

# THE JOURNAL

A RESOURCE FOR MINISTRY SPOUSES

Vol. 30 | Second Quarter 2013



*Growing  
Happy Children*



## ON THE COVER

Ministry families face unique challenges. How can we help our kids learn the arts of gratitude and joy?

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# “It’s *My* Fault, God?”

I HUNG UP THE PHONE in shock. My younger son, Zac, had just been suspended from school. I couldn’t believe it. How could my son do such a thing? He knew better. We had taught him not to do things like that. Why?

I knelt down and asked God why Zac had done this. Don’t ask God that question if you don’t want to know! As I read my Bible, God showed me that it was *my* fault. God impressed me that a certain behavior my son had seen in my life through the years had made him think it was OK to do what he did. I was devastated. I repented, confessed my sin, and thanked God for forgiveness.

I am so grateful that God’s Word says, “If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness” (1 John 1:9, NKJV).

I’m sure my son expected a scolding when he arrived home. Instead, I shared with him what God had shown

*“And whoever exalts himself will be humbled, and he who humbles himself will be exalted.”*

*Matthew 23:12, NKJV*

me. “Zac,” I said, “I have confessed it as sin, and I know God forgives me, but will you forgive me for being a bad example to you?” I will never forget the look on his face or the tears in his eyes. I saw my rebellious young teenager soften before my eyes.

Zac is all grown up now. He is a pastor who is very in love with Jesus. He is passionate about seeing souls won to God’s kingdom.

There is much more to his story and how God led me, as his mom, to change my behavior. Maybe another time I can share with you how God showed me to pray for his conversion.

One thing I know without a doubt: if we will spend quality time with God reading His Word, asking Him to lead, and listening to Him, Jesus will guide us in our family relationships.

So many times God has impressed me while I am reading the Bible to do something or stop doing something.

*“For I will contend with him who contends with you, and I will save your children.”*

*Isaiah 49:25, NKJV*

I’ve not wanted to hear it and have sometimes refused to do it. How I regret those times! Looking back, I’m so thankful that this time I listened and obeyed. Humbling ourselves and admitting our mistakes to our children and our spouses is priceless for eternity. ■

*Janet Page serves as associate ministerial secretary for prayer, pastoral spouses, and families.*

*From the editor:*

We received an e-mail with very positive appreciation of the article “Money and Marriage” by Heather Shurtliff (1<sup>st</sup> quarter 2013). The e-mail also brought to our attention that we should have mentioned the vital importance of always considering tithe and offering first when setting up a budget. The author so strongly assumed that fact that it was not specifically mentioned in the article. We strongly believe the following statement:

“Not until God ceases to bless His children will they cease to be under bonds to return to Him the portion that He claims. Not only should they render the Lord the portion that belongs to Him, but they should bring also to His treasury, as a gratitude offering, a liberal tribute. With joyful hearts they should dedicate to the Creator the first fruits of their bounties—their choicest possessions, their best and holiest service. Thus they will gain rich blessings. God Himself will make their souls like a watered garden whose waters fail not. And when the last great harvest is gathered in, the sheaves that they are enabled to bring to the Master will be the recompense of their unselfish use of the talents lent them” (*The Acts of the Apostles*, pp. 339, 340).



# *Next Time You Feel Overwhelmed*

BY JEANNE HARTWELL



**THE STITCHING ON MY PURSE** blurred into a black smudge as the doctor shook his head. “I’m sorry, but there’s nothing I can do for you.” The words I dreaded had just become reality.

I’d been going from doctor to doctor trying to find help, always with the same result. Eight months earlier I’d agreed to speak to a group of pastors’ wives on a small island in the Caribbean. Two days after arriving I felt sick, but the next day I felt better and enjoyed meeting new people. After the meetings ended I returned home and went back to my regular job.

But then I started feeling sick again, with stomach pain and low energy. Again, it only lasted a short time and then went away. This became a pattern—a few good days and then a few uncomfortable ones. Every time I had a few good days I’d feel relieved that maybe whatever it was would just go away. But the symptoms grew closer together. Before long, doing anything at all took more energy than I could muster.

I decided I’d better see my family doctor. After examining me he sent me to see a gastro-intestinal specialist. I told him I’d been out of the



country and that I'd gotten sick while I was away. He did a series of tests and found no answers. Then followed a succession of other specialists, who also came up with nothing. Soon, visiting doctors, getting blood drawn, enduring all kinds of tests, and taking a wide variety of medications became a large part of my life.

One day, while delivering a stool sample to the lab, I even tried cheering myself up by imagining someone mugging me and being surprised when they opened the package I carried! Silly, but I was desperate for some joy and humor.

Part of me wondered why God had impressed me to go on the trip and then allowed me to get so sick. I wondered if this was how the rest of my life was going to be, and depression dogged me every day. Some days I just didn't know if I could go on feeling so sick and useless.

Eventually I was treated for three types of parasites and a bacterium. I found some relief but still had continued symptoms and fatigue.

After nearly eight months, our children were on spring break from elementary school. I knew I couldn't take care of them alone all day. So my husband drove us to my parents' house several hours away, and then he went back to work. Mom and I researched doctors, calling to see if anyone knew how to help me, but after a week nothing had materialized.

"What are we going to do?" I asked my mother. We'd been praying all along, but she said, "Let's go kneel by my bed and pray." We poured out our hearts to God, asking Him to help us find someone who would know how to help me.

Within five minutes the phone rang for me. The caller was from a doctor's office several hours away. She said they'd heard I was not doing well and asked if I'd like to make an appointment. (I forgot to ask where they'd gotten my name—it wasn't any doctor we had called—and I still don't know how they heard about me!) I told her I would and asked when I could see the doctor, assuming it would be several weeks before I could get an appointment. But she said, "How about next Wednesday?"

This new doctor was a parasitologist, with pictures of odd creatures on his walls. After looking at my records, more blood work, and lots of questions, he finally had the answers he needed. I'd been fighting a fourth parasite. He knew how to help me, and I could finally start getting well.

I slowly began to regain my strength. Simple chores no longer drained every ounce of my energy. Life was looking better! Then my children got chicken pox. I'd never had it as a child, and my immune system was still depleted, so I got chicken pox with a vengeance. I vaguely remember having a bad headache and my husband carrying me somewhere, and then I woke up in the hospital.

The diagnosis was meningial encephalitis. I was in the hospital for a week but only remember perhaps 15 minutes of my stay. Because of the

## Next Time You Feel Overwhelmed



swelling in my brain I couldn't walk on my own, couldn't feed myself without dropping much of it in my lap, couldn't write, and couldn't talk so I could be understood. The one bright spot was that at least the doctors knew what I had this time!

But when you're that sick you can feel so alone. My discouragement deepened. My lack of hope made me wonder if I'd ever be well. Would I survive the depression?

I begged God to help me, and gradually a thought came to mind. Maybe I needed to try harder to find what good there was in my life. One day I opened a blank journal and willed myself to think of just one good thing to write down. It took a while, but I finally did. In the succeeding days I kept the journal handy and tried to think of good things—blessings that brought me joy.

Now it seems odd that it was so difficult to come up with things to write, but at the time it was hard work. Ever so slowly I worked myself up to 10 new "joys" a day, and I felt my attitude starting to shift. Some days I couldn't think of anything new, so I'd go back to past entries and remind myself of the good things in my life.

Writing my ten "joys" first thing in the morning helped to set the tone for my whole day. This mental exercise helped my body to heal, and I began to experience hope again. Gradually the horrible headaches became less severe, I was able to feed myself without wearing my food, and I could walk on my own—although not in a straight line!

Since then, I've filled several blank books with the good things in my life. Sometimes I'll go weeks or even months without writing in my joy journal. But then life will throw me a curve, and I get out my journal again. Praising God is an antidote to the hardships we face in this world. When Satan whispers to me that God doesn't love me and that there is bad all around me, I shout back at him through my journal that he is a liar and doesn't speak the truth.

Next time you're feeling overwhelmed, why not journal about the joys God has given you? ■

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*Jeanne Hartwell is the associate ministerial director for the Pennsylvania Conference, where she has worked for the past 17 years. She and her husband pastored for 15 years prior to coming to Pennsylvania. They have two grown children and a Westie dog named Nessie.*

**WHAT DO YOU FEEL IS THE MOST CHALLENGING ASPECT OF PARENTING AS THE PASTOR'S FAMILY?**

**AMY FOOTE MINETT**

Remembering that our families are our first ministry. Sometimes it seems we are running and doing to help others, but we forget our children NEED us too. We've tried to do twice monthly dates with our four kids to keep that special time. But it's tough when there is a lot going on in the church.

We like to hear your answers to questions like this. To participate, join our Facebook group online at [www.facebook.com/groups/ministerialspouses/](http://www.facebook.com/groups/ministerialspouses/). Your answer could be featured in an upcoming issue of *The Journal*. Responses may be edited to fit the space.

**STEPHANIE GLADDEN LIVERGOOD**

The amount of attention our kids get all the time. Everyone wants to hold, play with, or buy things for them. People constantly comment on how cute they are, etc. We have to really work at deflecting so much of the praise and attention so that it doesn't go to their heads.

**LIEKE SIBILANG**

The biggest challenge in raising our kids has been the busy life of our ministry. Especially now that we serve in the conference, we have very little free time to spend together with our children.

# *The Cruellest Cruelty*

BY JEFF RICHARDS



PARENTS OFTEN THINK it compassionate to withhold any bitter or difficult experience from their children. Buy them any toy they want. Don't ask of them any contribution that requires sweat and effort. Don't say no.

But hardships actually carve us into suitable companions for the journey of life. Disappointment, grief, and struggle—all teach children the common language of suffering humanity. Children who are sheltered from want and trials at home come to expect a lifelong exemption from pain.

When they grow up, when pain and suffering confront them as adults who are no longer in their accommodating home, they cry foul. "It's not fair! Why didn't society, government, or even God prevent my suffering?"

What happens if these children become adults and never get the character-shaping privilege of experiencing trouble and hardship? Since life has gone so smoothly for them, they may assume that other people's misfortunes are their own fault and somehow deserved. Their ability to minister to others will be stunted because they can offer little real empathy, just empty advice.



Healthy hardships are needed as we parent our children. Too often, the world teaches us to love things and use people. But godly parents help our kids learn to switch that philosophy around. We need to model how to *use things* appropriately and how to genuinely *love people*.

We can also choose how we process grief and hardship within our families. Fully journeying through grief proves to us that after the denial, the bargaining, the anger, and the

depression there comes acceptance, and with it comes hope. Struggle cultivates strength for upcoming trials. These are the essential qualities of character and companionship. Even little children can absorb these lessons in small ways, as long as we don't shelter them from every opportunity to learn.

Without the common language of hardship, how can people communicate their love, their brotherhood, their sisterhood? Without it, we leave our children ill-equipped to survive challenges, destined to remain isolated and alone. If you ask me, this is the cruelest of cruelties in our difficult, demanding, painful world. 7

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*Jeff Richards is the husband of Stephanie, the father of four active boys, and a pastor in the state of Oregon.*

# Mother Knows Best

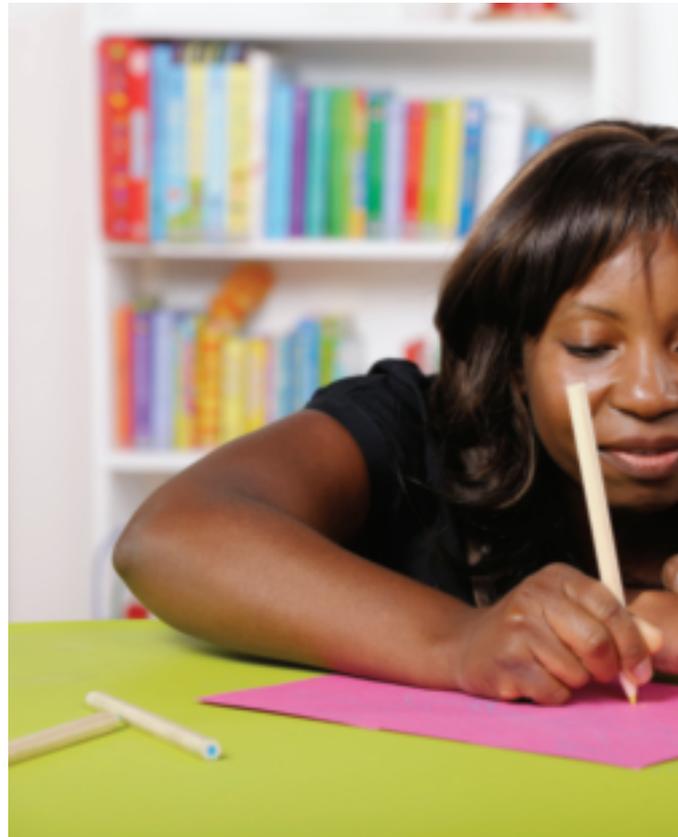
BY DAVE EDGREN

SOMEONE ONCE SAID, “The hand that rocks the cradle rules the world.” And scientific research backs it up. “The Maternal Brain,” an article in *Scientific American*, says amazing things about the brains of the women we call Mother. Apparently, chemical and physical changes happen in Mama’s mind when she is carrying, birthing, and nursing her children.

Here are a few things that mothers are blessed with in addition to their new baby:

## **MULTI-TASKING**

I am guilty of poor multi-tasking. Recently my mobile phone rang while I was driving my kids to school. I took my eyes off the road for the briefest moment—and smashed into the rear end of a BMW. I’ve been told many times that men can’t multi-task. But that doesn’t mean I can’t try, right?



My wife, research shows, is three times more likely to successfully multi-task than I am. We have three children, all of whom she has carried, birthed, and nursed. Due to child in triplicate, her brain has received three doses of various estrogen strains that I never got.

Just staring at the face of her own baby gives a mother a rush of endorphins. How’s that for unfair? I have to climb a mountain or build a rocket ship to get the same buzz she gets from playing goo-goo.

## **HUNT AND KILL**

Mice that have been pregnant are much quicker at navigating mazes than mice who are virgins. And when they need to capture and kill prey, they are *five* times faster! It makes sense—moms have more mouths to feed.

Skills that were beneficial in hunting-and-gathering societies of the past are still useful to mothers in the modern family. Propelling herself out of bed at the slightest whimper, exiting deep sleep and entering the darkness of night, today’s mom weaves her way through unlit hallways, deftly



missing couches, tables, and random toys underfoot—arriving at the whimper’s source in record time.

But if you think that’s fast, just watch a mom when her inquisitive toddler picks up a bug from the ground and prepares to eat it. Five times faster than your average non-mother, Mom saves the day! She vaults fences and knocks aside grown men in her single-minded goal to kill the enemy. The bug is unceremoniously squashed. The child cries from the shock. All returns to normal. That is, until the next time the world needs Supermom.

### **BONDING**

Mothering places demands on the human body to which fathers cannot relate. To help out, the mother’s body releases more cortisol, which will “boost attention, vigilance, and sensitivity, strengthening the mother-infant bond.”<sup>1</sup>

This gives Mom not only the ability to wait on every little hand and foot but also the *desire* to do so. Mother mice actually prefer their babies to cocaine! The chemicals that bathe Mom’s brain each time she breastfeeds actually make her feel good. And that’s a good thing, especially if you’re the infant who needs to nurse at 2 AM.

This is why, when Mom says she loves you, you believe her. She’s done amazing things just to keep you alive. And she *does* love you. It is also why most children do things their mothers ask them to do without knowing exactly why. I was once told, “A sweater is something you put on when your mother is cold.” We all want Mum to be happy—because we love her.

### **FORAGING**

Women are better at finding and preparing food. There, I said it. We all knew it, but now it’s in print, and the men can go back out to the shed while the women make the sandwiches.

I don’t have enough fingers and toes to count the number of times I have been unable to find something that my wife claims is in the pantry or fridge.



“It’s behind the milk!” says the wise woman from the other room.

“Nope, already checked,” I reply confidently.

Enter wife (stage right). One simple flick of the wrist and the repetitious rebuttal comes: “There it is, right where I said it was!”

#### **MEMORY, LEARNING, AND LONGEVITY**

“Oxytocin, the hormone that triggers birth contractions and milk release, also appears to have effects on the hippocampus [the control center for our memory] that improve memory and learning.”\* Amazingly, these effects remain for life.

While some mothers may feel their kids are making them grow old quickly, having children has been shown to slow the aging process. A combination of the hormones of pregnancy and the busy life of raising children floods the brain with all it needs to stay young! This combination results in moms living longer, wiser, more interesting lives. Go, Mom!

#### **WHAT ABOUT DAD?**

A young boy, after watching his father leave one morning, asked his mother, “Where does Dad go when he leaves every day?” His mother explained that his father had a job where he got paid for his time. The little boy ran to his room and returned with a handful of coins. He laid them out on the table, saying, “Mom, how much of Dad’s time will this buy me?”

Fathers who spend time with their children bring untold blessing into the lives of those youngsters. Just like mothers, there are benefits to the male brain that result from spending time with their kids.

One research program studied marmoset monkeys and found that male monkeys who were fathers (marmoset fathers help raise the babies) were faster and more accurate at finding containers with food in them. In human homes, the more time a father spends in the house, the less likely he is to be told, “It’s behind the milk.” I have become so suspicious of the milk in our fridge that I have been known to check behind the milk before asking if anyone has seen my socks!

In all seriousness, fellow dads, we’ve got a lot to answer for. We shouldn’t be grunting, “I brought you into this world, and I’ll take you out!” before we are willing to know and be known by our children.



“Father” is one of the most frequent ways the Bible refers to God. The first thing a reader or listener instinctively does is to apply the image of their own father to their perception of God. We bear not only our heavenly Father’s image—we also bear His name. I don’t know about you, but that challenges me!

### **GOD’S RIGHT-HAND WOMAN**

I once heard a preacher say that after making Adam, God took a good long look at the man and said, “I can do better than that.” And He did—by creating woman.

The Bible teaches that after making Adam, God waited until Adam realized he was alone before giving him a wife. Once the man asked for a mate, God put Adam to sleep, took a rib from his side—to show that man and wife were to stand side by side in authority and care of the family and each other—and created Eve.

Evidently, while God had Eve on the creation table, He took great care in making sure that every mom would have all the strength, wisdom,

vibrancy, and love He could squeeze into her. The care with which your Creator fashioned your mother is second to none.

George Washington said, “My mother was the most beautiful woman I ever saw. All I am I owe to my mother. I attribute all my success in life to the moral, intellectual, and physical education I received from her.” The wise author of Proverbs said, “Her children arise and call her blessed” (Prov. 31:28).

Thanks, Mum. I know it wasn’t easy, but you are God’s most blessed creation. I love you. We all do! ■

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<sup>1</sup> Craig Howard Kinsley and Kelly G. Lambert, “The Maternal Brain,” *Scientific American*, Jan. 2006, pp. 58-65.

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Originally published in the May 2006 issue of *Signs of the Times*.

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**Pastor David Edgren** serves as director of Children’s Ministries and Sabbath School for the Victoria Conference in Australia. He is a master storyteller and author. Dave and his wife, Jenny, have three terrific children.

# God Gave Me Feelings



## **GOD GAVE US OUR FEELINGS!**

God created us to have all kinds of feelings. Feelings are important because they help us to enjoy the amazingly good things that happen to us as well as the very sad and difficult things. To be healthy we need at least three happy kinds of feelings for every sad or hurt feeling.

## **JESUS HAD FEELINGS TOO!**

Discover some of Jesus' feelings. Look up the Bible verses to discover some of the feelings Jesus had. You may have to guess at some of His feelings by reading the stories around the verses.

Mark 6:34 .....

Mark 3:5 .....

Mark 8:11-13 .....

Mark 10:21 .....

Mark 10:13-16 .....

Mark 6:6 .....

Mark 14:32-34 .....

John 11:33-36 .....



### COMFORT MENU

Make a comfort menu with your family by making a list of all the ways you could comfort someone who is feeling sad. Include things like giving them a hug, listening to them talk without trying to fix things, making their favorite drink, doing something fun together, praying with them, etc. Talk about your favorite ways of being comforted. Print the list neatly and put it where everyone can see it. Provide a different color clip for each person so they can put their clip next to the comfort they need when they are having a hard time. Make sure everyone gets comforted—when we comfort each other we are putting God's love into action.



### SHARING CRAFT

Buy a box of tissues. Cover it with plain paper. Write a comforting message, prayer, or Bible verse on each side of the box, decorate it with pictures or stickers, and give it to someone who's feeling sad, sick, or lonely. Or make a simple folded book and write a special message or Bible verse on each page.

### FEELINGS GAME

Find a small cloth bag and fill it with the letters of the alphabet—use toy letters, such as magnets or game pieces, or write each letter on a small square of paper. Pull a letter out of the bag and think of a feeling word that begins with the letter. Then describe a time when someone in the Bible might have felt that way. Pass the bag to the next person and let them have a turn. See if you can find one for every letter of the alphabet.



# God Gave Me Feelings

## SOMETHING SWEET AND SOMETHING TOUGH

When you're together as a family, pass around a bowl of dried fruit and nuts, or any other mixture of sweet and hard foods. Take turns describing something sweet and good that happened during the day or week. Thank God for the lovely thing that happened and celebrate together by eating some dried fruit. Then let the next person have a turn. When everyone has described a lovely event, take turns describing something tough you're facing tomorrow, or in the week ahead. Pray that God will help the person facing the tough challenge, and invite everyone to chew a tough nut as you think about how you can help each other through the challenges.



## FEELING KIND

God gives us feelings so we can be kind and compassionate with each other.

What kind things could you do for someone who was feeling:

Sad .....

Disappointed .....

Lonely .....

Angry .....

Frustrated .....

Afraid .....

Worried .....

Stressed .....

And what would you like someone else to do for you if you had one of these feelings? **J**

*Karen Holford lives in Scotland, where she loves to make the Bible and prayer come alive for children and families!*

## DEAR ABIGAIL

Dear Abigail,

Graduation season is approaching, and my pastor-husband and I will be invited to many parties. Last year my pastor-husband wasn't yet on staff at our church, so we attended only the parties to which we were given a written invitation. There were only a few, so we were able to give a small cash gift to students who graduated.

Now my husband is the senior pastor. We'll be personally invited to many more parties and are expected to attend those posted in our church bulletin (even if we don't receive an actual invitation).

It seems impossible to attend all of them—and we will have a newborn baby at the time. How do we handle gifts? We aren't in a financial position to give cash, but we don't want to seem stingy.

What's the etiquette?

Pastor's Wife in Michigan



Dear Michigan,

Firstly, it's important to treat all invitations with appreciative grace, whether or not you can attend.

Your pastor-husband can forestall many issues by making a simple announcement from the pulpit a couple of weekends in a row, along these lines: "My lovely wife and I wish we could attend all the parties this year because we love you all very much. However, with the new baby coming, my wife needs to rest, and I'll be spending a lot of time caring for her and the baby, so we regret that we won't be able to celebrate with each of you personally."

When all the graduates are home for the summer (if they have gone away to college or boarding schools), your husband could plan a "Graduate Blessing." Invite all the graduates to come forward during the worship service, and both of you can congratulate and bless them for their achievements in front of the congregation. Give them each a card with a thoughtful, handwritten message and a carefully selected Bible verse from the two of you.

This way you can celebrate all your graduates without over-taxing your energy, dragging your newborn to dozens of parties, or overdrawing your checking account. And you will give a spiritual blessing to be remembered by your young people for years to come.

Abigail



# Take A Vacation? Who, Me?

BY RAE LEE COOPER

*“Sorry! I haven’t got time for a vacation this year!”*

*“I might get replaced at work if I take some days off.”*

*“We just can’t afford to go anywhere right now—uncertain financial times, you know.”*

*“A vacation? That would be a luxury we really don’t need.”*



## THE VACATION-SKIPPING TREND

Our society is leading the industrialized world in becoming a vacation-starved nation. Because of the tight economy, many are inclined to skip vacations as a general precaution.

Some are afraid to be seen as shirking their work duties, and some avoid even short vacations because they are severely stretched with too much to do. For others, vacations are just not a priority in their busy lives.

In our society a few workers even brag about *not* taking vacations. You might hear them proudly boasting of the many years they have worked without a single vacation, insinuating that congratulations are in order.

## DO VACATIONS HAVE HEALTH BENEFITS?

Medical studies tell us that taking time away from work and busy routine is good preventive medicine, allowing the body to replenish and repair itself. Vacation time should encourage relaxation and offer opportunities for rejuvenation. Stress levels would lessen,

decreasing the risk of stress-related illnesses such as heart disease, hypertension, diabetes, obesity, depression, anxiety, premature aging, Alzheimer's disease, and even early death. Taking a vacation is a serious health issue with potential for encouraging a happier, healthier, and more productive life.

But there's more!

## FAMILY FUN MEMORIES

You've heard it said, "The family that plays together, stays together." Vacations, whether for a day, a weekend, or a couple of weeks, are great opportunities for bonding with loved ones and enjoying each other without the distractions of phones, busy children's activities, work demands, and daily to-do lists. You'll find time to talk, to interact on a different level, to get to know each other better—and just to have fun. As the years go by and children become adults (and this happens quite quickly), they will remember these special times with nostalgia and happiness.

If you are able to visit historical sites or other cultures and countries, excellent, unique opportunities will be available for both you and your children. Personally experiencing the wonders and differences found in places and people of the world can make a far greater impression than learning through school homework.



## Take a Vacation? Who, Me?

Vacations can involve international travel, such as mission trips or tourist visits to other countries. However, vacation plans need not be extensive and complicated. A break from routine can be as simple and fun as visiting the local zoo, going on a picnic, taking a weekend camping trip, participating in a hike, or browsing a local museum. Whether you stay close to home, pack the kids in the car for a road trip, or travel to an exotic location, the benefits are the same: memorable adventures and meaningful family fun.

### EXPECT A FEW PROBLEMS

Realistically, you can expect a few negatives in any situation, and vacation travel is no exception. Planes get delayed, roads have detours, cars break down, travelers get sick, kids get cranky, the weather can become uncooperative, families can have too much of a good thing and get on each other's nerves—just to name a few. However, most negative experiences can be remembered as adventures and will add to the flavor of the stories told and retold as years go by.

### PLAN CAREFULLY

1. **Meet as a family and plan together.** Discuss dates, destinations, methods of travel, accommodations, activities, and food, as well as periods of relaxation.
2. **Scheduling is paramount.** Let your boss know as early as possible to avoid work difficulties for you or your company. If the children will be missing school because of vacation plans, discuss this with

the teachers so arrangements can be made regarding their studies.

3. **Make bookings as early as possible.** Hotels and tourist locations can fill up quickly. Look for off-season specials to save money and avoid large crowds.
4. **Find child-friendly activities and locations.** Keep in mind the ages and interests of everyone in the family and plan activities accordingly.
5. **Explore the Internet for ideas.** Much information is available, including suggested family travel packages, destinations, tips on traveling with children, ideas for unique vacations, as well as suggestions for adding fun to any family vacation.





### AN EXAMPLE WORTHY OF FOLLOWING

When the disciples returned from their very first missionary tour, they eagerly gathered about Jesus, anxious to tell Him all about their successes and failures. Can't you just hear them? All talking at once, trying to get His attention? They had been working so hard while on their tour that they had even neglected food and rest. Jesus saw their weariness, their anxiousness, their discouragement, and their need for nutrition. He did not encourage them to tell Him all about their journey in front of the ever-present crowds. Instead, He urged them to come apart with Him to a quiet place to rest and be refreshed.

They retired near Bethsaida, on the edge of a lake in a beautiful, green, peaceful location. There, away from the multitudes and demands of duty, they would have opportunity to quietly converse with Jesus and He with them. This was not self-indulgent rest but rather an opportunity for the disciples to be physically and spiritually strengthened, to find comfort and joy in communion and instruction with their merciful, loving Lord. Their experience of rejuvenation

and restoration can be ours too if we will but take time away as they did.

It is not good for us to always be under stress and strain, even if we are busily going about "our Father's business." The rabbis believed it was important to make a show of being constantly in a bustle of activity, as it would testify to how pious they were. Rather, a more positive and effective testimony would be a life lived in balance.

When we run ourselves down, becoming weary and over-stressed, our immune system is compromised. Our spirits are weakened, and we become Satan's easy prey. Taking time for a break—a vacation—allows us to reconnect with our Lord, examine priorities, and deepen relationships with loved ones.

"Come apart and rest a while," is His counsel. Heeding this invitation is truly in our best interest physically, emotionally, and spiritually. ■

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#### INFORMATION SOURCES:

<http://www.parents.com/fun/vacation/planning/>

<http://EzineArticles.com/22207>

*The Desire of Ages*, E. G. White, Pacific Press Publishing Assoc., ch. 38.

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

# Raising Leaders, Not Lemmings

BY SARAH K. ASAFTEI



MY KIDS ARE YOUNG. One is two, and the other is three and a half. Our challenges right now are things like potty training and learning to share, not peer pressure and crowd influences. But that doesn't keep me from pondering the future.

With two babies born so close together, it has been easy to be overwhelmed by the diapers and feedings, the sleep schedules and laundry. But the thing is, I don't want to just *survive*. I don't want to merely get through the day.

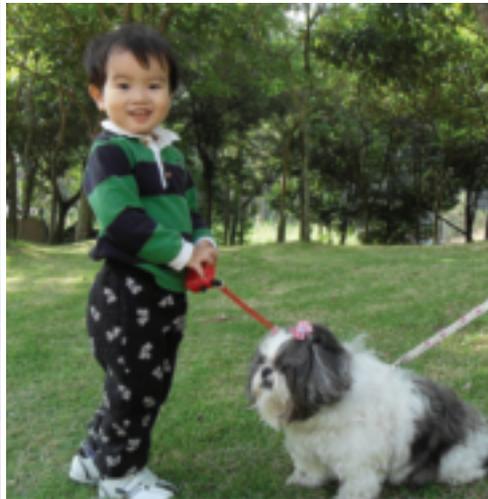
I want to be intentional. Purposeful. Biblical. I want to strategically raise the next generation for Jesus. I don't want to be so bogged down in survival that I fail to focus on the endgame. And what's the endgame, you ask? Ultimately, of course, it's heaven. But between now and then?

I want my children to become leaders.

I want them to be exceptional. Change-makers in the world. People of excellence. And my dream for them doesn't necessarily hinge on their careers. Honestly, I don't care what track they choose. I just want them to love Jesus so much that no matter who they become, they share Him with their audience. Teacher, doctor, pastor, plumber—what does it matter, as long as they have a missionary's heart?

It's so easy to be a lemming—those cute, furry little animals that live in the Arctic. During migration, they travel en masse without questioning the direction of their group, even if it means they all run off a cliff into the sea. People are like that too sometimes. Our desire to be accepted can overwhelm our common sense, and we just follow the crowd without thinking. I really, really don't want to raise a pair of cute little lemmings.

The thing is, my heart breaks a little when I look into the future. Because I know it won't be easy on them. Every culture is different, but here in the West where we live, being excellent doesn't make you popular. Being honest, smart, confident—that's a recipe for social disaster in most young peer groups. As a mother who adores my kids, I'm realizing that I'm going to have to toughen up a bit if I'm going to help them through what's ahead. Because I want them to be something more than "cool," something better than "popular." I want them to have integrity. I want them to shine with the love of



Jesus. And I want them to be unashamed of their leadership potential.

Being the pastor’s kids doesn’t make it any easier. Someday, I’m sure I’ll have to tell them that our dreams for them are not a byproduct of Daddy being a pastor. We would want this for them no matter what work Daddy does. Maybe that will take some of the pressure off. Maybe it won’t—I won’t know until we get there.

In the meantime, I’m seeking to preserve their sweet innocence as long as possible. Helping them to love church and their church family. Encouraging their little personalities to blossom. Praying with and for them every day. Teaching them Bible doctrine. Hoping to somehow give them the immeasurable gifts of self-control and self-discipline and an

understanding of the priceless value of all God’s children.

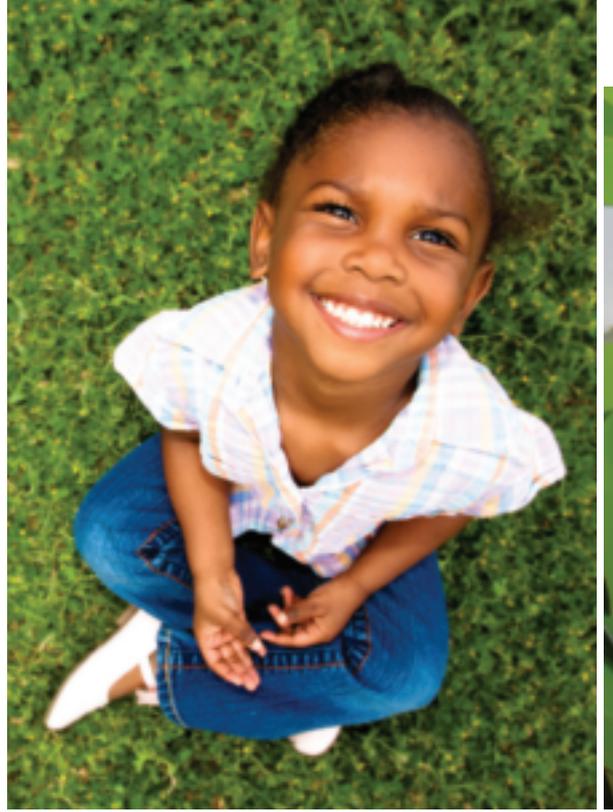
Because ultimately, if we’re not raising leaders for God, then the world will make them into lemmings. **7**

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***Sarah K. Asaftei** is a mother of two and is married to Marius, senior pastor of the East Pasco Church near Tampa, Florida. Her marketing and film production company, skaMEDIA productions, provides development and social media support for the GC Ministerial and Revival & Reformation initiatives. Raised a missionary kid, Sarah loves international travel, languages, and photography.*

# Growing Happy Children

BY KAREN HOLFORD



IF YOU ASK MOST PARENTS what they want for their children, it won't be long before someone mentions "happiness." Just as there are simple, basic principles for nurturing physically healthy children, there are also simple, basic principles for nurturing their emotional wellbeing. And the two go together—happy children are more likely to be healthy, and healthy children are more likely to be happy.

Happier students are more likely to believe they can learn new things, be creative, and do better in their studies. Happier people are more likely to get married, stay married, and have happy families. Happy people are more likely to do well at their jobs and help others. And happiness is an important part of a healthy Christian life. Paul was a wise psychologist when he told the Philippians to rejoice in all things and to focus on positive thoughts (Phil. 4:4-8).

## MANAGING NEGATIVE EMOTIONS

Negative emotions are things that drain the happiness out of our lives, such as anger, contempt for others, disgust, embarrassment, fear, frustration, guilt, sadness, shame, or stress.

Here are some ways to help your children empty their emotional garbage bins every day so they aren't overwhelmed by their negative emotions:

Be a good role model. Show your child how you manage your own negative emotions. Let your children see and hear you pray for help with your own difficult feelings. Talk about what you are feeling and what you are doing to manage the feeling. "I'm really sad because someone was unkind to me at work, and that hurts. But I'm also remembering how kind most of the people are, and I'm going to bake a cake for everyone to share tomorrow."

It's very hard for children to deal with emotions they can't name. Help them by using feeling words to describe what they might be experiencing. "You must be so sad and disappointed that David wasn't able to come and play today." When they can use words to describe their feelings, their emotions are easier to manage.

If your child looks worried or distressed, invite them to talk and be ready to listen, to accept their feelings, and to let them know you understand and care. Encourage them to pray about every worry they have because God cares about their concerns. Once they feel understood and comforted, they'll find it easier to sort out their feelings and find healthy ways to manage them.



Acknowledge when your children manage their emotions well, and let them know you've noticed how brave they've been in a scary situation. This encourages them and lets them know when they're getting it right.

However understandable a child's difficult emotions might be, let them know when their behavior is inappropriate and help them find different ways to respond. "I know you're angry that Tom broke your toy by accident, but it's not OK to hit him. Let's go for a run to let off some steam!"

Teach children to distract themselves when something's bothering them. Help them make a "busy box" full of interesting things to explore, or find a funny song they can sing. In *The Sound of Music*, Maria makes up a lovely song to distract herself from feeling afraid—"My Favorite Things."

Whatever you do, don't dismiss their negative feelings or tease them for being scared. Negative feelings are a normal response to a sinful world,

but the feelings are not necessarily sinful. God also feels sadness, anger, frustration, and disgust.

#### **ENCOURAGING POSITIVE EMOTIONS**

Positive emotions include laughter, wonder, thankfulness, joy, inspiration, interest, serenity, love, hope, and feeling valued.

You're the best teacher to help your children learn how to have happy and healthy emotions. So take care of your own needs and make sure that your children see you enjoying positive emotions. Talk openly about your happiness and gratitude. Thank God for the good things in your lives.

Involve your children in being kind to others. Being kind is one of the best ways for children to experience positive emotions.

Laugh before learning! Having a moment of fun before trying to learn a new skill actually relaxes and opens the mind to make learning easier. Talk together about what went well during the day and why it went so well. Remember the happy and good things that have happened to your family, such as answered prayers, God's guidance, and His provision.



Children need space to be quiet and still. Don't overfill their time with activities. Help them find a "peaceful place" where they can think and pray. Help your children experience God's love, acceptance, and forgiveness through the way you love, accept, and forgive them. Encourage children's *efforts* rather than their achievements to keep them working and motivated.

Keep a gratitude diary and write down what you're thankful for as a family. Inspire your children by reading and watching true stories of people who excel in their field and by talking about how hard they have worked to reach their goals. Use some of these ideas to start small traditions in your home that will help to nurture positive emotions on a daily basis. The happier they are, the easier it will be for them to love, learn, trust, and obey. 7

*Karen Holford is a family therapist living in Scotland, where her husband is the mission president.*

HEALTHY, HAPPY EMOTIONS	BRIEF DESCRIPTION AND BIBLE VERSE
Awe and wonder	Encountering God. A sense of wonder about something beautiful in nature. Ps. 139:13, 14
Laughter/ amusement	Laughing and smiling at something unexpected, positive, unusual, and safe. Pr. 17:22; Eccl. 3:1, 4
Thankfulness	Sincere appreciation for the good gifts that God and others give us. 1 Thess. 5:18
Hope	The belief that things will change and improve. Jer. 29:11
Inspiration	Being inspired by God and the wonder of His works. Recognizing excellence in others and being inspired to pursue excellence. Ps. 104
Joy	A feeling of pure and happy delight. Pr. 15:13
Interest	Being intrigued or challenged by something new. Wanting to explore and discover new things. Eccl. 1:13
Feeling valued	Having your efforts noticed and valued by others. Healthy satisfaction in a job well done. Eccl. 9:10; Col. 3:23
Serenity	Feeling peaceful, still, calm, and contented. John 14:27; 1 John 4:18
Love	A blend of positive emotions experienced within a warm, close, safe, and caring relationship. 1 Cor. 13:4-8

## Married to a pastor?

Fellowship with others on  
Facebook and Twitter!

discuss . share . connect

Official groups for Ministry Spouses online:  
Twitter @ministryspouses  
[www.facebook.com/groups/ministerialspouses](http://www.facebook.com/groups/ministerialspouses)

# TIPS TO SURVIVE

## THRIVE

### SUGGESTIONS GLEANED FROM SEASONED PASTORS' SPOUSES TO HELP NEWBIES LEARN THE ROPES. DON'T JUST "SURVIVE" YOUR NEW MINISTRY LIFE—THRIVE!

**Answer your phone. Or at least return your voice mails or texts.**

It's a common stereotype that the pastor's spouse is impossible to get in touch with. I once answered my cell phone, and the church member on the other line was so shocked she forgot what she called about!

No, you don't need to offer unlimited availability. And no, you should not let yourself be held hostage by members who can't seem to say "Goodbye."

But people value their pastor's spouse. They want to know that if they *need* you, they can find you. If they are in crisis and need someone to pray with them, that you'll answer. If they're trying to invite you and your spouse over for dinner, that they don't have to hope the pastor will remember to pass on the message to you.

Simple stuff like just answering your phone, at least whenever possible, can make a huge difference in perceptions.

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

# Special Quotes

By speaking kindly to their children and praising them when they try to do right, parents may encourage their efforts, make them very happy, and throw around the family circle a charm which will chase away very dark shadow and bring cheerful sunlight in. Mutual kindness and forbearance will make home a Paradise and attract holy angels into the family circle; but they will flee from a house where there are unpleasant words, fretfulness, and strife. Unkindness, complaining, and anger shut Jesus from the dwelling.

*Adventist Home*, p. 421

Too many cares and burdens are brought into our families, and too little of natural simplicity and peace and happiness is cherished. There should be less care for what the outside world will say and more thoughtful attention to the members of the family circle. There should be less display and affectation of worldly politeness, and much more tenderness and love, cheerfulness and Christian courtesy, among the members of the household. Many need to learn how to make home attractive, a place of enjoyment. Thankful hearts and kind looks are more valuable than wealth and luxury, and contentment with simple things will make home happy if love be there.

*Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 4, p. 621

Never forget that you are to make the home bright and happy for yourselves and your children by cherishing the Saviour's attributes. If you bring Christ into the home, you will know good from evil. You will be able to help your children to be trees of righteousness, bearing the fruit of the Spirit.

*Adventist Home*, p. 17

# *NY13 and Mission to the Cities*

BY MARK FINLEY

SOMETHING BIG IS HAPPENING IN NEW YORK CITY. IT IS CALLED NY13, A COMPREHENSIVE EVANGELISTIC INITIATIVE DESIGNED TO INVOLVE EACH CHURCH MEMBER, PASTOR, DEPARTMENTAL DIRECTOR, AND CHURCH ADMINISTRATOR IN THE GREATER METROPOLITAN NEW YORK AREA.



However, it is much more than a single evangelistic event. It is a divinely inspired vision of an ongoing evangelistic process. The Atlantic Union, the Columbia Union, and the five conferences (Greater New York, Northeastern, New Jersey, Allegheny East, and Southern New England) comprising the Greater New York/New Jersey area have united their efforts to reach the twenty million people living in this huge metropolitan area. NY13 involves varied outreach approaches, including personal Bible studies, small groups, health, family life and youth ministries, literature ministry, community services, lay evangelistic meetings, and much more. NY13 envisions each church as a dynamic soul-winning center where pastors have a passionate commitment to reach lost people and where church members are equipped and trained for service.

During NY13 approximately 400 evangelistic meetings will be conducted in the metropolitan New York area. Hundreds of churches and thousands of church members will be involved. Pastors are leading their congregations in prayer vigils, earnestly petitioning heaven for the outpouring of the Holy Spirit. Lay people are giving Bible studies. Small groups are being organized. Health and family life ministries are being launched. Literature is being distributed. Young people are becoming actively involved. Lay evangelistic meetings are being planned, and evangelists and pastors from every division of the world will attend an International School of Evangelism in NY in June.



The Holy Spirit is moving. Something unusual is taking place in New York.

The massive evangelistic outreach in New York City is part of the Seventh-day Adventist Church's "Mission to the Cities" initiative. Church leaders at every level of church organization have identified 630 major cities worldwide on which to focus their evangelistic energies and resources during the next three years. This comprehensive evangelistic approach blends biblical principles with the practical, divinely inspired counsels of the Spirit of Prophecy to reach people living in these urban centers with Jesus' endtime message of hope.

The mission is His, and He invites us to participate in His mission with Him. There can be no higher honor and no greater privilege. Let us together pray for the fulfillment of the Lord's promise given through His messenger: "When the cities are worked as God would have them, the result will be the setting in operation of a mighty movement such as we have not yet witnessed" (*Medical Ministry*, p. 304). May that day come soon, and may we experience the mighty outpouring of the Holy Spirit in New York and the great metropolitan centers of the world. ■

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*Mark Finley is assistant to the president of the General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists.*

## FROM THE FIELD

### *Northern Asia-Pacific Division*

Pastor David and Lynn Ripley held meetings in Taiwan at three churches in Taipei, Taichung, and Pingtung. In January, Lynn (NSD Shepherdess coordinator/assistant ministerial secretary) met with more than 30 pastors, spouses, and administrators. Their goals: to encourage attendees with Jesus' presence in their ministries, to help them reclaim their call to faithfulness and fruitfulness, and to inspire revival and reformation.

Lynn reported, "We know prayers were with us because the discussion times were so encouraging, and as we prayed together we could feel the Holy Spirit's presence. The pastoral spouses shared much about their busy schedules and challenges. I invited them back to strength through time with Jesus and [urged them] to mentor each other and members in their churches (even young women). Their names will be added to the NSD spouses' prayer calendar. As we prayed together, it seemed they felt stronger!"



*Pastors and spouses met together in Taiwan.*



*David and Lynn Ripley, Ministerial Secretary and Shepherdess coordinator/assistant ministerial secretary for Northern Asia-Pacific Division, met with pastors and their spouses in Taiwan.*



*Lynn Ripley (center) with coordinators in Taichung.*



*Lynn Ripley (center) met with pastors' wives in Pingtung.*

### *Southern Africa-Indian Ocean Division*

Pastor and Mrs. Papu met with pastors and elders in Seychelles. "It was a privilege to meet with elders' wives and shepherdesses for the first time!" said Mrs. Papu. "The Lord blessed all in a special way. It's a beautiful island with only three pastors and 800 members, and they face unique challenges. Please remember them in your prayers. There is still a lot of work to be done here."



*Shepherdesses met in Seychelles.*



*Mrs. Ndzuma (center) is Shepherdess coordinator.*



*Bible conference in Madagascar*



*Bible conference in Mauritius*

November 2012 found pastors and their spouses from across the Southern Africa-Indian Ocean Division in Mozambique for meetings. Jonas Arrais, Willie Hucks, and Jerry and Janet Page from the GC Ministerial Association, along with Raquel Arrais and Jongimpi and Patricia Papu, were speakers during the pastors' meetings. God blessed their time together.



*Patricia Papu (right), SID Shepherdess coordinator, displays the division magazine for pastoral spouses.*



*Fourteen pastors were ordained in Mozambique.*



*Pastors' spouses met together to pray and fellowship as well as enjoy seminars and break-out sessions.*



*Mozambique Union Mission held their first ministerial meeting for pastors and spouses.*



*Pastors and spouses sing praises to God in Mozambique.*

# Christ's method in the world's great cities

Mingling  
Showing sympathy  
Ministering  
to needs

Winning  
confidence

Bidding  
people  
to follow  
Jesus

