

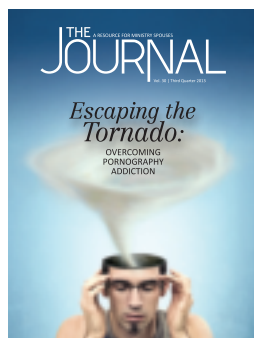
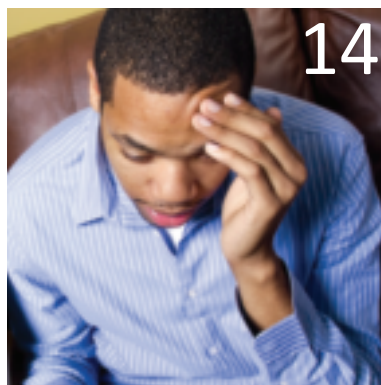
THE A RESOURCE FOR MINISTRY SPOUSES  
JOURNAL

Vol. 30 | Third Quarter 2013

*Escaping the  
Tornado:*

OVERCOMING  
PORNOGRAPHY  
ADDICTION





## ON THE COVER

Sexual addiction is devastating, not just to the person addicted but to their spouse & family as well. But it doesn't have to be hopeless.

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# The Power You Have

25 YEARS OF EMPOWERING MINISTRY SPOUSES

*“And let us not grow weary while doing good, for in due season we shall reap if we do not lose heart. Therefore, as we have opportunity, let us do good to all, especially to those who are of the household of faith.”*

*Galatians 6:9, 10, NKJV*

DID YOU KNOW THAT as a ministry spouse you have a power no one else has? You really do! As a ministry spouse, you have tremendous power to influence those around you through your relationship with God.

I first experienced this power many years ago as a result of people praying for me to be baptized with the Holy Spirit. My life changed dramatically, and I began spending daily time with God in prayer and the Word. My husband saw the change in me, and he too began praying the Word into his life and humbling himself before God.

Then one day I realized my sons really valued my counsel on decisions they were making. The same thing happened with my daughters-in-law. I was so amazed.

As I talked to God about it, I realized it was because they knew I spent time daily with God, praying God’s Word into my life and asking Him to change me, and praying for my family and others. They see the difference it has made in my life, and they want the same experience in their lives. My family knows my faults and weakness. But they see the difference God can make.

You, too, have power to influence your spouse, children, and church members as you choose to seek Jesus daily and

have a love relationship with your Redeemer God. “If My people who are called by My name will humble themselves, and pray and seek My face, and turn from their wicked ways, then I will hear from heaven, and will forgive their sin and heal their land” (2 Chronicles 7:14, NKJV).

Shepherdess International was begun 25 years ago to enable and encourage ministry spouses like you to use your power of influence for the Lord. The General Conference recognized the power of your influence and commissioned Marie Spangler and Ellen Bresee to work with ministry spouses worldwide. Their work was continued by Sharon Cress, who gave 18 years to helping pastoral spouses and families.

Around the world, Shepherdess leaders at the division, union, and conference levels have worked hard to encourage and disciple pastoral spouses and families through the years. I want to personally thank each one who has given so much to ministry spouses through the Shepherdess organization.

And I especially want to thank you, the pastoral spouse, for all you do to love, help, and influence the people around you for Jesus. I know it can get tiring, but when you feel unappreciated, careworn, or discouraged, remember that your life and your ministry have tremendous power. Spend extra time with your God and His Word, and let Jesus refresh you with His love so your influence will continue to draw people to Him. 7

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





# *We Had No Idea!*

“WOULD YOU PLEASE PRAY FOR MY HUSBAND?” Abigail\* asked our prayer group one day. “I want George to be the spiritual leader in our home and go to camp meeting. He brought me into the church, but he doesn’t want to go to church. I don’t want to go to camp meeting without him.”

We prayed for this request for many months, and yet George refused to go to camp meeting. After camp meeting, we decided to ask God how we should pray for him. So we prayed together for God to show us, then waited in silence. The idea came to us to pray that it would be his idea to go to the next camp meeting. So we started praying for that, and kept praying he would be the spiritual leader in the home and go to church.





Many months went by, and one morning my phone rang. It was Abigail. "Last night George came into the kitchen rubbing his head like he was not sure where this thought was coming from. 'I want to go to camp meeting,' he said. 'I have some time I can take off from work, and I can borrow Frank's trailer.'"

"Praise the Lord!" I was thrilled. "He has answered our prayers! You need to turn in the registration for camp meeting, because we fill up."

"No, when it comes down to it, he won't want to go," she said.

Now I was frustrated. "God has answered your prayer. You need to send it in."

Abigail wouldn't do it. Instead she put the application on the front of her refrigerator with magnets.



About three weeks later Abigail called again. "Last night George came into the kitchen and asked why I hadn't sent in this application for camp meeting since they fill up quickly. I told him, 'Well, I thought when it came down to it you would not want to go to camp meeting.' He said, 'Of course I want to go to camp meeting! I told you I did, and I have extra time I can take off work, and I can borrow Frank's trailer. I want to go to camp meeting!'"

She was a praying woman, and I think God had her wait until it was really his idea to go to camp meeting!

George and Abigail were there when camp meeting started. But not many days passed before Abigail found me. "Fine!" she said, her arms crossed and foot tapping. "He's here at camp meeting, but he doesn't go to any meetings. All he does is sit in our trailer. What good will it do?"

"I don't know, but we'll pray for God to get him into the meetings!" I quickly found some people who would pray, and we poured our hearts out to God, praying for Him to get George to go to all the meetings. We met several times and prayed this same prayer.

George never did go to all the meetings. But he did attend one seminar on prayer with Abigail. Previously, he had never participated in small-group prayer times during meetings. But this time, the speaker asked George and Abigail to pray with him at the end of the meeting. Whether that was what did it or not, I don't know, but I know that George went home a changed man. He started reading his Bible, going to church, and leading out in family worships.

About two weeks later Abigail called me in tears. "He is leading out in family worships, but it's terrible! He is so authoritarian and strict that the kids hate it!"

Well, she was a wise woman. She kept her mouth shut, and we earnestly prayed for God to mellow him. It took a few weeks, but he changed and it got better.

It is so important that when someone around us starts to grow spiritually, whether it is our husband, young adult child, or a new church member, that we not tell them what they are doing wrong. It is better just to pray. The Holy Spirit is fully able to tell them how they need to change.

Now whenever the church doors were open, George was there, asking how he could help. He was consistently having his own private time with God too.

One night after family worship, when the kids were in bed, he asked Abigail to help him with something in the living room. He asked her to wait, then returned with a huge stack of pornography magazines.

“Will you help me burn these in the fireplace?” he asked, shaking all over.

“I would love too!” she responded.

When the magazines were burning, she said, “They’re burning. Let’s go to bed.”

“No! Not till every one of them is in ashes. They have so controlled my life!”

George went on to become an elder in his church. He started preaching powerful sermons, giving Bible studies, and winning people to Jesus. Would all of this have happened if we had not prayed?

Our little prayer group had no idea George was suffering with a pornography addiction. But we knew he had a spiritual problem.

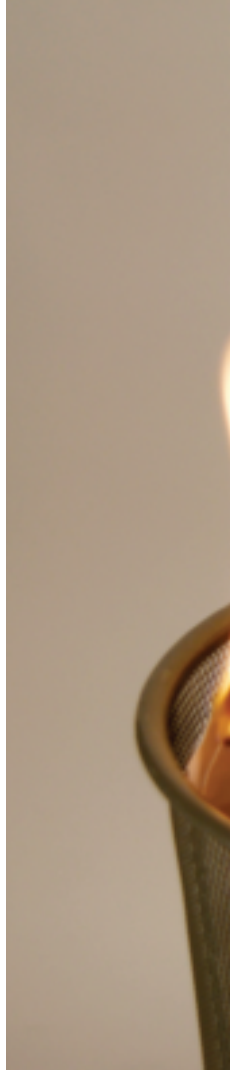
I love this quote:

*“Why do not believers feel a deeper, more earnest concern for those who are out of Christ? Why do not two or three meet together and plead with God for the salvation of some special one, and then for still another?”*

Testimonies to the Church,  
vol. 7, p. 21

Today, because of the Internet, TV, and movies, pornography has become rampant. Men aren’t the only ones who struggle with it. Women and children are susceptible too. Many parents do not realize that their sons are addicted to pornography. We cannot let Satan win on this one! It is destroying lives, marriages, and ministries.

God is mighty to save and can help each one caught in Satan’s trap to win the





battle with pornography. “For though we walk in the flesh, we do not war according to the flesh. For the weapons of our warfare are not carnal but mighty in God for pulling down strongholds, casting down arguments and every high thing that exalts itself against the knowledge of God, bringing every thought into captivity to the obedience of Christ” (2 Corinthians 10:3-5, NKJV).

Could I boldly suggest that we all join in fasting and prayer one day a week for this? As I write this, my heart goes out to those whose self-esteem and hopes of true love have been sickeningly destroyed through pornography. Could we also join in prayer for them to regain their self-worth and for their marriages to be filled with true love?

God promises that our prayers will be effective. “Again I say to you that if two of you agree on earth concerning anything that they ask, it will

be done for them by My Father in heaven. For where two or three are gathered together in My name, I am there in the midst of them” (Matthew 18:19, 20, NKJV).

Won’t you join me in persevering prayer for our brothers and sisters entangled in pornography? Let us “press [our] petitions to the throne, and hold on by strong faith” (*Early Writings*, p. 73). 7

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*\*The names in this story are pseudonyms.*

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



# Escaping the Tornado

## OVERCOMING PORNOGRAPHY ADDICTION

*“Lord, answer me because your love is so good. Because of your great kindness, turn to me. Do not hide from me, your servant. I am in trouble. Hurry to help me! Come near and save me; rescue me from my enemies.”*

*Psalm 69:16-18, NCV*

WHILE LIVING IN TEXAS, I developed a deep respect for, and quite frankly a fear of, tornados. There is something terrifying about a storm that comes up so quickly, lashes out so violently, and is so thoroughly destructive—mangling homes and trees, leaving nothing but debris in its path. In 2001 a different kind of tornado hit my world. It came rolling in, the sky turned dark, things began to twist, and thankfully God was there by my side holding me. The storm that rocked my world was pornography.

The revelation was an accident. I stumbled upon a website that my husband, Bernie, had forgotten to erase from the computer history. Shocked and sickened, hoping and praying that it was a mistake, I confronted him a few days later with what I had found. I was stunned when he revealed that he had been struggling with pornography for a long time, even before we had met. My world was spinning. The marriage I thought I had, the man that I thought I knew, the life that I thought we had created together, no longer existed in the same way for me.

At that point, I had no idea of the ways in which pornography entangles itself in one’s mind. I assumed that after we talked, cried, and prayed together that it would be over and that would be the end of it. Boy, was I wrong! The two stormy years that followed made the initial revelation of my husband’s addiction seem like a gentle spring rain shower. Two years of on-again, off-again struggles. Two years of Bernie trying to break free from the grip of pornography on his heart and mind. For every step forward, it seemed that we took two

or three steps back, with Bernie going for weeks without pornography and then falling right back into it. While he was battling to stay pure in his heart, my world was out of control. I was anxious over every minute he spent on the computer, and I was checking the website history filled with worry and doubt. Instead of a home filled with love, ours had become a home of fear and sadness.

I wish I could say that I reached out to someone or shared our struggles with even another pastor's wife, but I remained silent. What would people say? How would people react? After all, my husband is a *pastor*. The fear that held me back and kept me silent did far more harm than good. It served as my personal shame factor; each time I thought about reaching out to someone, fear of judgment would rush right in.

In retrospect, both Bernie and I see that pornography has strength in the dark. Anonymity makes it stronger, but sharing the struggle with other Christ-followers helps to break its crushing stronghold.

Finally I'd had enough. Away at camp meeting with my parents and our daughters, I decided that I was going to ask Bernie to leave. As heart-wrenching as that decision was, I knew that living this way was not what God had intended. Instead of being a godly wife and mother, I had become obsessed with being my husband's porn police. Things simply had to change.

I returned to our home in Texas ready to ask Bernie to leave, but in my absence, something had changed. While I was away, God had been working on Bernie's heart. He had finally made the decision to ask for help from a friend. That action changed things. God had been waiting for Bernie to be open and vulnerable to others, and finally he was willing. Light was breaking through in our marriage and our home. I chose to stay, praying that God would keep moving in our lives.

In October 2003 Bernie attended a Christian conference about sexual purity called *Every Man's Battle*.<sup>1</sup> There he

learned principles and tools to help him gain victory. It was like a rebirth in many ways, for both Bernie and our marriage.

Women often ask me how we got back to the healthy, happy place where we are now. The answer? Simply God's love and grace. I am always amazed by it and overwhelmed by it, but most of all I am a recipient of it. God's love and grace changed my husband; it freed him from an evil that had enslaved his heart for years. I watched with amazement as the man I'd been married to for nine years became a different person, a better person.

I cannot say it was an easy process; it took years to undo the havoc that Bernie's addiction had wreaked on my self-esteem and trust. Thankfully, God allowed us to be in a location where healing could occur, and He placed people in my life whom I could lean on.

This year my husband celebrates 10 years of being pornography-free. His life is forever changed, our lives are forever changed, and God has cleared away the debris.

Pornography is the enemy of intimacy. Satan uses it to destroy lives, *especially the lives of pastors*. A 2011 poll by a major Christian magazine indicates that about 40 percent of pastors struggle with porn. That is a staggering number! We cannot be silent on this issue. We must battle for our families, for our marriages, for our homes.

God is waiting for us to allow Him to help us survive the storm. If you (or someone you love) is caught in the tornado of sexual sin, please seek help—because there is hope. J

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<sup>1</sup> A book is available by the same title.

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*Christina Anderson works as a Child Life Specialist in a pediatric hospital. She and Bernie have three daughters—Madison, Brooklyn, and Liberty—and a dog named Lucy. In their spare time they enjoy traveling and watching football. Currently they live in Apopka, Florida, where Bernie serves as a pastor at Forest Lake Church.*

## RESOURCES:

We understand that sexual addiction can be a very private struggle. We offer these resources as a starting point for help and healing, whether for someone in your own family or for you to share with others in your sphere of influence who would benefit.

*Every Man's Battle*, by Stephen Arterburn and Fred Stoeker with Mike Yorkey

*Breaking the Silence*, by Bernie Anderson

[www.settingcaptivesfree.com](http://www.settingcaptivesfree.com)

"The Broken Image" (a 2-part audio presentation), by Nicole Parker <https://www.audioverse.org/english/sermons/recordings/3873/the-broken-image-part-1.html>

"Call It Anything But Love" (a 2-part audio presentation), by Nicole Parker <https://www.audioverse.org/english/sermons/recordings/3875/call-it-anything-but-love-part-1.html>

EXCEED Ministry (EXcellence in Christ thru Evangelism to the Erotically Defiled) <http://exceedinglory.org>

Pure Life Ministries (a Christian resource that is not Adventist) <http://www.purelifeministries.org>

*At the Altar of Sexual Idolatry*, by Steve Gallagher

Look for Celebrate Recovery and Men's Purity support groups in your area. Or start one for your church. If you'd like more information to share with someone in need, email [ministryspouses@gmail.com](mailto:ministryspouses@gmail.com) for any information we might have in your area. We can recommend outstanding confidential counselors in North America and in some other parts of the world as well.



# The Glad Game

*“Be joyful always; pray continually; give thanks in all circumstances, for this is God’s will for you in Christ Jesus.”*

*1 Thessalonians 5:16-18, NIV*

IN THE CHILDREN’S MOVIE *Pollyanna*, the title character is a young orphan girl who goes to live with her wealthy but stern Aunt Polly.

Pollyanna’s philosophy of life centered on what she called “The Glad Game,” an optimistic attitude she had learned from her father. The game consisted of finding something to be happy about, especially in unfavorable situations.

Pollyanna’s father had struggled to make a living as a minister of a poor congregation. One Christmas the only source of special treats and gifts for him and Pollyanna was the contents of a missionary barrel given to them by their parishioners. The dearest wish on Pollyanna’s heart was for a doll, but as the various second-hand items in the barrel were examined, all that was found for her was a pair of child’s crutches. Seeing his daughter’s keen disappointment, her father made up the game up on the spot.



“Let’s find something to be glad about,” he suggested. Deciding they were both glad Pollyanna *didn’t need* the crutches made them laugh, and suddenly the disappointment and sadness was lifted. It was a lesson Pollyanna never forgot.



Over time, with this philosophy and her own sunny personality, Pollyanna inspired positive changes in the lives of the residents of her aunt’s dispirited New England town. The glad game also shielded her from her aunt’s



dour attitude. When Aunt Polly assigned her a stuffy attic room without carpets or pictures to be her bedroom, Pollyanna exulted at the beautiful view from the high window. When Pollyanna was punished for being late to dinner and sentenced to a meal of bread and milk in the kitchen with the servant, Pollyanna thanked her aunt rapturously, stating, "I just love bread and milk!"

Soon Pollyanna taught some of the town's most troubled inhabitants to play the game as well—from a querulous invalid named Mrs. Snow to a miserly bachelor, Mr. Pendleton, who lived all alone in a cluttered mansion. Aunt Polly, too, found herself helpless before Pollyanna's buoyant refusal to be downcast and gradually began to thaw, although she resisted the game longer than anyone else. The story goes on to show how quality of life remarkably improved for each one who chose to see life in a more positive perspective.



### IT'S A SIMPLE CHOICE

It can be a real challenge at times to "be joyful always" and to "give thanks in all circumstances." But if we choose to engage in a bit of detective work and carefully examine our situations, we will uncover hidden happiness treasures here and there, things which we can be glad about—blessings, if you will, coming from God's own hand. Looking at the bright side can have the following benefits:

- Lead us to a more balanced perception of a situation
- Aid in our ability to cope
- Decrease the negative effects of stress on our health
- Create an uplifting influence on others
- Encourage an overall longer and more satisfying life
- Reinforce our attitude of gratitude
- Renew our awareness of God's presence and sustaining care



### A PERSONAL EXPERIENCE

I was working a normal busy day in the emergency department when the call came. My pregnant daughter, across the continent, was in a life-and-death crisis. As sad as it was to lose our precious prematurely born granddaughter, I later could see how God showed His compassion and care during this experience, as demonstrated in the following ways:

1. A sympathetic nursing director who released me from the rest of my shift,
2. The lunch-relief nurse who stayed the rest of the day to care for my patients,
3. The airline company that granted me an immediate reservation on a flight departing within a few hours with no extra charge,



4. The unexpected appearance of a dear friend at my front door, who came to help me pack and take me to the airport,
5. The relief of finding my daughter, quite ill but in a stable and recovering condition at her hospital,
6. The comfort of a kind hospital chaplain who had been a very present support to my daughter and her husband during the death of their baby,
7. The speed with which arrangements were made for my husband to join us from his international travel itinerary, and
8. The support and help we received from friends and family in the immediate days that followed—assisting with funeral arrangements, food, and emotional encouragement.

As anguishing as the experience was, when I look back it's easy to see that God didn't leave us alone in the valley of the shadows. He provided glimpses of His love and care all along the way. Our Creator knew from the very beginning that an attitude of gratitude is needed by both children and adults in order to triumphantly

weather the storms of life. The Glad Game (or the Gratitude Game) is just what we need in order to be happy, healthy, and whole. As we express our love and gratitude to Him, He fills us with peace and even joy through life's up-and-down journey.

"It's easy to be thankful for the good things. A life of rich fulfillment comes to those who are also thankful for the setbacks. Gratitude can turn a negative into a positive. Find a way to be thankful for your troubles, and they can become your blessings."

—from the poem "Be Thankful,"  
author unknown

J

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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.*

## IN WHAT WAYS DO YOU FEEL THAT THE PASTORAL HOME MOST OFTEN COMES UNDER ATTACK?

### SAMANTHA NELSON

The most frequent attacks we see and feel in our home are ones against our health. We try to praise God through them (which is not always easy) because we know that if Satan is that mad, God is up to something wonderful! Also, from the work I do with The Hope of Survivors (assisting victims of clergy sexual abuse), I know the temptation to sexual sin/pornography CAN BE very high in a pastor's home. There are a lot of factors that contribute to that vulnerability, though. We teach that some of the best things one can do to prevent the temptation are to maintain a close connection with the Lord and with one's spouse, not to travel separately (as much as possible), and never to counsel members of the opposite sex alone.

### HEATHER OWEN NUDD

I think that one of the common attacks against pastoral families centers around spiritual discouragement and spiritual warfare.

### RONÉ FÜRSTENBURG

The pastoral home is just like any other household. Busy! Busy! Busy! My greatest fear is that my husband and I will be so busy saving the rest of the world that our own children slip through the cracks. Are we doing enough for them? For their spiritual, physical, and emotional well-being? It is the number one question I ask myself every evening after I switch off the light.

*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.*

### GEZ DEPAZ

I believe that sexual temptation can be a great risk. The pastor's job entails making relationships with people, which can leave them vulnerable if their home life isn't stable. Pastors can also easily be tempted by porn.



# *After an Affair*

MOST OF US KNOW SOMEONE WHOSE MARRIAGE HAS BEEN TORN APART BY THE TRAUMA OF AN AFFAIR. WE'VE STOOD BY, NOT KNOWING QUITE WHAT TO DO OR SAY. OR MAYBE OUR OWN HEARTS HAVE BEEN RIPPED AND SHREDDED BY OUR SPOUSE'S BETRAYAL.

IN ALL THE SHOCK AND THE PAIN, HERE ARE A FEW THINGS TO KEEP IN MIND, EITHER FOR YOURSELF OR FOR SUPPORTING SOMEONE IN YOUR SPHERE WHO IS FACING MARITAL HEARTBREAK.



### **EMERGENCY SUPPORT**

One of the first things to do when you discover your partner's affair is to take time out to think, pray, and take care of yourself. You might need to stay with a trusted and confidential friend until the initial pain subsides. Knowing that your husband or wife is having an intimate relationship with someone else is one of the most traumatic emotional experiences that humans can encounter. It may also be a good idea to arrange for a few days off work.

If you have children, it's especially important to do your best to stay together and rebuild your relationship (if it's safe to do so) because a separation and divorce can be deeply troubling for them, sometimes throughout their entire lives.

### **LEAVE YOUR OPTIONS OPEN**

Plan your responses carefully. It's natural to be angry and yell at your guilty spouse, but this may cause even more damage to your relationship.

Think about your future hopes for your relationship. Write these hopes down and use them as your guideposts. If your goal is to *keep*

your partner and build a *stronger* relationship, then choose to respond in ways that are more likely to attract them, while avoiding behavior that may push them away.

It's important for you to tell your partner exactly how they've hurt you, but you can choose to do so in a calm, honest, and simple way (see ideas below). By behaving in ways that your partner will find attractive, wise, considerate, and respectful, you may help them to decide that you're the best person for their happiness after all.

### **EXPLAINING YOUR PAINFUL EMOTIONS**

It may be helpful to write down what you want to say and then read it aloud to your partner. This helps you to stay calm and in control so that your anger doesn't cause further damage to the relationship. Use these as possible sentence starters:

- I am committed to staying with you if you want to stay with me.
- But I feel sad because . . .
- I feel hurt because . . .
- I feel angry because . . .
- I feel betrayed because . . .
- I am afraid that . . .
- I would like to learn how I can build a closer relationship with you.
- Some goals I have for our relationships are . . .
- What would you like from our relationship?
- Some things I would like from our relationship are . . .
- Some things you could do to help me rebuild trust in you are . . .

After you've expressed yourself calmly, give your partner a chance to think about what you've said. Say something like, "I'll give you some space to think about this and get back to me."

### **BE CAREFUL WHOM YOU TELL**

What are your long-term goals for your relationship? Use these to guide you as you make careful choices about what to say and whom to tell. Your friends and relatives might put pressure on you to end the relationship even though you want to stay, or they might turn against your partner.

Or your spouse could be so embarrassed by the things you've told other people that it's easier to leave you than to deal with all those difficult relationships and conversations.

### **TOO MUCH INFORMATION?**

How much do you really need to know about the affair? Too much information can be a dangerous thing. Instead of helping to heal the relationship, the details can fuel your imagination and cause even more pain.

Whenever your thoughts start to dwell on the painful thoughts and imaginings,

replace them with something peaceful, happy, and positive, such as comforting Bible verses or prayer.

### **IF YOU'RE THE PARTNER WHO'S HAD AN AFFAIR . . .**

- Take time to listen to how much you have hurt your partner and know that what you have done has hurt God even more. Spend time in prayer. Experience God's compassion for your partner and let that break your heart. Focus on Psalm 51 and travel with David along the pathway of repentance and forgiveness.
- Don't expect your partner to forgive you quickly and move on, even though you'd like them to. You've hurt them deeply, so expect your partner to be very distressed. They will have good days and bad days. Ask how you can comfort and reassure them, and then do whatever they say.
- How did the affair start, and how could it have been prevented? Were you stressed out or lonely? Did you find the affair comforting during a difficult period in your life? Was something missing from your marriage? Identify a root cause and deal with it effectively. Talking with your partner, having counseling, and reading useful books can protect your marriage from future affairs.
- Do anything that rebuilds your partner's trust. It may be really frustrating to keep having your e-mails and mobile phone checked regularly. But this may be the only way to create a secure foundation for your relationship.
- Work very hard to help your partner feel loved and special again.
- Imagine you're having a new romance with your husband or wife! Invest the energy, money, time, fun, and careful planning that you put into your affair back into your marriage.





## REBUILD YOUR RELATIONSHIP

Good relationships don't just happen. Be prepared to invest time and effort in your marriage. Read books, search for help on the Internet, etc. Try these resources:  
[www.divorcebusting.com](http://www.divorcebusting.com)  
[www.2-in-2-1.co.uk](http://www.2-in-2-1.co.uk)  
[www.marriagepartnership.com](http://www.marriagepartnership.com)

Remember a few other things that can make a very big difference:


- Avoid being alone with someone you find attractive.
- If you find yourself attracted to someone else, imagine they have a contagious terminal illness.
- Listen to each other and be interested in your spouse's life.
- Soothe each other when life is stressful, sad, or painful.
- Talk positively about your partner and your relationship as often as you can.
- Strengthen your relationship by having fun together, listening to each other's hopes and dreams, and doing what helps the other person to feel special and loved. **7**

*Karen Holford is a couples and family therapist living in Scotland, where her husband pastors the Crieff church.*

Discover a safe place to fellowship, share support and explore the journey of ministry life.



## Married to a pastor?

 [facebook.com/groups/ministerialspouses](https://facebook.com/groups/ministerialspouses)

 [@ministryspouses](https://twitter.com/ministryspouses)



# All to God's Glory



"I AM CERTAIN," THE DOCTOR'S diagnosis crashed into my consciousness. "You have stage two breast cancer."

Shocked, I questioned, *How could this be?* Six months earlier I'd discovered a lump on the left side of my chest. After a mammogram I received a letter from the doctor stating that the lump was "probably benign [not suggesting malignancy]. Follow-up mammogram in six months."

"Nothing to worry about, just a fat lump," my primary care physician consoled. I was relieved.

Six months later an ultrasound said the lump had grown. Then my biopsy result stated, "Moderately differentiated invasive ductal carcinoma."

Confused, I recounted my lifestyle checklist:

- A vegan vegetarian for more than 20 years
- Total abstinence from refined sugar
- Eating lots of fruits and vegetables

- No family history of cancer
- Regular exercise and adequate rest
- Ideal body weight

I felt betrayed. All the health principles I had tried so hard to follow had let me down. How could I be an example of healthful living when I was a cancer victim? Was *this* my reward for a healthy lifestyle?

Seeking answers, my husband and I turned to prayer.

Two mornings after the diagnosis, I had the most unusual experience during my prayer time. Instead of crying to God in desperation, as was my intention, I realized suddenly that praise and thanksgiving was flowing from my lips. It was an exciting moment. When I got up from my knees, I felt the most beautiful peace and joy.

On the morning of surgery I awoke with peace. Although it was uncertain what the result of the surgery would be, I felt that it did not matter. I had God's peace, and I knew that whatever happened, I was in His hands. When the surgery went well, I was overjoyed! After the lumpectomy I was pain-free and needed no pain medication.

But that wasn't the end. Five days later the surgeon called. The good news? Cancer had not spread to my lymph nodes. But the pathology report showed more cancer cells. This meant it was necessary to have another surgery, possibly a mastectomy.

Discouraged and confused, we turned to God again. Fifteen days after the first surgery, I had a second surgery. The

surgeon cut deeper and wider. Again, I felt relief when I realized it was another lumpectomy, and, similar to the first surgery experience, I had no pain and needed no pain medication.

Then we got more bad news: the cancer board recommended a prescription for eight sessions of chemotherapy and 35 sessions of radiation.

The first four doses of chemotherapy were difficult but uneventful. My body reacted so violently to the fifth dose that all chemotherapy had to be discontinued. The medication caused third degree burns on the inside of my hands and feet. I lost all my hair and finger nails.

In March 2013, one year after my last radiation treatment, I was declared cancer-free.

On this cancer journey I learned many things:

- God is in control if we choose Him.
- When I did not know how to pray, the Holy Spirit gave me praise.
- Praise is a prerequisite for healing.
- Praise is a gift from Him.
- Praise is the channel through which peace is received.
- God delivers what He promises.
- His gift of peace is a sure promise.

A friend encouraged us to live in the Psalms. During this time Psalm 91 became my source of comfort, hope, and strength. Verse 6 encourages, "Do not dread the disease that stalks in darkness" (NLT).

Some might ask, is a healthy lifestyle even worth it? Absolutely, yes! We live in a disease-infested world. Healthy choices do not guarantee a disease-free life, but living healthily is of vital importance in helping us maintain quality of life.



Others ask, why did I go with the conventional treatment? As a friend observed, "Jean, you have already maxed out healthy living!" Healthy living did not prevent cancer, so how could it possibly cure it? God is the author of medical science. He could have healed me without conventional intervention, but He chose to use the human channel to bring about healing.

Many people all over the world prayed for me, some I've never met. When I felt too ill to pray, I knew others were praying. Their prayers, cards, phone calls, e-mails, gifts, and visits made me feel loved.

This experience was difficult yet sacred in that I had a personal encounter with the depth of God's care. Before I got sick, I focused on what I could do to prevent disease. My cancer journey taught me that even though what I was doing was "right," it's more important to focus on daily surrendering to God regardless of what I am experiencing. In 1 Peter 5:7 we are encouraged to "Give all your worries and cares to God, for He cares about you" (NLT). God not only extends the invitation but also shows how easy and uncomplicated it is to trust Him.

Life now has new meaning. Living each day to the fullest, enjoying every blessing, looking for positives, valuing my family, resting minute-by-minute in His love—these make every day full and dedicated to God's glory. 7

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*Jean Parchment was one of the pioneers for women's ministry in the Canadian Union. She has served her church in various capacities, including women's, family, and children's ministries director for the Ontario Conference in Canada. She is presently retired and lives with her husband in Laurel, Maryland.*



## *Portals For Evil*

*“I find television  
very educating.  
Every time  
somebody turns  
on the set, I go  
into the other  
room and read  
a book.”*

*Groucho Marx*

DURING MOST OF MY CHILDHOOD, our house had no television. The best decision my parents ever made was to throw out the TV when I was two. Instead of watching a screen, we read books, played outside, read books, went exploring, read books, climbed trees (and read more books).

Growing up in communist Romania, my husband didn't have much access to TV either, and he has fond memories of an active childhood without it. So before our wedding, we agreed that we were not buying a television for our home. We wanted a household focused on Jesus, on people, and on real life.

That worked blissfully, until the World Cup rolled around later that year. An avid soccer fan, my husband wanted to follow the news, and this was before the days of home Internet and smartphones. The only way to watch was to get a TV. So we found an affordable sale and brought the World Cup home.

The problem? Once the little black box was in the house, it was always on. Wake up; eat breakfast while watching

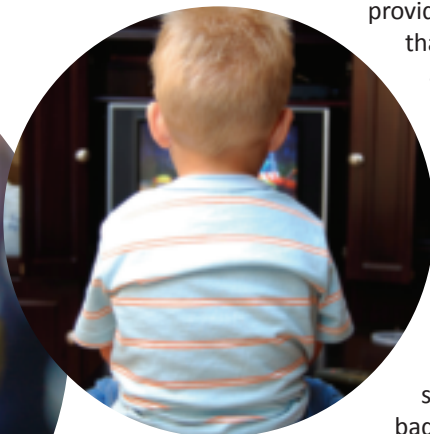


the news. Home from class? Grab the remote “to see if anything interesting is on.” No homework? One show leads to another, and suddenly it’s past 11 p.m.



Within a week, life was back to happy harmony. We were sleeping better, waking earlier, and enjoying each other’s company again.

Now that we have little children, we have a new appreciation for our TV-empty childhoods. We’ve made a conscious, intentional choice to provide them with activities that don’t revolve around a screen. These days, we still don’t watch regular TV in our house. If we need something, we find it online or play a DVD. But there’s no television playing in the background. Ever.



I’m not saying that every single program on TV is bad. But here’s the thing: when you want to serve God wholeheartedly, it’s awfully hard to control something like electronic media if it’s playing all the time in your home. It’s like inviting the devil into your living room—but pretending he’s not there. There’s so much junk available at the click of a button that it’s almost impossible to filter it all out.

A few weeks later we were squabbling about some little nonsense, and we suddenly had an epiphany. Before bringing home the TV, we rarely disagreed and our newlywed home had been a place of happy harmony. Now we were bickering over ridiculous little things, tired from getting to bed late, waking up too late for quiet time with God, and just generally tense and ill at ease.

It took us a bit to pinpoint that this tension had started building right when the TV entered our home. But then it all clicked—this new peacelessness was directly related to the time we spent catatonic before the screen. We weren’t chatting together anymore, or exercising as much, or reading great books—we were just watching TV.

So we took a cue from the generation before us and threw out our TV.

For that matter, the devil can be invited into our homes in other ways too. Such as unfettered access to the Internet through phones, tablets, and computers. Or through video games filled with violence, vulgarity, and competitive indulgence.

It’s not my place to dictate what your family should do regarding electronic media. But I’m challenging you to reassess, to really take a Spirit-driven look at the role that media plays in your life and in the entertainment of your children. Have you asked God lately whether you need to clean out your family’s media?

Have you really, truly unplugged every portal for evil that the devil wants to use to shatter your home? If not, why not have a conversation with Jesus and see what He has to say about it? **J**

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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.*

# I'm Sorry . . .

WE ALL MESS UP AND MAKE MISTAKES. IT'S PART OF BEING HUMAN, AND IT DOESN'T FEEL VERY GOOD. BUT GOD LOVES US SO MUCH THAT HE'S MADE A SPECIAL WAY FOR US TO SAY WE'RE SORRY FOR OUR SINS AND MISTAKES—THEN THEY WON'T MAKE US FEEL BAD ANYMORE!

HERE ARE SOME WAYS TO EXPLORE GOD'S AMAZING FORGIVENESS:

## DISAPPEARING BUBBLES

Get a bottle of bubbles with a bubble wand. Think of something you want to say you're sorry for and ask God's forgiveness. Blow some bubbles, then close your eyes and pray. When you open your eyes, after praying for forgiveness, the bubbles will be all gone—just like your sins! They can never again be found or put back into the bottle.

## CHANGE OF HEART

Take a handful of white playdough (or any other white modeling material or salt-dough). Shape it into something that represents what you want to say sorry to God for. Make the shape of your mouth if you find yourself saying wrong things! When you have made your model, shut your eyes and pray, telling God you're sorry and asking for His forgiveness. As you pray, squash your model into a ball shape and then form it into a heart. Open your eyes at the end of your prayer. Make your heart into a better shape if it needs adjusting. Let your heart dry out, and keep it to remind you that God can make your heart white and clean again—no matter what you have done.



### **FORGIVENESS COLORS**

Make a forgiveness booklet, or perhaps a strand of beads or buttons attached to a red heart bookmark. Use the following colors to remind you of God's forgiveness:

- Green: God wants us to be filled with life.
- White: God knows we are happiest when we are free from sin and forgiven.
- Black or speckled: But we mess up and make mistakes and sin.
- Red: So God sent Jesus to die for us because He loves us.
- White: Because Jesus has died for our sins and taken them all away, we can be clean and forgiven again.
- Gold: One day He will come back to take us to live in heaven forever!

Use the booklet, beads, or buttons to tell someone else about the amazing gift of God's forgiveness.

### **CLEAN STONES**

Find some big white stones and make them as muddy as you can. Let the mud dry on them. When you are ready, read 1 John 1:9. Tell God what you are sorry about, and then wash your stone clean in some warm water. You may need to use a scrubbing brush! Use this to remind you that God wants to wash you all clean again and make you white and sparkling like the stone. If your stone is big enough, write a Bible verse about forgiveness on it.





# I'm Sorry . . .

## SACK OF SINS

Take a strong bag and go to a safe place with your parents where there are lots of small rocks or logs. Think of some things you have done wrong in the past week, and put one rock or log in your sack for each thing you can think of. Pick up the sack and feel how heavy it is. You probably wouldn't want to carry that very far! But try to carry the sack for a little ways. Then empty out the rocks or logs and lay them out in the shape of a cross. Kneel and thank God for His forgiveness. Feel how light your sack is now! Run and jump and feel how free it is to be forgiven and loved by God!



F \_\_\_\_\_  
O \_\_\_\_\_  
R \_\_\_\_\_  
G \_\_\_\_\_  
I \_\_\_\_\_  
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S \_\_\_\_\_

## FORGIVENESS POEM

Write the letters of the word FORGIVENESS down the side of a sheet of paper, one letter to a line. Then write words and phrases about forgiveness beginning with each of the letters. For example:

"F: Freed by Jesus because He loves us!"

"O: Only by dying could He save us!"


Or you could write, "Free!" and "Overwhelming!"

Or you could see how many other words you could make out of the letters in the word FORGIVENESS.

## HEART OF TEXTS

Cut a large heart out of white poster board. Find your favorite texts about forgiveness and write them all over the heart.

## WIPE-AWAY WORDS

Learn your favorite verse about forgiveness by writing it on a white board with a dry-erase marker. Each time you say the verse, wipe away a few more words until they are all gone and you have learned the verse. Well done! 



*Karen Holford is so glad that God keeps on forgiving her and wiping away all her sins!*

# TIPS TO SURVIVE

## THRIVE

### **ABSOLUTELY REFUSE TO GOSSIP OR TO LISTEN TO SOMEONE ELSE GOSSIPING.**

People love to talk. No matter how new you are to being a pastor's spouse, you've probably already noticed the gossips!

The funny thing is, gossips assume that the pastor's spouse needs to know their opinions about everything and everyone else. But politeness doesn't require you to listen.

In fact, people will respect and trust you far more if you don't. (Even if they get miffed when you refuse to listen.)

It's perfectly OK (in fact, it's a very good idea!) to absolutely refuse to participate in any gossip of any kind.

When people come to you to "share" things that are negative or aren't their right to share, it's OK for you to kindly say, "Thank you for trusting me with that information, but I'd rather not talk about people who aren't here to defend themselves." Or some variation that feels right for you.

And when people ask you for information that you know because of your husband's position, it's OK to tactfully refuse to spill. In fact, it's probably the smartest thing you can do.

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*Have 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

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

*The Ministry of Healing, p. 471.*

"God has a purpose in sending trial to His children. He never leads them otherwise than they would choose to be led if they could see the end from the beginning, and discern the glory of the purpose that they are fulfilling."

*Prophets and Kings, p. 578.*

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

*The Great Controversy, p. 621.*

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

*The Desire of Ages, p. 330.*

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

*The Desire of Ages, p. 490.*

# Dear Young Pastor's Wife



WHEN I WAS A LITTLE GIRL, we got a new, young pastor's wife. She was lovely. Young, incredibly stylish, pretty as a picture. Their two young children were clean, always well dressed, and far too young to be my playmates.

The female population of my church was enthralled. They ooh'd and aaah'd over her decorating skills, her impeccable figure, her ability to look like a complete fashion plate with her feathered 1980s hair, decorative hats, and dainty gloves, and her ability to sew sweet little dresses for her daughter that exactly matched her own.

Quite a few of the ladies took up sewing that year. Including my mom. Before I knew it, I had several dresses for church that made me look like my mother's mini-me. At 10 years old, I thought that was great! Made me feel all grown up, like I fit in perfectly with the ladies.

I didn't realize it much at the time, but the rest of our little

church was beginning to lose its sense of balance. The honeymoon was over. The social good times were slowly tapering off in frequency.

Our lovely young pastor's wife was sweet and fun-loving most of the time . . . that is, until someone spoke in any way that could be construed as being "critical" of her husband. Then she morphed into this mother tiger, teeth bared and claws out. It usually happened during board meetings, but she wasn't above giving a good tongue-lashing to any member in the lobby after services.

One time I was privileged to attend a baby shower that was held at the pastor's house. I was so excited to be part of the "grown-up ladies" for once. All the dainty little finger foods, the pretty dresses, the gossip!

Oh yes, the gossip. Our pastor's wife wasn't above joining in the talk that abounds in every church.

"Did you hear that so-and-so is also having a baby this fall?!"

"Really?! But I thought she wasn't getting married until June!"

At this my mother shot me a look that said, "You'd better not be listening to this!"

"Oh yes, they've moved up the wedding date and are still planning to go to school in the fall just like they





were before, and they will be re-baptized just before the wedding, and they plan to confess before the church.”

A few of the ladies grew quiet and drew away from the conversation while our pastor’s wife leaned in farther and joined in with a few more details. Finally, someone spoke a gentle reprimand to the gossipers, and we nearly had World War III.

Our young pastor’s wife didn’t appreciate being reproved. She let loose with a rousing defense, and the whole room inhaled collectively and held our breath. The party quickly finished, and it wasn’t long before we were riding homeward and I was asking questions my poor mother had to figure out how to answer age-appropriately.

The backlash? Growing rifts between many members of the congregation. Worse than that was the slow, trickling loss of respect for her husband.

You know the kind of loss I’m talking about. It starts with feeling a little bit

sorry for him because his wife has a temper. And then it becomes a little more like disillusionment, and soon feelings of contempt rise up as it becomes apparent that he “allows” it and that she most certainly “wears the pants.”

After about four years they moved on, and I haven’t any idea how their story continued. I hope she eventually learned to bite her tongue, or accepted that her husband was a big boy who could take care of himself—even in the face of occasional disagreements with church board members.

I know that all pastors’ spouses walk a delicate balance between being comfortable with members and being *too* comfortable—between being warmly approachable and becoming overly familiar. I know that the walk of a pastor’s spouse can be incredibly lonely.

I also know that there were many good things that accompanied the ministry of that young pastor and his family. He baptized me that year, along with about 30 others. He was a kind, gentle person, and there were many besides me who were sorry to see him go. But I can’t say that the same sentiment followed his young wife when they left.

So I write this letter to you, as pastors’ spouses. I pray that her legacy will not be your own. May you be blessed in the journey to find balance, in the quest for peace over the trials your pastor-spouse faces, and in finding that harmony where your part of ministry complements and increases the respect people hold for the pastor. ■

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*Lisa Jenkins is a homeschooling mother who enjoys photography and writing in her spare time. She, her husband, Colby, and their four young children live on a small farm in northern Michigan.*

## *East-Central Africa Division*

Pictorial report of meetings in Mwanza, Tanzania:



Pastors' wives in Tanzania praying and forming new long-term prayer partnerships.



Pastors' wives meeting together in Tanzania.

## *Northern Asia-Pacific Division*

A Shanghai Youth Convention was held in Ai Wang Adventist School in January 2013. More than 150 young people participated. There was opportunity for fellowship, devotionals, and spiritual revival. The theme of the convention was "Midnight Cry," with a focus on preparing the oil and working for Jesus' soon coming!



Youth get together for a convention in Shanghai.



## North American Division

March 2013 found 55 young women attending the Seminary Spouses in Ministry retreat, reports Lisa Clouzet, coordinator for seminary spouses. The retreat was held at Five Pines Ministries Retreat Center in Berrien Center, Michigan. The theme for this year's retreat was "Bridging the Gap," on the topic of nurturing one's spiritual life while engaged in full-time life/ministry as a pastor's spouse. We were blessed to have Janet Page, ministerial secretary for pastoral spouses, families, and prayer, as the main presenter, and Leah Page as the minister of music. Two health workshops were conducted by Aquarius Jones and Raquel DeJesus, both seminary spouses. The program included segments for prayer, journaling, visiting, time in nature, and fun. Delicious meals were provided, and there was a special time for pampering and other activities. Spouses responded positively at the end of the weekend. It was truly a Spirit-filled weekend that helped to bond the ladies closer to God and to each other.

▼ Seminary wives enjoy time together at retreat.



Photo by Janet Page



by Beatriz Velazquez



by Paula Arrais



by Beatriz Velazquez



by Paula Arrais

## Dear Abigail,

A lady in our town prayed twenty years for a pastor to come. Not long after we moved here (it's my husband's first pastorate after seminary), she heard of him and joined our church.

My husband happened to mention to her that we own some of the Harry Potter books and movies. I do not believe that by reading well-written FICTION that I am going to start holding séances instead of Bible studies. This woman believes that having it in our house is holding him back spiritually and that blessings are not coming because of it.

She proposed to give us a large amount of money for student loans IF we agreed to several of her terms: get rid of Harry Potter, read a book on spiritual housekeeping, etc. We declined her offer.

This morning she told my husband that she cannot worship under his leadership unless he throws out the Harry Potter books. I feel that she is acting in an un-Christlike manner. I don't think my husband is a worse Christian or a worse pastor because of a novel that sits on our shelf.

Sincerely,  
Desperate & Frustrated

## Dear Frustrated,

I see two separate issues in your letter: the emotional blackmail and the Harry Potter. Let's deal with the blackmail first.

It is never OK for a church member to hold your husband, his ministry, or your family hostage by using "gifts" of money to gain control over you. You were absolutely right to graciously decline her offer.

I'm sure it hurts when she threatens to leave. But it is her choice. Your husband cannot, and should not, sacrifice his integrity just to make her stay. If he knows he has done everything appropriate to encourage her to stay and she still leaves, then he needs to be at peace that God will sort it out in His time.

Caving to spiritual extortion will open your family and your ministry to all kinds of manipulation in the future. Acts 5:29 is especially applicable here: "We ought to obey God rather than men" (NKJV).

That brings us to the Harry Potter books and movies—and how those fit with your desire to obey God.

Harry Potter, even though it is a novel, portrays witchcraft as being a good, desirable thing when used for good purposes. Each book gets progressively darker, and they tantalizingly familiarize children with sorcery. The books and movies make witchcraft appear nothing more than an innocent hobby.

Both the Old and New Testaments speak strongly against all forms of witchcraft, leaving no room for even fictional enjoyment of it. Deuteronomy 18:10, 11 says, "Let no one be found among you who . . .



practices divination or sorcery, interprets omens, engages in witchcraft, or casts spells, or who is a medium or spiritist or who consults the dead” (NIV).

Galatians talks about witchcraft too, in the same category as immorality, debauchery, fits of rage, and sexual orgies. Paul says, “I warn you, as I did before, that those who live like this will not inherit the kingdom of God” (Galatians 5:19-21, NIV). And Acts 19:19 says that people who came to believe in Jesus publicly burned everything they had about witchcraft, including their books and scrolls.

The lady in your church obviously has control issues. But while you may conscientiously reject her manipulation, please prayerfully ask God if He isn't calling you to throw devilish entertainment away and choose better, safer materials to have in your home.

Abigail



## Exploring Best Practices for Your Ministry



### Upcoming Programs

- Aug 5 The Priorities of a Local Church — Jan Paulsen
- Aug 12 The Decision Process . . . Without Manipulation — Shawn Boonstra
- Aug 19 Connecting With Our Youth — Gilbert Cangy
- Aug 26 Effective Fundraising — Lilya Wagner
  
- Sept 2 How Writing Can Enhance Your Ministry — Willie Hucks
- Sept 9 How to Prepare Powerful Biblical Sermons — Derek Morris
- Sept 16 Hearing God's Call — Gerald and Chantal Klingbeil
- Sept 23 Learning a New Language — Mark Finley
- Sept 30 Effective Evangelistic Visitation — Shawn Boonstra
  
- Oct 7 The Value of Memorizing Scripture — Derek and Bodil Morris
- Oct 14 How to Lead a Small Group Bible Study — Clifford Goldstein
- Oct 21 How to Have a Meaningful Devotional Experience — Jerry and Janet Page
- Oct 28 How to Understand the Bible — Oleg Kostyuk

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