

Shepherdess

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Submission

by Sharon Dyer

*At first I thought it was
carefully following
Commandments, precepts,
exhortations.*

*Making sure my life
lined up,
shaped up,
and measured up.*

*(But now I realize submission
is more
than doing and acting;
It is knowing God's heart,
cherishing His word,
caring so much
about His Kingdom
that I delight to obey.*



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Cover poem:

Sharon Dyer lives in Wyoming, Michigan, with her husband, Ray, and their three teenage children: Jennifer, Kelly, and Dan.

She has had more than 100 poems published in 29 different Christian magazines and periodicals. She especially enjoys writing poetry for teenagers and women.

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Between the Covers

The pages of this Fourth Quarter issue are filled with sharings of hope and heartache, miracles and messages.

Margarida Sarli opens the magazine with some encouragement for parents who may be concerned that they are not giving their youngsters every material thing they might desire. Tina Krause presents a candid response to our tendencies to only socialize with those in our congregation. Holly Martin reminds us that growing up as a P.K. can be very special, and an anonymous minister's wife shares her personal story of a prodigal P.K.

After you relate to Val Smetheram's article on stress in clergy marriages that we all feel, get a hot cup of tea and savor the moment as June Taylor shares a Christmas story with us to conclude this year's *Shepherdess International Journal*.

The year 1996 has held memories both glad and sad for all of us ministry wives. Jesus has given us the glad moments so that we can taste a little sample of the joys that await us in heaven where we can take courage in the knowledge that the sad will be removed forever. Jesus is coming back to get us really soon. Until then, may His sweet Spirit be with each one of you as we embark on 1997.

In His love,



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To Be Appointed

I Want to Give My Child Everything

Margarida F.
Sarli



Margarida Ferreira Sarli was born in Brazil. She has a bachelor of science degree in Theology, Education, and Library Science. She worked as curator of the Ellen G. White Estate in Brazil College. Also, she worked as a Bible Instructor in Canada. Presently she is working as a voluntary Shepherdess International Assistant at the General Conference. Her hobbies are: reading, playing the piano, gardening, and painting.

When my oldest daughter was three years old, we lived in a downstairs apartment. The family above us had a very smart daughter the same age as mine. Every morning when the weather was good, I took my little girl on a walk. Usually I took the girl from upstairs with us. One morning the little girl told me: "I would like to live downstairs!"

"Why?" I asked her. I didn't understand, because the upstairs apartment was better. She answered: "Because in the apartment downstairs, the mothers stay home!" She associated the presence of the mother with the apartment, because the mother of the family who lived in the apartment before us also didn't work outside of the home. And then the little girl continued, "but it's all right if my mother works because she can buy lots of beautiful things for me."

It is not necessarily wrong to work outside of the home, but as parents we should analyze our motives. Are they selfish? Saying "I want to give to my child everything I didn't have" may sound like a beautiful demonstration of love and dedication but in reality may be related to

something not very well resolved in the parent's past!

These parents don't ask if the child needs or even wants the items. The parents are actually fulfilling a necessity of themselves, not always a necessity of the child.

Because of the guilt feelings arising from being away from the child all day, the parents feel the necessity to compensate the child. The child gets whatever he asks for. The child perceives the situation and starts to develop the capacity to control adults. The parents shower the child with material things assuming they will make the child happy. Unfortunately, the child has so many toys he does not appreciate them; they soon pile up in the closets.

Years later these same parents complain about how much money they have to spend on their children's clothes, amusement, etc. The daughter needs a new outfit every weekend. The son demands a car, credit cards, more money for parties or trips. When the parents refuse such demands, the children usually rebel.

When parents give in to all the demands of children, they are shaping a generation of material-

minded young people. These children learn to treasure "things" instead "values." Their self-esteem is determined by the clothes they wear, the cars they drive, and the money they have. All too often, these children are selfish, proud, willful, and ungrateful. They do not appreciate and develop the God-given gifts they may have such as honesty, love for neighbors or generosity.

My childhood was spent in a well-structured family (in the pattern of the time, of course). My father worked very hard, and Mom took care of all of us. She did not work outside the home. Home and family were her mission and her destiny. My siblings and I always felt her love and concern. We didn't feel a lack of anything. We had delicious homemade food, attention, love, assurance, education, health, friends, time to play. Everything! We didn't have an excess of material things. We received toys only at Christmas. I didn't feel inferior to anybody. I wasn't educated in this "despair of

possessions."

Today, wealthy families give their children every thing: each child has her own radio, TV, room, bike, etc. They are not learning to share, to wait, to think of others. Some parents give presents to all their children on each child's birthday so the children won't feel jealous or sad. To learn to share, to wait for your turn, to suffer small frustrations are ESSENTIAL PARTS OF LIFE'S APPRENTICESHIP.

Children need to be able to wish, dream, and plan for something. When children receive everything they ask for, they do not learn to value what they have.

It can be argued that rearing children in the past was easier because of a lack of TV. While that is certainly true, it still is not an excuse to lavish children with everything they want. Parenting can be very hard, but parents need to remember children are gifts from God and parental responsibility is both a privilege and necessity.

Giving permission to children to participate in every program,

every birthday party, and every club is detrimental. Parents are always running from one place to another. Soon the children expect to be entertained and a weekend at home becomes torture. Helping children decide which event to attend prepares them for the future. They learn to make choices and realize choices often involve some type of loss and conflict.

Balance, peace, and assurance are the best gifts parents can give their children. They supersede material things in every way. Ellen White gives good counsel in her book *Child Guidance*, pages 135 and 136 when she says, "Do not educate your children to think that your love for them must be expressed by indulging their pride, their extravagance, their love of display . . . The spendthrift boy will be the spendthrift man. The vain, selfish, self-caring girl will be the same kind of woman."

After all, what do children have to discover, to expect, to feel emotion towards if parents give them the world on a silver tray? ❀

"Jesus knows the burden of every mother's heart. He who had a mother that struggled with poverty and privation, sympathizes with every mother in her labors. He who made a long journey in order to relieve the anxious heart of a Canaanite woman will do as much for the mothers of today. He who gave back the widow of Nain her only son, and in His agony upon the cross remembered His own mother, is touched today by the mother's sorrows. In every grief and every need, He will comfort and help.

"Let mothers come to Jesus with their perplexities. They will find grace sufficient to aid them in the care of their children. The gates are open for every mother who would lay her burdens at the Saviour's feet. He who said, 'Suffer the little children to come unto Me, and forbid them not' (Mark 10:14), still invites mothers to bring their little ones to be blessed by Him." (Ministry of Healing, p. 42)

Have You Lingered in Church Too Long?

Tina Krause



Tina Krause is an award-winning newspaper columnist and freelance writer. She has over 600 published columns, feature stories, editorials, and magazine articles. Tina is the mother of two grown sons: Jim, 26 and Jeff, 22. She and her husband, Jim, live in Valparaiso, Indiana.

Have Christians lingered in the church church too long?" asked my husband after hosting a table at an annual church-related banquet.

Responsible for inviting guests to sit at our table, we had deliberated on whom to invite for some time. Four of our Christian friends said they would attend but we needed two more people to fill our table.

"How about inviting Larry and Kathy?" Jim suggested, speaking of a non-Christian couple we knew.

"Great!" I replied, thinking what a perfect opportunity to acquaint the unchurched couple with our Christian friends.

When our guests arrived—a pastor and his wife, a Christian counselor and his spouse, and the non-Christian couple—we promptly seated them around the large, circular table.

Our Christian friends, respected church leaders, were experienced in the area of ministry; thus, we felt confident that our unsaved friends would feel right at home, even in a roomful of strangers.

After introductions were made, however, conversations emerged revealing the unchurched couple's spiritual status. After that, the alien

couple was politely ignored as a rapid stream of religious jargon flowed from the Christianized end of the table, smothering our unsaved friends like a cloud of unwanted second-hand smoke. Throughout dinner, the Christians feasted on church-laden conversations, while the spiritual misfits quietly listened, offering an occasional nervous smile.

Jim and I exchanged awkward glances as we noticed the discomfort of the neglected twosome. Attempting to compensate, we excluded ourselves from our friends' table talk and focused on the couple, hoping the others would follow our lead. But the religious dialogue continued.

"Hey, I saw Brother Dan the other day," one said.

"Really? I haven't seen him since last spring."

"Well, you know the son he had so much trouble with? He finally got saved a few Sundays ago!"

The verbal discourse was foreign to the unchurched couple—almost as much as interaction in a social setting with the "unsaved" was foreign to our Christian friends.

Regrettably, most of us box our faith within the hallowed halls of the four church walls. We boast

of programs designed to reach the unchurched; we speak of loving the unloved; we quote appropriate Scriptures and pray significant prayers. We formulate strategic initiatives to lure the unchurched into our sphere of activity, and once there, we expect them to comprehend our language, accept our methodology, and embrace our theology.

Yet apart from our visitation programs on Monday, we struggle to relate to the gas station attendant, the store clerk, or the "worldly" business associate on Tuesday. When faced with the task of socializing with non-Christians, there's little commonality, so there's little exchange.

The result? We either ignore

the unbeliever or, flaunting our spirituality, we blurt our salvation Scriptures in an effort to capitalize on the moment. Either way, the results are the same: alienation from the very people we want to reach for Christ.

Remove us from the security of our spiritual habitations and associations and we flounder as if trapped in a dark place. Consequently, our good intentions and pure motives are lost in our blindness.

Unlike most of us, Jesus communed with sinners. He spent more time preaching in the streets than He did sermonizing in the temple. The ungodly didn't intimidate Him; they moved Him to compassion (Matt. 9:36, KJV).

Perhaps we have lost sight of

our sinful pasts and prior indiscretions. So much so that our sensitivity, compassion, and love for the lost are buried in a maze of awkwardness and super-spiritual attitudes.

But Jesus still instructs us saying, "Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature" (Mark 16:15, KJV). That mandate propels us beyond formulating extensive church programs and masterful evangelism techniques or luring the lost into our sphere of Christian comfort. Instead, He says, "(YOU) go into all the world . . .

"Go" is defined as: "to move out of and away from where one is." From that perspective, perhaps we Christians *have* lingered in the church too long. ❀

The Closest Friend

Sharon Dyer

There have been friends
who have
shared my tears,
and some
who have dried them,
But none as close
as the Lord
who bottles them
and records it
in His Book.
—Psalms 56:8

*Sharon Dyer lives in Wyoming, Michigan with her husband, Ray, and her three children.
She has published over 100 poems in Christian magazines.*

P.K.'s are Special!

Holly R. Martin



Holly R. Martin is a journalism student from Chattanooga, Tennessee. She writes a standing column for singles in *The Joyful Woman* magazine. Her hobbies include reading, tennis, and composing and performing music.

Reprinted from *The Joyful Woman*, January/February 1995 issue, copyright 1995 Holly R. Martin.

Growing up in the John R. Rice family made me feel both special and odd.

I felt special because:

1. My parents really walked with God and practiced what they preached.

2. I daily saw God's faithfulness in answering prayers and providing all our needs.

3. I had the opportunity to meet wonderful Christians from around the world and to see people saved and transformed through my parents' ministry.

4. Many people loved my parents dearly, and I glowed in that atmosphere of love and appreciation.

5. Family life was stimulating, fun, and full of healthy activities.

I felt odd because:

1. My parents' standards were higher than most of my friends.

2. Dad and Mother had to be away from home frequently. Often I was very lonely.

3. Sometimes my parents received cruel letters and hateful treatment because of their stand for Christ.

4. Occasionally I felt "left out" because of my parent's commitments and limited finances.

Having been a P.K. for nearly twelve years, I can tell you that

P.K. stands for more than just Preacher's Kid. I was born a Preacher's Kid. I was also the last of six children—the "baby" of the family. That made me even more special. As I grew, I grew to love my dad's church—and they loved me back. They made me feel very special. I soon came to learn that P.K. also stands for Privileged Kid.

Growing up in my dad's church was one of the greatest experiences I can recall in my childhood. I loved the attention that the church family lavished upon me. I was the center of attention in every activity. I was always picked first for church plays, children's choirs, and as team leader in Awana. I soon became accustomed to being the life of the party.

I soon learned that P.K. also stands for Perfect Kid. There is always a little more expected of a P.K. because we are believed to be perfect. How could we not be perfect? We have perfect parents and a perfect upbringing. Right? People put P.K.'s on such a pedestal that no one could possibly fulfill every role we are expected to play. Of course I would become a great pastor's wife or church musician or have some other ultimate purpose in life. Even

with this great weight upon my little shoulders, I tried to keep up my end of the bargain. It was my price for being a P.K.

Although I was very mischievous, I always managed to win the prizes for memorizing verses and selling candy. After all, I was supposed to be the role model for all the other children in the church. And because I was the P.K., some people let me get away with a little more than other children. Everyone in the church was my friend and they all enjoyed the entertainment I brought them.

All this came crashing to a halt when I was almost twelve. My father sat me down in the kitchen and informed me that in order to take a higher position at the university where he taught, he would have to step down from the pulpit at our church. And we would now attend another church.

I couldn't believe my ears. I was dumbfounded; I hadn't known anything else but being a P.K. How could I make such a drastic change? I would now become just a regular kid. A nobody, and certainly no one special.

As it turns out, I would not only be changing churches, but changing schools also. It was a drastic change for me. One I was not really prepared for. And on top of all of this, I had just become a teenager. It was a devastating time for me. As I look back, I can mark that time as the beginning of my troubles as an adolescent. It was very difficult for me to say good-bye to my friends at church whom I had grown up with and grown close to. I would no longer see them except on special occasions.

Although I eventually made

new friends at my new church, I was never quite as popular as I was at my old church. I was just an R.K. now—a Regular Kid. I was no longer the center of attention—no longer special.

I still remember the first time I returned to my old church to visit. It was very strange. I saw and spoke to the same people, but there was no connection with them now. They had new P.K.'s to enjoy. I was no longer needed. I guess I thought when I returned, everything would be the same as when I had left. I was wrong. It was time to move on. Grow up. Be content without my title of P.K.

I still have rich memories of my dad's church and my experiences there. There is one thing people need to remember when dealing with P.K.'s. We're not perfect. We are only human beings. Never put a P.K. on a pedestal. They should be involved in church activities, but never expected to perform more than a regular kid is able to. Being a P.K. can be a wonderful experience and believe me, I enjoyed it to the fullest!

But life always brings changes—and with God's help, I eventually came to appreciate the blessings of being an R.K.—a Regular Kid! Like Paul, I'm learning to be content, "in whatsoever state I am . . . (Phil. 4:12) whether a P.K. or an R.K. ❀

Tantrum

Thelma Norman

When I have a
spiritual tantrum,

Screaming my
demands to God,

Beating my head
against His
commandments,

Kicking against the
pricks
of His Spirit,

He does not smite me
with thunder and
lightning
as I deserve,

But speaks in a still,
small voice
so I must be quiet
to hear.

This poem appeared in The Heart of the Home, Volume 9, Number 3, 1994.

Holding on to Hope When Kids Go Wrong

Name Withheld

We were the typical parsonage family. Our oldest, and only, daughter was married and living out of state. Our second, David Michael, was living in the dorm at one of our church colleges. It was his junior year and he was serving as music director at a nearby church on weekends. Our youngest son was in high school and living at home. All three children seemed well adjusted and very happy in their Christian roles. We had the feeling of being "successful" parents.

Maybe it was just a mother's intuition, but I sensed a gnawing, unexplainable pain that seemed to increase with each day. Was our oldest son having a problem? So happy, so exuberant, so in love with Jesus! He was doing what he loved to do most—directing a church choir and singing solos. Still I felt very uneasy about him for some unknown reason. That's when I decided I should fast and pray to get a direct answer from God. Mike and I had always

shared a close relationship, so it was very important that I understand if he had a problem.

At the time I was office manager for a general surgeon. Working five days a week, plus my duties at home and church, I had learned to pray "without ceasing." This was my third day of fasting and it was no exception. Using my lunch time, I decided to take a prayer walk to our church, a few blocks away. While I was walking and meditating on my son, these words seemed to come out of the blue—"spirit of perversion." Whatever can this mean, I asked myself? But, almost in the same breath, I answered my own question. Mike must be involved in *homosexuality*. But, how could this be? He's in a *Christian* college! Doesn't he profess to love the Lord with all his heart? Doesn't he sing His praises every week? My mind immediately went whirling. Sick pains hit me in the stomach. As much as I tried to dismiss the thoughts, my inner feeling agreed. *I must know, even though it hurts.*

By this time I had arrived at the church and I knew there would be solitude there at lunch time. The first thing I did was to call my daughter long distance to share with her what I felt God

was revealing to me. My agony was justified when she came back with, "Yes, Mom, you're right. I didn't want to break his confidence, but Mike told me he is gay." I don't think I will ever be able to erase those words from my memory!

I explained to my daughter that I was going into the sanctuary to pray at the altar and she could join me in the prayer 1,000 miles away.

Words cannot sufficiently describe the spiritual warfare that I encountered. It was as though Satan was actually jeering at me in my face. Could I really feel his breath? No way could I pray on my knees. This required a militant stance! This was an all-out WAR! No war can be more furious than that between a mother and the forces of evil that threatens her child! I prayed, I cried, I wrestled. I knew I didn't dare give in to Satan! The soul of my son was at stake! In the heat of the battle I cried out, "Satan, I will not give him over to you! If I have to wade through hell to bring him back, I will do it before I will ever give him over to you! He was born to serve the Lord! He was dedicated to God before he was ever born, so you may as well get your grubby hands off him!" It's hard to say just how long this warfare lasted before I felt that

victory had been won. I only know that I was exhausted, physically and spiritually. What was most important, however, was that God heard my prayer!

Within a few months, our son returned home from college and began dating one of the young ladies from our church whom he had known for a few years. It was only a short time after when his father performed their wedding ceremony. Needless to say, we were greatly relieved that his problem was over and our son was now happily married.

The crushing blow came nearly five years later, however, when our daughter-in-law called. Between weeping and sobbing, she broke the news that Mike had left her for another man. Once again the knife pierced my heart. This time even deeper, for there was a wife involved. Another broken heart.

From that day forward our loving, talented, creative son continued to put space between himself and his family. As he found support in the gay community he needed us less and less. Our burden was even greater because we felt we couldn't dare share this loss with our congregation—even our closest friends. If Mike had been diagnosed with cancer, or a terminal illness, we could have found comfort and understanding from the church. But this, we thought we had to bear among only our few family members. How tragic!

Months slipped into years. Nothing changed. Our daughter-in-law had their marriage annulled. Fragmentation. Worry. Loneliness. Heartbreak. Separation. Months would pass by without seeing our son or knowing of his whereabouts and we could still share our sorrow with only a few. Worried about our reputation as

spiritual leaders, we continued to grieve alone.

However, something began to happen. Our feeling and sympathy for other parents with wayward children deepened. Now there was a genuine concern for them. No more did we feel self-righteous over having the "ideal Christian family." When heart-broken parents came to us for prayer, we entered into their grief with them. After a few years we began openly sharing our heartache with others. This played a very important role in our healing. God began to use our trauma to bring comfort to other parents of homosexuals.

I would give everything I own if today I could say that our son has returned to the God of his father. That initial encounter with the spirit of darkness happened more than 20 years ago. We are still waiting—waiting—waiting. However, in the meantime, God has brought about a reconciliation between father and son. Nothing has changed our love for our son. He calls frequently and we always end the conversation with "I love you" from both parties.

What about the time of wrestling with Satan over the soul of my son so many years ago? Would I do it over again? A million times, "YES!" From that day until this, God is in control. Through the years, I have found peace in waiting. Not only *peace*, but I have proved the faithfulness of the Holy Spirit. There are times that He reassures me of His presence with Mike at that very moment. It has taught me confidence in His sovereignty; it has taught me to hang onto hope.

Someday soon, I trust, I will say, "And now for the rest of the story." With happiness, but not

surprise, I will tell you of God's wonderful deliverance of our son from the gay lifestyle. Then, too, I will proudly give my name and the full name of David Michael, with his consent. In the meantime I will continue to praise my Lord, day and night! ❀

Editors note: We print this testimony with great compassion, concern and a trust that readers in the fellowship of this magazine will share in the prayer battle for this particular suffering pastor's kid and his parents. May he soon "come home."

Just Between Us, Fall 1995.

Trust and Obey

"God will do marvelous things for those who trust in Him. It is because His professed people trust so much to their own wisdom, and do not give the Lord an opportunity to reveal His power in their behalf, that they have no more strength. He will help His believing children in every emergency if they will place their entire confidence in Him and implicitly obey Him."

(Testimonies to the Church, vol. 4, p. 163)

Escorted by an Angel



Evelyn D. Scout

My husband and I were serving as missionaries in Botswana. Our 18-month-old baby traveled with us as we traversed the corrugated and badly potholed roads. We were constantly on the go visiting our church members. The trips to church members living in the Kalahari Desert were especially long and arduous. The roads were in such poor condition we soon realized we needed a new vehicle to help us get around. After some research we decided the 4 x 4 Landover was the vehicle we needed.

South Africa was the only place we could buy a 4 x 4, so off we went by train.

After purchasing our new vehicle, we began the long trip back home. The Landover is a pretty big vehicle and traveling across bridges with no sides proved to be quite a feat. With the

Evelyn D. Scout is a Registered Nurse. She has been married 23 years to a church administrator. She is the mother of two university students and enjoys swimming, knitting, crocheting, the outdoors, and traveling. She writes from South Africa.

utmost caution, we edged up to each bridge, gauged its width and edged our way across, praying for God's guidance all the way.

We had been traveling for the better part of the day. Our baby daughter was comfortable in her carrycot. However, the tomatoes had jumped out of the sealed cartoons because of the bumpy ride on the badly corrugated roads.

The sun had set and it was pitch dark. We were still about 30-40 kilometers from the mission when our vehicle began sputtering and eventually came to a halt. My husband, Chris, got out to see what the problem was. Nothing was wrong mechanically; we had simply run out of petrol.

It was dark, home was a long way away and it was quite cold. We could see for miles down the road and we saw no approaching lights. Something had to be done. After discussing the situation, we decided I would go for help while Chris stayed with the vehicle and baby Colleen. We prayed and asked God to help us.

When we opened our eyes, we saw a car approaching. We were quite amazed. When it reached us, the vehicle stopped and the driver asked if we needed help. We told him of our dilemma and he offered to drive us to our

mission located in Francistown.

Colleen and I left with the man while Chris stayed with the Landover. The man was very friendly and we passed the time chatting about matters of mutual interest. He wanted to know what had brought us to Africa and he seemed interested in knowing how we were adapting. It provided me with an opportunity to tell of our church and the work we were engaged in. After about an hour we reached our destination.

Once we arrived at the mission, I thanked him and suggested he drop me off at the gate because the mission house was quite a distance from the mission entrance. He insisted on driving me all the way to the President's home.

The President's wife had heard a vehicle approaching so I did not have to wait long before she answered the door. As I turned to show her who had brought me, there was no sign of a vehicle, no lights leaving the mission compound, nothing!

I was, and still am, convinced an angel had given me a ride that night. Petrol was taken to Chris, he drove our new Landover home, and that night we thanked God for His love and care for us. We thanked Him especially for His angel who escorted me home. ❀

Your Value is Priceless

*Meibel Mello
Guedes*



Meibel M. Guedes is the AFAM coordinator for the Central Brazil Union in Artur Nogueira, Sao Paulo, Brazil. She is married to Pastor Arlindo Guedes, an evangelist, and has two daughters. Her pleasure is to serve her family and the work of God.

The Lord created each of us with gifts and different temperaments, thus we are all able to make special contributions to His work. Usually the cheerfulness of living and receiving God's blessings produces a happy, lovely and gentle pastoral wife.

There is a plain assurance about the love of God in our lives. He created us in His own image and likeness and gave His own Son to save us. These points assure us about our real worth and show us our true heritage.

We are nothing less than children of the King and before Him we are priceless.

If we accept this great truth, it does not matter what race, school, background, social class or temperament classification we belong to. We will accept ourselves completely and thus be enabled to grow up day by day with Jesus as our model.

How a person regards himself or herself is an important element in his or her relationship with others. People who do not give themselves value tend to have a defensive attitude and have difficulty in listening and understanding others.

If we evaluate ourselves in a positive way, there will be a

greater possibility of cultivating a good relationship with those we come in contact with.

To respect others, you need to respect yourself and to love others, you need to love yourself. It seems that human beings are losing self respect and dignity. It is true that values are changing, but it is essential to preserve personal dignity to develop positive self-esteem.

It has been said that dignity is to act according to standard and moral values. Therefore, it is important to be sure to act appropriately and honestly. If a person has neither principals or rules, she will not have self-control. She will have difficulty relating to others and usually will suffer from low self-esteem.

All of us have faults we find difficult to overcome, but we must not make these faults the focus of our lives. If we do, we begin to despise ourselves and soon lead useless and unhappy lives. We need to grasp God's promises. One of them says: "Cast all your anxiety on him because he cares for you" (1 Peter 5:7, NIV). I have been trying to keep this text alive in my mind. Many times I pray, "Lovely Father, You know me and You know that I can't solve

this problem. Please, take this burden into Your hands. Solve it for me." After my prayer, I hold my peace because the problem is not mine anymore but it is His, and the things are solved in unexpected ways.

It is wonderful to share with your husband not only the successes of life but the hardships as well. He is by your side giving you strong support and confidence. It is important to a woman to feel she is loved by her spouse. In feeling the sure love of her husband, she feels secure, positive and happy. That is the reason why a loved person feels more enthusiastic about life. She likes herself more and transmits the happiness of living well to those around her. Because she respects herself, she respects others as well. Consequently those around her respond to her joy and cooperate more.

A woman who has developed high self-esteem is aware of her personal value. She is loved, respected and inclined to success. She is prepared to struggle and win. Each victory generates another victory.

When she experiences victory, she also feels a sense of fulfillment; the task has been completed and the goal reached. There is no limit

to a woman when she puts herself in God's hands.

It is important that a person earnestly evaluates her own work. By honestly analyzing the results, she can see the failures and do better the next time.

Positive people look ahead to successes, not back to failures.

A woman with high self-esteem maintains her standards of behavior even when she is dealing with negative feelings such as guilt, rage and hatred. Though such feelings are real and need to be acknowledged, it is important not to let them rule. A self-assured woman will not let feelings threaten her. She knows it is unnecessary to be defensive, and she endeavors to find positive solutions to negative situations. She is mentally healthful because she is in touch with Jesus. He is part of her life, completing her happiness and joy of living.

If you have problems with your self-esteem, start by spending more time with Jesus. Only

He can help you overcome your negative feelings. This first step is the most important. He will awaken the great potential you have within and will show you that you are priceless. ❀

If you have problems with your self-esteem, start by spending more time with Jesus. Only He can help you overcome your negative feelings. This first step is the most important. He will awaken the great potential you have within and will show you that you are priceless.

"You are not to wait for great occasions or to expect extraordinary abilities before you go to work for God. You need not have a thought of what the world will think of you. If your daily life is a testimony to the purity and sincerity of your faith, and others are convinced that you desire to benefit them, your efforts will not be wholly lost."

(Steps to Christ, p. 83)



Do Pastors' Wives Actually go on Dates?

Annette Fites

Everyone needs to feel special. And you're not the exception! Do you and your husband consistently take time for one other? Can you carry on a conversation without discussing business (the church)?

Many magazine articles encourage "date night" once a month. We've tried. We've failed. We have seen how, at different seasons in our marriage, special times together happen in different ways. Let me give you a few examples:

When our girls were little we actually had more frequent "date nights." Granted, they were not once a month! We had some "adopted" grandparents who were willing to give free baby sitting, and we were free for an evening "on the town!" Now, that special evenings sometimes consisted of McDonalds and a movie at the \$2 theater or it may have included a fancier dinner and a visit to a viewing at a funeral home. Whatever the circumstances, I was determined to have a night out with my "preacher!" Oops, what I meant

Annette Fites and her husband live in Virginia, and they have been serving in full-time ministry for 15 years. Annette loves the outdoors, photography, curling up with a good book, and any kind of needlework! She works as a part-time secretary for her church which makes her husband not only her pastor but her boss as well. Her true focus is in trying to remain in God's will, be a helpmeet to her husband, and be a loving mom to her three girls ages 11, 13 and 14. All the rest are extras!

to say was my sweetheart! It was fun, plus it helped curb any jealous thoughts when my husband had coffee or lunch with a parishioner in town, and I was home with the girls dining on peanut butter and jelly sandwiches. It helped to make me feel loved and an important part of my husband's life. Mind you, he never did anything to make me question his love or loyalty, it was Satan working on me and my insecurities.

As the girls began school, "dates" were different but easier to accomplish. We switched from evenings out to "mid-day rendezvous" (sounds romantic, huh) in town for lunch. If we had gift certificates on hand, we would "pig out," if we had a "tight" week, we'd see how cheap we could eat while still enjoying just being together!

Our girls are now old enough to stay home by themselves and often choose not to attend "boring" open houses, birthday parties, and wedding receptions. Yes, most of these types of functions are "work," but we try to incorporate a feeling of "you and me" into the evening. I actually take days off from my job to enjoy my husband's day off so we can drive to the mountains or ride a long-distance to a hospital. We often stop at a favorite store or restaurant before going home. We enjoy the quiet time of simply being together during the

ride. It's not the "traditional" date, but it allows us time to catch up on each other's lives and keep the team spirit alive.

I don't care where we eat, what we do or where we go; I just want—and need—to be with my husband to continue developing "us!" Our relationship at work and church must develop so we can continue to be effective in the ministry together. Our relationship as mother and father continues to grow as our girls grow. Unfortunately, the "Annette and Denny" relationship can be shoved to the side without realizing it. I want my husband to not only be my "boss" (I work part-time as the church secretary), my pastor, the girls' father, but also to be my best friend and confidant! That takes work!

Do you take time in your marriage to continue developing your relationship as husband and wife, as yokesmates working side by side for the Lord? Do you pray about your priorities and try new approaches that might work in the different seasons of your life?

As Philippians 1:6 (NIV) says: "being confident of this, that He who began a good work in you will carry it on to completion until the day of Christ Jesus." God wants to continue "growing" you—all the facets of your life. Make sure you're allowing Him to "carry on!" ❀

A Woman

*Gloria A.
Castrejon*



Gloria A. Castrejon is the Translation Department Coordinator for the Inter-American Division. She is the spouse of Jaime Castrejon, the Inter-American Division Ministerial Secretary.

Once I was asked about my favorite feminine character. Since I had to present that character in a devotional, I carefully reflected on the inspirational significance and importance of the many feminine Bible characters, and finally decided on one which is both wonderful and relevant, to me the most important of them all. No, it is not Mary, even though we are so moved by her heart's grace and humility, and the fact that she was the mother of Jesus, our Saviour. I did not choose the mothers of Moses or Timothy, whose dedication to their sacred duties is a classic example for us; or probably queen Esther, whose story stirs up our imagination so high with the splendor of her beauty and the magnificence of the court. Neither did I go for the prudence of Abigail, or the love and gratitude shown by Mary of Magdala, which is also a story of endless resources.

The character I am referring to now is greater than them all, if considered individually, because this character encompasses all those feminine virtues and multiplies them in many other facets and circumstances. This woman I am talking about, doesn't have a name, neither does she have a

face. She is like those famous faceless Dominican dolls, without any features, representing the rich variety of physical features present in their people, that cannot be represented with one face.

The woman I'm referring to is the woman who didn't get her personal name written in the Bible. Even though she is mentioned indirectly, she is a vital and constant element of all the machinery that makes the story of God's people so strong and alive.

In Mexico, my country, the civil war made way to the insurgence of famous popular heroes, I am not referring to those that are mentioned in the history textbooks. The names of these peasant heroes are present in the popular songs of that period and still live in the mythical consciousness of the people. They are used as metaphors and symbols of many others that exhibited the same virtues. Within this procession of anonymous and popular heroes there are the "Juanas" and also the "Jesusitas" and the "Valentinas" (those valiant and self-denying "soladeras" who went along with their husbands in those crowded military trains, cooked for them and sometimes even fought in the battlefield when their men died before the

enemy.) Well, those names really make reference to the anonymous common heroes and heroines, the true heroes of the civil war.

The Bible is full of these anonymous, common heroines, women of all ages who followed the rules and lived their everyday lives without regrets, doing what they thought was God's will. They didn't hesitate even in giving their lives, as Paul said, as a living sacrifice; every day, every moment, in honor to God, to their husbands, their children, their neighbors, their fellow men. Just think of the mothers of all Bible heroes, whose names are not recorded in the Bible. Think of the thousands that journeyed on that long 40 year path to the promised land, their feet tired and souls wearied, deprived of even a little spot that they could call home and that unique feminine experience of being queen of that little kingdom. Think of the anonymous women's choir that so many times lifted the name of Jehovah, and those skilled feminine fingers that played the tambourine and cymbals. Think of all the faithful mothers of Israel that systematically taught their children the Word of God, building a tradition followed faithfully by those women whose names, we know, like Loida, Eunice, Mary and others.

Think of those who used their fingers to weave and clothe their loved ones; to cook and to be in charge of their household with dignity and honor. And also those who cried and suffered at the death of their fathers, husbands, brothers, and friends during the hardships of Israel's difficult history as a nation. The Hebrew economy did not provide much

space for the abilities or talents of a woman to flourish, except those relating to the home and family. As early as in the New Testament, you can find examples of women

*Not by wearing the mask
of a given color, race,
profession or stereotype, but
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bless every one of us . . .*

who contributed their financial and moral support and were acknowledged by the apostle Paul in many of his writings.

In modern times, society has required and accepted a wider feminine role. Women have added new dimensions to the spectrum of their influence and labor. It would be impossible to list all professions and tasks that women participate in modern society. We are all part of that anonymous face, distinctly feminine, casting in just one image of those virtues and talents of our beloved Bible heroines: The Marys, the Lydias, the Marthas, the Ruths, and the Esthers. The idea is for each to live that peculiar life God has assigned to us, using our talents to the utmost with faithfulness and joy; and being aware of the fact that there is no area in this task that is unimportant or insignificant. Every single thread makes its way throughout the pattern of the weaving. Every single one holds the others in place. Negligence or weakness in

just one thread destroys the beauty and firmness of the whole.

May all the single virtues depicted by the feminine Bible characters and many others, which by the grace of God we may be able to acquire, be a part now of this great image of the Adventist woman. Not by wearing the mask of a given color, race, profession or stereotype, but in the diversity of talents and functions in Jesus Christ, God certainly will bless every one of us as we participate in the making of this wonderful image of feminine love, faith, service and living sacrifice. ❀

*"Give, and it will
be given to you.
A good measure,
pressed down,
shaken together
and running over,
will be poured into
your lap. For with
the measure you
use, it will be
measured to you"*
Luke 6:38, NIV.

Stress in Clergy Marriages

Val Smetheram

There is a large dropout rate in ministerial ranks these days and very few younger recruits want to fill the spaces. This is a serious problem and deserves particular attention. Many families are not willing to subject their marriages and home lives to the intense stress obviously suffered by clergy families.

What can be done to counteract this trend? A start has been made by endeavoring to get a true picture of what it is like to be a clergy wife.

One writer said that "being a minister today can be one of the most difficult callings in the world" and "being his wife can be sheer agony in spite of dedication and piety." That thought is echoed by numerous pastors' wives. Many of my colleagues agreed with me when I said that though I would support my husband in whatever line of work he chose, he was the one "called," not me. Such honest thoughts are hard to share. A pastor's wife is expected to joyfully embrace and participate in her husband's ministry. With a smile on her face, she is expected to put aside her frustrations and disgruntlements. Inevitably, if such feelings are not recognized

and resolved, a breakdown situation can easily occur.

There is no doubt that children of clergy marriages often have to rely on one parent. I think of old friends, who when still new in ministry, experienced enormous pressures on their family life. The mother did most of the parenting while the children were growing up and the children grew up resenting their father for always being "on call." It seemed their father was available for anyone and everyone except his own family. When he was at home, he was either studying or on the phone. Their mother, a wonderful Mum and a valuable church worker, felt on "overload" from the word "go." After some years of trying to cope, the home broke up with great bitterness all around.

The expectations of a minister's family are too high. In other professions, the hours that ministers work would not be tolerated. Sixty to eighty hours per week is usual. It certainly has been in our case, and I have no reason to believe otherwise of any of our colleagues. Most people, being unaware of the amount of hours a minister works, appear to be unappreciative. And if a pastor is invalidated, due to burnout, nervous collapse or whatever,



Val Smetheram is a pastor's wife who lives in Australia.

many will say he was foolish to have worked so hard. Most do not understand the pressures of the ministry.

Church authorities get a bargain when they hire a minister. Not only do they get a full-time employee working up to twice the hours for a 40-hour wage, they also get another worker (his wife) thrown in for free. This is probably the norm in most denominations.

Some years ago my husband and I ministered to a very busy parish. At one point I reached the stage where the phone bell nearly caused me to scream. It rang constantly. I lost count of the number of meals interrupted. Finally the receiver was taken off at mealtimes, but many times, the children and I ate alone. During our stay there, my mother passed away, we almost lost our elder child in a road accident, and my husband had to help sort out three crumbling marriages. My husband was close to burnout at that time, but I did not know where to obtain help. Today I wonder how many clergy couples are suffering silently, afraid to admit they need help or unable to find the assistance they need so badly.

Since our children have "flown the nest," I spent a year in full-time study. I found the experience positively therapeutic. The following year I became reacquainted with an old love . . . writing. . . then branched into poetry and art. I enjoyed a little success (some publications) and enormous satisfaction. We tend to forget that we all have some "hidden ability" that God graciously blesses us with, and it is up to us to develop that talent. In short, we have to "make time" to have something absorbing to lift our minds from church and

people problems. We owe it to ourselves and to God.

In most cases, clergy marriages in trouble do not know where to go for help. A trustworthy counselor is needed, someone unattached to the administration and with no vested interest in the employees or their jobs. Several denominations have addressed the problem and are providing services designed to defuse stressful situations before they are beyond recall.

I think sadly of two couples . . . both under tremendous workloads! In both cases, the men slipped into adulterous situations. Wife number one was devastated. She had no idea of what had been going on. Although forced to resign, her husband, having unloaded the guilty secret, began his healing immediately after confession. Hers, I fancy, took considerably longer. She was utterly traumatized by the whole episode and desperately needed ministering to; however, her only visitors were three or four ministry couples with whom she and her husband had worked. She and her husband must have experienced intense pain. Unfortunately, the system finds these embarrassing situations impossible to handle and the people suffering the most are not cared for.

Wife number two was also devastated. She was left with several children to raise and educate. Although church people carefully avoided her (probably through embarrassment) for many months she still attended church. Her early despairing letters were heartbreaking. Because she lived in another country I could only support her with prayers and letters.

Marriage number one was salvaged. The couple was able

to put the past behind them and make a fresh start; however, their spiritual enthusiasm was somewhat dampened by their perception of the coldness of the church system. It is fairly certain that the whole family is lost from church membership forever.

Unfortunately, marriage number two was irreconcilable.

Following are some suggestions for those marriages experiencing trouble:

a. As already mentioned, a trusted counselor should be available.

b. An official limit should be set on pastoral working hours (unless in a life or death situation), e.g. no phone calls or visits outside office hours. I confess I have no idea how the clergy can limit their working hours as most seem to become workaholics. An occupational hazard perhaps! But if the policy had official backing, it would be a beginning.

c. A retreat for clergy wives (minus children) would be wonderful, although understandably difficult to implement. Such retreats have been successfully carried out in New Zealand and are very much appreciated.

d. Marriage Enrichment Seminars are needed. My husband and I were able to attend an excellent seminar that we found very beneficial. Topics to be discussed should include how to lessen stress in marriage and how to find more time for one's spouse and family. The trusted counselor should be responsible to ensure the seminars are available to every pastoral couple. Wives usually have children to care for, thus it would be beneficial to provide childcare so both husband and wife may attend the seminars.

e. Stressed people benefit from

a complete change: bushwalking, gardening, farming, or an organized exercise program that is reasonably physical. There should be no heavy study, and the environment should refresh both mind and body. Perhaps three or four days, twice a year, should automatically be slotted into the year's planner.

f. A comprehensive questionnaire should be given to all the pastors' spouses. (I believe this has been done on a limited scale.) This should be handled by the trusted counselor to ensure complete anonymity. While many wives would probably be unwilling to state their concerns openly, this method of obtaining information would be non-threatening. The counselor could spend a few days with each family interviewing wives apart from their husbands in order to extract honest responses, not what the wives feel they should answer.

The "goldfish-bowl syndrome" is horribly real for most of us. Everyone suffers, especially the children. Many P.K.'s rebel against the stress of life in the manse.

These stresses are part of the realities of our increasingly pressured pace of society. What happens in the world is reflected in the church and in clergy marriages. Focusing on clergy marriages is a very important issue of today, and I believe church administrations of all denominations should take heed and make this problem their top priority.

I am encouraged when I hear about groups such as Sonscape in the United States and John Mark Ministries in Australia. They have chosen to address this problem and deal with the stresses incurred in clergy marriages. May God bless their efforts and ours as we all try to help one another. ❀

10 Ways to Celebrate God

David and Claudia Arp

Aren't you thrilled to simply be outside? Why not take advantage of the season and plan some outside family devotions right in the middle of God's wonderful world. Clip and save the following ideas and randomly choose from them over the next couple of months!

1. Psalms 33:6-8. On a clear, starry night have your evening prayers outside. Pray that your conscience would be as clear as the starry, night sky!

2. Psalms 84:11, 12. On a sunshiny day exercise together and talk about how God is your sun and shield. Don't forget the sun screen!

3. Psalms 74:16, 17. Talk about how God created His boundaries in His Creation as you walk by a stream or stroll on a beach. Pray for wisdom in creating boundaries for your family.

4. Psalms 90. Rejoice together as a family because God is eternal, above and beyond all that He made. Make a list of things to rejoice with and for from Psalms 90.

5. Psalms 85:10-13. As a family plant a small garden, window box, or planter. Talk about how God gives a harvest of goodness. Discuss ways you can grow spiritually as a family this spring and summer as you watch your plants grow.

6. Psalms 92:12-15. Pray to stay "fresh and green." Take a family walk and look at all the different shades of green in God's creations and how the colors in nature harmonize and don't clash. Talk about your own uniqueness and how you can harmonize your family constellation.

7. Psalms 92:1-5. Proclaim His love in the morning and His faithfulness at night. Get up early and watch the sunrise together as a family and then later in the day, together watch the sun set and offer your prayers to God.

8. Psalms 95:1-7. Jump for joy on the Rock of our salvation! Take a nature hike and study the rocks. For the more adventuresome, go rock climbing or find a safe rock and jump off!

9. Psalms 98:7-9. Clap with the rivers, sing with the mountains! Go wading in a stream together. Sing your favorite chorus on your favorite mountain trail! If you live in the "flat lands," rent a video of the Alps and sing along as a family as you watch it. Talk about how the mountains show God's majesty!

10. Psalms 19:1, 2. Pray that you and your family will hear what creation says about our Creator as you take a nature hike together. ❀

David and Claudia Arp are family life educators and the parents of three adult sons. They are co-founders and co-directors of Marriage Alive International, Inc. Also, they are authors of PEP: Parents Encouraging Parents (Cook) for both mothers and parents of teens.

No Empty Chairs

June Taylor



June Taylor served 32 years in the Inter-American Division as teacher, librarian, secretary, and editor. Since coming to the General Conference, she worked as an administrative secretary and in "retirement" works part-time in the North American Division. She enjoys history and taking visitors sight seeing in the Washington, D.C. area.

The profusion of blooming poinsettias in the neighbors' yard across the street and the aroma of carrot "fruit" cake baking were about the only indications that Christmas was anywhere near. The ache in my heart was reflected in the slow motion of my fingers as they reluctantly hung satiny blue ornaments on the white-sprayed tree. Why *did* my husband have to get a tree, anyway—it only made the lonesomeness that much worse.

Thoughts of past Christmases, when an enthusiastic son and two lively daughters with their friends helped decorate the tree, bake the cookies, and wrap the gifts, made the heartache a bit more intense. All three seemed to be endowed with an amazing capacity for collecting school friends with no place to go for Christmas. And they had possessed an equally amazing confidence that Dad and Mother would provide a nook and a welcome for their friends.

Although sometimes I had felt a slight tendency toward acquiring a martyr complex—for instance, the time one daughter brought home four friends and the other one brought two—I always ended up enjoying the young people more than they could have enjoyed being with us. They never complained, even

when their "nook" turned out to be only space to spread out a sleeping bag on the rug. They pitched in to help with everything, and were appreciative of home cooking and the kind of Christmas weather that encouraged picnics on the beach. Memory recreated the young faces for me now—faces with thoughtful blue eyes, and mischievous brown ones. But curly red heads, long straight blonde hair, and waving brown hair faded into the corners of the room as I reluctantly pulled my mind back to the quiet present.

"So what's so bad about a little lonesomeness?" I began a little lecture to myself. "You know you're glad your son is a minister pilot in a jungle area—well, the minister part, at least! And for sure you're happy he has a wife to back him up and a little son who keeps life from getting dull." The self-inflicted lecture continued, "Even if you could you wouldn't turn your author-teacher-wife-of-a-brand-new-doctor daughter back into a little girl again, would you? Well, maybe not, but . . ."

Just then my hand automatically picked up the star for the top of the tree, and I remembered the day when our younger daughter helped select it. At that point all stoicism collapsed, and tears splashed onto the star. Reflected

in the shining drops, I saw our younger daughter as we had last seen her more than a year before through the window as our plane took off from the airport in Queenstown, New Zealand. Even though we were happy she had married a fine young minister, news of her poor health in the past few months was causing us great anxiety. And Australia was literally half a world away!

But, after saying a prayer for each of the three, I firmly placed the star on the tree, hopped down from the chair, and set about putting the house in order. At the same time I was mentally making plans for Christmas dinner the next day.

We had invited a friend of one daughter to bring her parents over for Christmas dinner. She had been baptized a short time before, and was finding it difficult to explain her new faith to dad and mom. Then we found out about another couple who were facing their first Christmas without any of their children home, so we invited them.

Some time later, as supper time neared, the house looked invitingly hospitable, and good smells were issuing from the kitchen. The telephone rang. I picked up the receiver and heard my husband's voice saying, "Honey, this is going to be a shock to you, but I didn't know what else to do."

He explained that while working alone in the office (it was a half-holiday) he answered the telephone, and a young woman told him she was in desperate need of help. Several years before she had been a student at the local academy, where she became an Adventist in mind if not in heart. Then she ran away from home to get married, and was alienated from her family. Now she had a

three-week-old baby. Her husband and brother were out of work, and they had been put out of their apartment the day before because they couldn't pay the rent. The three adults and the three-week-old baby had spent the previous night on a park bench. Now they were exhausted and hungry.

"There was nothing else I could do, honey, so I told them I'd go pick them up. You'd better get some food ready because they haven't eaten for three days," he added, and hung up.

Half in a state of shock, I stood holding the silent receiver to my ear for a minute longer. My thoughts were in a turmoil as I put water on to boil for spaghetti. Some of those thoughts were fearful ones. "Is it safe in these days to take strangers into your home?" Verses from the Bible came to mind:

"Truly, I say to you, as you did it not to one of the least of these, you did it not to me" (Matt. 25:45, RSV).

"Do not neglect to show hospitality to strangers, for thereby some have entertained angels unawares" (Heb. 13:2, RSV).

About then I heard the car turn into the carport and I went to open the door. A lean and bedraggled girl who couldn't have been more than 18 or so carried a beautiful baby boy in her arms.

"Do you know how to make formula?" she asked me. "I don't seem to have enough milk for him."

I did the best I could with what I had in the house, and soon the baby was contentedly drinking from a bottle.

When the rest of us sat down to eat, the heaped-high platter of spaghetti disappeared fast. "You're a good cook," the girl's brother said, adding that he had been assistant chef at a tourist hotel.

Then as I went out to the kitchen to refill the platter, I stopped in my tracks as I heard the new father, who was quite a bit older than his wife, refer to his time in prison. He also mentioned his parents' running a business in a small Midwestern town. When I returned to the table I asked him whether he'd like to call his parents, but he replied, "No. They won't have anything to do with me since I was sent to jail."

Later, after the unexpected guests had taken showers and were in bed, my husband, recognizing that the problem was too big for us to handle alone, went to the office and called the pastor of the church we attended. He said that in the morning he would get in touch with a local organization that was set up to handle such cases.

After that, we settled down for the night ourselves. Was it lack of faith or was it prudence that made me lock the bedroom door? Long after my husband was asleep, thoughts on how to put Jesus' teachings into practice in a world plagued with sin and crime kept me wide awake.

On Christmas morning there were no empty chairs at the table. Our three guests again ate heartily. When the church pastor came for them, the husband expressed their appreciation for food and warmth and said it had given them courage to face the future.

At Christmas dinner late that afternoon, we felt a new closeness to the other lonely couple, and we strengthened the friendship already begun with the parents of our daughter's friend.

As I knelt to pray that night, I was astonished to realize that the dreaded lonely Christmas was over, and I hadn't even had a minute to feel sorry for myself. The empty chairs had been filled. ❀



Shepherdess International News

Asia-Pacific Division

✿ Mrs. Mellie Villosio, Shepherdess Coordinator for the North Philippine Union, coordinated pastors' wives in the Union to do evangelistic meetings. She approached George and Marilyn Johnson (Ministerial Secretary and Shepherdess Coordinator for the Asia-Pacific Division) for funding for these pastors' wives to do evangelism. Elder Johnson agreed to provide U.S. \$2,000 for 20 small meetings. Thus far over 324 baptisms have resulted from these committed pastors' wives and a ministerial secretary who believed in them.



Converts with the pastors' wives

✿ Under the planning of George and Marilyn Johnson, Shepherdess Coordinators and Ministerial Secretaries met for four days at beautiful Mauk Lek for the quinquennial advisory. Enthusiastic reports were given of Shepherdess activities around the Division, which included evangelistic meetings by pastoral wives, retreats for pastoral families, and meetings for ministry wives. Ideas were exchanged on

dealing with problems unique to the family serving in ministry.

Euro-Africa Division

✿ A cheerful group of ministers' wives from the German Swiss Conference met together for three days in June in the beautiful mountains of Bernese Oberland. The presentations, discussions, songs, and prayers centered on the subject of "peace." Interruptions with gymnastics, theoretically and practically, made it easy to concentrate. On one evening the women had the special experience of coloring silk-scarfs. They all were thrilled by the beautiful results.



German Swiss Conference ministers' wives in Bernese Oberland

✿ Nearly one hundred pastors' wives from the Czecho-Slovakian Union accompanied their husbands to a mountain resort at Malenovice near the border of Czech Republic and Poland for a time of relaxation and spiritual refreshment. They represented the Bohemian, Moravia-Silesian, and Slovakian Conferences.

Perched on the side of a mountain in northern Moravia, the former communist retreat center was alive with singing, prayer, and praise. Several of the ladies were part of the orchestra that accompanied the song service at each main meeting. Several ladies contributed testimonies and music to the Sabbath afternoon praise service. Between meetings you could see them walking hand in hand with their husbands across the mountain meadow or along shaded trails beside gurgling streams.

Leading out in the women's meetings was Geri Müller, Shepherdess Coordinator for the Euro-Africa Division. She was assisted by Dorothy Eaton Watts, Shepherdess sponsor for British Columbia, Canada, who spoke on "Communicating Love" and "Success Secrets for Pastors' Wives."

Dorothy also spoke to the combined pastors' and wives' meetings on the topics "Stress and the Pastoral Family," "Expectations and the Pastor's Wife," and "Team Ministry."



Czech Union pastors' wives in discussion groups.



Geri Müller (right) Shepherdess Coordinator for Euro-Africa Division with her translator, Marta.



Czech Union pastors' wives listen to their seminars.

North American Division

✿ Arizona Conference ministry wives met together with Kay Kuzma for a special camp meeting breakfast at the Prescott Resort and Convention Center. They elected new officers, received gifts, and enjoyed the special message Kay gave just for them.

South American Division



North Ecuador Mission pastors' wives join in song as they begin their Shepherdess meeting.



The Bolivian Shepherdess group meet with Vasti Viana, Shepherdess Coordinator for the South American Division, for a special day of meetings.



Pastors' wives from the Central Peru Conference at their retreat.



Hostesses for the Shepherdess dinner at the University in Lima include Dinna, Alicia, Vasti, and Antomieta.

Trans-European Division

✿ Almost 30 pastors' wives from the Middle East Union participated in the World Ministers Council held in beautiful Amman, Jordan. The featured speakers included Jeane Zachary, a pastor's wife and evangelist from California, who spoke about practical ways for a pastor's wife to lead others to Jesus. Margarida Sarli and Gizelle Hasel, a mother/daughter team, both pastors' wives, presented an unique and interesting seminar on perspectives about growing up as a Pastor's Kid and becoming a pastor's wife. Joyce Neergaard, the Middle East Union Shepherdess Coordinator, spoke sincerely and reached hearts about having a personal relationship with Jesus. Sharon Cress, from the General Conference, was also privileged to speak and fellowship with these pastors' wives for four days of meetings.



Joyce Neergaard stresses the importance of a relationship with Jesus.



Jeane Zachary and Nadia Watson, a pastor's wife from Egypt, who translated for all the meetings.



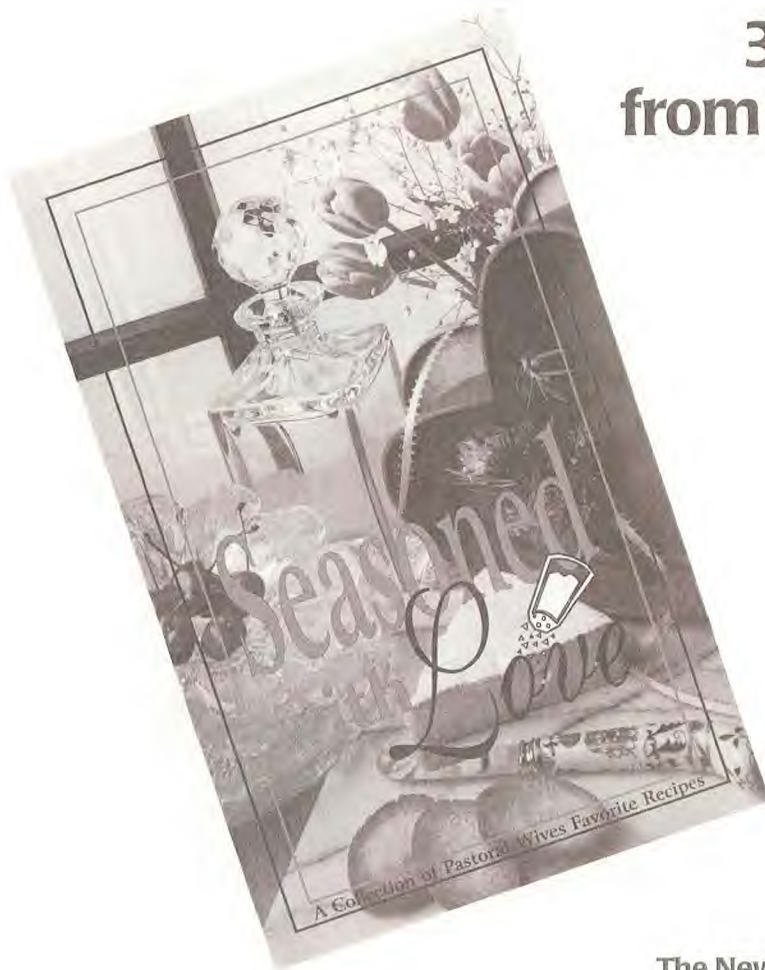
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