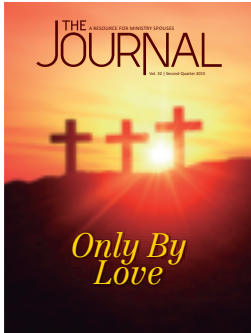


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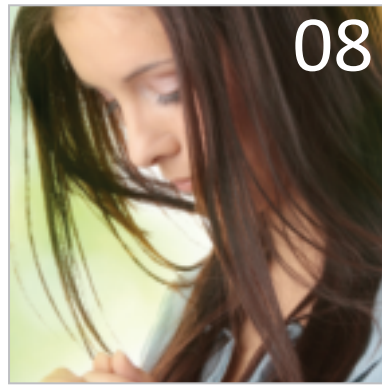


*Only By
Love*



ON THE COVER

Have you ever wondered how lasting heart transformation takes place? Genuine humility means setting aside pride and letting God bring a new identity, only by His love.



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Honey-do List



AS WE WALKED INTO SABBATH School class, my friend John said, “You’ll never guess what happened to me this week, but class is starting. I’ll have to tell you later.”

“Great,” I thought, eager to end the suspense. After class, I found John and asked, “OK, what happened?”

“Well, my wife is always making these honey-do lists,” John smiled. “And then she nags me to get it done. I don’t like to come home from work and then do more work. I’m a builder all day, and the last thing I want to do is come home and fix more things.”

I tried to nod understandingly, wondering where this conversation was headed. “But this past week has been interesting,” he explained. “I had this odd urge to fix everything I could, until there was nothing else to fix. Then I asked my wife, ‘Don’t you have more things you want done?’ She opened a drawer and pulled out a honey-do list. I took it and fixed everything I could on the list.”

“On Friday, I was resting in my easy chair as the sun was setting,” he continued. “My wife came over, kissed me, and thanked me for all the repairs I’d done during the week. Then she asked, ‘Have you noticed I haven’t been nagging you?’”

“The Lord will accomplish what concerns me.”

Prov. 138:8, NASB

John thought about it and realized she hadn’t said a word to him all week about what needed to be done. “You’re right! You haven’t! I actually had to *ask you* for the honey-do list.”

Smiling, she explained, “That’s because for the past several months, I’ve just been asking the Holy Spirit to nag you instead!” John laughed, and so did I.

It’s true, though. If I pray more, nag less, and stop trying to fix everything myself, I could save a lot of trouble.

Maybe we don’t get the immediate answer we wanted, but God also asks us to be persistent in prayer. And God does not think we’re nagging. “So I say to you, ask, and it will be given to you; seek, and you will find; knock, and it will be opened” (Luke 11:9, NKJV).

The words *ask*, *seek*, and *knock* are ongoing verbs. They mean *keep asking*, *keep seeking*, and *keep knocking*. I often think my biggest problem is persistence. It’s tempting

to get discouraged because answers don’t come right away. Sometimes things even seem to get worse when I pray. But if I am sincerely praying, I can trust that God is answering. “‘For My thoughts are not your thoughts, nor are your ways My ways,’ says the Lord. ‘For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are My ways higher than your ways, and My thoughts than your thoughts’” (Isa. 55:8, 9, NKJV).

Clarence Schilt writes, “We do much, if not most, of our sinning when we are right and right is not happening for us—we’re not being treated right” (*A Life to Die For*, p. 176). That is certainly true for me! I need to learn to shut my mouth, wait on God, and let *Him* change people or situations instead of trying to do it myself.

“Trust in the Lord with all your heart, and lean not on your own understanding” (Prov. 3:5, NKJV). ■

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

“To every sincere prayer an answer will come. It may not come just as you desire, or at the time you look for it; but it will come in the way and at the time that will best meet your need.”

Ellen White, Gospel Workers, p. 258

Only by Love

ALTHOUGH I'D BEEN RAISED in the church, as an adult I had no private devotional life. I knew all the Bible stories, but I did not pursue regular, personal Bible study or devotions. My husband was the preacher; *he* gave the Bible studies.

I was raising my family, working with community, leading church music, and running a clinic for the poor in Brazil, where we served as missionaries.

Just before returning to the United States, I was forced to rest in the hospital to recover from a miscarriage, and someone gave me audiotapes of sermons by Pastor Glenn Coon, Sr., about the "ABCs" of prayer and claiming Bible promises.

At first I found them merely entertaining. Then I decided to read the Bible verses he shared. Soon I began searching for promises to claim. I would

read God the verse, tell Him I understood this promise was for me, and thank Him for giving it to me—assuming that the gift really *was* mine.

I began praying over every little need or question. As I claimed His promises, answers came almost instantly. I devoured the Bible and concordance, looking for more and more promises to meet more and more needs. It was as though God was there, just waiting for me to ask. Nothing seemed impossible!

Soon after, my husband and I began ministering to a couple in a troubled marriage. The husband had moved out, and they were talking divorce. After I showed the wife how to claim Bible promises, we asked God to fulfill Isaiah 42:16. I was certain God would open her husband's eyes and bring him home. Didn't God *always* answer my prayers?



“If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness.”

1 John 1:9, NIV

Weeks passed, then months, and there was no change, except in the wife’s life. I wondered why God delayed. One night as we prayed on the phone, I heard her pray, **“God, if he never comes home, please save them both anyway.”**

This was a huge contrast from someone who recently had wished harm for the other woman in her husband’s life.

That evening I prayed silently while cleaning the house: *God, is there another promise we should be claiming? What if her husband doesn’t go home after all? Have I misled his wife? Have I been wrong to encourage her? What else should I be doing?*

I stopped praying. There was nothing more I had to say. Suddenly, a thought-voice spoke in my mind: **YOU should go talk to her husband!**

I dismissed the idea instantly, thinking, *I can’t go. I wouldn’t know what to say.*

Again that thought-voice spoke a command into my mind: **Ask for the Holy Spirit.** That was out of the question for various reasons, including that in my teens I’d heard a preacher warn about the Holy Spirit, saying that if you ask to receive the Holy Spirit, you’re likely asking for trouble. I’d decided never to ask. So instead I prayed, **“God, just tell me what other promise I should be claiming.”**

Again the thought came, **YOU go talk to the husband.** Again I replied, “But I don’t know what to say!” Twice more I was instructed, **Ask for the Holy Spirit.**

I put away my vacuum and, with much hesitancy, took my Bible and went to my bedroom. I opened my Bible on the bed, knelt beside it, and put my hand on the text in Luke 11:13. I prayed God’s promise to Him: **“Dear God, You say right here, ‘If ye then, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children: how much more shall your heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to them that ask Him?’”**

I continued, “God, I am asking for the Holy Spirit so I will know what to say when I go to visit that man, who is such a sinner! You said that when I ask, I receive, so I believe I have received Your Holy Spirit. Thank You, in Jesus’ name, Amen.”

I paused. *Nothing* happened. I prayed again. Again, nothing happened. I’d learned that you don’t stop asking after the first prayer. So I read His promise and claimed it again and again for perhaps thirty minutes. Finally, I realized God *knew* I was reluctant about His gift. I wondered if I could prevent this couple’s reunion because of my unwillingness. I confessed this to Him and asked Him to help me to *want* it. Then I told God I really *did* want the Holy Spirit, and would accept that gift. It was then, finally, that I became aware of the Holy Spirit’s presence.

In my mind’s eye I could see the silhouette of three crosses on a distant hill. I saw no Person, but I was aware of Who had been on the center cross. The thought-voice spoke in my mind: **Your temper is sin, to be confessed as sin and forgiven.**

I was stunned. It was true, I’d had a bad temper and even tantrums when I was displeased as a newlywed. But now it was under control! No more doors slammed until the plaster fell, rarely tears from sheer anger. I’d never claimed to be perfect, but over the years I’d told myself that since my temper was inherited, it was excusable. Now, I was supposed to call even my mature control of that temper “sin.” So I read 1 John 1:9 and confessed to God that even my “controlled” temper was sin against Him. I accepted and thanked Him for His promise of forgiveness and cleansing.

A moment later the thought-voice seemed to speak again: ***Your spirit of criticism is sin, to be confessed as sin and forgiven.***

I'd always thought I was gifted with a "discerning" spirit. Often I had inwardly criticized hypocrisy in others. For example, during ministers' meetings, I'd judge the way some pastors uttered loud and fervent "Amens" to the prayers of visiting union or division or General Conference leaders, in contrast to what I thought was relative silence when a "lowly" intern was praying. Also, the sight of a loved one's weight problem continually provoked my inner condemnation. Now I realized my spirit of criticism was more repulsive in God's sight than someone else's supposed apple-polishing, seemingly unfair monetary decisions, or a loved one's genuine struggle with excess pounds. It was *my sins* that sent Him to the cross.

Almost in shock, I again claimed the promise of 1 John 1:9, calling the spirit of criticism a *sin*. I accepted and thanked God for His forgiveness.



As quickly as I thanked Him, another thought came: ***Your impatient tone of voice and the unkind look on your face toward your family is sin, to be confessed as sin and forgiven.*** (He helped me understand He was referring to those mornings when I had a headache after being up late claiming promises with someone the evening before—while I had been excusing my poor family behavior!) I quickly called those behaviors sins also and accepted forgiveness. Then I asked God, ***“Please, just forgive it all. I’m truly the sinner. Forgive me.”*** Now there were no excuses or justified reasons that I had used before for my attitudes and actions. At that moment I knew I was standing fully exposed before God.

I thanked God for forgiveness and waited, expecting more rebuke. No thought-voice spoke. I prayed again, “Please, Lord, tell me what else I need to confess. I don’t want *any* more sin. I have been so blind, so busy straightening everyone else out, so busy praying for everyone else. *I’ve* been the sinner all along. I thank You, Jesus, for all Your forgiveness; I accept it. But I’m sure there is more sin! Please tell me if there is anything else, because I want to be forgiven of everything.”

No additional conviction came. Finally, I opened my eyes and looked down at the Bible, lying open on the bed to 1 John 1:9. I had never before noticed a promise on the opposite page, which seemed to jump out in front of me, saying, ***“And this is the promise that He hath promised us, even eternal life” (1 John 2:25, KJV).***

I couldn’t believe it. He would want *me*? I got up off my knees and walked over to the window of my bedroom. It was for *my sins* specifically that He had gone to that cross. I was the sinner, self-righteous and hypocritical. Yet He loved me and wanted me with Him in heaven. Everything was amazing!

He was telling me in 1 John 2:25 that I had eternal life. I got back on my knees to thank Him and weep at such love. I told Him, “God, I want to see You. What kind of God are You, anyway? ***You have waited so long, so courteously . . . I want to see You!***”

It was as if for the first time my eyes were opened and I was free of the need for pretense, free of a façade. I had no idea I had been carrying a burden all my life, yet now I knew I was free. I was embarrassed for not even seeing the portion of Luke 11:13 where it says the Holy Spirit is the *good* gift of the Father.

The inner peace was amazing. The next morning I began apologizing to family members I had hurt by my attitude and words. Then I went to see the man for whom we'd been praying. I told him of my experience the previous evening, how I was the sinner whom God was waiting to help. As I shared with him the joy and peace I had found in specific confession of sins and acceptance of Christ's forgiveness and cleansing, the man told me he didn't know a person could really be happy "being good." But he said he would give anything to have the peace of mind I had found. (He added that 95 percent of his patients would get well if they had it also!)

Way more than twenty years have passed since that experience. Eventually, that man was reunited with his wife, and many changed lives resulted from their joint ministry.

Besides freeing me from the power of an ugly temper, Jesus gave me an unquenchable sense of urgency about His soon coming and a desire to tell others of His love and mercy. He enables me to follow the counsel I'd heard my husband share many times but, somehow, had never *really* heard: "The first thing to do in the morning, as you come to consciousness, is to let God know that you choose Him, that you want His control of your mind and life,

that you want to be possessed by His Holy Spirit." And I have found that in order for God to be truly the center of my life, I must surrender to these specific guidelines every morning:

1. BEFORE I look at any magazine, book, or newspaper, or listen to the radio, watch TV, answer the phone, text, or check emails, **I invite the Holy Spirit in** to teach me more about Jesus.
2. I MUST spend time **reading His Word**.
3. I CHOOSE never to leave His presence **until a passage of Scripture has impressed itself upon my mind** as being a revelation from Him for that day.

(After 46 years of following this daily path, I can say it is **only by love** that my heart continues to be won. In awe, I'm honored to love Him in return!) ■

For the complete article, please go to <http://www.revivalandreformation.org/prayer> and select "Articles."

Juanita Kretschmar mothered three children; spent decades serving alongside Merlin, her pastor husband; by prayer led a New York health/community e-Van-gelism outreach and a tourist attraction ministry in Florida; and now serves two small churches and oversees a full-power FM station in the Florida Keys that reaches the world via Internet. She says, "ALL credit to GOD, our CEO."

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Encountering God in Prayer

A MODEL FOR PRAYER

1. Ask the Father for the covering of the Holy Spirit and the presence of Jesus Christ, who is God the Son. Claim the blood of Jesus over all sin. Ask for angels to guard you, for He has promised. Ask Him to protect you so that no other influences or thoughts will be allowed to disturb you.
2. Worship the Creator, Redeemer, King. Consider the many biblical names for God. Ask Him to bring thoughts to your mind of reasons to worship Him.
3. *Invite Him to search your life for a revelation of hidden sin. Allow Him to take you back to childhood if necessary. Take time to be attentive and listen. Be still and allow Him to “speak” thoughts to you.*

4. As conviction comes to your mind of thoughts, acts, cherished “rights” (such as anger, rebellion, and resentment), or experiences that in the presence of the cross are sin, be specific, call these things sin, and ask for forgiveness. Accept forgiveness and thank Him aloud. (Your ears need to hear your own voice expressing confidence and praise.)

5. *Ask for a deeper repentance. Since it is a gift, thank Him, whether you feel anything or not.*

6. By your own free choice, tell your Heavenly Father you give Him permission to remove the sin and sense of guilt or condemnation that came with the sin. Let God know you are willing to allow Him to place the burden you have been carrying on the shoulders of His Son. Accept Jesus’ desire to release you from this guilt. Christ *wants* to do this for you. Express thanks aloud.


7. Ask God what He has for you in exchange. What characteristic of Jesus is He waiting to give you? What gift of guidance or insight is He making available? Be still. Take time to be attentive and listen.

8. *Let God know you will accept that gift (whatever thought, word, or picture He brings to your mind). Be sure to thank Him aloud.*

9. Repeat the process as desired. Enjoy His presence. Praise Him. NOTE: Compare any thought or impression with what you already know is in the Bible or Spirit of Prophecy. We do *not* build our lives on impressions, so if a thought comes that is *contrary* to Scripture or any of His already-written, inspired words, *reject that thought by the power of the blood of Jesus*. Claim again Psalm 34:7 and ask God for another blessing! (You can always thank Him for peace. See John 14:27.)

10. While you are accepting gifts from God, if He has just impressed you of specific instances of sin, you may want to ask what help He would have sent if you had turned to Him fully in that earlier moment of temptation. Or you may ask what Jesus would have done in your place. He may give you delightful insights.

11. You may want to ask Him in the final moments of this specific prayer if there is anything or anyone else He wants you to pray about or for, or if there is any particular instruction He wants to share with you. Take time to be attentive and listen. Again, be still and know that *He* is God!

12. *Be sure to praise Him aloud as you end the time of prayer. You’ll want to. He’s a wonderful God and a marvelous, generous, loving Friend.* 

For the complete article entitled “Encounter With God in Prayer,” please go to <http://www.revivalandreformation.org/prayer> and select “Articles.”

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Just a Job, or a High Calling?



BRUCE RENFROE, AN ELEVATOR operator in New York City, recognized the same somber faces riding his elevator each day. The passengers rarely spoke or acknowledged one another. Their demeanor was the same, whether riding up to their offices or coming down to go home.

For many, working as an elevator operator would feel like a boring, dead-end occupation. But Mr. Renfroe resisted becoming stone-faced and introverted like his passengers. He was someone who thought outside the box. There must be a way he could make things better.

After thought and prayer, he developed a plan. First, he hung cheerful pictures in his elevator and took his Bible along. Then he brought small speakers and played soft music. He greeted each passenger cheerfully, getting acquainted enough to know their names and interests. He did his best to build community spirit in the eight-by-eight space. And it worked!

Riding up in the mornings and back down in the evenings, people began chatting and sharing with their small elevator family. Bruce's elevator became the favorite in the building.

IS THERE A LESSON HERE FOR ME?

What about my daily routine? Am I settling for the uninspiring and humdrum? Am I just accepting circumstance, or could I be doing something about it—not only to brighten my world but to bless and inspire others?

Constant stress and unhappiness, for any reason, has a detrimental effect on our health and longevity. Symptoms may show up in conditions such as skin rashes, asthma, arthritis, depression, lack of energy, frequent respiratory infections, and susceptibility to seasonal illnesses.

When we complain and wear an attitude of unhappiness, we easily have a negative effect on our families, friends, and even church. But we don't have to be prisoners of our circumstances.

LEARNING FROM THE ELEVATOR OPERATOR



1. CHOOSE HAPPINESS.

Are you unhappy? Your daily routine seems boring and meaningless? Choose to do something about it. Make it a positive beginning point.



2. THINK OF OTHERS.

Is there a way you could brighten the lives of co-workers, associates, and those around you? Nothing brings joy and meaning like creating happiness for others.

3. Do something you love daily.

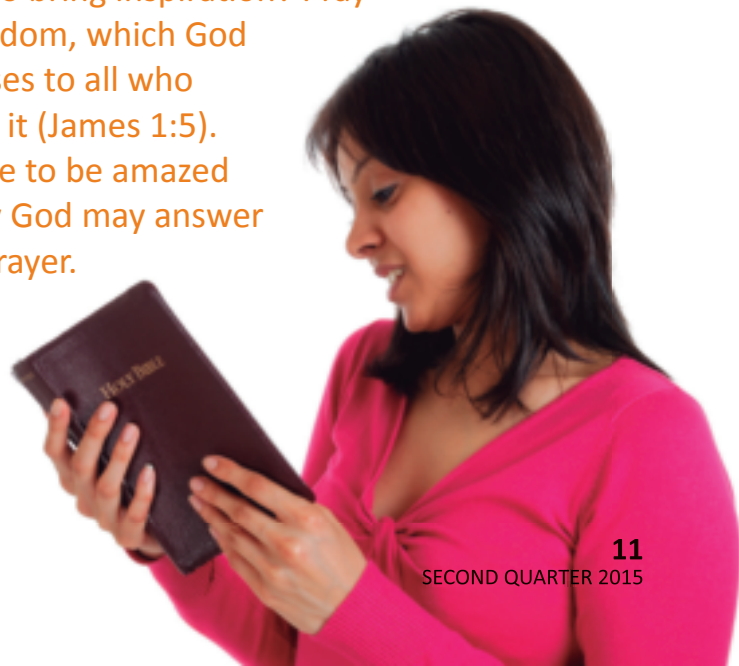
You may or may not love your current job or routine, and you might think it's impossible to find anything positive even if you look for it. But seek a way to feed your soul daily, to inspire your creative abilities.

4. Avoid negativity.

Try not to dwell on the negative aspects of your situation. Recognize that negativity is the Enemy's way to drag you into hopelessness. Choose to strive toward positive possibilities. Keep your goals firmly in mind.

5. STUDY AND PRAY.

Like Mr. Renfroe, take time to evaluate your situation. What changes can you make to bring inspiration? Pray for wisdom, which God promises to all who ask for it (James 1:5). Prepare to be amazed at how God may answer your prayer.



It's true that happiness is largely a choice. Sometimes the choice involves actively pursuing happiness by making changes—to our physical environment and in our attitudes and plans.

From childhood, Ina D. Ogdon dreamed of becoming a circuit preacher. But when her father became terminally ill, she gave up her cherished goal to be

his caregiver. Later, she wrote the song "Brighten the Corner Where You Are." Serving God to the best of our ability, wherever we find ourselves—even operating an elevator—can be our high calling. J

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.

BRIGHTEN THE CORNER WHERE YOU ARE

Do not wait until some deed of greatness you may do,
Do not wait to shed your light afar,
To the many duties ever near you now be true,
Brighten the corner where you are.

Just above are clouded skies that you may help to clear,
Let not narrow self your way debar;
Though into one heart alone may fall your song of cheer,
Brighten the corner where you are.

Here for all your talent you may surely find a need,
Here reflect the bright and Morning Star;
Even from your humble hand the Bread of Life may feed,
Brighten the corner where you are.

Refrain

Brighten the corner where you are!
Brighten the corner where you are!
Someone far from harbor you may guide across the bar;
Brighten the corner where you are!

—Ina Ogdon (1913)

QUESTION AND ANSWER

HOW DO YOU STAY HUMBLE IN MINISTRY WHEN MANY PEOPLE PLACE YOU ON A PEDESTAL OR TREAT YOU AS THOUGH YOU'RE DIFFERENT/BETTER? HOW DO YOU KEEP THE ROLE OF LEADERSHIP FROM GOING TO YOUR HEAD?



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.

ELBA CORONADO

I think people keep me pretty humble—they like to point out my flaws. Ha ha!

ROX-ANNE MCKOY CHAMBERS

At the end of the day we may be in a leadership position, but we are still SERVANTS. And a servant never gets promoted from the status of serving. So God simply positioned us to serve, like Esther. We are not there because of looks, intellect, or might, but positioned for service at “such a time as this.” While we cannot control the way people treat us, our humility will point them to God.

MICHELLE LYNN DANESE

It’s hard, but I try not to listen too much to other people. I know I’m not as good as some of them think. I also know I’m not as faulty as others think! The most important thing is that God, who knows me completely, calls me His beloved. How amazing is that?

STEPHANIE J. MASON

If that pedestal starts to become the height of a ladder, believe me, one of the saints will cut those legs right off and turn it into a stepping stool! Then sit down on that stool and praise Him for placing you firmly on a stable seat. Then stand up, brush yourself off, and start all over again.

VIVIEN VASQUEZ

I remind myself that praises belong to God only, and even though the “pedestal moments” feel good, it is only by His grace that I have the privilege to taste victory in His ministry.

LAVINIA RUSU

I stay humble by serving.

NAMA FALEAFINE-NEUFELDT

Pedestal moments are few and temporary. All the glory and honor I’ve received is because of God. It’s easy to allow my leadership role to get to my head, but I need to guard my heart from being deceived. I’d rather use my role to influence others in a positive way and help them realize their God-given talents.

ANU MOLOMO

My role model is Christ Jesus. What an example of humility I admire in my friend and Savior. As a result, I see everyone as special (blind to what my role is). The thought of Christ and what He has done in my life motivates me in relating to others as Christ did.



The Only Way

I HADN'T SEEN MY FRIEND Joanna for years—not since her son had graduated from my violin studio and moved on to academy and college. But as soon as I saw her enter the back of the sanctuary, I could tell she was headed straight for where I sat on the front pew, waiting for the wedding prelude.

Now Joanna is an inquisitive, insightful person. I knew we could spend hours fully engaged. But we had six minutes before the service would begin.

In 90 seconds we covered the formalities and caught up on family news. And then she looked me in the eyes, tears brimming for her son, who was now nearly 21 and rethinking his careful upbringing. “How do you make it, Kathie?” she asked.

I knew she had in mind all of my young sons and the 66-second briefing I'd just given her about them. (That's about nine seconds for each guy, five seconds extra for a couple of them.)

I was taken by surprise. *What do you mean, “How do I make it?” How do I hold on? Should I be falling apart? Does my life look hard to those watching? Am I missing something I should be worrying about?* Even while I was playing through prelude numbers, my mind was preoccupied.

How do I make it? Sometimes I do get discouraged, but most days I think I'm productive, positive, and a source of courage for others. I sob my heart out at times, but I know tremendous relief too. My life is not

simple or easy, but it is well-bolstered with hope. I have found sound bearings in the midst of parenting demands, business stressors, church pressures, home demands, financial crunches, and life frustrations.

So have I “made it” because I have an unusually close confidante with whom to share my burdens? In spite of a thousand precious friends, nobody in particular comes to mind. Perhaps my husband is my soulmate? Sure, we find great support in each other, but he can’t live my life, and I can’t live his. Have I found a fine Christian counselor, a life coach? No chance. Or maybe I’ve joined an excellent support group? Hardly. Have I read a good self-help book that has helped me manage my demanding life? No author could ever put in a book what I live.

By the time the service was over, I could only think of one thing that I could tell Joanna. One single thing: God’s Word is what brings me real, dependable strength. God’s Word always reshapes my perspective. It informs my emotions with sound thinking. It keeps me in touch with His reality. It reminds me of the larger issues of life. It settles my anxieties and reprioritizes my concerns. It shows me workable, effective solutions. It opens up the enormous resources available to me. It is a deep well of wisdom and insight—beyond the farthest stretch of any human thinking. I could go on and on and on.

God’s Word has come to mean everything to me. That’s where I can see and touch the Infinite,

Almighty One who alone can meet every one of my needs.

But even though Barnes & Nobles carries shelves and shelves of Bibles, God’s Word is not a self-help book on successful living. It is God Himself coming to me with His presence, His mind, His heart. It is God Himself strengthening me from the inside out, building my core. In His Word He meets me, changes me, and provides for me.

Now I have to tell you that I’m blessed with countless wonderful friends and a faith-filled, supportive husband. I’ve had a few excellent counselors and am a member of a richly rewarding Bible study group. I’ve even read a few—a very few—sound parenting books. But only God’s Word really gives me what I need.

When I feel on the tattered edge of my emotions, I know what I need. When I’m unraveling inside, I know what I need. When the unknowns loom overhead and I’m clouded with fear, I know what I need. When I feel helpless, confused, discouraged, weak, vulnerable, crumbling, I know what I need.

That’s how I do it, Joanna. It’s impossible to explain. But I’m certain of it. His Word is where I’ve found Him. And *He* is the only way I make it. ■

It is God Himself strengthening me from the inside out, building my core. In His Word He meets me, changes me, and provides for me.

Kathie Lichtenwalter and her husband, Larry, live in Beirut, Lebanon, and work in the Middle East and North Africa Union. The Lichtenwalters enjoy the long-distance friendship of their four sons and two beautiful daughters-in-law.

“Happy Mother’s Day!”

MOTHER’S DAY. It brings thoughts of breakfast in bed, hugs, kisses, handmade cards and gifts, thoughtful acts and deeds. It’s supposed to be a happy day of feeling appreciated for everything we do for our families. But depending on a woman’s circumstances, this holiday can sometimes feel far less than “happy.”

For me, Mother’s Day can bring tears, both happy and sad, as I reflect on events that have affected both me and the women close to me:

- Making special meals for my mum and my nanna.
- Mourning an auntie’s sudden death from terminal illness, leaving behind three barely grown-up children and one grandchild.
- Doctors saying we may never have children—shattering my dreams of being a mum.
- Celebrating my first Mother’s Day—holding the baby son God gave us!
- Feeling helpless when a friend’s premature baby didn’t survive.
- Having another auntie murdered by her estranged husband, leaving her three-year-old son with family while his dad went to jail.
- Desperation to have a second baby.



- Thanking God for a second baby, despite doctors saying the pregnancy was “doomed.”
- Waiting anxiously to learn if the cysts on our third baby’s brain had gone away or if he had a genetic disorder that would cause stillbirth or death in the first year.
- Praising God for the blessing of our healthy third son, and then a fourth baby on the way.
- Feeling overwhelmed and inadequate as a wife and mother.
- Grieving the miscarriage of a hoped-for fifth child.
- Feeling devastation and guilt for the SIDS death of a friend’s baby (while they stayed in our home) and fear that our own baby would meet the same fate.
- Celebrating as those same friends conceived and had another child.
- Praying when our youngest son stopped moving in-utero and was delivered by semi-emergency c-section. The cord had been around his neck, and it was clear the doctors were thinking that we would be going home with empty arms and broken hearts. There was a loud, collective sigh of relief when he started to cry and breathe inexplicably (I believe, as a result of the power of intercessory prayer) halfway through transferring him to the resuscitation trolley.
- Watching each of our boys grow and change, developing so differently from each other.
- Thanking God for my husband’s insistence that I travel to visit my nanna for Mother’s Day, especially when she suddenly died four weeks later.
- Feelings of pride at the physical and academic achievements of my boys.
- Excitement when friends welcomed a baby girl into their family after a long battle with infertility.

It’s an enormous mix of emotions, and I’m pretty sure I’m not the only one with conflicting feelings. Being a mother is not easy, but somehow it makes you more sensitive to the pain of others.



Sometimes everyday chaos makes you feel that you just can’t cope: someone can’t find their hat, shoes, or homework; dirty dishes are stacked in the sink; the pile of ironing resembles Mount Everest; the kids are fighting; you look (and feel) a wreck; there’s food to cook for church; and that project you wanted to finish weeks ago is still not done. Time slips so quickly through your fingers, and when you fall into bed at the end of the day, you marvel at how much you *didn’t* manage to get done.

If you look around and compare yourself to other mothers who appear to have it all together, you’re bound to feel not-so-happy. I suggest a different approach: Get real with yourself and the women around you who, dare I say it, may possibly think *you’re* the perfect mother.

Give yourself some credit for doing your best every day. You don’t have to be “perfect,” just “good enough.” Your family loves you just the way you are. ■

Naomi Thomas has served on the Partners in Ministry team in Western Australia for three years and also works in educational administration. She and her husband have five sons and live in Western Australia.

Loving with a Heart Like Jesus

TWELVE PAIRS OF DUSTY feet stood awkwardly on the wooden floor of the upper room. The table was set, the food was ready, water had been carried from the well, and clean linen towels had been folded neatly on a bench. But someone was missing. Eyes avoided contact, elbows nudged, someone coughed nervously. But no one wanted to do the work of a servant. No one was willing to kneel at the feet of his friends. No one was humble enough to wash away the dirt from two dozen dusty feet.

They all stood proud and tall—except Jesus, who quietly picked up a towel, poured the water, and knelt on the ground to show His love. For three long years He'd shown them that true love kneels to serve and is willing to make sacrifices. For three long years He'd shown them that true love puts others first. But they still didn't understand.

Years later, Paul wanted to help Christians love each other with a heart like Jesus. So he shared what he'd learned about love in a letter to the Romans. His practical ideas for healthy relationships are as relevant today as they were two thousand years ago.



“Be devoted to one another in brotherly love. Honor one another above yourselves.”

Romans 12:10, NIV

LOVING DEEPLY AND PURELY

Romans 12:8, 9

Jesus' love for us is deep and pure. In its depth He is totally forgiving, and in its purity He leaves no room for anyone to doubt His love.

- How deep is your love for your husband or wife? What do you need to forgive, and what do you need to say you're sorry for?
- How pure is your love? Do your words or behavior ever prevent your spouse from experiencing your love as pure and transparent?

LOOKING FOR THE DIAMONDS

Romans 12:6-8

Make a list of your partner's special gifts, qualities, and strengths. Write down as many as you can, and add more when you notice them. When we focus on positive qualities, we help each other to blossom and grow.

- How can I show appreciation for the spiritual gifts and character strengths of my spouse?
- How can I develop my own spiritual gifts and character strengths, and what positive effect might they have on our relationship?

BEING AFFECTIONATE

Romans 12:10

Love needs to be expressed in warm words, eye contact, smiles, gentle touching, time together, thoughtful gifts, or helpful support. Different cultures and families express affection differently, but the important thing is to love others the way they like to be loved, not just the way we want to love them.

- Ask your husband or wife to write down ten times when they felt especially loved by you and three other gestures that would make them feel loved. Then spend at least five minutes a day doing whatever makes your partner feel loved. Notice the difference it makes to your relationship.

CONNECTING EMOTIONALLY

Romans 12:15

Jesus was happy with His friends when they were happy, and sad when they were sad. When something amazing happens to your husband or wife, celebrate together! And when your spouse is sad, just sit and be sad together. When our partners don't share in our sadness or joy, we can feel very alone. But when we share in each other's emotions, we strengthen the love-bond between us.

- How can I be more responsive to my partner's emotions so that we can strengthen the love-bond between us?

CROWNING YOUR PARTNER

Romans 12:10

When Jesus met people who felt downtrodden and rejected, He lifted them up and showed them how valuable they were to Him. Healthy relationships are based on mutual respect. When we place our spouses a little higher than ourselves, we're both lifted up. When we look down on our spouses and act superior in some way, we're both dragged down. See your partner as a unique and amazing creation that God has made just for you. Honor your spouse as the king or queen of your home. Discover what makes your spouse especially happy, do it for them, and watch what happens to your own joy.

- What can I do to honor my husband or wife and to show them how valuable they are to me?

Loving with a Heart Like Jesus

HUMBLY HOSPITABLE

Romans 12:13

When Jesus knelt down to wash His disciples' feet, He wasn't only being humble but also hospitable. Hospitality is doing whatever it takes to make someone feel comfortable, welcome, and special. It's pouring a glass of water for your spouse on a hot day, setting the table attractively, turning the heated blanket on to warm their side of the bed, or doing anything else to touch their heart with a smile.

- How can I show warm hospitality to my partner today?

LIVING PEACEFULLY

Romans 12:18

Loving like Jesus means creating a peaceful atmosphere where people feel safe, forgiven, accepted, and heard. It means going the extra mile to make sure conflicts are resolved by listening to the other person's concerns and by exploring their ideas for a win-win outcome. It also means letting go of your desire to win the argument, to get your own way, or to have more power than the other person.

- How can I prevent an argument by putting my partner's needs and wishes first?

DEVOTION—LISTENING TO THE HEART

Romans 12:10

Jesus listened to the heart. He wanted to hear the real needs in people's lives. When your partner is hurt, tired, angry, disappointed, afraid, or sad, respond to their unspoken needs rather than reacting to their frustrated words. See the difference it makes!

- When does my partner most need a hug, a helping hand, some time together with me, or some appreciation, respect, or encouragement?

DOING WHATEVER IT TAKES

When we love with a heart like Jesus, we do whatever it takes to show the other person how much we love them. Jesus laid down His life for us so that we'd never have to doubt His love for us.

- What sacrifices do I need to make for my partner's happiness?

SPENDING TIME WITH JESUS

Romans 12:1, 2

In order to love like Jesus, we need to spend time with Him studying and praying, learning about His love, and listening to His heart for our partners and for us. This is how we are transformed by the renewing of our minds (Rom. 12:1, 2).

- Which aspect of my life most needs to be renewed so that I can love my partner more like Jesus does? j



Karen Holford is a family therapist working with troubled families and couples in Edinburgh, Scotland.

HERE ARE 30 EXTREMELY SERIOUS QUESTIONS TO ASK ABOUT THE HEALTH OF YOUR FAMILY RELATIONSHIPS:

1. Does every single member of your family feel valued?
2. Can they trust you with anything?
3. Do you care about the small things, the details?
4. Do you make yourself available to them?
5. Do you make it easy and safe for them to say, "I'm sorry" or "I was wrong"? Or are they made to pay for it with "I told you so's"?
6. Do you lift up, or put down, your family members in public?
7. Do you nurture and support their passions?
8. Do you humiliate or embarrass them, either privately or in public?
9. If they were to come to you with a problem, even a shameful problem, would they find in you a lecturer or a listener?
10. How would you make them feel if they made a mistake? As if it were the end of the world, or just as respected and valued as before? And do you tell them that? Remind them?
11. Do you hold old mistakes over their heads?
12. Do you point out their strengths and talents?
13. Are you enabling them to become the best people they can be, or are you inflicting a controlling, possessive nature on them?
14. Are you telling them it's OK to cry, or urging them to "always put a smile on it," as if faking it means real strength?
15. Do you teach that struggles are in direct correlation to their spiritual state, and that if they struggle in life it's a sign they need to "make things right with God"? Or do you support them in their struggles, as God does for us?
16. Is the name of God brought up in the context of encouragement (the true kind), or in the context of shaming and guilt? How do you think this might affect their relationship with God?
17. Is faith something you can openly share together, or is "talking theology" a way of avoiding real, personal conversations?
18. Have you, perhaps unknowingly, labeled a family member? For example: "The Rebel," "The Procrastinator," "The Messy One," "The Bossy One." Do you point back to this label again and again, so that with each action they seem to be "confirming" the accuracy of the label?
- 19a. Do you constantly insist that your way is the only right way?
- 19b. Do you empower yourself by hoarding information and using it as a tool for manipulation or power?
20. Do you let family members make their own mistakes, while serving as a safe place to return to (only if they want to)?
21. Do you believe you have more of a right to influence and decide for them than you actually do? (Even children need a sense of independence.)
22. Do you make the mistake of needing to be needed, therefore creating situations in which you stunt their growth?
23. Do you allow your family members to explore possibilities, even if that means going through "phases" or "looking silly"?
24. Do *they* know you're on their side, no matter what? And are you really?
25. Do they *feel* loved as much as you tell them they are? Do you know their love language, and are you speaking it? Have you asked if they feel loved?
26. Do you punctuate excuses for ill behavior with the words, "I only did it because I love you"?
27. Are you a friend?
28. When you feel afraid or make a mistake, do you admit it honestly, or turn to shouting or aggressive/controlling behavior?
29. Do you acknowledge that people change and aren't statues—and therefore need to be rediscovered and re-known by their loved ones? Or do you assume the "same old answers" because you haven't checked to see if anything has changed?
30. And, finally, are you aware of how deeply you can leave scars or inspire strengths in your family members?



Happy to Serve

HAVING A HEART LIKE JESUS

It's really important for a Christian to have a heart like Jesus. Lots of people are greedy, proud, and want their own way all the time. But Jesus said that's not the way to be happy at all, and those people will end up feeling lonely and miserable. Jesus knows that we're happiest when we serve others first, just as He did.

HAPPY TO SERVE!

Many famous people in the Bible served others cheerfully, lovingly, and generously. Read their stories, find out what they did, and discover how they blessed others by their simple, kind actions. To find some of the answers, you might have to read farther than the verses listed.

| PEOPLE WITH SERVING HEARTS | HOW THEY SERVED OTHERS | HOW THEIR KIND ACTIONS BLESSED OTHERS |
|--|------------------------|---------------------------------------|
| Samuel 1 Samuel 3 | | |
| Naaman's maid 2 Kings 5:1-19 | | |
| Moses Exodus 2:16-24 | | |
| Joseph Genesis 39:1-6 | | |
| Abigail 1 Samuel 25:2-42 | | |
| Onesimus Philemon 1-22 | | |
| Mary of Bethany John 12:1-8 | | |
| Jesus John 13:1-17 | | |

Which one of these characters would you most like to be?

What do you do to serve others?

What effects do your simple, humble actions have on the people around you, such as your family, teachers, and friends?



HOW CAN I HELP YOU?

CREATIVE SPACE!

Design a pin/badge that says, "How can I help you?" Draw your design neatly on a circle of cardstock and tape a safety pin to the back. Wear it and see what happens. Write down what you do and how it makes people happy.

OR

Make some colorful signs for your home. Choose from these phrases, or make up your own phrase to encourage service to others:

Whenever I do the smallest thing for someone else, I am really doing it for Jesus.

What can I do today to show someone how much Jesus loves them?

What can I do to be kind to a lonely person today?

What's the best thing I could do to help my mom or dad today?

SECRET SERVICE

Experimenters try out different things, sometimes secretly, and then watch carefully to see what happens. Why don't you experiment to discover the unexpected joy that results from serving others?

Make a list of things you could do simply and safely to serve others in your home, just as Jesus did. Then do them secretly.

After completing your Secret Service, write what happened in your secret notebook:

- What I did . . .
- Who noticed first?
- What did they say?
- What did they do?
- What do I think they were feeling?
- What effect did this have on my family?
- When I was doing my Secret Service, I felt . . .
- The next Secret Service I plan to do is . . .



SOME SECRET SERVICE IDEAS:

- Make someone a drink
- Make someone's bed
- Clean their shoes
- Clean the bath or shower
- Sweep or vacuum the floor
- Tidy up someone else's things
- Do someone's chores as a surprise
- Empty the garbage with a cheerful smile on your face
- Mow the lawn
- Clean up after a pet
- Feed your pet



PRAYER FOR PUTTING OTHERS FIRST

Cut out a white paper heart and write a prayer on it.

- Thank Jesus for loving you and for putting you first by dying to save you.
- Thank Jesus for making you feel so special deep inside that you don't have to brag to feel good.
- Ask Jesus to help you have a heart like His and put other people first.
- Ask Him to help you be happy with just who you are, so you don't have to act proud or push yourself to the top.


YOU FIRST!

Jesus told His disciples to be content with being at the end of the line or at the far end of the table. He said we don't have to push ourselves forward or be first all the time, because He's taking care of us. We're always special to Him.

When we put others down, we all feel unhappy. But when we give them a boost, we all feel happier.

Think about these different situations. What could you do to put the other person's needs first, rather than your own? What would Jesus do?

- Your friend badly wanted to win a class prize, but someone else won first place, and you won second. What kind words could you say to your disappointed friend, and what could you say to the person who won?
- **Your mom is really busy and asks you to help with a messy job that you don't like. What can you say and do to help her feel happy?**
- Your little sister is being teased at school. What could you say to help her feel happy, and what could you say to the bully?

- You are waiting in a line at a potluck, but a very hungry and miserable little boy is standing behind you. What could you do and say?
- Mom has made your favorite dessert. Everyone has had a piece, with one piece left over. You really want it, but so does your sister. What can you do?
- You are playing in the park and waiting for a turn on your favorite swing. A younger child also wants a turn on that swing. What can you do and say? 

Karen Holford writes creative worships for children from her home on a Scottish hillside.



TIPS TO SURVIVE

THRIVE

TAKE A STEP BACK

It's easy to get so busy doing good things that we lose focus on what ultimately matters most: God, our spouses, and our families.

If this has happened to you, take a step back and just soak it in.

Pause for a moment, stand in bright sunshine, and notice the intense blue of the sky. Stop washing the dishes for a minute and look at your children. Really look at them, at how quickly they're growing and how rapidly they learn.

Give your spouse a 15-second kiss every day for a week. Take extra seconds to hug. Pay a compliment for something they do without being asked.

You might be amazed at how much these little things can do to make you feel more united in ministry!

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.

Special Quotes

"Thus it is with the sinner who, knowing his unworthiness, has entered the Master's vineyard at the eleventh hour.

His time of service seems so short, he feels that he is undeserving of reward; but he is filled with joy that God has accepted him at all. He works with a humble, trusting spirit, thankful for the privilege of being a coworker with Christ. This spirit God delights to honor."

Christ's Object Lessons, pp. 397, 398

"The lessons of childhood, good or bad, are not learned in vain. Character is developed in youth for good or evil.

At home there may be praise and false flattery; in the world each stands on his own merits. The pampered ones, to whom all home authority has yielded, are there daily subjected to mortification by being obliged to yield to others. Many are even then taught their true place by these practical lessons of life. Through rebuffs, disappointments, and plain language from their superiors, they often find their true level and are humbled to understand and accept their proper place. But this is a severe and unnecessary ordeal for them to pass through and could have been prevented by proper training in their youth."

Child Guidance, p. 180

"The majority of these ill-disciplined ones go through life at cross-purposes with the world, making a failure where they should have succeeded. They grow to feel that the world owes them a grudge because it does not flatter and caress them, and they take revenge by holding a grudge against the world and bidding it defiance. Circumstances sometimes oblige them to affect a humility they do not feel; but it does not fit them with a natural grace, and their true characters are sure to be exposed sooner or later. . . . Why will parents educate their children in such a manner that they will be at war with those who are brought in contact with them?"

Child Guidance, p. 181



How to Raise a Narcissistic PK

IF YOU WANT TO RAISE A SELF-ABSORBED, arrogant child, you can do several things to ensure raging success. Don't settle for just one tactic. A combination of several is most effective!

Give them whatever they want, whenever they want it.

Never make your child wait for anything; they might cry! Crying will quite likely damage them permanently. If they want something, you should drop whatever you're doing and meet their desires immediately. Giggle encouragingly when toddlers throw sassy tantrums. Reinforce their natural assumption that, as the parent, you exist to be the most fawning and adoring slave they'll ever have. It's especially effective if you live in fear of your child's temper. The younger you ingrain this mindset in them, the more successful they will be at manipulation, control, and self-centeredness.

Rescue them from the consequences of their own actions, while blaming everyone else.

Refuse to allow your child to feel the brunt of their negative choices or poor behavior. Step in and divert any natural results that might help them learn a memorable lesson. Shelter them from their own pain and whatever hurt they cause to others. Blame anyone and everyone else for your child's failures. Whatever happened is always the other kid's fault, the teacher's fault, the school's fault—but it can never, *ever* be their own responsibility.

Pave the road so they never battle their own obstacles.

Hard work is fine for some, but your kids are better than that. Help your little geniuses along by removing as many challenges as possible so they feel good about themselves without any effort. Do homework for them, build their class project, offer excuses when

they make mistakes instead of encouraging them to humble themselves and say they're sorry. Of course, constantly remind them that they're *ah-mazing*, even when they've only invested mediocre energy.

Don't require respectful manners or social courtesies.

Make apologetic excuses when they are rude or disrespectful. Refrain from intervening when your child is aggressive or thoughtless to peers and grownups. Let them sit comfortably in the best chair while an elderly person is left standing. They're just kids, so they can't be expected to stand or wait patiently. Say this aloud to nearby adults so your children know you don't expect much from them in the way of social graces or self-denial.

Praise them constantly, especially for externals and when they haven't earned it.

Focus on external appearance—make sure they know they are more attractive than all the other kids. Don't just tell them they are precious to you but also inflate their sense of value beyond what they have accomplished. Place excessive emphasis on public performances that enhance your image as a parent, and ignore the small, thoughtful deeds they may do in private.

Shower them with material things in place of quality relationships.

Forget investing quality time in teaching and learning. Skip nature walks and deep conversations and reading books aloud. Instead, make sure they know that things

are far more important than people. Allow unsupervised, unfettered access to media, technology, TV, video games—anything to feed their pleasure centers and provide shallow entertainment.

Teach them that externals (like skin color) are a good reason to judge people.

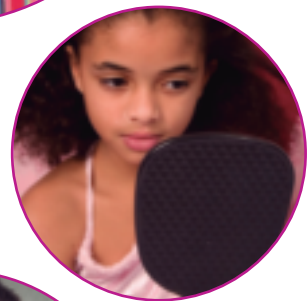
Make them believe their own race is best and that people of other colors are not their equals. Imply that others are jealous of their superiority, or that society has it in for them because of their ethnicity, or both. Reserve your acts of compassion and sympathy for those who fit your racial and cultural comfort zone. Don't let your children become close friends with families who don't look like them or share a similar socio-ethnic background.

Avoid the time-suck of compassionate activities that bring zero personal gain.

Instead of modeling empathy and kindness to your children and those around you, set an example of being aloof, emotionally distant, and disdainful toward anyone who can't return an equal or better favor. Let your kids overhear you speaking with disregard and arrogance about others whom you feel are beneath you.

Don't give them chores or expect them to do physical work.

Take care of all household functions for them. Let them grow to believe that dirty work is beneath them. They are too precious to have to fold their own laundry, help prepare meals, clean their own toilets, work in the garden, or make their own beds.





Encourage elitism.

Lead them to believe that the whole world owes them and that it's okay if they break the rules to get what they "deserve." Model this lack of integrity in your own life, even when you think they're not watching.

Remember, self-esteem is far more important than moral character, and reinforce this concept in your words and example.



Obsess about what other people think of you.

Whether you're driven by a deep-seated need to be well-liked or a paralyzing fear of other people's judgment, generally disregard meeting people's needs unless it is an opportunity to have something good reflect back on you. Model a constant awareness of what people think by verbalizing criticism and judgment about how others look, what they say, and why you're essentially better than the rest of the world.



This list of surefire tips for raising a narcissist could go on and on. Everyone knows someone who has an out-of-control child: that boy or girl who bullies others, manipulates circumstances in their favor, lacks compassion for others, and acts superior to both adults and peers. Nobody decides intentionally to raise a smug, self-centered child, yet society is filled with them. The trouble is that far too often, parents themselves can't see it.

If that's not your goal, then perhaps a different approach is needed. You

could aim for a lifestyle rooted in the powerful example of service, where your children grow up to be shockingly humble and grounded. To achieve that, you might start by prayerfully living a life focused on loving, grace-filled character growth in yourself and your children. A life unafraid of hard work, service to others, and unswerving dedication to integrity.

You could muster the courage to communicate about really tough topics and embrace the chiseling of soul-surrender to Jesus Christ. When your children do well, you might praise their process and perseverance rather than merely their performance. And when you see them doubting their ability to conquer something that appears impossible, perhaps even the daunting task of conquering themselves, you could encourage them with love and acceptance, going together to seek wisdom on your knees.

It's all up to you.

*Disclaimer: Recently I took a poll of those in my circle of influence, asking what they observe as contributors to the tide of narcissism in modern culture. This tongue-in-cheek article grew out of those responses. In case anyone is still wondering—no, I don't think we should intentionally raise self-centered children. I highly recommend the books *Adventist Home and Child Guidance*, by Ellen White, as a foundation for biblical parenting wisdom.* J

Sarah K. Asaftei ministers alongside her husband in Florida, raising two high-energy kids and running her own business for media and branding. Connect with her on Twitter @sarahKasaftei.

DEAR ABIGAIL

My children are at the age where they keenly feel Daddy's absence, and it seems he is gone more than he is home. My husband means well and is very dedicated in his work, but the kids miss him intensely when he is so occupied serving our church district. I am watching them grow increasingly distant from their father and his ministry because they feel neglected. How can we be more united as a family?

Worried Mother



Dear Worried,

It's easy for ministry families to become so focused on meeting the needs of others that we forget our most important mission field is the children in our own home.

Have you and your husband discussed how your children feel? Is he aware of their growing distance from him? His dedication may possibly keep him too busy to really notice, and he may need you to gently bring it to his attention. If he's already clued in, then it is time for a family conversation.

If your children are old enough to express their feelings, ask how they feel about Dad's level of work commitment. Explore ways they might spend time connecting with your husband one on one. Look for ministry activities you can do together as a family. Encourage him to spend one date a month with each child, doing something relaxing and enjoyable according to each child's interests, with no interruptions from work. He should put it in his calendar as an appointment so it doesn't get delayed or forgotten.

If your husband doesn't already take *one full day* off per week, urge him to do so. Sabbaths are often the busiest and most harried day of the week for pastoral families. It is vital to spend at least one full day each week (outside of Sabbath) together as a family, resting, recuperating, and rejoicing in time away from the duties and pressures of ministry.

Most of all, pray for your husband and kids. Pray God will convict your husband to spend more time focused on the children. Pray your kids' hearts will turn toward you and your husband with affection. Pray you can facilitate family discussion without forcing commitments they aren't ready to make.

God is capable of doing amazing things, and He *loves* bringing families together in unity!

Abigail



East-Central Africa Division

Pastors, spouses, and children met together in Uganda for pastoral meetings and fellowship in December 2014. Anthony and Debora Kent provided training for both pastors and spouses. Anthony is a GC Ministerial associate director for continuing education, and Debora previously served the South Pacific Division as Shepherdess/Partners in Ministry director. She is now a labor and delivery nurse, midwife, and lactation consultant.



A group of pastors and spouses gather with Anthony and Debora Kent in Uganda.

Inter-American Division

Pastors' wives in Curacao celebrated a graduation from continuing education courses in October 2014. The courses provide three modules of training over the span of three years in areas such as personal spiritual growth, leadership

development, conflict management, handling burnout and depression, and parenting. Approximately 3,000 women are enrolled in some phase of the program, and the Cuban Union has already completed the certification. Women say they love the opportunity to learn and have seen a positive impact on their homes, marriages, and ministries.



Shepherdess leaders from Cuba have completed all the modules of the continuing education program in IAD.



Shepherdess leaders and coordinators gather in Curacao.

Northern Asia-Pacific Division

The fall Hong Kong-Macau Conference workers' meeting highlighted the theme "Revival and Prophetic Truth." Ms. Swonli Tam gave an inspiring devotional message.

Workers shared a season of united prayer, asking God to bless their individual churches and make their ministry initiatives fruitful for His glory.



David and Lynn Ripley meet with pastoral families in Fozhou.

Southern Asia Division

India (Southern Asia Division) has over 1.3 billion people and in the next several years will surpass China as the most populous nation on earth. Pictured below are some of God's Spirit-filled pastoral spouses whom He is empowering to help lead in the mission to reach this territory! Pastoral couples from across India came together in February to study, pray, and plan for this great work.



Pastoral spouses gather in South East India Union.

Southern Africa-Indian Ocean Division

In December 2014, Trudy Mfune returned from her post at the General Conference to her home country of Malawi, where she had previously been a Shepherdess sponsor. She visited almost eighty children's ministries leaders from the North Malawi Field.

They gathered at Nkhorongo Church for a workshop on how to make teaching materials for children's Sabbath Schools and after-church activities. Twenty-one of the attendees were ministry spouses.



Trudy Mfune (center) poses with Shepherdesses in Malawi.



Pastoral couples meet in Northern India Union.



Pastoral spouses come together in South West India Union.

**“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 I will forgive their sin and will
heal their land.”**

2 Chronicles 7:14, NIV

COME JOIN US AT THE 2015 GC SESSION PRAYER ROOM
JULY 2 – 11, ALAMODOME, MEETING ROOM F, 8 a.m. – 8 p.m.

 **PRAY!**



SEVENTH-DAY
ADVENTIST CHURCH

Revival
REFORMATION