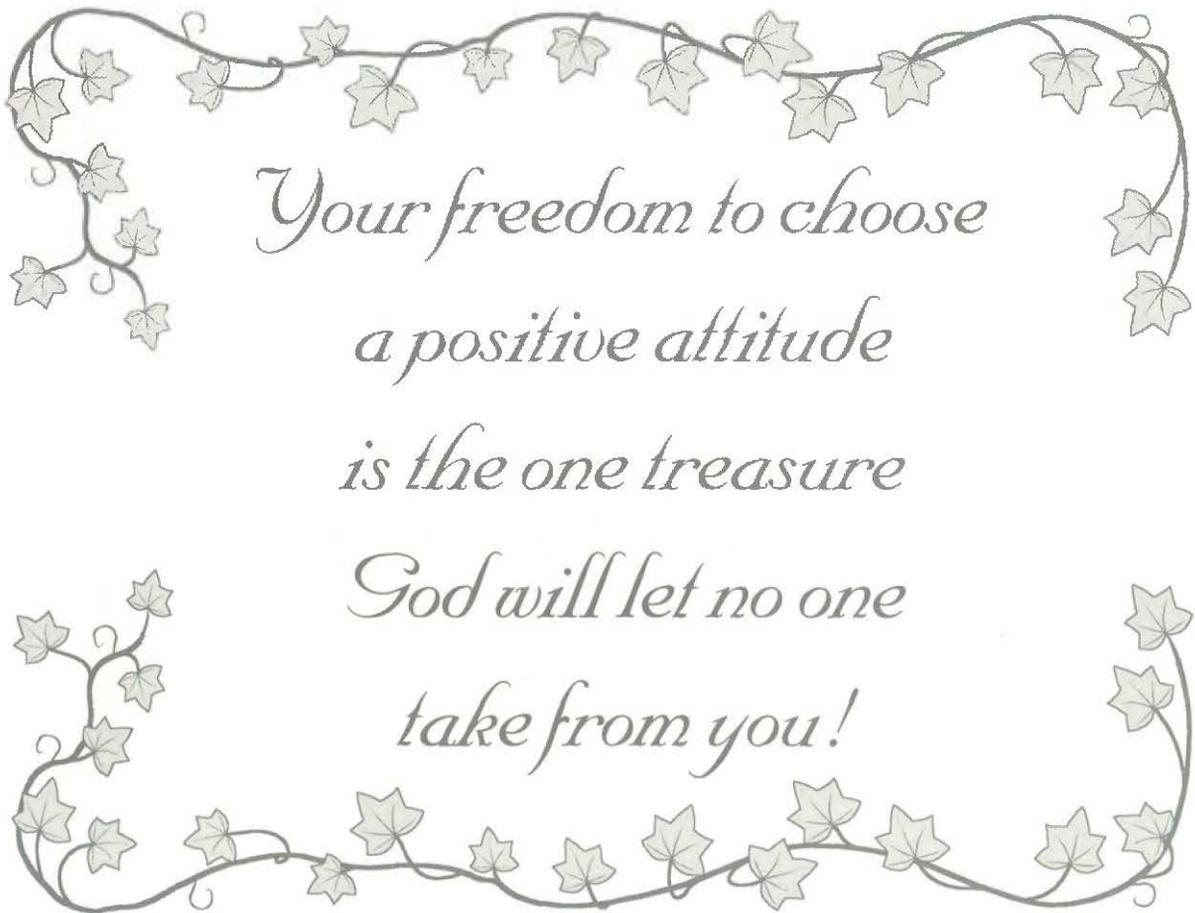


A SHEPHERDESS INTERNATIONAL RESOURCE FOR MINISTRY SPOUSES

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The Journal

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Editor's Musings

Here it is 1999 already. It is so tempting for me to think about how tired I am and how much I wanted to accomplish in 1998 that is still undone. My calendar testifies to the fact that I was over worked and over busy, but I wonder—did I do the urgent or the important? And, how can I do better in the new year?

It is easy to look back on the past and pontificate about how I might have done things differently and blame somebody else's expectations or agendas. What is really difficult is to look to the future, make my new year's resolutions, and then *change me!* That word, *change*, can create a great deal of frustration, discussion, and debate. Maybe it is because we always want somebody else to change so we don't have to. Or, we don't want them to change because we are comfortable with the status quo. As the new year begins, my resolutions involve some changes—in me. And, it just might bring about some changes in those who associate with me. I put them into an acronym so I can remember them.

- C *Christ*—I will make my time with Jesus a priority.
- H *Husband*—I will spend more time doing fun things with him.
- A *Annual Physicals*—I will spend more time taking care of my health.
- N *Neighbors*—I will take time for fun fellowship with those around me.
- G *Gratitude*—I will be more thankful for daily blessings that I take for granted.
- E *Enjoy*—I will enjoy the moment and make each day a delight not a duty.

As each of you begins a new year, sort out in your own life the truly important from the tyrant of the insignificant. Look at the life of Jesus and study His short 30 years on this earth. It will make all the difference.

Happy New Year!

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What to Do . . .

When You're Feeling Blue

Karen Holford

Karen Holford is the wife of Bernie Holford, the family life director of the South England Conference. Together they enjoy developing seminars on all aspects of family life. They have three children: Bethany, 10; Nathan, 7; and Joel, 4. Karen has written several books, including, Please God Make My Mummy Nice!—A warm and humorous look at mothering and what it can teach us about God's love for our families. She also enjoys crafts of all kinds.



Let's face it—it happens. There are always some of those days when you don't feel so hot. You may have had a rough day. It may have been a bad hair day. Miserable things happen. Hormones regularly work overtime. And life is not always a bed of thornless roses; sometimes life feels more like a bed of roseless thorns.

In a ministry home we are often more exposed to pains of those around us. Our lives can be very challenging. Our local church may seem full of insurmountable problems. And we still have all the everyday problems to deal with as well. We have our own disappointments, bills, sick children, moving hassles. The list goes on and on.

There are days when we will feel down. Elijah had them, Job had them, David and Solomon had them. Feeling down from time to time is a normal part of life on this earth. The way we cope with our "downers" is the most important thing.

Firstly, try to analyze what it is that is making you feel down.

Is it a difficult situation or relationship? Is it criticism from others? Are you setting your goals too high to achieve at

the moment? Are sad things happening in your life? Are others trying to push you into roles with which you are uncomfortable? Do you have feelings of insecurity or loneliness? Are you eating properly and exercising regularly? Are you sleeping well? Do your "downers" follow your monthly cycle?

Consider the causes for your feelings, and see if you can do some simple things to tackle the root cause.

Take your feelings to God. Pray about them, even if you don't feel like praying. Write a letter to God, as you would to a friend, telling Him all about how you feel and why. Remember He understands, He cares, and He holds you close to His heart when you hurt.

Turn to Psalm 103, and read it slowly. List all the wonderful aspects of God's relationship to you, how He loves and forgives you, and remembers how fragile you are. Whenever I feel low, this is such a wonderful, encouraging passage to read. It makes me glow right inside, and it feels to me like a love letter from God. Maybe you have other scriptures that encourage you. Write them in a pretty notebook. Add

encouraging thoughts you may have while reading the Scriptures. Clip words from cheerful cards and notes and turn to your notebook when you are feeling down.

Imagine God taking you onto His lap. In Revelation 21:4, it says that God will wipe away our tears in heaven. I like that personal picture of God wiping away my tears even now, and giving me a foretaste of the heaven to come. Imagine God wiping away your tears. Imagine what you would tell Him and ask Him if He were right here with you now.

If you can, ask someone to pray for you, or with you. You don't have to say why, just say that you would like them to pray for you. If you want to share more, then that is up to you.

At one of our ministry wives' retreats a counselor asked us to fold a piece of paper into four quarters, and answer one of the following questions in each quarter:

- What is my life like right now?
- Where would I like my life to be, ideally?
- What is stopping me from reaching my goals?
- What am I going to do about those obstacles?

This exercise can help us to clarify our situations, and may help us to pin point what we can do about the challenges we face.

If you are feeling anger or resentment towards your local church, other organization, or a person, try writing out ten positive things about them, and focus on the positive qualities for a while. If you are feeling bad about yourself, then list ten things you like about yourself.

If you find your local church

constricting, consider becoming involved in a ministry outside of the local church. Consider using your skills to develop seminars for Women's Ministry events, Ministry Wives' events, Family Ministries, etc. Or become a part of a local ministry in your community. Volunteer at a homeless shelter, be a nurturer at a home for unwed teens, try telephone counseling. The list is endless.

Exercise—it releases chemicals of well-feeling into your body which can counteract the bad-

Analyze what it is that is making you feel down. Consider the causes for your feelings. Do simple things to tackle the root cause. Try some of the author's innovative suggestions.

feeling chemicals. Take a brisk walk in a lovely park, jump rope, swim, or dig in the garden.

Deep, relaxing breathing is helpful, and also good for your health. Take deep breaths in, and then release your breath as slowly as you can, until you feel that all the air has come out of your lungs. To make it more fun, blow bubbles, and see how many bubbles you can blow with one deep breath, or how big a bubble you can blow. Jump on the bubbles and get some exercise too. Do this with some kids and have some innocent, healthy fun!

Fill your home with flowers. Fresh flowers always lift the spirits. If you can't afford them, pick huge bunches of wild flowers,

or greenery in the winter. Grow potted plants and fill your rooms with "home-grown" blossoms. Share your flowers and plants, and spread the cheeriness they bring.

Read a funny book, or watch a funny movie. Some Christian authors have the gift of humor. Proverbs tells us, "A merry heart doeth good like a medicine." Try reading Adrian Plass' book *The Sacred Diary of Adrian Plass (aged 37)*, or Jane Grayshon's works entitled *Confessions of a Vicar's Wife*, and *Vicar's Wife on the Move*. Rabbi Lionel Blue's writing is also full of gentle humor. Look in the ABC for uplifting books.

Bake your favorite cookies and share them with someone. Bake bread. If it's a disaster, grind it into bread crumbs for nut roasts, or go and feed it to the ducks in the local park.

If you feel like going on a spending spree, write a list of all the special occasion cards you will need for the next year. Reading lots of funny cards, and choosing lovely ones to buy to suit your friends and family will make you feel happier.

Find a way to learn a new skill. Choose a simple tapestry kit if you are not used to sewing, one with the picture printed on the canvas. Tapestry is very soothing, and the end result will help you to feel positive about yourself. Make the tapestry as a gift, and you will spread your cheer even further! Consider buying a complete beginner's kit to learn stenciling, quilting, cross-stitch, silk painting, etc. Learn how to make simple greeting cards, and save yourself a lot of money!

Do something to improve your home. Make a simple wreath, or flower arrangement. Plant some

new flowers in the yard borders. Buy some cheerful pillows to brighten up a tatty sofa, a new towel to brighten the bathroom, new candles for your bedroom.

If you feel bad about yourself, take some time to soak in a bubbly bath, or use lavender aroma therapy oils. Do all the nice things you like to do to keep your body looking and smelling good.

If you yearn for a new outfit, look through sale racks, good will shops and charity stalls, or trade clothes with a good friend.

Go on a fruit fast, and drink only water and eat only fruit for a few days. This will cleanse your body and help you to feel more energetic.

Do one thing that will help somebody else. Clean out your closets and give some clothes to ADRA. Donate any special skills you have to help someone in the church or your local community. Solicit some help from friends and repaint someone's house, weed an elderly person's garden, or baby-sit for a busy single mother.

Help your spouse relax. Plan a special night with your spouse. Dress up for him, take the phone off the hook, make a special meal, or go out to eat. Have fun planning this as a secret surprise for him, just make sure he keeps the space free in his diary.

Write a list of other people who may need cheering up. Invite them to do some of these things with you. Walk in the park, have a picnic, blow bubbles, watch a funny video. Spreading your happiness increases it!

If you were feeling blue when you began to read this, I hope and pray that you are feeling a little more pink around the edges by now! ❀

Solitude

Marah Courteous

Solitude is all I ask,
As I wonder why it is such a task
To find a tiny bit of peace.

Why is it so difficult to understand,
And why of the pastor must you demand,
That he have no peace.

Maybe we can claim a Saturday night,
But to miss a social just wouldn't be right.
Where do we find that peace?

Surely a Sunday will be our own,
But no, working bees and picnics are all the go,
And with them go our peace.

Holidays come and I give a sigh,
But you can't let this opportunity go by,
And once again there is no peace.

Home again to the ringing phone,
The doorbell sounds and the children groan,
For there just is no peace.

Even at home there's always some chore,
And with three little boys, life's never a bore.
Will there ever be peace?

Will a pastor be left alone,
When his children are fully grown?
No, even in retirement there is no peace.

Marah Courteous is a pseudonym.

For Such a Time as This

Hepzibah G. Kore

Hepzibah G. Kore is the Shepherdess Coordinator for the Southern Asia Division. Before she took up these responsibilities, she served in education for 25 years. Her husband, Gnanaraj Kore, is the President of the South India Union. They have been happily married for 28 years. They have one daughter, one son, one son-in-law, and one grandson. Hepzibah enjoys listening to music, reading, and writing articles.



After my husband's appointment as the President of the South Indian Union, I received many letters containing the words, "Who knoweth whether thou art come to the kingdom for such a time as this," (Esther 4:14) with a request either before or after the quote. When I visited the field, I heard the same words. I began to think of these words. The more I thought, the more I was compelled to read the source—the book of Esther.

As I read the story a couple of times, I saw many valuable lessons that I, as a shepherdess and an administrator's wife, could draw from two of the three prominent women mentioned there—one as savior, the other destroyer; one woman approaching her husband for help, the other advising or giving instruction to her husband to destroy.

The issue, as we all know, was the decree to kill all the Jews, withholding none. Haman had initiated the decree. It was a matter of life and death for the Jews. In this grave situation, Mordecai sent a message to Esther. "Who knoweth whether thou art come to the kingdom for such a time as this?" This triggered Esther's inner soul and she acted

immediately to find a solution.

We, shepherdess' and administrators' wives, may not face the same crisis, yet you will agree with me if I say we do face similar unpleasant and difficult situations such as character assassinations, false rumors, anonymous letters, power politics, and cold wars within the church. As a woman, can you handle this? You can if you follow the steps Esther took.

Prayerful life

Esther presented the problem before God. First she fasted and prayed and asked the people to do the same. With Esther it was not, "You fast and pray, I feast and enjoy" but rather, "Let us fast and pray together." God says, "Call upon me in the day of trouble; I will deliver you" (Ps. 50:15, NIV). That is what Esther did.

Faith and confidence in God

Esther had so much faith and confidence in God, the Father, that He worked out every detail of the plan to save His children. God says, "I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee" (Heb. 13:5). Trust in God's promises to save you from a difficult situation. Do not run to people for support

and guidance. God says, "It is better to trust in the Lord than to put confidence in man" (Ps. 118:8).

Willingness to sacrifice

Esther risked her life for a good cause, to save her people from death. Since no one in the palace knew who she was, she could have ignored the plea or turned a deaf ear to Mordecai. Not Esther. She said, "If I perish, I perish" (Esther 4:16). Are you willing to sacrifice your time, money, and comforts for a good and noble cause?

A few months ago I happened to meet two women in a conference office. While my husband was in the committee, I sat in the lobby trying to read a book. The two ladies were pouring out their problems to the men there. It was nearly 8 o'clock at night. From the little bit of conversation I overheard, I understood that they had come to see my husband and were told that he would not see them and they were asked to go away. They had traveled a long way just to meet my husband so he could help solve this problem. I wanted to tell them that he would see them no matter how late it was. Yet I remained silent because I didn't want them to know that I partially overheard their problems. When I got up from the seat, one of the men listening to the women came and said, "You do not know me, but I know you. You are the Union President's wife. You must help these two women." So saying, he called the two women and asked them to tell about their problem.

When they finished, like a good administrator's wife, I said, "I am so sorry this has happened to you, but I cannot interfere in

the administration to do anything for you."

The man said, "You are wrong. You can and you must help such women. If you don't, who will? If you can't, who can?"

Being an administrator's wife is not easy. People will come to you with lots of requests. You will also be criticized and accused falsely. They might even say you are ruling your husband. That should not bother you. You have to take a risk to help the helpless.

Politely I told the ladies to wait to see my husband. Sadly, they said, "We were told that the pastor will not see us because it is late, and we were asked to go away." I assured them that my husband never sends anyone away without seeing them, no matter how late it is. They were able to meet with him, and they went away satisfied.

"Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends" (John 15:13).

Patience

In spite of the fact that Esther could have called and confronted Haman, she did not. She was patient and let the king act. Do you exercise patience under adverse circumstances or let out your anger like fire crackers? Scripture says, "If, when you do well and suffer for it, ye take it patiently, this is acceptable with God" (1 Peter 2:20). "Tribulation worketh patience" (Rom. 5:3). Remember, all things—whether it be power politics, cold war, false accusation, criticism—all things work together for good as long as you love God (Rom. 8:28). This verse gives me a lot of strength.

Tactfulness

Esther did not pour out her

heart as soon as she was accepted in the presence of the king. She prepared the king's mind to listen to her plea. "Be . . . wise as serpents" (Matt. 10:16).

Defensiveness

Esther defended her cause rather than accuse the adversary. "Let my life be given me . . . and my people" (Esther 7:3). She pleaded for her life and the life of her people. She did not use the opportunity to destroy the enemy and his people. Neither did she suggest what action should be taken against him. Could it be because of his position at the king's court?

Submissiveness

Esther did not demand justice. She said, "If I find favor in thy sight . . . if it pleases the king" (*Ibid*). Paul admonishes the wives to submit themselves to their husbands (Eph. 5:24).

Savior

Not only did she save the lives of her people but she also protected her husband from unknowingly doing wrong.

The second prominent woman I find in the book of Esther is Zeresh, the wife of Haman. What sort of a woman was she—domineering, foolish, cruel? In spite of the fact that she was a party to the evil devisings of Haman, we can still draw valuable lessons which would prevent us from doing what she did.

Pacify

To Haman, Mordecai was a "thorn in the flesh." He couldn't stand the sight of Mordecai and felt something must be done. When he came home with a heavy heart and shared his

feelings, his wife Zeresh, along with his friends, advised him to make a gallows and hang Mordecai.

When your husband comes home with a problem, a hurt, or his spirit is low and he is disappointed about something, speak words of comfort and encouragement and help him calm down. Do not aggravate and add fuel to the fire. Remember, God is always in control. The Lord said, "Vengeance is mine" (Rom. 12:19).

Help overcome jealousy and hatred

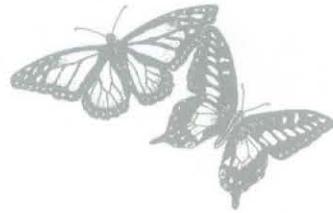
Do not instigate to do evil. Help in all possible ways to overcome evil with good. Pray especially for those whom you think are thorns in the flesh. This will help you understand them and overcome jealousy and hatred. Whatever the case may be and whosoever it may be, it would definitely do a world of good if you pray for them. "Envy (is) rottenness to the bones" (Prov. 14:30).

Do not expect respect and honor

You become disappointed only when you expect something and do not get it. All that you need is favor from God. God will lift you up if you are faithful.

Zeresh was cruel. She gave wrong advice to her husband, which caused his life, their sons' lives, and many others lives to be lost. The greatest loss was the loss of her husband. What a tragedy.

What you sow, you reap. As someone has said, "You pass this way but once. Therefore, do all the good you can while you are here." ❀



The fool says in his heart, "There is no God." This designation goes for those who doubt God's sovereignty as well as those who deny Him. Either He is sovereign, or He is not God. Therefore, when we become so preoccupied with and dismayed by circumstances and certain people that we doubt God's ability to handle things in His own way, and in His own time, then we, too, are fools.

—Ruth Bell Graham





Anywhere... but New Guinea

Kerrie Long

Warrick and I married in December 1986. We both worked in Sydney, Warrick at the Division and I at the Sanitarium Health Food Company's Chatswood Office. Just nine months later we got "the call." I was visiting Wahroonga at the time, and due to a prior agreement, Warrick accepted the call, then rang to tell me where we were going. When "volunteering" to go to the mission field, we had stipulated "anywhere but New Guinea." So you can guess where we were headed.

After being encouraged about our destination at Mission Institute, we arrived in Lae in January 1988. I have to be honest and say I was totally unprepared for the reality that awaited us. I lay awake that first night in a foreign land, with foreign noises, heat, etc, and wondered if we had made a dreadful mistake. The humidity of Lae took a bit of getting used to. I used to stick my face in the freezer to get a nose full of cool air!

It is amazing how a person adapts to a totally different environment and the steps people take to make an enjoyable life for themselves.

I must say that the settling in process was greatly aided by the arrival of our own personal effects. With each move, we sent our goods ahead of us by at least a month so we were able to settle in with our things almost as soon as we arrived instead of camping in transit flats.

There is far greater contentment on the home-front if the husband is able to settle the family with their own things before getting caught up in his work.

We spent two years in Lae, then received a call to transfer to Suva, Fiji. We spent nearly two years there as well, before having to return to Australia a little earlier than planned because of a tumor in my foot. We had two little girls while we lived in the islands, although I travelled back to the Sidney Adventist Hospital to give birth. I also had to bring the older one back there for an operation when she was just 10 weeks old. So we do know well the procedures for medical leave. In both places, we found excellent doctors—some European, some nationals.

A little over three years have passed since we arrived back in Australia, and we do think with

Kerrie Long (nee Tolhurst) writes to us from Newcastle, Australia. Her husband, Warrick Long, is the Associate Secretary-Treasurer for the North New South Wales Conference.



nostalgia of our time overseas. Many images come to mind when I think of those years:

- Many incredibly fun times were had with other expatriates. We have never had a more social time, any excuse was made for a party. We even had a party in Lae during a curfew—about eight families stayed in one house all night and played Pictionary at 2 a.m. (We have noticed people tend to stick to themselves more in Australia.) In the mission field, people need to be able to depend on each other. In the absence of the closeness of relatives, fellow missionaries almost become surrogate families.

- The friendships with the local people were wonderful and enlightening. It really is so eye-opening and refreshing to learn to appreciate others with all their different backgrounds and views and to understand their simple faith.

- It was very interesting to observe another society at work. I am a self-confessed people watcher. I can sit and watch people for hours and I found it fascinating to learn about another culture.

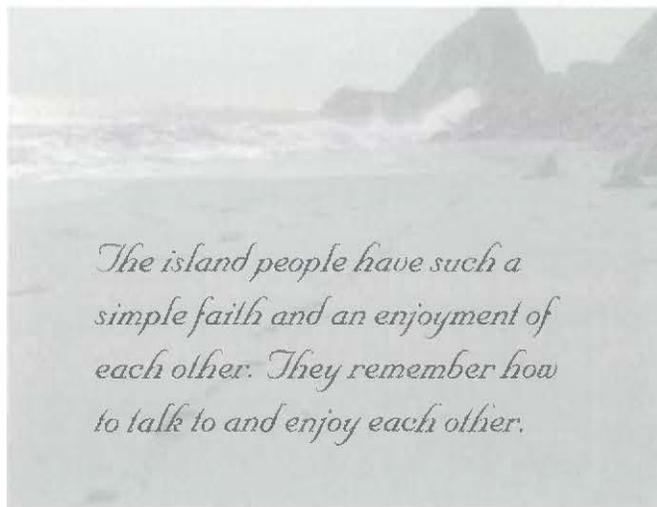
- We were given the opportunity to do some good for others. I think about the ladies craft group we set up in Suva. We invited community ladies to join us to learn or demonstrate crafts.

- I fondly remember the challenges of being a missionary's wife, not the least of which was having an hour's notice to cook lunch for 12 men! That

happened more than once, but was immensely gratifying when they were so appreciative.

- I cherished the unexpected pleasure of having a house-girl to take the edge off the chores. I was not going to have one, but soon realized I was helping a needy lady by giving her work. For about \$10 a day, she and I both benefited. I really do miss this aspect of the islands!

- I laugh when I recall the



The island people have such a simple faith and an enjoyment of each other. They remember how to talk to and enjoy each other.

humorous moments when "civilization" crept into local life. It was fun to see a group of local lads crowd around the first escalator in Lae. They dared each other to try it, and occasionally pushed one hapless individual onto the steps so he had no choice but to grimly hang on and leap off at the top end. (There was only one escalator, and it went up. To come down, you had to use the stairs.)

- I admired the self-sufficiency of the wives while the husbands were away. Sometimes not enough credit is given to the wives who hold down the fort while the husbands do their travelling and

spend many long hours away from home. I still vividly remember being left home with two tots while Warrick had to endure visiting Tahiti—twice! I won't hold it against him forever, just for the next 20 years!

- I cannot say that mission service is financially lucrative. We found it rather difficult to keep up a Sydney lifestyle, but that is not the idea of mission service anyway. We had to sell all our new "stuff" one year after getting married, and then start from scratch when we came back to Australia, but what price do you put on the experience we had?

- We found that we had to stick to a simple diet. Warrick suffered some rather gruelling tummy bugs from little nasties in non-purified water and some raw vegetables. But he did quite enjoy travelling through the islands in the Pacific and tasting

their freshly caught fish.

- Probably the biggest area of learning for us was in the area of the things that matter most in life. The island people have such a simple faith and an enjoyment of each other. They do not have all the distractions of our computerized society—they remember how to talk to and enjoy each other. They also know how to really put their hearts into worship and believe in God rather than just theorize about religion. We can all learn lessons from these folk and that is the thing I would like to remember most about our mission experience. ❀

Women's Participation in Global Mission

Meibel Mello
Guedes

Meibel is the Shepherdess Coordinator and Women's Ministries Director for the Central Brazil Union. Her husband, Arlindo Guedes, is in charge of Evangelism in the Union. They have two adolescent girls, Simeí and Rosinha.

For 15 years Meibel worked for Women's Ministries in different places in Brazil. She also taught physical education and Bible in various Adventist schools and was the principal in two elementary schools.

She likes to work for her family, be with her husband in evangelistic campaigns, and help in the church. Through her personal witness and testimony, she has brought many people to know Jesus.



When we study the Bible we discover that women are present at any moment of decision for God's people and for the Nations.

Jochebed's courage, facing her slave drivers, made her save her son Moses, whom God used as an instrument in restoring freedom to His people (Exodus 6:20).

The humble little orphan Hadassah reached the highest position in the kingdom of Ahasuerus as queen. In that position, bearing the name of Esther, she was used by God in order to save His people from death (Esther 2:7).

In the great plan of salvation, God chose a woman to be the Savior's mother!

Both the Old and the New Testament are full of noble actions accomplished by women.

At the beginning of the Adventist Church a distinct woman, Ellen G. White, was used as an instrument in God's hands in order to give this church the needed orientation for the accomplishment of its mission.

Today the church counts on the dedicated service of its female population:

- **At home**—As wives and Christian mothers, we

endeavor to make home a center of peace, love and light, we lead our children in the good path, making them useful to country, church and God, and we prepare them not only for this life but for eternity.

- **In schools**—We devote ourselves to the shaping of men and women with a vision for leading the church to final victory.
- **In offices** of our denomination—We help our leaders successfully accomplish the programs of this church.
- **In hospitals**—We help relieve the pain and suffering of physical and spiritual patients.
- **As pastoral assistants**—We spread the message of salvation to those who have never heard of Jesus.
- **In church**—We use our talents in the various departments in order to make its program advance.

In order to accomplish this mission we need to be, first of all, true Christians. We have to be Christ's friends, transforming our lives in His image by loving Him, imitating Him, and totally trusting Him.

How do we become like Christ?

How can we be worthy of the name of Christ? Using this name involves a great responsibility. We need to show the world the true character of God; we need to follow Christ's example.

Alexander the Great, the Greek leader who conquered the world in three years, was told of the improper conduct of one of his soldiers. He gave orders for the soldier to be brought to his presence.

"What is your name?" he asked.

"Alexander," the soldier answered.

"Young man," the commander asked again, "what is your name?"

"Alexander," the boy answered once more.

"Young man," the commander said in a threatening tone, "either you change your attitude or you change your name."

As Christians our lives must honor that wonderful name.

We need to take hold of God's Word. We need to spend more time studying the Bible, participating in morning worship, reading Spirit of Prophecy books, and studying the Sabbath School lessons.

An elderly German teacher led a very Christ-like spiritual life. He was an example among his colleagues and his students, who tried to discover what the secret for this life of kindness, understanding and love was. One day, some students decided that one of them should hide in the Professor's apartment, as this was the only place where they had not yet observed him. The teacher arrived late that night. The day had been long and tiring. He put the books on the table, took off his coat, and sat down. Then he took his Bible and read for almost one hour. He then bowed his head, joined his hands

on the Bible in an attitude of prayer, and stayed like that for a long period of time. Then he closed his Bible, stood up and with eyes lifted up, said, "Dear Jesus, you and I will always be friends!"

If we are intimately linked to Jesus, we will wish to have:

- *the tone of His voice and His words*—using kind words, never criticizing others.
- *the truth*—speaking always the truth. In Proverbs 12:22 we read: "Lying lips are abomination to the Lord: but they that deal truly are His delight."
- *respect*—real Christianity makes people polite, refined, and kind. Let us praise the Lord with our tongues and let us help those who suffer with words of comfort. With our tongues, let us advance the Lord's work and prepare for His Coming.

Let us build not destroy. Let us proclaim this message.

A missionary was preaching to an heathen tribe about the love of God. He told them that God had sent His Son to live among men. He described how kind, gentle, and polite Jesus was and how he helped to cure sick people. He mentioned the beautiful stories told by Jesus and, finally, said that Jesus had died for us.

"We know him!"

"That is not possible," answered the missionary, "he died many years ago."

"Yes, we do," insisted the Chief. "He lived among us and died here. His grave is here!" Then he took the missionary to the grave of a previous missionary, the first one ever to work and die in that land. His life had been so similar to that of Christ that the natives thought he was the real

Son of God.

What a wonderful witness!

Hearing facts like this we certainly wonder "How can I be more Christ-like?"

We can be like Christ by:

- living a life of prayer, having our minds constantly turned towards Him.
- keeping daily contact with the Holy Scripture.
- working for others.

If we practice this we will be witnessing for Jesus:

- in our homes: "The mother's work is a solemn and important one, to mold the minds and fashion the character of her children. . . ." *Evangelism*, page 676, 677.
- with our neighbors: "Visit your neighbors in a friendly way . . ." *Christian Service*, page 115.
- through letters: we can write missionary letters to people who are weak in their faith and to those who have not heard the Message of Christ.
- in hospitals, hospices, orphanages: by spreading the message of hope as well as our literature.
- in any place: "The Lord desires that the truth shall come close to the people, and this can be accomplished only by personal labor" *Evangelism*, page 436.

We are to obey the order of the Master who said, "Go. . ." We should participate in Global Mission in a more active and involved way.

"If we can arrange to have regular, organized companies instructed intelligently in regard to the part they should act as servants of the Master, our churches will have a vitality that they have long needed" *Testimonies*, volume 2, page 401.

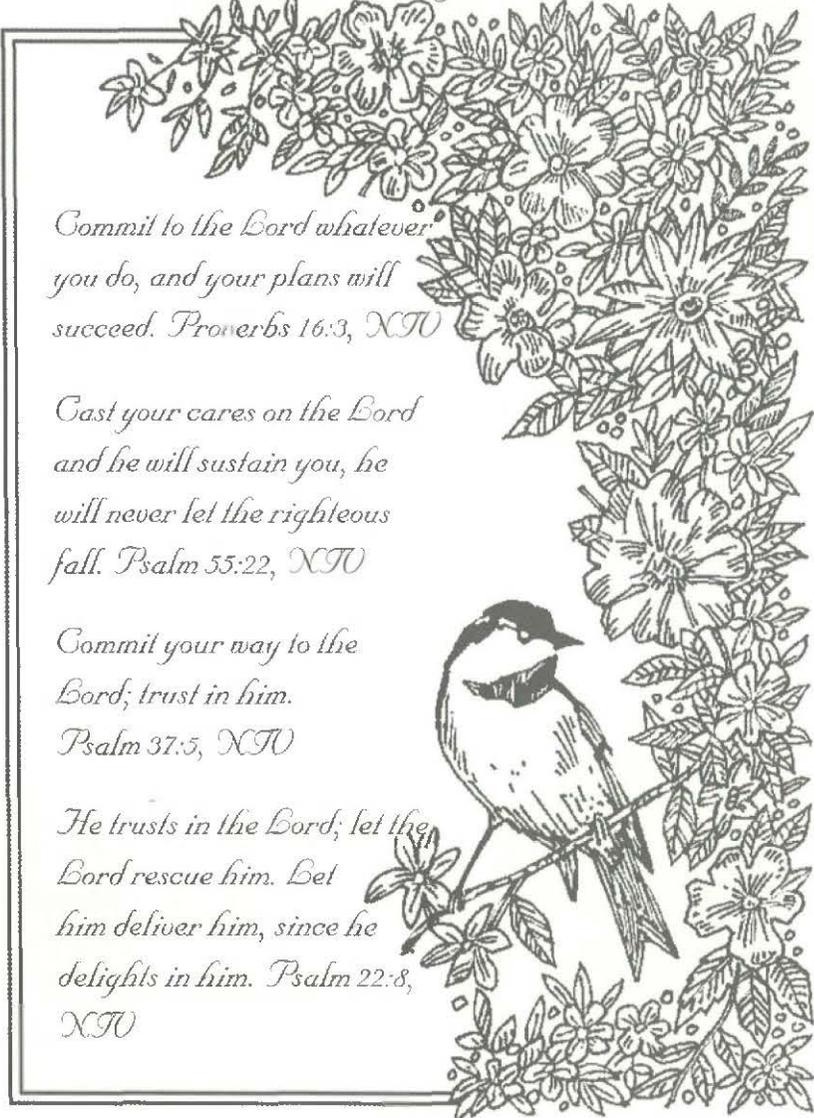
AFAM presents the following projects that can be accomplished by any Christian woman.

1. Christian Home series—
Study in family groups
 - a) Divide children into small groups according to age. They are more likely to participate and enjoy group worship if it is on their level.
 - b) Choose one coordinator per group.
 - c) Invite non-Adventist mothers to participate in these studies.
2. Happy Hour—Encourage children to participate in evangelization through Affiliated Sabbath Schools.
3. Plan to mark the Bible
 - 1st step—Mark your Bible 23 studies printed in self adhesive paper.
 - 2nd step—Understand your Bible
 - 3rd step—Share your Bible
 - a) Create Adventist and non-Adventist family groups.
 - b) Teach others how to mark the Bible.
 - c) Study the texts with everyone's participation.
 - 4th step—Lead the people to make a decision for Christ.
4. Missionary Purse—Use your purse to carry brochures to be given away like fall leaves.

These are some simple, practical ways to witness. Through faith and prayer, together we can do a great work with positive results for the Lord. Then, very soon, we shall see the return of our Savior in the clouds of Heaven with power and great glory.

Dear sisters, let us use our hands to finish the work. Let us be an instrument in Jesus' hands to make that day come sooner. ❀

Some Words to Live By...



Commit to the Lord whatever you do, and your plans will succeed. Proverbs 16:3, NIV

Cast your cares on the Lord and he will sustain you, he will never let the righteous fall. Psalm 55:22, NIV

Commit your way to the Lord; trust in him. Psalm 37:5, NIV

He trusts in the Lord; let the Lord rescue him. Let him deliver him, since he delights in him. Psalm 22:8, NIV

When Birds of a Feather

Debra Fulghum
Bruce

When the inner clock of spouses are not the same, how serious is the problem?

Debra Fulghum Bruce is married to Rev. Robert G. Bruce, Senior Pastor at Ortega United Methodist Church, and they have three young adult children: Rob, Brittynne and Ashley. She is a professional writer with a B.A. in Communications, University of South Florida and specializes in marriage, family and health collaborations. She is a Contributing Editor for Christian Parenting Today and is on the Editorial Board for ParentLife magazine. When she is not writing, Deb loves gardening, music, her family and friends, and her summer cabin in North Carolina.

From Home Life, February 1993. (c) Copyright 1993, The Sunday School Board of the Southern Baptist Convention. All rights reserved. Used by permission.



I had always believed the adage, "Birds of a feather flock together." But when my husband and I married and combined our two opposite body clocks, I ignored this saying. After all, many marriages had worked with greater differences than we had.

According to the latest marriage surveys, our 18-year-old marriage can't possibly be working. Marriages where one person likes to stay up late and the other retires early and gets up early, are just not compatible this study said. This report also stated that in these marriages there wasn't enough time for private conversation, the communication that should take place in a marriage was stilted, and the two different body clocks created inharmonious rhythms.

I don't like to dispute the experts, but let's be realistic. Can a "morning lark" really be happily married to a "night owl"? Oh, I know so! Let me give you an example of how our body clocks find harmony.

How the "lark" begins her day

It is 5 a.m. My eyes pop wide open without the assistance of an alarm. After all, it is another gorgeous day offering so much to

do. I hear my husband breathing deeply as he sleeps next to me, and I quietly tiptoe out of the bedroom. The birds chirping at daybreak add a cheerful sound as I pour my hot, early morning coffee. Then I celebrate; it's *my* time. Two hours . . . I have two wonderful hours to read, pray, write, and think clearly before anyone else awakens. You see, the early hours are the time I spend alone with God. As I unload the dishwasher, make school lunches, dust a table or two, and fold last night's laundry, I am constantly thinking of ideas, stopping to make a list or two, and asking God to give direction to the day.

As delightful as this time is, all good things sadly come to an end. About 3:00 p.m. my body slowly, but surely, begins to tire. My mind becomes a bit foggy, and the creative ideas are less frequent. I put all big projects on hold for the day and begin to focus on family duties: kids home from school, carpools to run, a last-minute errand, dinner to cook, dishes to clean, and homework to monitor.

How the "owl" begins his day

Now, let's turn back the clock to see how Bob, the "night owl,"

approaches the day.

The alarm rings for three long minutes at 7 a.m. before my sleepy husband finally turns it off. It seems the middle of the night to this devoted night owl, but the daylight pouring in his window lets him know it is a reality. Bob stumbles out of bed, bumps into a wall or two, and finally turns on the shower to help signal his body to wake up.

Family members are greeted with a soft, "Good morning, Deb," and, "Can you turn the radios down, kids?" Breakfast is eaten while reading the paper, not too much conversation yet. A quick kiss and his blurry eyes guide him to the car. Another day has begun.

Bob spends his early mornings at the office in study, then begins to see parishioners after 9:30 a.m., once his body has realized the owner really did wake it up.

Here is where our differences begin. By 9:30 a.m., I have already edited several manuscripts, written an outline or two for articles, vacuumed the bedrooms, wiped down the bathrooms, and started early dinner preparations. Oh, where did my day go, I wonder as I pause for a refreshing glass of iced tea.

By 9:30 a.m., my husband has settled into his office and has started to open his mail from the previous day. *My day is just beginning*, he thinks, as he pours his first cup of coffee.

By 3:00 p.m. I am almost through my day. But Bob has just finished a luncheon meeting and is starting his afternoon schedule.

At 7:30 p.m. Bob and I pause to be together—alone. As the

children work in their rooms, we sit in the den and talk about our respective days. My mind is through being creative, so I can think about his needs and his dreams. His mind has not fully clicked into the creative mode, so he can think about my needs and dreams.

We talk about children, family, bills, and vacation. We argue about politics, current events, teen curfews, and the neighbor's barking dog. We hug and kiss and smile and laugh. We joke and



People who are different in some ways can fill voids in each other's lives.

cry and pray and sit in solitude. Yes, we are compatible.

It is 9:30 p.m. The children have all been tucked in. Their lights are all out. I am ready for bed mentally and physically. My mind is tired, my body aches, and the cool covers look so inviting. As I turn off my light by the bed, my husband kisses me goodnight and tiptoes back into the den.

Let the good times roll, Bob thinks. This is his time. He thinks and creates. He plans and reads. He makes prayer lists, job lists, and visitation lists. He tinkers with a new program on the computer, throws in a load of wash, watches the news, and

listens to the new C.D. on the player. He quietly plays the piano in the distant living room, hums the verse to a new hymn, and prays aloud. He is alive, vibrant, creative, and yes, very awake.

The mantle clock strikes midnight, and Bob reminds his body that it has to be tired. Finally, his day is done as he turns back the covers on the bed and crawls in.

Benefits of different body clocks

Perhaps it is our strong independence that keeps our marriage together. If we had the same body clock, we might not have those times for aloneness and creative thinking. But more than that, people who are different in some ways can fill voids in each other's lives. My cheerfulness during the morning hours gets the family off the ground and moving. Bob's energy at night helps complete our busy day when the family's needs change.

Despite any study modern science makes, I still claim the Scripture "Where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them" (Matt. 18:20). His love is the basis for our relationship.

Yes, our marriage is living proof that the "morning lark" and the "night owl" can flock together, even if these two old birds do differ in some ways. We have found that with a common belief in Jesus Christ, along with some open communication, planning of daily schedules, and allowing each spouse to find personal time, our marriage can be sound and fulfilling. ❀

When Your Spouse Complains . . .

Willmore D. Eva

*"Do I have to make
an appointment
with you?"*

*Will Eva is the
editor of
Ministry
magazine. Born
in Zimbabwe, he
and his wife,
Claire, now live
in the
Washington,
D.C. area.*



The question might have been expressed in a cry of anguish or in the silence of a deep inner desperation . . . "What's happened to our marriage?" or "What's the matter with us?" There are probably only a few pastors or pastors' spouses who have not asked such questions in the frightening moments that accompany the confusion of marital stress.

The feelings of pain and distress that accompany these questions are often carefully hidden far back in the recesses of the guarded private world of the pastoral couple. There are times when such experiences and feelings are symptomatic of serious marital difficulty. Often, however, things are not as serious as they appear during a time of conflict.

In the physical realm, pain, among other things is a warning pointing to the need of appropriate intervention, be it a more or a less serious intervention . . . major surgery done by a professional surgeon or a Band-Aid applied to one's own finger. We need honesty, courage and the ability to distinguish and initiate what is actually needed in a given set of circumstances.

When we are in the throws of relational anguish and we have to decide how serious our

symptoms really are and therefore which intervention is appropriate, we should not (as may be the tendency in today's sometimes over-professionalistic world) despise the small, more home-spun interventions.

Recently I came across one of these that could prove helpful to our marriages.

Dean Merrill's book, *Clergy Couples in Crisis* (Volume 3 of the Leadership Library series, published by Word Books, 1985), consists of a number of carefully chosen examples of typical clergy couples wrestling with the common (though never ordinary!) challenges that come to a married couple in ministry. In one chapter entitled, "Do I need an Appointment?" Merrill describes Austin and Lois Hunter, a pastoral couple who began ministry in an Appalachian parish that allowed them time together, but who later moved to a more demanding urban setting which left them very little time for each other.

In Merrill's example, Lois Hunter describes how she felt at one time when she was acting as her husband's temporary secretary in the new church. She tells of a certain woman who had a standing one-and-a-half hour appointment with Austin each

Tuesday afternoon. Although Lois could not hear what was being said during the counseling sessions with this woman, from where she sat she could hear the quiet, attentive tone of the conversation, and once in a while the laughter as her husband and this woman talked together.

Lois says (page 120), "I'd try to keep my mind on my typing, but it was tearing my heart out, because I didn't feel even I could talk to him an hour and a half a week. I didn't have his undivided attention."

Lois later confronted Austin this way: "Do I have to make an appointment with you in order to receive what I see you giving so generously to others?" (*Ibid.*, p. 121).

"That confrontation led to the establishing of a weekly date each Friday from noon to two o'clock, time reserved for the marriage alone" (*Ibid.*). During this time (probably not the best time for an Adventist pastoral couple!), Lois had control over the "agenda." She could cancel the appointment, but Austin could not. If Lois wanted Austin to go shopping with her, fold the clothes with her, read a book aloud, go for a boat ride, work in the yard, "or whatever" that is what the Hunters would do.

This practical approach does not frontally spotlight a couple's actual points of conflict, rather it centers on that which we human beings need as much as we need anything else. It is something that is utterly Christian and truly godly in the best sense of those words: Time, and not necessarily that much of it, to concentrate unselfishly and unselfconsciously on those we love and depend on most, and time for them and for us to be recipients of this undivided attention. ❀

A Pastor's Wife

Maureen Mbedzi

*A pastor's wife has a heart large enough
to love everybody, but small enough
to love a smaller family unit.*

*A pastor's wife has a hand long enough to reach
and feed everybody in the neighborhood, but
short enough to reach and feed the few by her side.*

*A pastor's wife has time enough to minister to
someone all the time, but still has time enough
to attend her own household.*

*Her burdens are often times heavy.
What is expected from her many times is unrealistic
but because God is her strong hold
she still lives from day to day.*

Maureen Mbedzi is from Zambia. She attended Solusi College where she met her South-African pastor-husband; they have three children. They are based in the Mafikeng District in the Trans-Orange Conference of the Southern Union. Maureen is a lecturer at a college offering commercial subjects. She is also working on her MBA degree. She enjoys reading, traveling, sight-seeing, and listening to music and people.

The Patchwork Quilt of My Life

Heidrun Behnke

Heidrun Behnke is a registered nurse working for the Health Department of the government. Her husband is a pastor and Family Life Director in Germany. They have three sons and two daughters-in-law. Heidrun's main interest is the children's department of the Sabbath School and her hobbies are patchworking, gardening, reading, and traveling.



I have been an enthusiastic quilter for a year and a half. Insiders call this hobby a virus! If you have caught it you will probably never get rid of it. Thankfully my husband and youngest son have patience and understanding because when the virus is activated, my whole household gets out of order.

My dining-room table is covered with cloth patches. Many times the table is not big enough to hold all the material, so I soon have my living-room carpet covered with more patches! Little stacks of cloth can be seen everywhere as I sort the material by type and color. Soft muslin, damask, cotton, satin, silk, linen, calico, you name it, I have the material. Pins are another working hazard of the quilter. They can be found all over the house. Families of quilters soon know to look before sitting!

I see this hobby as a symbol of life.

A quilt is made up of many small patches, many kinds of different materials. Sewing cotton and linen together is quite easy, but sewing others types of fabric together can be quite difficult.

Adding a swatch of silk can dampen the enthusiasm of even the most experienced quilter. The fabric begins to go askew and the corners don't fit exactly. At such times, frustration can occur and quilting loses some of its charm.

Each patch is like a piece of my life, a period in my life that has been given to me. There are happy patches full of wonderful memories, soft positive patches that symbolize inner peace and promises for the future. And then there are hard-to-work-with materials: patches of frustration, disappointment, difficulties, and discouragement; these patches don't want to fit into my quilt because of their structure.

I experienced a relatively care-free childhood. After high school, I trained as a nurse in the profession of my dreams, married the man of my dreams, and was able to hold the sweetest baby in my arms. Everything seemed to work out according to my wishes. My husband and I were both serving the Lord and everything looked wonderful. My quilt consisted only of beautiful harmonious patches, and it was a joy to look at. But

then came a coarse patch of black cloth into all this harmony. Abdominal pain and our longed-for second child ended in a miscarriage.

How I would have liked to rip out the ugly patch but the thread was too strong. It had already become a part of my life and could not be exchanged. It was a disappointment I did not want to accept.

A quilt consists of three layers: the top with the patches, the filling, and the lining.

The top layer can be compared to the pattern of our life. Many times we have no influence on what "patches" we will be given. The filling supports the patch, it gives volume and warmth. It symbolizes our personality. Fillings come in different thicknesses as do personalities. The lining holds everything together. It is a symbol of God's love. We don't always see the lining, we don't always show it, particularly if the top has turned out well. It is only when we don't really like the top too much, when the individual patches seem too rough, that we take the time to look at the lining.

Sometimes when I look at my quilts, I see one I would like to change. I find a patch I no longer like, one that drives me to despair. I want to take it away and exchange it for a soft patch. But I discover that everything has long since been joined together through the quilting. My life is so like my quilts. The filling (my personality) and the lining (God's love) will keep together the patchwork quilt of my life. My quilts have some patches that are soft. They symbolize the times in my life when things are going smoothly. Other patches are not as smooth; they symbolize

the trials of life like the time my husband was diagnosed with a severe illness or the period of time when we had to deal with some serious family problems. But when I look at the quilt and see it in its entirety, I see a beautiful design. When I look at my life, I see the promise that one day we shall be together with our loved ones in God's kingdom. I see a time when I shall be united with my babies who were born too soon.

The beautiful pattern of my quilt is made of so many patches. I look at it and my life and am reminded of the poem "Plain and Simple" by Sue Bender.

The world can sometimes meet us in fragments. But the parts alone are not the problem. If our pattern is strong enough they can make up a whole.

Though my life may have some "ugly patches" here and there, I can accept them, for I know the lining, God, will support me. ✨



A little lad knelt down at his father's knee to say his bedtime prayers. After he had repeated, "Gentle Jesus, meek and mild," "Now I lay me down to sleep," and the Lord's Prayer, the father asked him if he had any other prayer he wanted to make to God.

After some hesitation, the little fellow said: "Dear Jesus, when I grow up, make me big and strong like Daddy."

The words sank deep into the father's heart, and very late that night,—hours after the little boy had gone to sleep,—the father knelt by the bedside and prayed: "My Father, now that I am grown up, make me pure and sweet like my boy."

—Lionel A. Whiston, *Signs of the Times*, July 14, 1925



Heart Attack Aborts My Family Life Seminar



Edith Kahiigwa Abwooli

It was a lovely Friday evening in October of 1997. My husband's bicycle was parked in the courtyard of our parsonage. He was waiting for me to finish readying myself for a trip to the bus station. I had been invited to hold a family life seminar in the nearby Kaitemba SDA Church, and he had to bicycle me to the station so I could catch a bus.

Upon arrival at my destination, I was greeted by members of the church. I was invited to preach during the Divine Service on Sabbath morning. My husband had told me I probably would be asked to preach, so I was prepared. I eagerly accepted the invitation.

The church was packed. People had come to see their District

leader's wife, and many were anxious to see and listen to the preaching and teaching of a woman. Also, they had not had a family life seminar in quite awhile, so they were looking forward to the message.

As I talked to the rural and humble children of God something unique began happening to me. My heart started beating extraordinarily fast. I began sweating. (This was not caused by nervousness; I was used to talking before large audiences.) I now know I was experiencing the genesis of a health problem.

I managed to end the sermon normally and on time. No one noticed the symptoms I was experiencing. At the end of the sermon I made the following announcement, "Dear Church Members, I believe that you are aware of the family life seminar that begins today at 3:00 p.m. Please make sure you get back to the church on time."

Hugging and greetings seemed endless in the courtyard that day. I finally managed to slip away with the Headmaster's wife. She had invited me to lunch.

As we neared her house, my heart began to race faster. I was dripping with sweat. She and her

husband supported me until we reached their home. I removed my Sabbath clothes in the hope that I would cool down. I drank cold drinks, but still the problem did not go away. Finally my hosts sent for medical personnel. An hour later, a doctor arrived and began ministering to my needs. I did not regain my health for two days.

Meanwhile, church and community members had gathered to hear my family life seminar. Unfortunately, they were told the meeting had been canceled due to the district leader's wife's illness. Oh, the humiliation I felt! I was scheduled to talk about health and I was too sick to give the seminar!

Still, as I look back at that embarrassing incident, I realize that we have no control over some things. We can berate ourselves and wish things were different but what good does that do? We must accept that we cannot govern everything. All I can do is thank God for watching over me during my medical crises. Though my heart attack aborted my family life seminar, my heart still clings to the knowledge that God watches over me. ❀

Edith Kahiigwa Abwooli was born in a pastor's family. She loved Jesus and her parent's work and longed to be married to a pastor. Her desire was granted and today she feels blessed to have two boys and two girls.

She visits many congregations and gives seminars on family life.

Edith and her husband like to sing together. She also loves to make chapti (a soft, thin, round wheat bread) and is known as an expert baker. Her prayer and ambition is that the Lord will continue to use her more, especially as a family life instructor for pastors' wives and others.

Ministry Wives Need Friends Too

Jill Briscoe

Jill serves as advisor to the Women's Ministries at Elmbrook Church in Brookfield, Wisconsin, where her husband, Stuart, has served as senior pastor since 1970. She is executive editor of *Just Between Us*, a magazine for ministry wives and women in ministry. She hosts a television program for women called *Bridges*, which is seen on cable TV in five states. She also advises numerous non-profit organizations, and serves as a director of World Relief and Christianity Today, Inc.

This article appeared in *Just Between Us*, Summer 1993. Used with permission.



A good self-image is nurtured by friendship. According to one fact-finding group, forty-four percent of pastors' wives have no trusted friend, and thirty percent have no person they could go to for support or any support group at all. But guess how many of those women asked for help when they really needed it? *One percent.* Only one percent shouted, *Help!* even though they were hanging on by their fingernails. Why is this the case? There could be many reasons but maybe one of the chief ones is the shallow nature of the friendships that do exist for the ministry wife.

So many people in our churches are spiritually and emotionally starved. They drain us dry instead of charging us up. They have no real friendship to offer. Yet if there's anything a ministry wife needs, it's friendship. And I don't mean just the acquaintance who comes over for coffee or goes to the mall with you to peruse the sales. Meaningful friendships are part of God's design. Every person needs at least one close friend. This is especially vital in the ministry.

For ministry wives, this can be tough. For instance, the wife of a

minister is never viewed as being in the same category as *normal* people (a problem suffered also by her husband). Either people assume you are aloof, or they themselves act aloof. Not only that, but people in a congregation or some other ministry group feel very intimidated and vulnerable when they see weaknesses in their *leaders* and those leaders' spouses. They are a little afraid to know what's really going on in our lives, especially if it's ugly, or it hurts. Somehow they think we should be *above* problems.

For this reason, quite a few ministry wives have friends (if they have friends at all) outside their church or organization. Sometimes they are the wives of other men in ministry. Sometimes they are people with the same outside interests, such as literature, sports, or crafts. But, much of the time, the ministry wife, cloistered as she is in the unending cycle of activities and the demands of her family's needs, pursues no real friendships at all. She has been taught to expect that God will meet her every need.

Indeed, God does intend to meet all our needs. But He meets them through certain instruments,

one of them being close and meaningful relationships.

I struggled with this in a youth mission situation because our leader's wife believed you shouldn't have close personal friendships on the *team*. She felt, perhaps from experience, that it caused tensions and friction. Maybe since *she* didn't have a close personal friend, she thought we wives didn't need one either. She was wonderfully able to live like that, but I wasn't. I tried very hard to be like her because I admired her and wanted to model after her. But I'm the sort of person who needs friends in order to operate at my best. As I looked at the Scriptures, I noticed that Jesus himself had friends: twelve good friends, three very good friends, and one best friend!

Think about the circles of Jesus' friendships. Jesus never apologized for his friendships, and that often got Him into trouble, even among the twelve. He was always picking His three very good friends out of the crowd and not explaining why, and that inevitably caused envy and jealousy. Jesus modeled friendships because He chose to need it and knew that we all needed it too. He knows that women especially need the friendship of other women.

During that particular time in my life, I knew that I needed to get very practical about what I was learning about Jesus and His friendships. So I sat down at my kitchen table and drew three circles within each other: the outside circle for the twelve, the next one for the three, and the one in the center for his special friend. I prayed, asking the Lord which individuals, in my life, belonged in those circles. And then I drew another outer circle,

beyond the twelve, this circle representing the seventy—Jesus' close acquaintances. Beyond that was the space representing the multitudes.

What happened to me that day? As I wrote names in those circles I finally quit feeling guilty about having friends—about not spending as much time with my *seventy* as I spent with my *twelve* or as much time with the *twelve* as I did with the *three*, and so on. As I was freed up to pursue friendships, many needs were met, and I was enabled to be a



*Nurture your
self-image
through
friendship.*



better (and less stressed) youth worker's wife.

A close friend makes a big difference. Why are friends so necessary? First of all, good friends know how to listen. They allow you to let off steam, to cry, to throw a temper tantrum. They help us to process our experiences, and to be truly honest. If the many unhappy ministry wives I've met could do one or two of those things on a regular basis, they would feel better immediately. I know I did!

At one point in our ministry

when my husband had a period of heavy traveling, I found the friendship of one particular woman a lifesaver. Fortunately, I had been through the learning process I have just described and was able to be open to extending friendship to Angela. She was a true friend—leveling with me in love (and when you are leveled in love you are never *leveled!*), *being there* in the tough and tender times in those early child-rearing days and, above all, making me laugh. The therapy of laughter, I discovered, happens easily between good friends, bringing release from tensions. She was also my sister, my partner in projects. Many times when we arrived home well past midnight—exhausted yet happy after evangelistic efforts with youth—we drank a welcome cup of tea together. With Angela I found a friendship of equals that was quite a new experience for me.

As I wrote in *Thank You for Being A Friend*, a book about my friendship with Angela and other women in my life: "As long as our friendship remained inclusive and not exclusive God enriched our lives and service immeasurably."

I found out that really good friends are accepting. Their world doesn't fall apart when your imperfections come glaring through. They don't have you on a pedestal to begin with, so when you fail or show weakness, their love and appreciation remain constant. Love isn't blind, I discovered. Only love sees.

Good friends tell you the truth about yourself. Most of the time they don't have to tell you the negative part of the truth; you are already overly familiar with your bad points.

No, a friend tells you repeatedly about your positives. He or she sees you through more merciful eyes than you see yourself. Did you know that many women in ministry are driven people—are high achievers? The personality profiles are often that of the type of person who is hard on herself, who is never satisfied. A good friend knows you well enough to tell you when it's time to *lighten up*. Friends are intent on encouraging, on being lifelong cheerleaders for each other.

A genuine friend can make quite a difference. So maybe it's time you prayed that God sent you one. Maybe He already has, but you were just too self-involved to see it. That's easy to do. Perhaps there is a person right under your nose who would be amazingly good at reciprocating your love and support. We are so programmed to think that we must always be the givers, and others are to be the receivers. Take a fresh look at your present relationships and examine their potential.

You might not find a friend in your own church or team. That's not important. The important thing is to find a friend. Although the Lord sometimes brings each of us through periods of aloneness, even periods of friendlessness in order to teach us dependence on Him, those states should only be temporary. We were meant to live in relationship to others.

A good self-image should be nurtured by your best friend—your mate. It should go without saying that your husband should become not only a good friend, but also a source of positive feedback for you, helping you to maintain a healthy image of yourself. But the sad truth is that

many spouses are more detrimental to the self-image of their partners than they are helpful.

A husband saddled with the responsibility of being the sole source of his wife's ego will wither in a matter of weeks. Wives can depend far too much on their husbands for their self-esteem, and that dependence

generally has a boomerang effect. Spouses weren't designed to carry that kind of load alone. Therefore, it is imperative that women base their self-esteem on God and His Word and nurture it through other relationships besides the marital one—especially with other Christian women. ❀



*Friendship is a chain of gold
Shaped in God's all perfect mold,
Each link a smile, a laugh, a tear,
A touch of the hand, a word of cheer.*

—Author Unknown



Shepherdess International News

Southern Asia Division

✦ *Julia James, Associate Director for Special Ministries to Pastors' Wives, reports her experience in training and working with pastors' wives in her division.*

Pastor James and I joined the Southern Asia Division office staff in 1993 with a special assignment—to train the unemployed ministerial workers' wives for team ministry. We conducted Training programs for them. The subjects taught were: Bible Doctrines, Life and Teachings of Jesus, Role of a Pastor's Wife, Personal Evangelism, and Comparative Religious and Practical Activities.

The Ministerial and Personal Ministries Directors of Unions and Sections assisted us in this training program. I taught the Role of a Pastor's Wife in the home, in the church and in the community. The Bible classes were taught for ten days each year in all the sections and regions for three years.

While they were still in the training program the Division absorbed them into ministry and gave them a stipend. Now there are 300 women involved in Team Ministry.

Participation in Evangelism

During this training period the women were given a Bible, a song book and a baptismal manual in

their own languages and were sent to their towns and villages to reach out to nonbelievers. The ready acceptance of this program is proof that Adventist women are eager to fulfill God's commission of warning the dying world of Jesus' soon return.

They actively participated in evangelistic meetings at Machilipatnam in South Andhra conducted by Pastor I. James and

Like her there are many dedicated Bible Women. They are a great asset to their pastoral husbands.

Girupai John Mayavelu, a convert from a Pentecostal church, married an Adventist Minister. After attending the Bible Training she proved the seventh-day Sabbath truth from the Bible to her old Pentecostal sisters. As a result, 37 precious souls were added to our church. When we do our part, the Holy Spirit does His part.

The women are ready to carry God's word to every home where men cannot reach with the truth and prepare their families to meet Jesus when He comes the second time to take His faithful ones home.

Our pastors' wives are great instruments in reaching Hindus and Muslims. The Seventh-day

Adventist Church began with sacrifice by women for Christ and it will accomplish its work by the dedication of women in the last days. The Bible Women can nurture and prepare the church for the second coming of Jesus.

In 1996 the Bible Women won 800 precious souls. In 1997 there was an increase to 1050 souls.

Thank God for such dedicated women. May God bless every active woman who spreads the gospel. Today, please remember them in your prayers.



Suman B. Khajekar, a Bible woman and pastor's wife from Jalna with some of her converts to Christianity.

brought in seven souls for baptism. One couple was a freedom fighter and his wife. Another meeting was conducted at Hugely in West Andhra and 25 souls were brought to the fold by these women.

Mrs. Bharathi Thompson established four churches in Bangalore by visiting homes and praying for their needs. When the prayers were answered, people believed in the true God and accepted Jesus as their Savior. Mrs. Bharathi Thompson is now a regularized evangelist in Karnataka Section.