

THE A RESOURCE FOR MINISTRY SPOUSES
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*He just
wants me*

THE JOURNAL

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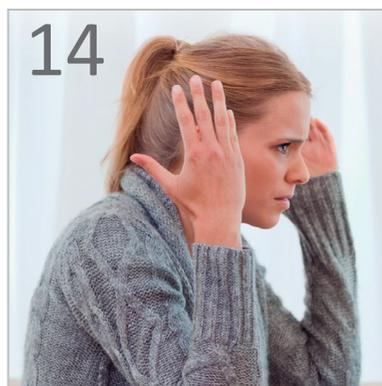
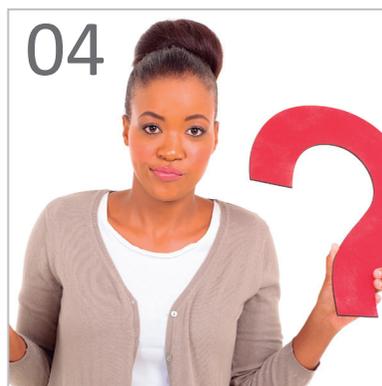
Third Quarter

2014



ON THE COVER

It's easy to lose focus on what matters most. When you get overwhelmed and busy, remember to ask the most important question of all.



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Troublemakers

MY DAD WAS A PASTOR. Every time our family moved to a new assignment, people would warn him of “the troublemakers.” You know about troublemakers—the ones who give constant grief on committees, in church, or at work.

Dad would pay special attention to the cranky, irritable, griping ones. He’d search for the good things in each one and affirm each person for their strengths.

Dad would win over the “troublemakers,” and then they would do almost anything for him. Sometimes Dad would get upset with people, but he was always quick to humble himself and apologize.

When he and Mom were called to a new district, the “troublemakers” would weep over his departure. Years later, when I met some of those members, they talked fondly about my dad and how he blessed their lives.

How do you handle it when someone seems to be undermining you? Criticizing you? How do you react to angry looks, harsh words, and unchristlike actions?

You may not believe it if you’re feeling attacked right now, but prayer works. It really works! Pray like crazy! And then keep praying. I can’t say it enough.

Tell God how you feel; pour out to Him how badly it hurts. Ask Him to change your heart, to help you see that person the way He does.

One morning during my worship time, I was complaining to God about a person while attempting to read my Bible. But I couldn’t seem to concentrate. Frustrat-

Meditate on Psalm 22, Isaiah 53, and Matthew 27.

ed, I gave up reading and began sharing transparently with God.

Just then I read a verse, and it sounded as if God was speaking to me, asking me to pray prayers of blessing for this person. He wanted me to praise and thank Him for them. “No way! I don’t want that individual to be blessed. I don’t want that person to look better than I do spiritually. And I am *not* thankful for them.”

Eventually, I grew tired of arguing with God about it and decided to pray for the person because I knew it was His desire. So I began saying prayers of blessing for the person, asking God to bless them both spiritually and emotionally. I praised and thanked God for them, even though I didn’t feel like it.

You know what happened? My hurt feelings disappeared. God filled my heart with compassion and love. Yes, it was hard to do. But then it was freeing and brought heavenly joy.

I don’t know why I drag my feet in doing what God wants me to do, when I know He is so amazing! Here’s what I’ve learned:

- Humble yourself before the Lord. Pray, “Lord, help me understand what Jesus went through for me when He was crucified. Change me, so I can ask You to forgive the one hurting me” (see Jer. 17:9).

- Thank God for taking away your hurt feelings. You may not feel like the pain is gone, but thank Him ahead of time for healing your heart. God has amazing ways to dissolve the hurt.

- Pray for ways to love them. Say encouraging things to them. Pray to see them through God’s heart. Try to see how hard or frustrating life must be for them.

- Praise and thank God that He has put them in your life. It really helps.

My team and I are praying for you as ministry spouses, for all the difficult situations you encounter. You know we are in a great controversy, and God desperately needs a people who are willing to die to themselves and allow Him to mold their hearts to be like His. Then we will let Jesus love others—even our enemies—through us!

“Be of good cheer, I have overcome the world” (John 16:33, NKJV). J

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

“But I say to you, love your enemies, bless those who curse you, do good to those who hate you, and pray for those who spitefully use you and persecute you.”

Matt. 5:44, NKJV

What Does the Lord Require of Me?

I DON'T SPEND A LOT OF TIME wondering what people think. Well, I do care a little. But it's not the first thing on my mind. That's nothing particularly saintly; in fact, I've been known to cause those around me much anxiety at times.

Being so comfortable with myself also makes me less sensitive to what God thinks and wants for me. Maybe that's why I've had to stop and think about

ministry expectations. If I don't recognize them, I'm in trouble. If I take them too seriously, I'm in trouble. If I just live by what I think, I'm in trouble. If I go by what other people think God thinks, we're *all* in trouble.

So Micah's description of God's expectations of me brings me relief: "He has shown you, [my daughter], what is good. And what does the Lord require of you? To act justly, and to love mercy, and to walk humbly with your God" (6:8, NIV, 1984).

I can do that! Well, sort of.



I'm badly in need of Someone to lift me out of the fray. For those who think I'm on a pedestal, I'm wrapped high up in the strong arms of the Shepherd.

One rare, quiet Sabbath afternoon I decided I needed a better explanation of what He expects of me. In a quick read of the whole book, I quickly realized Micah is addressing a spider's web of abuse and shame in this warm-fuzzy memory verse. If only acting justly and loving mercy could be that simple!

Micah is talking about people who are failing—and proud of it. About leaders who are taking advantage of their position, destroying others, and then denying it all. He's talking about a nation destroying every dream God has for them. It's enough to make both God and Micah weep.

Even though nothing in my life mirrors the corruption and abuse that brought Micah such grief, a few subtle references bother me.

First, I've never meant to misuse the little power I've been given (2:1, 2). But how many times have I concocted ways to solve church problems *my way*, simply because it is within my power to do so? Am I getting in the way of God using His power *His way*?

Then there's the whole denial thing (2:6, 7; 6:2). I want life to be nice. I don't like tough times. Or challenges. Or accountability. Or trials. There's nothing really wrong with believing everything's OK with the way I am, is there?

Also, Micah makes categorical generalizations about human nature (7:1-7). Is he being cynical? Or painfully realistic? Will people *always* let me down? Will I *always* let them down? Will no one *ever* live

up to my expectations? This sounds like failure. *What are people going to think?*

Ouch.

The way I'm inclined to do things, I'm certain I'll bring someone grief. I will disappoint. I will hurt others and bring dishonor to God. This isn't good when He has intentionally, personally called me to do His work. With such high risks, it's embarrassing to be one of God's "called." Who would ever wish to be in ministry?

But look at the help which Micah—and God—offers. Here's a detailed job description, resource center, source of moral support, crisis management team. . . . There's hope for me and all the expectations I face!

"I will bring [you] like sheep" (2:12). I'm badly in need of Someone to lift me out of the fray. For those who think I'm on a pedestal, I'm wrapped high up in the strong arms of the Shepherd (5:4).

"The Lord [will be at your] head" (2:13). For every challenging situation or difficult person in my life, He's there first. I'm caught in a battle which I can't fight alone. In fact, I can't fight it at all. I can only follow.

"He will teach us His ways" (4:2). When I'm inclined to do things my way, He has the patience to show me *His way*. He intends to stay by me until I'm able to walk His path *with Him*.

"You will go to Babylon; there you will be rescued" (4:10). Despite my failures, He gives me help. In fact, the hard times are the tools He uses to redeem me.

What Does the Lord Require of Me?

“The remnant . . . will be in the midst of many peoples like dew from the Lord, like showers on the grass, which do not wait for mortals or depend on any human being”

(5:7). I’m not the one who makes the dew; I’m not the rain that refreshes their lives. When I don’t meet their expectations, it is clearly because I am human. When they rejoice because of my ministry, it is clearly because He is God.

GOD SAYS ALL HE REQUIRES OF ME IS TO—

“Act justly”—live in harmony with what is right and true.

“Love mercy”—find joy in offering people what they don’t deserve.

“Walk humbly”—recognize that you are not capable of doing what He’s calling you to do.

“With your God”—and stick close to His throne, knowing that you are His, and all His power is available to you.

“But as for me, I watch in hope for the Lord, I wait for God my Savior” (7:7). The world has no honor and offers nothing in which to trust (7:2-6). God is my only hope of being any different. My calling as a pastor’s wife is simply to let His salvation work so others can know what He can do.

“Though I have fallen, I will rise” (7:8). I’m limited in patience, energy, wisdom, pure motives, good intentions. I stumble in ministry. I fail to represent Him perfectly. But amazingly, He can do wonders with faulty people like me (7:15).

“Who is a God like you, who pardons sin and forgives” (7:18). He forgives me even while He calls me. When I am imperfectly, helplessly needy, He “has compassion.”

“You will be faithful to Jacob, and show love to Abraham, as you pledged” (7:20). God has always known the fault lines in my soul, but He will keep His promises. In the end, He wants to save me (7:20).

What does my Lord expect of me?

To let Him use my life to showcase His love, His forgiveness, His promise, His salvation. That’s the summary of what it means to be in ministry. It’s not complicated.

And maybe that’s why it’s so humbling. He doesn’t want a pianist, hostess, pastoral support system, creative writer, organizer, witty social leader, theological expert, diplomat, exemplary mother, or some other weak attempt at perfection.

He just wants me. 7

Kathie Lichtenwalter and her husband, Larry, live in Beirut, Lebanon, and work in the Middle East & North Africa Union. Previously she led a Bible study group in Berrien Springs, Michigan, and she is praying for the opportunity to grow a new study group in Beirut. The Lichtenwalters enjoy the long-distance friendship of their four sons and two beautiful daughters-in-law.

QUESTION AND ANSWER

HOW DO YOU MANAGE CRITICISM DURING THE INEVITABLE WOUNDS OF MINISTRY?

KELLY HALL

It is important to have another ministry spouse as a friend/mentor to whom you can turn for prayer, encouragement, and sometimes even guidance.

ANNETTE MAJ-BRITT OTTESEN

Managing criticism is about patience, I think. You need to ask yourself why a person may be criticizing you. If you feel you can use the criticism to make some changes that you yourself would like to make, then use the opportunity. If you do not find the criticism helpful, try to ignore it. I know it is not always easy, but it is important if you want to survive in the ministry. Having said that, who are we to criticize anybody else, and who are they to criticize us? I do not believe in criticism per se, but rather in sound advice given in a loving manner.

TELMA WITZIG

First of all, I try to remain calm. Don't always manage; sometimes I have to ask for concrete examples in order to understand the criticism. What also helps me is to avoid wild justifications. When I can, I try to decide which criticisms are useful and which are not. As far as possible, I try to ignore subjective criticism. On the other hand, it'd be useful to apply suggestions for genuine improvement.

HEATHER KEOUGH

I find criticism very difficult. Some people can be so harsh about our best efforts, because their expectations of the pastoral family is so high. I'll admit that I have a tendency to withdraw from situations or people which I know will be critical; probably not the best solution, but it helps me!

CONSTANCE CAMPBELL-FOLCH

Some people criticize because they are struggling with something else and criticizing is their outlet. Reaching out in a loving manner makes a big difference. I'm learning to love praying for the other person and accepting the challenge to learn more about them and try to understand what is going on under the surface. The criticism often goes away, and I find myself with a new friend. Recently our church merged with two other churches, and some people had their feelings hurt. They have shared with us because they want answers or relief. This normally makes me reclusive, but I'm asking God to make me more like Him in these situations. My devotions have been about the importance of caring for others (more deeply than normal), so I've begun staying with the greeters every Sabbath morning until the sermon starts. It has opened a door to connect and really know how everyone is doing. I've been blessed by hearing their happiness or praying for their struggles and then seeing God answer those prayers. I'm learning that I love sharing God's promises and feel joy to hear their fulfillment.

We like to hear your answers to questions like this. To participate, join our Facebook group online at 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.

Drinking From the Same Cup

>PART 1



BEFORE EMAIL OR TEXT messaging, my husband, James, and I fell in love with each other through writing letters to each other. After a few months James decided it was time to visit. While we had previously met, we had never spent time together having serious intentions. Driving away from the airport after picking him up, I took a swig from my water bottle. Offering him the bottle, I asked, “Are you thirsty?” At that point, he says now, hope rose within him. A woman doesn’t share her cup with just anyone!

In ancient times, the man who drank from the same cup as the king was called the cupbearer. A high-ranking royal officer, the cupbearer not only served the king’s drinks but also ensured his safety, protecting the sovereign from assassination by poison. Due to the constant fear of plots and intrigues, the cupbearer had to be thoroughly trustworthy. In Eastern culture, drinking from the same cup meant you were willing to die for the king. At a wedding, two people drinking from the same cup indicates their level of intimacy.

Jesus spoke of a cup He would share with His followers. James, John, and their mother had approached Jesus requesting “closest-to-You-in-Your-

kingdom” positions so they could sit on the right and left side of His throne. Jesus said, “You do not know what you are asking. Are you able to drink the cup that I am about to drink?” (Matt. 20:22, NASB). *Only those who will drink from My cup will be near Me in My kingdom.* What strange words.

Just before this encounter, Jesus had described His future suffering with James, John, and the other disciples. “Behold, we are going up to Jerusalem, and the Son of Man will be betrayed to the chief priests and to the scribes; and they will condemn Him to death, and deliver Him to the Gentiles to mock and to scourge and to crucify” (Matt. 20:18, 19, NKJV). However, the disciples did not understand. Like followers of any rising leader, their eyes were set on glory.

Jesus was alluding to the reality of His suffering when He spoke of the cup. To follow Him was to pursue a man carrying a cross. “Are you able to do that?” He asked. “We are able,” they naively answered.

They *would* drink of the same cup. Of Jesus’ followers, James was the first to feel the sword. John endured persecution the longest. Their request was answered.

They received no obvious heavenly position of glory, but I doubt it mattered to them at the end. The purified desire for closeness with the Savior was granted. Both were brought into greater intimacy with Christ through fellowship with Him in suffering.

Peter also had this lesson to learn. His aversion to suffering was so strong that after Jesus explained what He would endure, Peter took Him aside and rebuked Him. "Never, Lord!" he said. "This shall never happen to You."

Jesus answered, "Get behind Me, Satan! You are a stumbling block to Me." Peter's attitude toward suffering was preventing the closeness Jesus longed for.

When cleansing the temple, Jesus spoke with similar passion. As He was chasing the retailers out, overthrowing tables, aggressively removing material things that stood between true worship and the people, He cried, "Take these things out of the way!"

Did Peter understand the rebuke? Was he able to grasp the path of suffering? Years later he wrote, "For it is commendable if a man bears up under the pain of unjust suffering because he is conscious of God. . . . But if you suffer for doing good and you endure it, this is commendable before God. To this you were called, because Christ suffered for you, leaving you an example, that you should follow in his steps" (1 Pet. 2:19-21, NIV, 1984).

To endure suffering with dignity is thank-worthy. God is thankful when, instead of buckling under victim mentality, or blaming Him and shaking the fist as if He were the source of the pain, we choose to allow suffering to draw us closer to Him.

"Therefore, since Christ suffered in his body, arm yourselves also with the

same attitude" (1 Pet. 4:1, NIV, 1984). "Beloved, think it not strange concerning the fiery trial . . . but rejoice . . . as ye are partakers of Christ's sufferings" (1 Pet. 4:12, 13, KJV).

A partaker means a sharer, a fellow, a partner, a comrade. The quest of those who come to love God becomes this: "That I may know Him, and the power of His resurrection, and the fellowship of His sufferings" (Phil. 3:10, NKJV). Why would they seek this kind of fellowship?

Suffering is a vulnerable, narrow place. We don't spill our deepest pain to just anyone, especially in the midst of it. We tend to assume that others will not understand, that they may not validate the intensity of our hurt. They might say something callous or cast blame. But those who *do* suffer with us reach a level of transparent friendship deeper than all other relationships.

Peter wrote, "If anyone suffers as a Christian, let him not be ashamed, but let him glorify God in this matter" (1 Pet. 4:16, NKJV). Tragically, our world is full of inescapable suffering. We suffer the bitter consequences of our decisions and irretrievable mistakes. We also suffer what is unfair and wrong. Yet over and over again, Scripture says that God is just. In contrast to the world's injustice, a belief in His fairness brings strength to live unashamed, knowing that someday He will make it right. While His love cannot yet put an end to suffering, it *can* enable a man or woman to get back up after being hit hard, to experience the darkness and still believe in the light, to have something precious ripped away and know that it will yet be restored.

God is glorified by those who, in spite of everything, choose to trust. Ultimately, Christ enables all who drink from His cup to triumph over affliction. J

*"We
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Risë Rafferty has worked for Light Bearers for over 20 years as a writer and public speaker. Her passion to help others realize that God has an amazing plan for them physically and spiritually is seen in her monthly ALIVE articles on various health topics. Risë has enjoyed sharing messages of physical, emotional, and relational health as well as on spiritual topics with various audiences. She is married to James Rafferty. She is also a proud mother of two amazing kids.

Understanding is the Key



THE COLD, DRIZZLING RAIN was turning to snow as we stood watching my son unsuccessfully try key after key in the lock to the door of the enormous blue shed. What would we find when the door was finally open?

THE PHONE CALL

Just before Mother's Day, May 2012, a coroner called with the sad news that my aunt and uncle had been found dead in their camper home. I was asked to come as soon as possible to collect some of their personal papers.

Arriving two days later to a little town high in the Colorado Rockies, my son and son-in-law and I ultimately followed the coroner's car up the rutted, tangled track to my deceased relatives' property. Rounding the last corner, we were struck with the sight of a large collection of broken-down cars and machinery which littered the area. Overwhelming the entire scene was a big blue shed against which sat a tiny camper-trailer—my aunt and uncle's home for many years and the one in which they had died.



The camper's interior was almost completely obstructed by boxes, books, trash, old food, and clothes, with only a narrow path leading to a miniscule bedroom at the back.

After a time-consuming, thorough search, the key to the big blue shed was finally located and the door opened. Immediately a sad-looking black cat dashed out, and we were engulfed by the strong odor of cat urine. With the aid of a couple of flashlights we peered into the dark interior. What a sight met our curious gaze. The entire building was full of *stuff*. Boxes, debris, cans, papers, old furniture, a broken-down organ, building materials, lumber, machine parts, bedding, clothing, two old cars—the entire interior was piled high with *so much stuff*. Narrow walkways trailed between the piles like a surreal maze.



CHARACTERISTICS OF A HOARDER

Almost everyone collects things to some degree. However, most of us buy and accumulate more than we really need, filling closets and cupboards to capacity. The mental disorder called *compulsive hoarding* is an overwhelming urge to collect and keep mundane objects even when the accumulation takes over one's life. For forty-some years, my aunt and uncle had crammed piles of things into the large shed, their tiny living quarters, an unfinished house on the same property, *and* a commercial storage unit in town.

Most hoarders are also uncontrollable shoppers. Many of the items in my aunt and uncle's piles were still in original packaging, unopened and unused, with price tags still attached.

Hoarders are mentally incapable of throwing things out. As stuff accumulates, their relationships are often compromised, family members may move out, and friendships are lost. Many hoarders are extremely distressed over their situation and become reclusive or depressed.

HOW DOES IT ALL START?

Scientific theories try to explain hoarding to some degree. However there is still much mystery surrounding this disorder. Originally, it was thought to be an obsessive-compulsive condition. But new research suggests hoarding may be a unique cognitive disorder instead. A hoarder's brain may have difficulty processing information. They may feel a sense of emotional security in having many things. Some fear they are losing part of themselves if they part with a possession. Others may feel an overpowering sense of guilt over discarding something useful.

THE ACCIDENT

Another risk factor can be stress caused by a life-changing event which results in significant personal loss—such as the destruction of property during a severe storm, or the loss of relationship as in a divorce or the death of a loved one. Accidents with significant personal injury can have the same effect.

The last time I saw my aunt and uncle alive was shortly after their marriage years ago. They were young, in love, and very happy. Several years

later, they were both involved in a horrific car accident. My uncle was thrown from the vehicle, striking the curb of the sidewalk and suffering a traumatic frontal lobe head injury. He survived but was never the same. My aunt was also injured, though not as severely. Many things changed for them after that. He had loved being a pilot but was no longer able to fly. He was now disabled and unemployable.



They gradually moved farther and farther away from family and friends, eventually isolating themselves in the Colorado Rockies.

Concerned family members who sent cards, letters, and packages received no response. Neighbors, family, and local church members who attempted to visit were discouraged by my uncle's sour, unwelcoming attitude and his habit of carrying a gun.

STILL MANY MYSTERIES

Medical professionals don't fully understand the complexities of this disorder, but they believe it is an incurable condition. The key to helping a hoarder begins with understanding that it is a deep-seated cognitive malfunction. Hoarding can

also be hereditary, with symptoms evident from childhood.

If you know someone who has this disorder, here are a few suggestions which may aid in your efforts to be supportive and helpful.

1. Provide non-judgmental friendship and a ready, listening ear.
2. Be available to assist if the person indicates a desire to explore therapy or counseling.
3. Be ready to support and cheer them on as they attempt to complete tasks given by the therapist.
4. Be extremely patient.
5. Expect setbacks. Continue to be encouraging and supportive.
6. Pray for the person and trust God's guidance in your efforts to help.
7. Remember that compulsive hoarding is virtually incurable. Your friend or family member's therapy will likely focus on how to best manage hoarding impulses.

THE GREAT PHYSICIAN UNDERSTANDS

My aunt and uncle are an extreme case example. They lived into their early nineties. It was heartbreaking that they died together all alone of sickness and hypothermia in their unheated camper-trailer. We were comforted to find Bibles and reading materials indicating a faith which hopefully was sustaining in their life of hardship.

We know God is merciful and loving toward His children. He understands that we are *all* broken and made of dust. Our ultimate hope is in Him! ■

For more information, go to www.mayoclinic.org and search for "hoarding." Other online resources are also available.

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.

TIPS TO SURVIVE

THRIVE

Special Quotes

GO WITH HIM

To avoid those creeping feelings of loneliness, jealousy, and simply missing your husband because he seems to be gone all the time, *go with him*. This may not always be possible or even appropriate, but you might be surprised how often you could go with your spouse as he visits church members in their homes or in the hospital, gives Bible studies, leads out in prayer meeting, and attends various programs at your church and/or church school. This may sound especially hard for young mothers, but if evenings don't work, how about Sabbath afternoons?

Going with your husband is much more than just being a tag-along. You can be a great blessing as you seek to love those to whom your husband is ministering. Simply making conversation, seeking to encourage and love the people, will meet a need that your husband is unable to fulfill.

You will also find yourself developing more personal relationships with your church members and genuinely enjoying your time with them.

Uniting with your husband will increase both your and your husband's effectiveness in ministry. Your husband will appreciate your interest in his work, and the time together will also grow your relationship. And don't forget—as you invest in God's work, you will be blessed in your own walk with God!

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

“Christ conquered by divine strength, and so must every tempted soul overcome. God was with Christ in the Garden of Gethsemane, and by the experience of Christ we are to learn to trust our heavenly Father; at all times and in all places we are to believe that He is tender, true, and faithful, able to keep that which is committed to His care. In the agonizing struggle of Christ, our Substitute and Surety, the Father was beside His son, and He is beside every soul that struggles with discouragement and difficulty.”

Seventh-day Adventist Bible Commentary, vol. 5, p. 1123

“If the clouds sweep over your soul, you must not feel that you are forsaken. Your faith must pierce the gloom. . . . The riches of the grace of Christ must be kept before the mind. Treasure up the lessons that His love provides. Let your faith be like Job's, that you may declare, ‘Though he slay me, yet will I trust in him’ (Job 13:15). Lay hold on the promises of your heavenly Father, and remember His former dealing with you and with His servants; for ‘all things work together for good to them that love God.’”

Mind, Character, and Personality, vol. 2, p. 496

“To all who are reaching out to feel the guiding hand of God, the moment of greatest discouragement is the time when divine help is nearest. They will look back with thankfulness upon the darkest part of their way. ‘The Lord knoweth how to deliver the godly,’ 2 Peter 2:9. From every temptation and every trial He will bring them forth with firmer faith and a richer experience.”

The Desire of Ages, p. 528

“But though the conflict is a ceaseless one, none are left to struggle alone. Angels help and protect those who walk humbly before God. Never will our Lord betray one who trusts in Him. As His children draw near to Him for protection from evil, in pity and love He lifts up for them a standard against the enemy. Touch them not, He says; for they are Mine. I have graven them upon the palms of My hands.”

Prophets and Kings, p. 571

No Need to Nag

“How many times do I have to ask you to fix the bathroom tap?”

“Why do you always wait until the last minute to tell me you need a packed lunch?”

“This is the third time this week my dinner has been cold! What’s your problem?”

“I can’t believe you forgot the bread . . . again. Don’t you ever listen?”

“Nag, nag, nag. All you ever do is nag!”



NAGGING DOUBTS

Nagging . . . probably we've all done it, at least once or twice. Especially when we feel stressed, overloaded, and unsupported. Nagging could be defined as "offering repeated reminders with ever-increasing frustration and urgency." But the problem isn't just frequency. Our tone of voice may be sarcastic, irritated, frustrated, resigned, or angry. Nagging puts the other person down. The implied message:

"I'm better than you are."

"I'm more self-controlled/more thoughtful/more careful than you."

"I think you're just stupid/incompetent/rude/inconsiderate."

"You'll never get it right/be good enough."

BETTER TO LIVE ON THE ROOF

Nagging negative comments grind away at the love and joy in our relationships. When we use our words carelessly, we end up tearing each other down rather than building each other up (Eph. 4:29).

Even the wise and powerful King Solomon apparently got nagged occasionally! It clearly wasn't good for his relationships either, since he thought it was better to live on the roof than with a nagging wife (Prov. 21:9)!

THE MOST EFFECTIVE WAY?

Nagging and criticizing are some of the *least* effective ways to encourage someone to change behavior or do something we want. Nagging can imply that the other person is lazy, inadequate, or unhelpful. Being nagged can make our loved ones feel rebellious, stubborn, and even *less* like helping. Or they may help reluctantly and resentfully.

Appreciation can be much more effective. The power of kindness works like a sculptor, with each stroke gently smoothing the clay toward the desired shape. When you appreciate someone for the tiniest thing, they are more likely to want to do it again, and to do it cheerfully and willingly. Try it and see!

TURN COMPLAINTS INTO REQUESTS

Write your nag down. Read it carefully and then rewrite it as a simple, clear, and polite request. "Would you stop walking all over my clean kitchen floor with your dirty shoes!" might become, "Please take your shoes off and leave them at the doorstep so we can keep the kitchen floor clean."

Ask yourself how you might make the same request to a guest who was visiting your home. The polite version is likely to leave everyone feeling happier.

SCALE IT DOWN

Make a task list, then draw three columns beside it.

In the first column rate *how urgent* the task is on a scale of 1-5, where 5 is "very urgent."

In the second column, rate *how important* the task is on a scale of 1-5, where 5 is "very important."

Use the third column to add the two scores together. The highest scores are the things that need to be done first.

How important is it to fill the car with gas each week, tidy the kitchen by bedtime, or have a perfect home by sunset on Friday night? If one of you thinks a task is very important and rates it as a 5, but the other person thinks it's not so important and rates it as a 2, it will be helpful to talk about your different priorities in a calm, non-judgmental way.

WRITE IT DOWN

Make a shared "To Do" list. Agree on how often you'll each check the list, do a task, and cross it



Having a written list means that you don't have to remind each other so often.

off. Having a written list means that you don't have to remind each other so often. The list does the nagging for you in a much nicer way—as long as you don't nag each other to check the list!

ONCE IS ENOUGH

"I just ask once," says Paula. "I choose a good time to talk to Mark, make sure I have his full attention, and then tell him I have a problem and need his help. I show him what needs to be done, and then he decides how and when he'll fix it. Asking once like this means I don't have to nag, and it gives him the freedom to choose the best time in his schedule."

"TO DO" DATE

"We have 'To Do' dates!" says Tim. "We sit down together on a Sunday evening, share dessert, and make a list of everything that needs to be done in the week ahead. We decide who's going to do what, and then we spend the evening tackling the list and doing the worst jobs together so neither one feels so bad!"

BE CREATIVE

Find enjoyable, respectful, and caring ways to remind each other. "We found these crazy kids' toys," says Sandra. "You can write messages on them with washable markers and toss them in the laundry to wipe them clean. So we have one each and we write our 'requests' on them. Then we hide them for the other person to find. I know it sounds crazy, but it makes us laugh!"

DO IT YOURSELF

Are you nagging your husband to paint the bedroom, or your wife to iron your pants? Why not learn how to do it yourself?

Ella realized that learning to decorate a home was going to be useful because they moved so often. She attended a free class at the local home-decorating store and soon had the confidence to try painting a bedroom.

Tom and Lily decided to teach each other useful skills so they could both cook a meal, unplug the sink, fix the washing machine, iron a shirt and pants, check the car's oil, mow the lawn, etc. This helped them become more efficient as a couple and spend their energy getting jobs done rather than being frustrated at each other.

Think about your relationship:

- What do you remind your spouse about most frequently?
- Why do you think you're most likely to focus on this area?
- What do you think would invite your spouse to help you more often or more cheerfully?
- Which ideas listed above do you think might work best for you? **J**

Karen Holford is a family and couples therapist. Sometimes she and Bernie stick big smiley faces on the things that need to be done around their house!



Dear Abigail,

Our local church has asked me to be the leading elder in the congregation where my husband is the pastor. I have lived a number of years in the community, and they recognize my gifts and wish for me to serve in that position. However, the conference president has made clear that he feels my taking that role would be inappropriate. What do you think?

It seems somewhat of a conflict of interest for the pastor's spouse (or parent, or adult child, or any relative, for that matter) to be the head elder, and therefore not a good idea. The head elder usually works closely with the pastor, and it seems it would be hard to stay unbiased on certain issues. In the secular workplace, it's called nepotism. And what if the spouse, as head elder, doesn't agree with the pastor? Marriage is hard enough work without adding church issues. If the pastor and spouse have a work conflict, it would be very hard (if not impossible) not to carry it over to the home life.

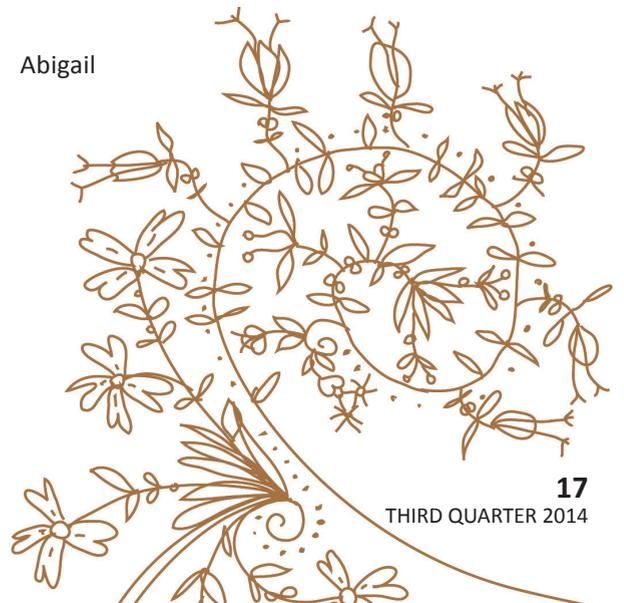
Also, picture Sabbath mornings with the pastor and head elder spouse both on the platform: if you have young children, who sits with them? If you have older children, who is supervising them?

If there are no children involved, there is still the reality that a pastor's role is to train and mentor the lay members to take ownership of leading the church. If the pastor's spouse fills the role of head elder, the church will not have a lay member prepared to do the head elder's duties when you move to a new district.

Though it may sound romantic to work so closely together, it has the potential to create more problems than it would solve. I think it would be helpful to hear the conference president's reasons as well.

Please don't take this response as a diminishment of your obvious gifts and passion for ministry. It is an honor that your church recognizes your talents and appreciates your service, even if there might be a different role that would be a better solution.

Abigail



Waiting for *Justice*

Madalena Monteiro's husband, Antonio Monteiro, is an Adventist pastor who was recently acquitted and released from a prison in Togo. In March 2012, Pastor Monteiro was detained with others and held without trial based on the accusations of one man who was described as a "pathological liar." After his release, Pastor Monteiro shared his story during the 2014 Spring Council at the General Conference. Madalena accompanied him, and we asked Raquel Arrais, GC Women's Ministries associate director, to interview her in Portuguese. This is her incredible story of God's care while her husband was in prison. May you be blessed!



Raquel: What was your reaction when your husband went to prison? How did you feel? What was the first thing that came to your mind?

Madalena: I was in shock. I had no words. I just saw my husband with the police at our door, telling me he's going to prison. When I saw him in chains, I asked, "What is going on, Antonio?"

"Sweetie, I have no idea!" he said.

I just ran away and started screaming, trying to get answers. I was so scared. The police said, "Don't go anywhere." I kept screaming and saying, "What's going on? What's going on?"

A policeman told me, "Listen, we are the police, don't do anything!" But I was so scared I couldn't stop screaming. Then he took his gun and pointed it at me. I froze in terror, and stayed quiet then, still very confused.

R: Then your husband went to prison?

M: Yes.

R: After that, how did you manage your daily life routine?

M: In the early days, I prayed. For the first three days I felt my prayers were going nowhere. But one day a young man knocked on the door and visited me. After a three-minute conversation, he prayed with me and left. I closed the door, went to my room, and prayed again, "Lord, I need to talk to You. But before I talk to You, before I speak, I need to open Your Word because I need something to calm down." So I opened the Bible and read Psalm 17: "God is our justice." After that day I felt the Holy Spirit and the angels close to me.

Every day as I cooked, I would ask the Lord, "Why?" God told me, "Not your will be done." It was not easy to go every day to the prison to bring food to my husband behind bars. But before I left the house every day I'd say, "Lord, I consecrate my life to You. Keep me safe and help me to deliver the food he needs. Help me face this trial." Then I felt God's presence. Sometimes I felt discouraged but then the comfort of the Holy Spirit always came to me. Can you imagine leaving



home every morning for prison? Can you imagine seeing your husband, the person you love most, behind bars? This was not easy. But God gave me the strength to face this.

R: This is beautiful! It was not just one or two months. It was 22 months! How did you feel God's presence?

M: As a human being it would have been impossible to face this alone. I had to be in communion with God 24 hours a day. Without Him, I could do nothing. It was by God's grace alone.

R: You've mentioned before that God helped you in a special moment. Can you tell us about that?

M: One day I dreamed they had released him from prison, but when I woke up he wasn't there. Then just a few days later, it happened!

R: What message would you share with pastors' spouses around the world as they face trials?

M: My advice would be to never doubt our great God. If you are facing problems—health, persecution, oppression—find a friend to have someone to talk to. But your first friend is always God. I had many people visit me every day, and they brought so much comfort. But my first comfort was at the feet of Jesus. If you're facing trials or difficulties, go to the cross. Go to the feet of Jesus. Be in communion with Him. Believe that at the right moment, God will act in your favor.

R: How old are your children?

M: My older son is 28, my daughters are 25 and 23, and my younger son is 13.

R: How did your children cope?

M: My older son did what he could for his daddy. He would have knocked on every door in the country to ask for help. The government did what they could to support him from the beginning to the end.

My two daughters were in Ghana. When my younger daughter saw me cry, she would say, "Please, Mom, let's stop crying and trust in God." I said, "Sweetie, I know God is going to bring justice to us, but now I'm just human." Because there are moments when it's just good to cry.

My youngest would watch me, when I was sitting down. "Mom, rest, rest! This is your time to rest. Very soon Daddy will come home." He was the best friend and companion for me. He kept going to school, and one day he came home upset because he shares his father's name, Antonio. A classmate said, "I heard about Antonio Monteiro on TV. Your daddy killed people!"

I went to his school the next day to explain what was going on in our family. The principal said, "Rest assured, I have talked with all the teachers so they can protect your son. Nothing will happen to him." After this it was peaceful and God took care of him.

God took care of us. 7

For more information on Pastor Monteiro's story, go to adventistreview.org and search for "Monteiro."

Interview with Maria Madalena Brito Veiga dos Anjos Monteiro by Raquel Arrais on April 8, 2014.



When God Orchestrates a Family

>PART 4

*“Make the tent you live in larger. Stretch wide
the curtains and don’t hold back your vision.
Lengthen the ropes and reset your stakes.”*

Isa. 54:2, The Clear Word

And what is faith? Believing God is going to do exactly what He says He's going to do.

WHEN GOD FILLS our empty seasons, He does it on His own timeline. First we lost our first pregnancy, then I lost the ability to have children forever, and then our adopted baby, Nicole, was taken back by her birth mother. As Christians we're often tempted to search for the perfect promise to fill our desires, to earmark it as our very own, and then to assign our schedule to it. We've been struggling with *faith* since the beginning of time.

And what is faith? Believing God is going to do exactly what He says He's going to do.

In the Old Testament, Abraham was called the "father of faith." But he kept assigning timelines to God. And when God didn't deliver "on time," Abraham did things his own way.

It's perfectly understandable. Abraham was taunted by titles he could neither live up to nor give up on. Abraham was known as a "father of many nations," but the whole nation knew he was childless. The nursery in his tent was empty. He had prayed for a child, waited patiently—and was left humiliated. He and his wife, Sarah, discussed their emptiness and agreed their lineage had been blank for long enough. God's time was up.

Sarah decided her servant Hagar should be the vessel to deliver God's promise, and Abraham invited Hagar to bed. This was quite an offer: for a maid to become the first lady, "the mother of all nations." And Hagar said

yes. She chose another woman's husband to fulfill her dreams. She accepted what was not hers, to receive what belonged to another.

And God painfully heard and saw each step His chosen people took, just as He does with you and me.

As the child Ishmael grew, so did the misery, until separation seemed to be the best of bad options. One morning Abraham gave Hagar food and water; then, like so many fathers today, he said goodbye as she and his son walked toward the desert full of unknown dangers.

With emptiness beyond despair, Hagar was keenly aware that death was looming. They were homeless, starving, and dying of thirst. As her son wilted in the desert heat, all she could do was make him as comfortable as possible under a tree, so that his last breath would be in the shade.

This was a moment of uncompromising honesty for Hagar. In the hot, scorching sun, she longed to hear from her Creator. She began to take inventory of her choices. Starting at the beginning, she realized:

1. *Faith is bigger than life, and it determines eternal life.* If I don't believe God will deliver what He promises, then I live on watered-down wishes and not faith at all. Without faith, I run ahead of God or lag behind Him in order to please myself. Yet as my pride dissipates, I inevitably run back to Him.
2. *There are no secrets with God.* What happens in a bedroom, in the desert, behind a curtain, or anywhere else is seen, known, and recorded by angels. Putting my life in God's hand and trusting His plans is the only prescription for oozing sores and empty voids. When I try to fill these voids on my own, I fail miserably.
3. *Everything man offers me has limits.* Whether it is a bottle of water to quench my thirst, a relationship to provide security, or a title to support my self-esteem, it will someday end. I may look up to my husband,

a protector, or a spiritual leader, but if my admiration isn't aimed at God Himself, I'm not looking high enough.

God heard Hagar's prayer. When she had given up on herself, her friends, her theories, on everything she once valued—she finally gave God permission to do something. It was at this moment that God "opened her eyes and she saw a well of water."

It was only when she was willing to take inventory—and see herself for who she really was—that she could hear the voice of God.

God replaced Abraham's bottle of water with a well of water, a well of Living Water that forever quenched her thirst and filled her emptiness (see Gen. 21:14–19).

This old story whispers new beginnings. When God fills our emptiness, He does it with eternity in mind. Fullness is best achieved when we trust God's timing. Don't abandon the promise just because its fulfillment has been prolonged.

After our devastating losses, God delivered tiny Tawnya into our arms. Rocking her was like sitting beneath a rainbow, knowing the storm had passed, the flood of tears was dry, and His promise had been delivered. But miracles don't begin—or end—when we think they should.

One Sabbath when Tawnya was three months old, a doctor rushed up to us, the same doctor who had delivered our first adopted baby girl, whose mother had taken her back. "Rod and Donna, we have a baby for you!" We looked at Tawnya in our arms and said, "Doc, we already have a baby!"

"Well, you need another one," he said.

A few weeks later we stood in the hospital as little Tyler was transferred from delivery room to nursery. It took all of two minutes to love him for eternity. Falling on my knees, I wept.

God took this childless couple with a broken womb and transformed us into a family, and then when we thought we had enough, God said, "We're just getting started!" For when God enlarges a family, He enlarges His kingdom! **7**

*"Make the tent
you live in larger.
Stretch wide the
curtains and
don't hold back
your vision.
Lengthen the
ropes and reset
your stakes."*

Donna Willey (www.donnawilley.com) is an author, inspirational speaker, and lay pastor in her home church. This article is adapted from a chapter in her newest book, Empty: From Despair to Deliverance.

empty

from despair to deliverance

Do you battle broken dreams?

Has your faith gotten misplaced along the way?

There *is* a way to radically refocus your direction and identity.

empty
from despair to deliverance

Donna Willey writes contagiously encouraging messages for “ordinary” people.

www.donnawilley.com



Be at Peace

A FEW MONTHS AGO, an older woman in our church approached me. “I owe you an apology,” she announced. “When you moved to our church, I thought you were just a bit of fluff. Pretty to look at, but without substance. I was wrong, and I’m sorry. Now I know better.”

She went on to share some compliments, but, honestly, I wasn’t sure how to respond. Most compliments don’t start out so backhandedly, and most insults don’t finish with praise.

It’s hard to act casual when people make wrong assumptions about you. It’s painful when your

whole life is focused on helping and serving them, but they are determined to find things to dislike or criticize. Some personalities are more hurt by this than others, but I don’t think being criticized or misunderstood is *enjoyable* for anyone. Especially when all you want is to help others see more of Jesus!

Here’s the reality: there’s absolutely no way you can live in ministry without facing criticism, without being misunderstood, without getting hurt. The question we have to ask ourselves is this: *How do I respond when these things happen?*



Our purpose in ministry is to bring people to Christ, to attempt to model a life of leadership, family values, and dedication to biblical principles.

And the answer God has been teaching me through the years? *Be at peace.*

So, for what it's worth, here are a few things I've been learning along the journey as a pastor's wife.

IT'S NOT ABOUT MAKING PEOPLE HAPPY.

My personality feels the dislike or indifference of others very deeply. I have an innate sense of fairness and justice, and when someone else has a wrong opinion of me, I feel this almost-overwhelming need to go and make it right. But I'm learning that if I obsess about the people who misunderstand, I will have little time left to accomplish anything good.

You can never make everyone happy all of the time. And that isn't really our goal anyway. Our purpose in ministry is to bring people to Christ, to attempt to model a life of leadership, family values, and dedication to biblical principles. If we focus on making people feel happy, we're likely to lose sight of what really matters.

So focus on following Jesus and doing what you know to be right—in a spirit that demonstrates kindness and compassion. And *be at peace.*

IT'S OKAY TO BE YOURSELF.

Of course the last pastor's wife did things differently. The next pastor's wife will, too. Maybe your predecessor played the piano

beautifully and was a great cook, and those aren't your strengths. But are you a great storyteller, or do you have the gift of making beautiful decorations? Maybe you give incredible Bible studies? Embrace that.

Be confident in the gifts God has given specifically to you. It's great to learn from other ministry spouses, but don't try to become someone else. They aren't you, and you aren't them. And that is perfectly okay. *Be at peace.*

STAY FOCUSED ON WHO MATTERS.

When you live in the fishbowl of ministry life, everyone thinks they have a right to express their opinion about the pastor's family. That's probably not going to change anytime soon. You can try to please them all, and run yourself ragged in the process. Or you can step back and ask yourself, "Whose opinion really matters to me?"

To me, there are three opinions that truly count: God, my conscience, and my husband. If I've checked with God, and my conscience is clear, and my husband approves—that's all I need. Other people may think what they like, and it may not feel nice when they criticize, but I can stay calm because I'm already in harmony with the ones who matter most. *Be at peace.*

BE COURTEOUS.

There may be times when you choose to stop doing something that you feel is acceptable, simply out of respect for someone else's feelings or convictions. That's great, as long as you remember it's something you're doing out of courtesy and not because you're rearranging your identity to pacify someone else's dictates. Ask God to remind you of who He created you to be, and *be at peace.*

Be at Peace

REFUSE TO RETURN THE FAVOR.

Never. Never. Never engage in gossip or inappropriate criticism of others. When people come to you telling stories about others, let them know clearly and unmistakably that you will not listen to, participate in, or initiate gossip.

When you experience conflicts of your own, seek to follow the principles laid out in Matthew 18. Talk directly with the person, and if they don't respond well, bring another spiritually discerning person along. If that doesn't resolve the situation, take it to the larger body of believers. But even if you have to pursue these multiple steps, *be at peace.*

I won't pretend that I'm *always* at peace, every single time. Nobody's perfect! But there is incredible freedom in letting go of worry about being criticized and fear of what other people think and focusing more on being in harmony with God and my spouse. And that freedom allows me to increasingly be at peace. 7

“For God has not given us a spirit of fear and timidity, but of power, love, and self-discipline.”

2 Tim. 1:7, NLT

Sarah K. Asaftei is a mother of two and is married to Marius, a pastor in central Florida. She works in social media management and video production and loves international travel and photography.



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Apples of Gold . . .

CREATIVE FAMILY WORSHIP ACTIVITIES ABOUT WORDS



Match these kind words of Jesus to the person or people to whom He said them (all verses NIV, 1984):

| | |
|---|--|
| Mourners at Jairus' house | "For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life" (John 3:16). |
| Disciples | "Leave her alone. . . She has done a beautiful thing to me" (Mark 14:6). |
| Man who was lowered through the roof | "The child is not dead but asleep" (Mark 5:39). |
| Zacchaeus | "Come and have breakfast" (John 21:12). |
| Dinner guests and Judas | "Come to me . . . and I will give you rest" (Matt. 11:28). |
| One of the thieves crucified with Jesus | "Today salvation has come to this house" (Luke 19:9). |
| Nicodemus | "Your sins are forgiven" (Luke 5:20). |
| A crowd | "You will be with me in paradise" (Luke 23:43). |

OUR FAVORITE WORDS

Some researchers discovered that the words we most like to hear are these:

"I love you!"

"I forgive you."

"Supper's ready!"

Jesus said words like these to His friends and still says them to us today!

- What are your favorite words to hear?
- What are some kind things you can say to the people in your family and class?



APPLES IN FRAMES

Solomon said that kind, wise, and helpful words are like “apples of gold in settings [or frames] of silver” (Prov. 25:11, NIV, 1984).

What are some of the kind, wise, and helpful things that people say to you?

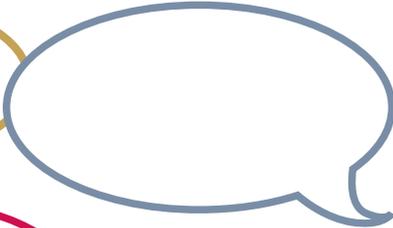
Write some of these special phrases and sentences on the golden apples in this silver frame.

Which ones do you like to hear most?

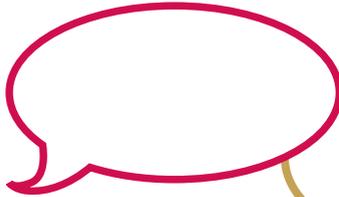
CHOICE WORDS

What kind things could you say to your friends in these situations? Write your caring words in the empty speech bubbles next to theirs.

Oh no! I forgot to bring my lunch!

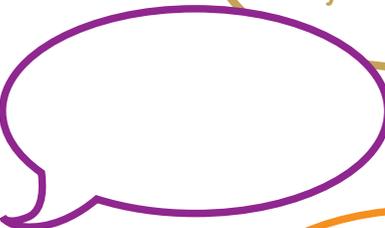


I'm really worried about the math test tomorrow.

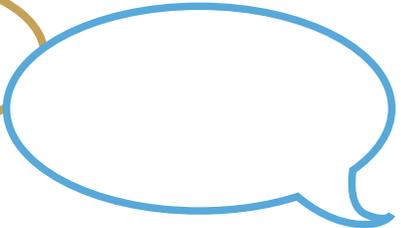


I feel really sad today because my mommy had to go to hospital.

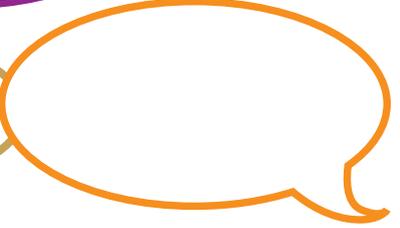
My dad has a new job, so we have to move. I'm afraid I won't have any friends in the new school.



Please, will you play with me?

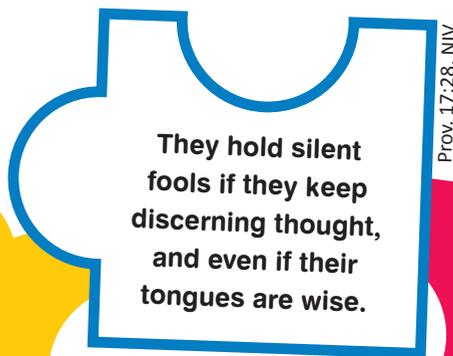
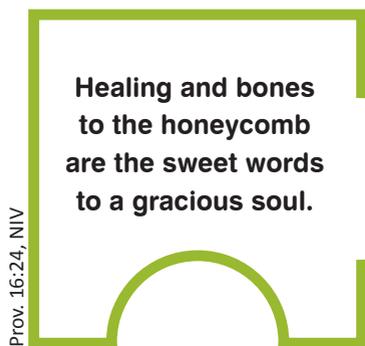


I don't feel very well.



PUZZLING PROVERBS

Arrange these mixed-up proverbs about words in the right order. Talk with your family about what you think these proverbs mean.



CREATIVE WORDS

Find a newspaper or church magazine. Choose a favorite verse from the Bible.

Cut out words and letters from the magazine to spell out the verse.

Stick them on a fresh piece of paper or card to make a trendy poster, a card to give away, or a scrapbook of decorated Bible verses.

Or choose your favorite style of lettering, graphics, and pictures to make a Bible verse collage for your room or your home.

Get inspired by searching the Internet for images of Bible verses on beautiful backgrounds. Why not make a great gift for your mom or dad by decorating their favorite Bible verse?

BIBLE WORD GAMES

- Work with your family to find a Bible verse beginning with each letter of the alphabet. Use “Ex” for X. If you find Q and Z difficult, look for verses that contain a word beginning with one of those letters.
- Choose a long Bible name like Methuselah or Melchizedek and see how many other Bible names you can make from the letters in the long name.
- Gather 5 old dice or 5 wooden cubes. Write a different letter on each side of the cube. Leave out Q and X, and write at least two different vowels on each cube. Take turns rolling the dice and see if you can make a five-letter Bible name from the letters you roll. You may have three rolls per turn. Roll all the dice the first time, and then choose which dice you will throw on the next two turns to try and spell a Bible name.



- Make a Bible name chain. Take turns thinking of a Bible character. Each person has to think of a name beginning with the last letter of the previous name. Example: AbrahamaM, MichaelL, LabaN, Naomi, IsaacC, etc. 

Karen Holford is the author of 100 Creative Activities for Sabbath, Pacific Press, 2006.

East-Central Africa Division

KENYA

East-Central Africa Division (ECD) Shepherdess coordinator, Antoinette Mwangachuchu, shares that pastors' spouses in ECD are ready to work hand in hand with their husbands in ministry. She states, "Behind a successful minister, there is a shepherdess." The following is a pictorial of this last year.



In Tanzania pastors' and elders' wives met at the Injilo Church in Arusha.



The Burundi Union held meetings for pastors and spouses at the Kivoga Secondary School in July 2013. This union is the youngest in ECD and is on the move.



In January 2013 the East Congo Union held meetings in Lubumbashi. The shepherdesses are always ready to praise God.



Rwanda Union held an advisory in Kigali, where all the Shepherdess coordinators from seven fields and their leaders met in July 2013.



In East Congo Union Mission seven pastors' wives from the South Katanga Field said "yes" to their husbands ordination and promised to work and be faithful to God's calling.



The ECD Shepherdess chapter visited an orphanage in Rongai. They distributed food, soap, lotion, pens, and notebooks.



In June 2013 the Greater Equatorial Field pastors' spouses met for meetings in Juba, South Sudan.



The children sang after being fed.

South Pacific Division

In October 2013 the first-ever Partners in Ministry (PIM) retreat was held in Western Australia. The theme was “Finding Joy in the Journey.”

Sharon Riggins, WA PIM coordinator at that time, shared, “We plan on having this retreat yearly. Why? Because as pastors’ wives we need this connectedness to bring us closer to our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ and to each other.”

Carol Tasker (former PIM director for SPD), used interactive talks to share her life experiences and advice.



Seeing the relaxedness of the wives was wonderful. They were all just being themselves, connecting, laughing, crying, and praying as they shared with each other.



Southern Africa-Indian Ocean Division

Three hundred fifty delegates, including officers and spouses, regional ministerial associates and Shepherdess coordinators, and frontline pastors and spouses, came together for a meeting in South Africa. Important recommendations were voted to empower leaders to encourage, equip, and nurture spouses in working side by side with their husbands. They praise the Supreme Provider for the success of the council.



Southern Africa Union pastors’ wives gather at their meeting.

Southern Asia Division

In December 2013 the division office in Hosur, Tamil Nadu, India, celebrated the twenty-fifth anniversary of the Shepherdess organization.



Rose Christo, SUD Shepherdess coordinator, interviewed Birol Christo, the first SUD Shepherdess coordinator, and Margaret Nathaniel, the third Shepherdess coordinator.

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