

# The Journal



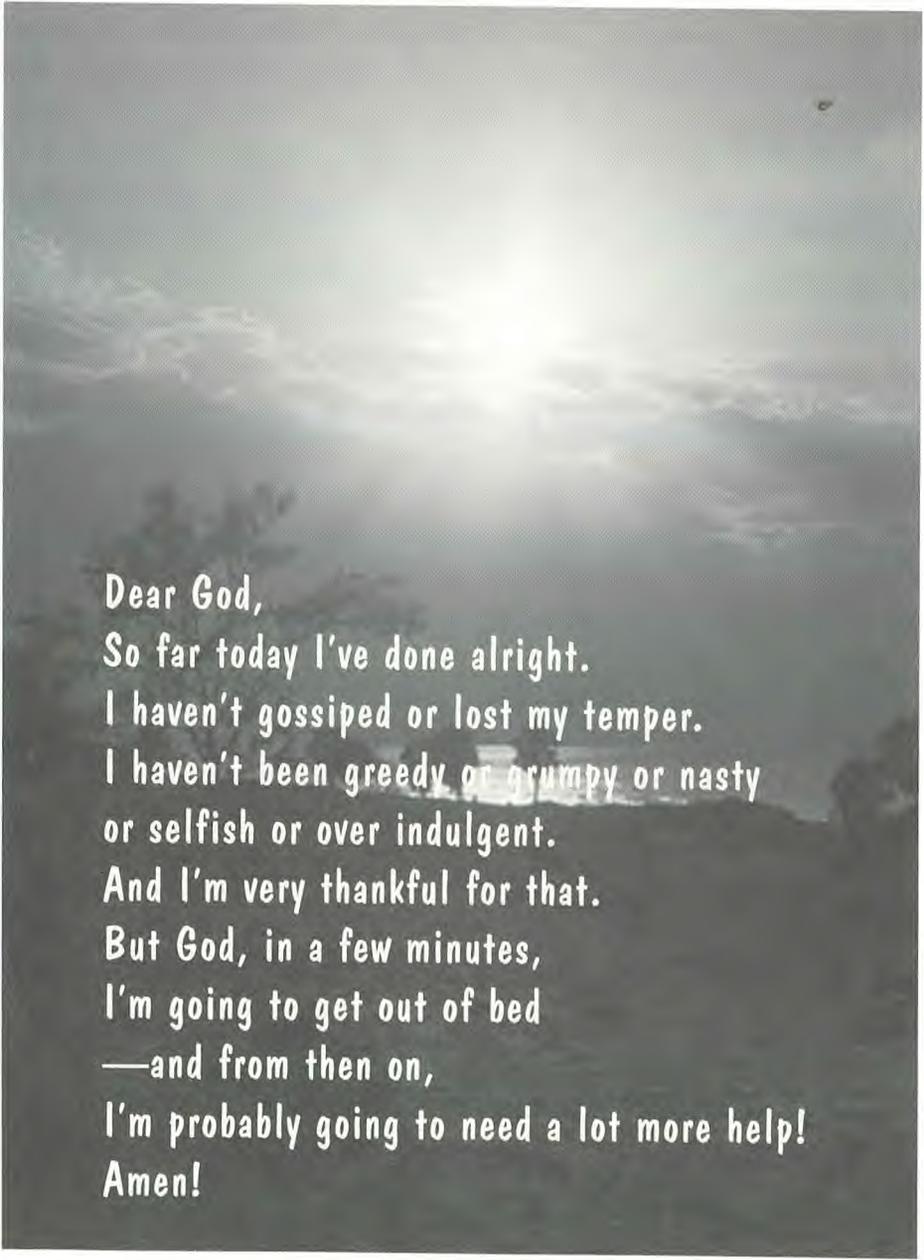
A SHEPHERDESS INTERNATIONAL RESOURCE FOR MINISTRY SPOUSES

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Dear God,  
So far today I've done alright.  
I haven't gossiped or lost my temper.  
I haven't been greedy or grumpy or nasty  
or selfish or over indulgent.  
And I'm very thankful for that.  
But God, in a few minutes,  
I'm going to get out of bed  
—and from then on,  
I'm probably going to need a lot more help!  
Amen!

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# The Journal

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## Editor's Musings

Before we know it, Christmas will be here! I like Christmas for a lot of reasons and I would like to share two of them with you.

First, it gives us an opportunity to remember in a special way and at a special time that Jesus willingly left the splendor and majesty of heaven to come down to this earth as a helpless baby, putting the fate of the King of the Universe in the hands of mere humans. The God who controlled all the heavens and universe made Himself vulnerable and fragile. He controlled nothing. His own destiny was in the hands of fallen humanity. Not many other times during the year do we dwell on these thoughts in depth.

Secondly, I like Christmas because it brings out the best in many people. There are those who like Ebenezer Scrooge see it as only opportunistic and commercial. But others find it a time to exercise a bit more patience, stop to say a kind word, give a little more generously to the poor, and in general act better toward their fellow human beings. Maybe it is all perspective.

It would be my wish this particular Christmas season for you as spouses of ministers to experience these two particular joys of the season. On the first, give study and devotional time to the sacrifice Jesus made when He came to this miserable place—a world He so perfectly created and we so quickly ruined. Think of something you treasured, perhaps something you hand-made that was willfully destroyed. Think how you felt and multiply that by millions, and that must have been the hurt that Jesus experienced when we ruined what He created. Also, contemplate the issue of control. It seems to me that too many people want to control other people and other circumstances. As ministers' families we have a great influence over those to whom we are responsible. Let's make sure it is a ministry, not a control. God is the one in control, not us.

Secondly, let's see if we can end up better women for experiencing this Christmas season. Maybe the habits of kindness and patience can follow us all the days of our lives because we made it a habit during this time period.

The season could become a rat-race of programming and entertaining. Instead, let's vow that it will be a time of contemplation of Jesus and how we can better reflect His love to our friends, neighbors and families.

Merry Christmas,

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# Shepherdesses: Who Are They?



*Glenda C. Catane*

Shepherdess is a very fitting name for the wife of the one who shepherds the flock. She is the one who fills a unique position. Through the many facets of her character, she reflects God's light to the people around her. She completes or "rounds-out" her husband's ministry just as a jewel complements an outfit.

Genesis 2:18 says, "And the Lord God said, 'It is not good that man should be alone. I will make a helpmeet for him.'" No companion could be found for Adam among the animals. It had to be one of his kind. In God's plan since the creation of Eve, the wife is therefore a helpmeet to compliment the man. A pastoral wife plays a valuable part in the ministry for she is the silent figure who provides moral support and a prayer in every step of the pastor's way. With her, the pastor-husband knows that he has a ready critic, admirer and "thermostat."

When Christ called His disciples to follow Him, He offered no flattering prospect in this life. His shepherdess is likewise playing a major role in this "self-sacrificing ministry" in the form

of loneliness, the meager ministerial paycheck, and being always taken as a model (whether she likes it or not).

Is she affected by these "waves"? It depends whether she chooses to glide on them, or let them push her away from the shore. But as she clings to Christ, the Rock of Ages, an ever present source of strength, the shepherdess will eventually reach a friendly port.

The role that pastoral wives are playing is of such importance that steps have been taken by our leaders to provide a new organization for these special ladies. Shepherdess International is a program sponsored by the General Conference under the auspices of the Ministerial Association. Its chapters assist the minister's spouse to grow spiritually, develop personally and clarify her role. It helps her form a team ministry built around her unique gifts and abilities. She also finds fellowship in a support system (with fellow pastoral wives among others) and is assisted in developing stronger family relationships.

This unique position of a

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minister's wife places her under special stresses and expectations from the congregation that are not experienced by any other women in the church. It is important that the shepherdess feels loved and appreciated and that the church expresses this to her also. How can we support them? Here are some ways:

- Pray for her. She needs the strength of the Lord for her daily living.

- Appreciate her. She deserves some sincere praise for her efforts. Let her know that you care by sending a note or a card or telling her family.

- Be supportive of her programs and projects. She needs your willingness and cooperation as she works for the Lord.

- Be kind and honest with her. All criticisms even when done constructively, hurt. If you must do it, tell her lovingly and in private.

- Accept her for what she is. She does not have a monopoly of all talents. Help her realize that you understand her, by protecting and assisting her in areas where she is limited.

- Be friendly. Friends have a way of lifting. On some occasions, she needs to know she is not alone.

- Love her family. Warmly welcome her family to your home. Treat her children with understanding; they are not unlike other kids.

In fulfilling the mission of the church, let us continue to provide a stronger support for one of the most essential (yet rarely recognized) workers of the church—the shepherdesses. ❀



## Christmas Reminders

### May Christmas

**gifts** remind you of God's greatest gift,

His only begotten Son.

**candles** remind you of Him who is the

"Light of the world."

**trees** remind you of another tree upon

which He died for you.

**cheer** remind you of Him who said,

"Be of good cheer."

**bells** remind you of the glorious

proclamation of His birth.

**carols** remind you of the song

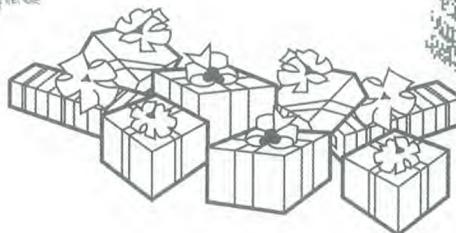
the angels sang, "Glory to

God in the highest."

**season** remind you in every

way of Jesus Christ

your King.



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# Time Not Things

Jill Briscoe



It's hard being poor. Yet too often ministry support leaves no money for *extras*. It's especially hard being poor at Christmas because that's when the extras demand to be bought. But then the Lord Jesus Christ knows all about that. He was poor at Christmas, too.

And once Jesus left His poor home in the poor village town of Nazareth, He grew up and lived poor. At one point He said, "Foxes and holes, birds have nests, but the Son of God has nowhere to lay His head." In the wilderness Satan had tempted Him to use His God-given powers to meet His own very legitimate needs. Seeing His heavenly Father had chosen not to supply Him with

those legitimate needs at that particular time, Jesus chose to do without and stay without.

Jesus went through many a holiday poor as a church mouse. He never had money for presents! He knows how that feels and yet He came as a poor man to make many rich, and we can have that focus and mind set this season, too, if we so choose. He came to give us a gift, not to receive one: the gift of Himself.

Think of it. The greatest thing we have to give to anyone is ourselves. Our love, our attention, an hour of prayer, a listening ear, a spiritual blessing. These gifts can make those we love rich beyond their wildest dreams and cannot be measured in dollars and cents.

Years ago as Christmas approached, our daughter and I sat down to figure out the family gift list. I don't know why it was usually left up to us to decide who gave what to whom, but that's how it was in our family. We came to the conclusion that none of us had everything we wanted, but all of us had everything we needed. The one thing we were all short on was time with each other. That year we decided to try an experiment and give each other *time not things*. This necessitated being creative

—brainstorming, and asking God for good ideas.

"Maybe the boys would enjoy tickets to the basketball game together," Judy suggested. "Perhaps you and I could go to a pretty Victorian tea shop and have English tea and a good talk together," I proposed.

Not all things we came up with cost money either. Judy gave her Dad and herself a run in a charity race—something they had to train for and therefore spend precious moments with each other. One way or another that Christmas we managed to give each other the priceless gift of time.

After all, Jesus came that first Christmas night to give us His time—30 years of it to be precise. What a gift. I'm so glad He didn't bring earthly gifts with Him. Those are things that would only last a short time—treasures that moth and rust would undoubtedly corrupt, and where thieves could break through and steal.

This Christmas we may be poor as this world counts riches, but in giving ourselves to each other without reservation, as Jesus did that first Christmas night, we can all know wealth beyond anything this poor world might have to offer! ❀

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*Jill serves as advisor to the Women's Ministries at Elmbrook Church in Brookfield, Wisconsin, where her husband, Stuart, has served as senior pastor since 1970. She is executive editor of Just Between Us, a magazine for ministry wives and women in ministry. She hosts a television program for women called "Bridges," which is seen on cable TV in five states. She also advises numerous non-profit organizations, and serves as a director of World Relief and Christianity Today, Inc.*

*To meet Jill Briscoe is to sense her "heartbeat" for God, for women, and for her family. As she strives to stay close to the Lord's own heartbeat, He has blessed her with wisdom, wit, and disarming honesty. Most of all, she wants her words to make a difference in our world, doing their part to help His kingdom come.*

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# Saving a Life on the Way to Bangladesh



*Dorothy Biswas*

*Dorothy Biswas was a pastor's kid's. She saw her father give first aid to church members in almost every church he served. This prompted her to take nursing as a profession. She does not practice nursing now, as the Adventist hospital has been closed in Bangladesh, but for the last ten years she has worked as an office secretary. She is also the Shepherdess Coordinator of the Bangladesh Union. Her husband, R. K. Biswas is treasurer of the Bangladesh Union. Her hobbies are singing, cooking, gardening, visiting friends, and sewing.*



*"I was a stranger, and ye took me in . . . I was sick, and ye visited me."  
Matt. 25:35-36.*

**I**t is very difficult to live alone in today's sophisticated world. Therefore, I was excited when I had the opportunity to share a long flight from Los Angeles to Bangladesh. I would like to share my story with you.

I was at the airport ready to board my flight when a stranger approached me. "Alpha (sister in Muslim terms), where are you going?" she asked. I replied, "I am going to Bangladesh." She then asked, "Could you please help my mother? She is going to Bangladesh too and she is scared to be traveling alone."

I immediately agreed to care for this stranger's mother. I looked forward to the company. After introductions were made, my new friend, Boro Ahapa, and I boarded a huge double-decker plane. After twelve hours of flight, we landed at the Narita Airport in Japan. The plane needed fuel. Because I had not been assigned a seat next to my new friend, I took the opportunity to check on her. She said she wasn't feeling well. I too was feeling a bit sick. We both decided

to forgo the next meal served on the plane.

After refueling, the plane took off for the second leg of our journey. We traveled for eight hours. We landed at the Singapore Airport at 1:00 a.m. We had a six-hour layover until our next flight. Boro Ahapa, four other women, and I sat together in a waiting area. We rested and spent time talking to one another.

By 5:00 a.m., Boro Ahapa still was not feeling well. She was feeling very giddy. She asked me to pour water over her head. I did that, but she still felt bad. She began to cry. She said she thought she was going to die.

I was very worried. I was taking care of a stranger who spoke no English. I prayed to the Lord. Then I went to the information desk at the airport. I requested a doctor. Unfortunately, the airport security person could not get in touch with a physician. I became more worried.

Eventually a nurse was sent to check on Boro Ahapa. After examining her, he said she was in need of a doctor's care. He called a physician and explained the urgency of the situation. The doctor arrived at 7:00 a.m. and immediately decided Boro Ahapa

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*“Christian people are good and helpful people.  
I will not forget you as long as I live.”*

needed to go to his clinic.

I was in a predicament. If I went to the clinic with my new friend, I would miss my plane. I thought about the fact that I am a Christian nurse and a pastor's wife. I felt she needed help so I went to the clinic with her.

After examining Boro Ahapa, the doctor discovered she had high blood pressure. He gave her some medicine and stressed the importance of her taking the medicine regularly. He presented Boro Ahapa with a bill for \$120.00. The bill seemed somewhat high so I requested that the doctor lower the cost of the visit. Fortunately he did. He charged Boro Ahapa \$100.00 and she paid

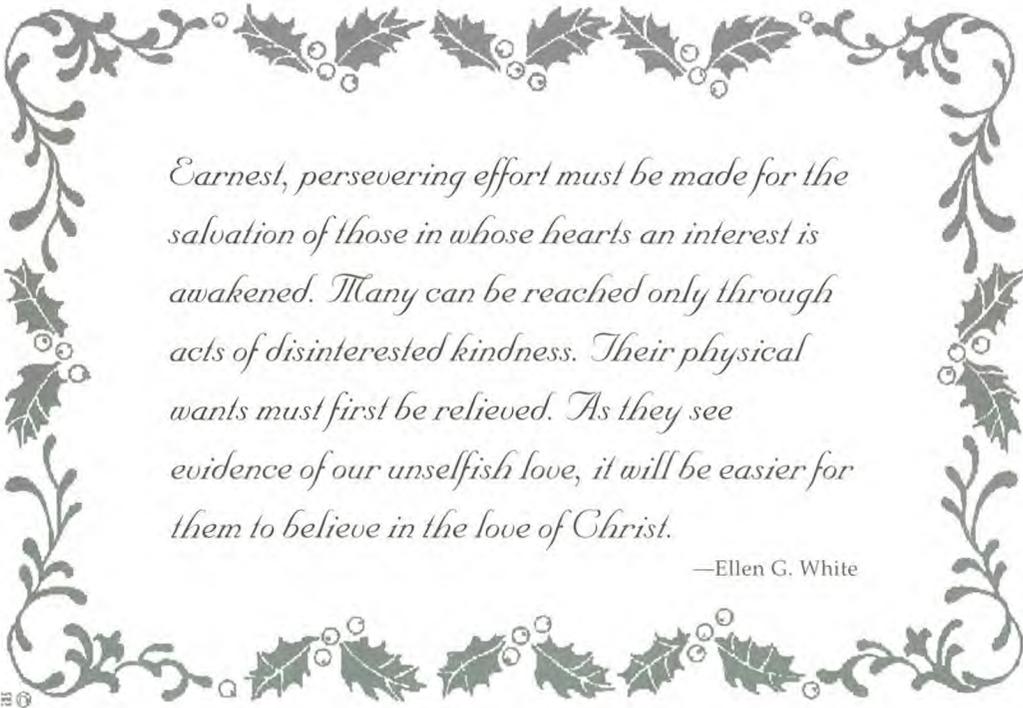
it with a check.

We returned to the airport in a miraculously short time. I could not believe that our plane had not departed. God had worked a miracle. Boro Ahapa and I boarded the plane. We were able to sit by one another. My new friend was feeling better and I praised God for the care he had given us. Boro Ahapa said, “Christian people are good and helpful people. I will not forget you as long as I live.”

As Boro Ahapa and I talked, I asked her if she knew why her blood pressure had risen so high. She told me she had been worried about her golden ornaments. She had put them in her luggage and then forgotten to lock her bags.

She was worried the golden ornaments would be taken by the custom officers at the Bangladesh Airport. Her worry over her material possessions had almost killed her.

Life is more valuable than time and golden ornaments. I praise God that I was given an opportunity to share that fact with Boro Ahapa. She and I discussed the power of our loving Lord Jesus Christ. We talked of the miracles that had occurred on our trip. God had placed me in a position where I could “love my neighbor as myself.” I pray that the same opportunity will come to each of you. ❀



*Earnest, persevering effort must be made for the salvation of those in whose hearts an interest is awakened. Many can be reached only through acts of disinterested kindness. Their physical wants must first be relieved. As they see evidence of our unselfish love, it will be easier for them to believe in the love of Christ.*

—Ellen G. White

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# The Perfect Pastor's Wife

Jean Coleman

## Being Everything to Everyone?

Jean and her husband, Jack, are co-pastors of The Tabernacle, an International Christian Center located in Laurel, Maryland. She has a deep love for pastors' wives, and her monthly letter, *The Pastor's Helpmate* is widely distributed to these dedicated women who serve the church so faithfully. The Colemans travel thousands of miles every year carrying the gospel. Their hearts have been especially linked together with the nation of India where their church has a school and two orphanages.



I feel that the Lord is calling the church to spend more time in prayer," my husband announced at the close of a recent Wednesday night service. "So I am setting apart thirty minutes before each mid-week service for prayer, and also an additional thirty minutes at the close. No one is under any obligation to come early or stay late, but the alter will be open for those who want to spend extra time in the presence of the Lord."

Inwardly I groaned, sensing that I was going to be under an obligation to attend every week. I could see Wednesday prayer time stretching out before me from here to infinity. Every Wednesday evening I would be counted with the faithful band of prayer warriors who responded to the clarion call. I would be on my knees, resenting the fact that I was there, and feeling guilty because of my attitude.

Are you shocked? Am I the only pastor's wife who obligates herself to be involved in everything that's going on in the church. I recognize my weakness in this area, but am often unwilling to open myself to the criticism, judgement, and condemnation that *might* (note, I said might) be heaped upon me if I don't do my share.

My problem stems from *my*

belief that the pastor and his wife are supposed to serve as examples to their congregation. How can I expect others to commit to a prayer meeting that I am not willing to attend myself? How can I ask others to give generously to the building fund when I put in only a pittance? How can I expect others to go the second mile if I'm not willing to walk along with them?

I know! I have the freedom of choice just like everyone else. I can skip prayer meetings, but then I feel even worse. If I stay home, I find myself locked behind the doors of my self-inflicted prison of guilt and condemnation. There's no question in my mind that Jesus would excuse me from the prayer meetings, but the problem is that I can't excuse myself. I feel that as the pastor's wife I must attend every function and service. The pressure to be all things to all men (and women) is constantly with me.

It seems to be an occupational hazard—being everything to everyone. Which of us doesn't want to be the best possible pastor's wife? We want to bring glory to the Lord, to our husbands, and to the church. So we submit ourselves to all manner of activities that we really don't want to be doing. We move into the "obligation mode" to placate our consciences. Lord,

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grant me the grace to be “love motivated” in the things that I do.

I recall the time four years ago when the church was experiencing a real financial crisis. My husband fervently sought the Lord for the answer to the money problems we were facing, and after several days of prayer, he felt he received the solution—the 11% tithe.

It was simple enough. Instead of giving 10% in the offering, he would ask that for one year, the faithful contribute 11% of their income. Of course, the moment I heard his plan of action, I knew that we would be donating 11% for a year. I didn't even pray to ask God if He would have us give. It was a foregone conclusion from the beginning. After all, how could we ask the people to give the extra one percent if we didn't. And it was only for a year. We could certainly handle the 11% tithe for one year!

The people responded and the bills were paid. God was faithful to supply our needs. That year ended and the obligation to go the second mile also ended—for everyone but us. Four years later we are still “setting the example” and the 11% tithe has become the norm for our household.

“You can never out give God,” Jack explained. “And if we don't give generously, how can we expect others to reach down deep into their pockets? God will honor our sacrificial giving.”

Please don't think that I'm stingy with our money, or that I resent giving to the Lord. Neither do I have anything against prayer meetings. But I don't want to give out of compulsion, but rather out of a heart that delights to please God. I don't want to *have* to go to the prayer meeting. I want to attend because I truly

desire to meet with God in sweet communion. Hopefully you understand what I'm trying to express about this inordinate compulsion that attempts to control my actions and my choices. It causes me to cease to be spirited and instead become a slave to self-imposed expectations.

There was the time that my husband preached on the need to communicate the gospel. He asked for volunteers who would go to Main Street on a Saturday morning to pass out tracts and take part in some street evangelism. “Who is willing to devote a morning to soul winning?” Jack challenged the people. Three men raised their hands.

“Surely there are more than three in this congregation who will go.” he pleaded. “Where are the soul winners?”

Everything within me rebelled against going to Main Street with tracts in hand, but after all, I was the pastor's wife. If I wasn't willing to go, how could I expect the people to take this step of faith. Reluctantly I raised my hand and was rewarded by my husband's smile. It was an act of pure submission.

I would like to say that my tract time was a wonderful experience, but I would be lying. I hated every moment that I spent on the street. God didn't call me as an evangelist, but rather as a Bible teacher. I was completely out of my element and my labor profited nothing. The morning was endless; the minutes dragged by as I obediently stood in front of the town tavern passing out my tracts—feeling like I was casting my pearls before swine. Not a soul was won to Christ, but no one could fault me. I was out there doing my part, living up to

everyone's expectations. I was serving as *the example* to the members of the church.

After twenty years as a pastor's wife, I am still battling the compulsion to be the perfect pastor's wife. I am still endeavoring to live up to the impossible standard that I have set for myself. I continue to attend every meeting, take part in all the activities, arrive on time for every function, keep a happy face, and remember everyone's name (and the names of their children). It's exhausting!

Don't fall into the same trap that I have fallen into. You will never please all of the people all of the time, even if you do everything perfectly. The compulsion to be the perfect pastor's wife will seek to grab hold of you, but stand against it! Be a God pleaser. Seek God's will rather than the congregation's expectations.

Would anyone really have cared if I hadn't passed out tracts? Will the Wednesday prayers be less effective because I miss an occasional meeting? Would the church have become insolvent if I had suggested to my husband that perhaps it wasn't necessary for us to continue on as 11% tithers? Would the congregation love me any less if I wasn't perfect?

God doesn't require us to be “super-helpmates” who set unrealistic goals for ourselves and then struggle to live up to them. We need to rest in the Lord and simply be ourselves, knowing that we are accepted in Him. Learn to walk in the Spirit, allowing the Lord to determine your involvement in the church functions. What would you have me do, Jesus?

And whatsoever *He* says to you, do it! ❀

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# You Chose Me

Genie Huskins

My fingers brushed across the book titles, reaching for one, and then sliding it back into the bookcase. Friday evenings called for a good book, or at least one that I hadn't read in a while. Already read that one. . . and that one . . . too long . . . too dull . . . too babyish . . . too *what*? I pulled the book out to make sure I had seen the title correctly. *How to be a Minister's Wife and Love It*. What a joke! I couldn't believe Mom had such a book. Loving being a minister's wife . . . how absurd! The whole idea was ludicrous, impossible. I shoved the book back and continued the search, but the titles were no longer catching my eye. Memories of my life as a preacher's kid hovered in my mind's eye like a persistent mosquito until I finally stretched out on the floor and let the images roll by.



December. A cold, beautiful evening. I watched the black window reflect the orange glow of the living room lamp.

"When is he coming home?" I asked.

"He will be here soon. He just had a Bible study and then he's coming right home."

"And then can we go? The

parade has already started, and there's going to be a Santa Claus throwing candy just like last year, and. . ."

"It's getting late, Genie."

"But you said we'd go! Daddy said we would go!"

"We'll see."

"Dear Jesus, please send Daddy right home so we can go to the parade. Please, please, Jesus."

By the time the car lights beamed into my anxious face, I was exhausted from hoping. I didn't move. It was too late. But still, maybe . . .

". . . got held up. They're really interested. What? This late? Well, let's go then."

I was in the car, pressing my nose against the window and fogging it with my breath. "Please Jesus, let me get some candy."

"I'm sorry, Genie, look's like it's all over with."

The litter and wrappers and damp streamers taunted me.

"You missed it, missed it, missed it."



School time, and the smell of carpet glue filled my head while my classmates and I ate our sandwiches on the floor.

"What does your daddy do? My daddy works a the mill."

"Yeah, and my daddy . . . well

Genie is a pastor's wife and PK who currently lives in Rocky Mount, North Carolina.



my daddy . . ."

But I was too busy thinking to fight for my own father's recognition. His occupation was suddenly a mystery to me. I went through the days of the week, thinking about his coming and going.

"My Daddy built this school," I said triumphantly, "and our house."

"Well, my daddy says your daddy didn't know what he was doing when he put those kind of windows in here," Amy announced.

"Yes, he did! He's a builder!" I shouted.

"No, he's not. He's just the preacher."

"Oh, yeah, I know that." But I didn't speak to her the rest of the day. I recoiled at the insult and felt frustrated that I could not throw one back at her. Even if I knew of some juicy bit of something about her father, I was not allowed, on the pain of death, to breathe a word of it to anyone. I thought again of just what it was my daddy did for a living. I hadn't really thought of him as a preacher. He did so many other things every day of the week. I just hadn't figured in Sabbath yet in his list of duties.



Sabbath. The day that began with "thunk—swish, thunk—swish" about 75 times as dad reeled out the bulletins on his hand-crank mimeograph machine. The day that ended with a key in the lock as he closed up the church after vespers. Then he was daddy again. Well, actually it would be 20 minutes after he locked up while he stood in the parking lot talking to a church member, while I begged mom to

let me blow the car horn.

Yes, daddy was the preacher, and that meant I was a good girl and mom was a saint from heaven. I hated being a good girl. But I had only an inkling of how my mother felt. I only heard the muffled sounds of crying once when I walked by her bedroom door. I only saw her lips tighten and her fingers grip mine a little closer while someone complained or rebuked now and then, and I only noticed her tired eyes when she stayed up late to sew something for one of us to wear. I sat down to many a mouth-watering Sabbath meal with the visitors from church when it seemed we didn't have anything in the refrigerator. I saw a little of the weariness and pain in her life, but when it came to moving to a new district, I had eyes only for my poor little self.



September. I sat in the back seat, my feet cramped around the cardboard box for the cat.

"I'm not going to stay there. I'll run away. I'll run back to my real home. I'll live with the Clarks; they love me. They wouldn't make me leave the best place in the world, my friends and my school and my tepee, for some awful place where it doesn't even snow." I pulled my shirt close around my neck again. I was wearing a necklace, a forbidden object. It was from David.

"I'll never forget you, ever. I'll keep this always, and when I come back, we'll be together again," I whispered out the window.



Saturday night. It was what I

waited for all day. As the hours passed and the sun went down, my excitement increased. Time to have fun!

Kelly called, "Can you come with us? My mom will pick you up, and you-know-who is going to be there!"

"I'll be ready! Just let me ask my mom."

Great! Kelly's mom was the most dependable, trusted mom in the whole church, so if she is going to take us skating, I knew my parents would let me go. So I thought.

I began my speel to mom but was intercepted as dad approached. All I heard was, "You're the pastor's daughter, and I can't allow you . . . the music they play in those places . . . it's not a place for *you* to go."



The snip and clatter of scissors broke through my thoughts. So much for reading. I had spent all evening reminiscing.

"You need any help with those felts, Mom?" I eased into a dining room chair and studied the odd shapes that fell from her scissors.

"No, I'm almost finished. Thank you for making dinner for tomorrow. It looks good," she said. Then, out of the blue, she looked at me and said, "You know, you'll make a good pastor's wife someday."

*What!* Had she read my thoughts? No, she must have *misread* them. My drowsy body bolted upright as I proclaimed, "No way! Not me, I'll *never* marry a minister! I'm not even going to look at a guy if he's going to be a minister!"

I think I was quivering, but even in my sudden outcry I noticed she seemed a little hurt.

"Has it been that bad?" Dad clapped his hand on my shoulder and startled me again. I began to feel a little remorseful.

"No, you're both great, but I don't want to have to go through what you do all the time. It's not worth it."

We were quiet for a while.

"You really haven't been fair, thinking of all the bad times," a voice inside me whispered.

What about all the Pathfinder trips, the extra treats, workers' meetings at camp, getting out of school to go with Mom and Dad on a family day? What about having Dad at home more than most kids do? Well . . . as a teenager that didn't always seem like a good thing.

The two sides continued to debate, but my final thoughts were about my future. So I had grown up as a preacher's kid, for better or worse; that certainly didn't mean I had to continue the same pattern as an adult! No money to spend, no apples or pears off of the fruit trees we planted because we had to move away; no best friends to confide

in, and no fun, lest some dear church member find out and disagree with the activity. The negatives of being part of a pastor's family were many: criticism from church members, long hours for Dad, hurt feelings and discouragements, and monumental expectations from those around us.

*"Lord, help me, a reluctant preacher's kid and pastor's wife, to do all that you want. . . . Help me to love it! Most of all, help me to love You."*

Dad's chuckle interrupted me again.

"Well, sometimes I don't feel like it's worth it either, Genie. This is not an easy life, but God is good."

God is good, perfect and wise, and has plenty of opportunities to laugh, I am sure. The book title that I scorned now sits on my shelf, in our home, and I have put

it to use, not as a drink coaster but as a source of encouragement and information. I don't always love it, but as a minister's wife, I see the hand of God work in a way I never have before, and I feel as though I am a part of something even bigger than I can see or imagine. I have an awesome responsibility, not to the sometimes troublesome, often wonderful church members, but to the God of the universe, who ironically led me to this position in life.

"You did not choose me, but I chose you to go and bear fruit," Jesus said (John 15:16, NIV). He said it to the willful, proud disciples, and I know He says it to me, too. The verse grabbed hold of me when I read it. That's me! The one who said I would never marry a minister, and yet did. (Is it you, too?)

"Lord, help me, a reluctant preacher's kid and pastor's wife, to do all that you want. I don't always feel like I have what it takes to bear fruit for you, but make me Your disciple. Help me to love it! Most of all, help me to love You." ❀

*The words are more than an indication of character, they have power to react on the character. Men are influenced by their own words. Often under a momentary impulse prompted by Satan, they give utterance to jealousy or evil surmising, expressing that which they do not really believe: but the expression reacts on the thoughts. They are deceived by their words, and come to believe that true which was spoken at Satan's instigation.*

—Ellen G. White  
*The Desire of Ages*, p. 323

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# Mary: Privileged Woman Among All

*Natividade Quintino*

The victories and defeats of life depend in a sense on the priorities you give to God. The example of Mary of Nazareth, the Savior's mother is such an example of affirmation. The reality and validity of her example is because it does not rest on myths or old fables but provides a profound experience.

#### **How can this happen?**

After the angel Gabriel's announcement about the coming of the Messiah through her immaculate conception, Mary vacillated and asked how could this happen. Read Luke 1:34.

Mary knew the intervention of God in history of the Jewish nation and in an individual's personal life in particular; however, she had not yet experienced this intervention in her own life. She was young, bright, and intelligent and above all, a believer in God, but Mary was not wealthy nor did she enjoy high social standing. The success of the divine plan concerning the Messiah's birth depended on the decision and acceptance of this young woman.

#### **The greatest of divine power touched the conscience**

From the moment that Mary

accepted her state of maternity and submitted to become "the servant of the Lord," she felt unworthy of this awesome privilege and realized her sins and the necessity of the Savior. The Son that she would bring to the world would also be the Savior that she needed. The humbleness and submission of Mary reaches its highest expression in the wonderful hymn of praise to God, "O Magnificat" (Luke 1:46-55, NIV).

#### **The fulfillment of God's will involves renunciation**

Mary disposed herself to the sacrifice of submission and renunciation and accepted the role to become a mother unconditionally. "I am the Lord's servant" Mary answered. "May it be to me as you have said" (Luke 1:38, NIV). What seemed impossible became a privilege. Mary is called blessed or happy by all generations.

To be useful to God, we should often submit ourselves in our personal lives. The comfort of our home and our reputation should be renounced for God. In the crucial moment of the birth of Jesus, Mary accepted the most humiliating and socially inappropriate state to give birth to her son.

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*Natividade was born in Tomar, Portugal. She received a Master of Arts degree from Andrews University in 1987. She served as an Assistant Pastor for three years and since 1994 has been the Administrator and Principal of the Adventist Secondary School in Lisbon. Her hobbies are reading, walking, listening to music and to be with friends.*

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### Gladness in service can bring tears

Mary cried when she accepted the plan to flee to Egypt in order to save the life of Jesus from the violent hands of Herod. The screams of the innocent children massacred by the king's soldiers broke her heart. Ten years later she would search unceasingly for her son who had disappeared for three days (Luke 2:46). When they arrived back in Nazareth, their home, the fear and insecurity pursued her. This was the ideal moment in which God provided a way for her to submit her motherly wishes and anxieties to the will of God. After that time she acquired full serenity that gave her the capacity to influence Jesus in a positive way from His adolescence to maturity. "And Jesus grew in wisdom and stature, and in favor with God and men" (Luke 2:52, NIV).

### The worries of a person determine their acts

This great woman's love for the Word of God served as an example to Jesus. It was in the home of Mary and Joseph that Jesus had His first contact with the Scriptures. Mary's thoughts were always on God. Mary and Joseph struggled to put their home and the education of their children in conformity with the will of God.

Jesus lived 18 years with His parents and brothers and sisters. At the time of Joseph's death, Jesus supported his mother and assumed the responsibility of acquiring the family's subsistence.

### To remain in the shadows can be worthy

At the marriage of Cana, when

Jesus was 30 years old, Mary discovered that there was a restriction and limit to her son's submission. She realized that in her son's life there were higher imperatives than her instructions. In accepting this distressing discovery, she said, "Do whatever He tells you" (John 2:5, NIV). When Jesus began His



*For Jesus the relationship did not have anything to do with blood ties but instead with the ties raised by faith in God.*

ministry, He left His home and Mary. For her, only the evidence of His continued availability that he had always shown, remained.

Mary suffered the rejection of her own children's belief in Jesus. She also suffered because the inhabitants of Nazareth refused to accept Him. It was apparent to her that the ministry of her Son was an absolute failure.

Mary suffered in silence as Jesus included everyone in His plan of salvation—herself, his brothers and sisters, the people that heard Him and His disciples (Matt. 12:46-50). For Jesus the relationship did not have anything to do with blood ties but instead with the ties raised by faith in God.

Mary's pain reached a climax when she saw her son crucified as a vulgar evildoer. She saw His agony. She heard the insults. Mary stayed beneath the shadow of the cross and suffered with Jesus until the end. All this was part of her role as a mother.

### Jesus never forsakes us

When Jesus was suffering intense agony on the cross, He did not forget his mother. "When Jesus saw his mother there, and the disciple whom he loved standing nearby, he said to his mother, 'Dear woman, here is your son,' and to the disciple, 'Here is your mother.' From that time on, this disciple took her into his home" (John 19:26, 27, NIV).

Mary appears again after the ascension of Christ in the upper room, where with the disciples, her other children, and some women devoted themselves to prayer (Acts 1:9-14). Mary did not vindicate anything for herself. Discreetly she took her place among the others. Mary had reached a spiritual maturity. She touched the culminating point of happiness and the lowest point of suffering. Her position before God never changed.

Through her life, Mary proved the sincerity of her own words when she told Gabriel at the announcement of the Messiah's birth, "I am the Lord's servant. . . . May it be to me as you have said" (Luke 1:38, NIV).

Today I hope that the example of Mary will serve as a point of reflection and inspiration for each one of us in our pastoral ministry goals for 1999 and in the years that separate us from the coming of our Redeemer. ❀

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# Sometimes It Seems That God Isn't Fair

Aretta Loving

*A missionary grandma,  
separated from her grand-  
children, is tempted to feel  
"It's not fair!" Then she  
reflects on Christmas  
... on God's love...*

Aretta Loving and her husband, Ed, members of Wycliffe Bible Translators, work with the Awa people of the Eastern Highlands of Papua New Guinea. They, and a group of Awa men and women, are working on the revision of the Awa New Testament, first published in 1974. The Lovings are training three Awa men as literacy supervisors. These men in turn have trained teachers who are now teaching others to read the Awa New Testament.

The Lovings have two grown daughters who were born in PNG. One daughter lives in North Carolina, with her husband and three boys. The other daughter lives with her husband and two daughters in the Philippines.



*I*t's not fair!" was an oft-heard phrase in our home when our two daughters were growing up.

"Today at school, Mr. Harder..." Karen would begin. A woeful tale of some supposed injustice would follow, ending with, "It's not fair!"

Or Teesa might lament, "It's not fair that I *always* have to wash the dishes alone. Why can't Karen help?" On and on, week after week, it went—an all-too-familiar story to parents.

"You know what?" I'd reply to the plaintive *It's not fair* cry, "life isn't fair. It's not fair that you should have Daddy and Mommy to love you. Many children are unwanted and unloved; many are treated cruelly.

"You were born in a country where there's no fighting. Many kids go to bed with the sounds of bombs bursting around them night after night. They know nothing but war. That's not fair."

"And it's not fair that you have plenty of food. All over the world lots of children don't know how it would feel to have full tummies. No, life isn't fair! Sometimes it even seems that God isn't fair."

Recently I discovered the ugly *It's-not-fair!* attitude lurking in my own heart.

Our married daughter, Karen, came to visit us in the mission field where my husband and I were serving in Papua New Guinea (PNG). She brought her two young sons. En route she stopped in the Philippines where our other daughter, Teesa, and her family are missionaries. There she picked up our four-year-old granddaughter and brought her along, too.

What a glorious, though tiring three weeks we enjoyed with our wonderful grandchildren, Ricky, Michael, and Alyssa. Then they left. My house, heart, and arms felt empty. Silence echoed through each room of my now too-big house. My heart felt squeezed into a tiny, hard ball. My arms ached both figuratively and literally. Grandchildren play is fun, but hard on grandmuscles. But grandchildren absence is far more difficult!

"It's not fair!" was right on the tip of my torn emotions, seeking to express itself in words. But of course, I'm too old to say *that!* Or at least anywhere but in the shower where only God can hear.

But I was tempted to remind the Lord that many grandmothers can zip across town to spend an hour, a day, or a night with their grandchildren. My grandsons live half-a-world away. And

although Alyssa and Kendra are only a fourth-of-a-world away, airfare from PNG to the Philippines is expensive—and missionaries don't have a lot of extra money. Some grandmas can pick up the phone and for a few cents chat with their grandkids. But phone calls from PNG to the USA and the Philippines are budget-breaking

But why remind the Lord of all that? He already knew it. So I just cried as my hot shower relaxed

love me, an undeserving sinner. But, oh, how I thank my gracious Heavenly Father that He "so loved the world"—and that includes me! It isn't fair that God was separated from Jesus, His beloved Son. Jesus left His Father and the splendors of heaven to come to this sin-cursed earth to die for my sins. I praise God that because He loved, "He gave His one and only Son. . . ." But it wasn't a matter of being "fair." Not at all.

It's not fair that I should be born into a kingdom of peace. But thank you, God, that the angel's announcement of "Peace on earth" included my heart and life. Thank You that John 3:16 assures me that "whoever believes in Him . . . has eternal life."

It's not fair that I should be able to feast on God's Word, served up in a language I can read and understand. As I used to tell Karen and Teesa, "Lots of kids in the world are hungry; they're hungry for more than food. Many of God's children hunger for His Word in their own language. They have never read in their heart-language that "God so loved the world that He gave His one and only Son that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have eternal life."

"That's why this "long-distance grandma" is here in Papua New Guinea as a Bible translator.

It's Christmas Eve now. Earlier, as I reflected on God's love, a hot shower washed away more than early-morning garden grime; my grandma grief went too. I felt those ubiquitous words, "It's not fair!" recede from the tip of my tongue as the muscles of my heart relaxed in the warmth of His love—a love which always carries us to victory in an unfair world. ❁



## Keeping Christmas

*Are you willing to forget what you have done for other people, and to remember what other people have done for you; to ignore what the world owes you, and to think about what you owe the world; to put your rights in the background, and the chances to do a little more than you duty in the foreground; to see that your fellowmen are just as real as you are, to try to look behind their faces to their hearts, hungry for joy; to [acknowledge] that probably the only good reason for your existence is not what you are getting out of life, but what you are going to give to life; to close your book of complaints against the management of the universe, and look around you for a place where you can sow a few seeds of happiness—are you willing to do these things even for a day? Then you can keep Christmas.*

—Henry van Dyke



*When God gave  
His beloved Son  
that first Christmas,  
He was  
operating on love,  
not fairness.*



my aching muscles, but failed to relax my cold, complaining heart.

It was almost Christmas, the time of "joy to the world." How could I get over the *It's not fair!* self-pity syndrome that was sapping, not only my joy, but my energy as well?

Christmas. Yes, that's it. When God gave His beloved Son that first Christmas, He was operating on love, not fairness. Love, for you and me. No Christmas isn't "fair." John 3:16 isn't "fair."

It's not fair that God should

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# Let Us Give Thanks

*Lilly Satyavadi*



*"Offer unto God thanksgiving; and pay thy vows unto the most High" (Ps. 50:14).*

You remember the story recorded in Luke 17:17 how Jesus entered a village when ten lepers from afar off cried out to be healed. Jesus did not immediately heal them, but sent them to show themselves to the priests. As they acted in faith upon His commission, they discovered that on their way they were healed. One of them, a Samaritan turned back and gave thanks. The other nine did not bother. It is hard to understand why nine out of ten victims, suddenly healed, would not even bother to say, thank you. But how is it with us? Have any of us daily considered how much we have to be thankful for?

Let us not be like the unthankful nine, whose hearts were untouched by the mercy of God. As we give thanks today let us duly consider how much we have to be thankful for.

In one of the churches in Ireland, they were having a Thanksgiving program. The parents of a young man who was killed in the World

War had given their church a cheque for two hundred dollars as a memorial of their loved one. When the presentation was made, another war mother whispered to her husband, "Let us give the same for our boy." The father said, "Why? What are you talking about? Our boy did not lose his life." The mother said, "That's just the point. Let us give thanks because he didn't."

In the midst of the storm, when the storm-battered vessel was plunging at its four anchors off the coast of Malta, Paul gave thanks to God in presence of them all (Acts 27:35). He could do that because he had faith in the Word and promise God had given him.

Paul's reasons for gratitude to God cover the whole territory of human life and experience. He gives thanks for—

- His daily bread (Acts 27:35)
- Men who have faith in Christ (Rom. 1:8)
- Deliverance from anxiety (2 Cor. 2:14)
- Deliverance from temptation (Rom. 7:25)
- The memory of his friends (Phil. 1:3)
- Kindness in the day of trouble (Acts 28:15)
- The unspeakable gifts (2 Cor. 9:15)

"In the darkest days of my life, I thank God the light was in it and my life was worth living," said a Christian leader.

Before we do anything else, I think we should first thank God that we have come thus far with no serious trouble and that we have enough strength left to finish our life's journey.

Give thanks to God for victories won! Sing praises for all His wonderful gifts. May we never become calloused so that we fail to show thanks to our Father in heaven for His tokens of love. Let us stop in our busy-round-of-life and give thanks to our Father for His rich blessings.

The true meaning of Thanksgiving is:

- T Trusting
- H Heartily
- A Almighty
- N Note-Worthy
- K Kindness
- S Selflessly
- G Gifts
- I Investing
- V Voluntarily
- I Individual
- N Nurturing
- G God's Word

Dear shepherdesses our prayer may be like this, "Our Father, thou has given us so much, please give us one more thing—a thanksgiving heart." ❀

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*Lilly Satyavadi is a pastor's wife living in India.*



# What Shall We Do With Jesus?

Lorraine Pintus

The tree stood tall and proud, forty years of Christmas memories adorning its branches. Twinkle lights blinked cheerfully, illuminating silver icicles. Sweet pine perfumed the air.

I stepped back to admire our work. Year after year, the thrill of trimming the tree returned with a freshness that made my heart tingle. I was a little girl again, reliving the wonder of the season through the eyes of my children.

"Mom, I've been waiting all day. Can we do it now?" Amanda pleaded.

"Yes, honey. We can do it now." I said.

"Yahoo!" Amanda jumped in the air with cheerleader enthusiasm. She tugged at her baby sister. "Come on, Meg! It's time to set up the manger."

I pulled the rickety barn from the box and placed it on the table. Amanda unrolled a figure from a cotton mummy casing. Three of us sat around the table, stage managers reenacting the greatest moment in history. Oohs and aahs accompanied the unveiling of each character. Even the lowliest had a special role in the wondrous drama.

Since this was Megan's first time to help, veteran manager-setter-upper Amanda appointed herself director. "Mary and Joseph

go in the middle of the stable."  
"The angel belongs on the roof."  
"The camel goes outside."

Finally, all the figures were in place. All but one. Megan and I hovered over Amanda as she carefully unwrapped the baby. She looked at the crowded stable. No room in the inn. She looked at me.

"What shall we do with Jesus?" she asked

Simple question. Complicated answer.

Since the death of Christ 2,000 years ago, the world has been in turmoil over what to do with Jesus. The question has divided nations, toppled governments, ripped apart families. Like an earthquake, the question split the church into hundreds of pieces. Dazed worshipers wandered aimlessly among the rubble, reeling from the after shocks that came each time the question was asked. Despite attempts at reconstruction, the building process is on hold because workers still cannot agree on what to do with Jesus.

Angels adored Him. Kings bowed before Him. Nature revered Him. Demons feared Him. Children cheered Him. Pious pagans steered clear of Him. Sadducees questioned Him. Herodians harassed Him. Pharisees hated Him. The house of Jairus laughed at Him. His

*Excerpt from Diapers, Pacifiers, and Other Holy Things by Lorraine Pintus, ChariotVictor Publishing. She contributes to many Christian magazines, speaks at conferences, and leads Hearts at Home Ministries marriage seminars with her husband.*

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own family thought Him insane. Peter's family thought Him divine. Satan tested His humanity. The Holy Spirit proclaimed His deity. John baptized Him with water. Mary wet His feet with tears. Pilate washed His hands of Him. A widow gave Him encouragement. A boy offered Him lunch. One friend denied Him. Another friend betrayed Him. Enemies whipped Him, spit on Him, stripped Him. A nation despised Him. God glorified Him.

What will you do with Jesus? You have three choices. Like the thief who hung on His left, you can reject Him. Like the thief who hung on His right, you can accept Him. Or, like the Roman leader Felix, you can refuse to make up your mind about Him. Bring Him out front when you want to look respectably religious. Stick Him behind a bale of stable hay when you don't feel like dealing with Him.

I know a few Felixes—people who won't commit. They say, "I'll think about Jesus later," never intending to think of Him at all. The Felixes of the world had better make up their minds, because one day they will have to give an account of what they did with God's Son. Their answer will mean the difference between heaven and hell.

One day every knee shall bow and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord. Every knee. Your knee. My knee. Every Felix's knee. I don't intend to wait for some future day to bow my knee., I'm going to do it today. Right now.

*Jesus! I give You center stage in the stable of my heart! I confess Your name. I ask you to be the Lord of my life. That, my friend, is what I will do with Jesus.*

What will you do with Jesus?✿

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## *'Twas the Night Before Jesus Came*

'Twas the night before Jesus came and all through the house,  
not a person was praying, not one in the house.

Their Bibles were dusty; on the shelf without care, in hopes  
that Jesus would not see them there.

The children had dressed to crawl into bed, not one ever  
kneeling or bowing his head.

And Mama in her rocker with babe on her lap, was watching  
the Late Show while I took a nap.

When out of the East there arose such a clatter, I sprang to  
my feet to see what was the matter.

Away to the window I flew like a flash, tore up the shutters  
and threw up the sash!

When what to my wondering eyes should appear, but angels  
proclaiming that Jesus was here!

With a light like the sun sending forth a bright ray, I knew in  
a moment that this was *the day!*

The light of His face made me cover my head; It was Jesus!  
returning just like He said.

And although I possessed worldly wisdom and wealth, I  
wept when I saw Him in spite of myself.

In the Book of Life which He held in His hand, was the name  
of every saved woman and man.

He spoke not a word as He searched for my name; when He  
said, "It's not here," my head hung in shame.

The people whose names had been written with love, He  
gathered to take to His Father above.

And those who had waited, He took up in the sky; all I could  
do was to kneel and to cry.

I fell to my knees, but it was too late; I had ignored Him too  
long and had sealed my own fate.

In the words of this poem the meaning is clear; the second  
coming of Jesus is drawing quite near.

We've only one life and when comes the last call, we'll find  
that the Bible was true after all.

So if you can hear Jesus speaking to you, say "Yes Lord,"  
today! That is all you must do.

—Author Unknown



# Shepherdess International News

## Africa Indian Ocean Division

✿ Leola Whaley reports that there is now an active Shepherdess Chapter in Liberia. The wives met together for the first time. Although there are scars of war everywhere, the meeting is a sign of things getting back to normal after so many years of fighting. Please remember this chapter in your prayers.

✿ The Cote d' Ivoire Shepherdess Chapter, Sahel Union, met together and had discussions on the topics of "Communication in Marriage," "Spirituality in Marriage," "Sexuality in Marriage," and "Finances in Marriage." The meeting ended with a demonstration of how to make communion bread and a Consecration Service.



*Cote d' Ivoire Shepherdess*

✿ The West Africa Union Mission reports that in the Union they have five active Shepherdess chapters. Mrs. Mary Osei Mensah is the president of the Shepherdess organization at the Union level.



*The West Africa Union Shepherdesses meet in Techiman, Ghana.*

✿ The Mid-West Ghana Conference Chapter has a membership of 31 and they have adopted an orphan whom they sponsor. The child has just graduated from the Junior Secondary School. The women also organized

and evangelistic meeting in which 40 souls were baptized.

✿ The Liberia Mission Chapter as a membership of 13. They recently held a retreat which featured the theme "Preparing the Shepherdess for Effective Ministry."



*The East Congo Union Mission Shepherdesses meet together.*

✿ The Ghana Shepherdess Chapter held its annual retreat at the Adventist Vocational Institute. It was attended by 175 members. The theme was "Enhancing the Shepherdess Family Life for Effective Ministry." This particular retreat was graced by the attendance of Nana Afia Abrafi, Queen mother of Techiman. In her short address, she made the point that women are just as gifted with wisdom and talents as men but reminded the women to be submissive to their husbands.

✿ The Nigeria Chapter recently completed the Continuing Education course, "Hospitality Made Easy." This year they are concentrating on "Transitions."

✿ The Burundi Chapter has in the past had problems with translation but this year many translations of the *The Journal* and other material has been completed.

#### Euro-Africa Division

✿ Hanni Klenk reports that June 7-10, 1998 was a special time

for the ministers' wives from the German speaking part of Switzerland. They held their biannual meeting in the mountains of Bernese Oberland. Maeve Mauer, the Division coordinator, planned and directed the event. Silvia Schappi, a psychotherapist also made presentations to the group. The women had interesting and blessed hours under the theme of "Ministering to Ministers and their Families."

✿ Mary Maxson was the featured speaker for approximately 100 pastors' wives from the Czech-Slovakian Union for their Workers' Retreat. Ministerial Secretary, Daniel Duda planned the joint meetings for pastors and spouses.

✿ The Austrian Union sponsored four days of fellowship and seminars for their



*Pastors' wives in the Czech-Slovakian Union listen to a presentation by Mary Maxson.*

pastors and spouses. Meeting at Bogenhofen Seminary in beautiful north Austria, the ministry couples enjoyed seminars together and separately as their children were treated to planned programs and baby-sitting by students hired from the seminary. The evenings were set aside for fellowship. Pastoral couples enjoyed interacting with each other and eating special ice cream treats served by the Ministerial Secretary, Gunther Maurer and his wife. Shepherdess leaders Lydia Schleifer and Gertruden Maurer planned the Shepherdess meetings in a beautifully decorated room. Sharon Cress was the guest speaker.

✿ About 100 pastors and wives from the Czecho-Slovakian



*Ministers' wives in Bernese, Switzerland meet together in a lovely setting.*



*Daniel Duda, Ministerial secretary of the Czech-Slovakian Union and his wife, Viera; Mary and Ben Maxson; Donna and Karel Nowak (union president).*

Union had a period of relief and spiritual growth in the mountains of Malevonic close to the borders of Polony and the Czech Republic. They represented the Slovakian, Moldavia, Bohemian, and Moravia-Silesian Conferences. They met in a building that was formerly a communist asylum. This place became happier with the songs of praise and prayers. The meetings were guided by Geri Mueller, a shepherdess coordinator of the Euro-African Division. Dorothy Eaton Watts was the guest speaker. Her topics were "Communicate Love" and "Secrets for Pastors' Wives Success." She also spoke at the general meetings held with the ministers on the topics "The Pastoral Family and Stress," "The Pastor Wife and the Expectations," and "Ministry Team."

#### Inter-America Division

✿ Coaby de Dzul from Guadalajara, Mexico organized a celebration of four activities of great importance for pastors' wives the weekend of April 16-19. Event 1: A course entitled "Christian Culture" for the Guadalajara area was directed by Marilu de Rascon. Instructors included Irma de Olmedo, Tere de Carballo, Miriam de Lopez, and Sofia de DeLima. Event 2: A seminar on Children's Ministries was presented by Evelyn de Omana, director of SIEMA for the Inter-American Division. Event 3: A seminar focused on Women's Ministries was given by Rosy de Miranda, director of Shepherdess at the Union level. Event 4: A seminar addressing the topic of pastoral children was taught by Evelyn de Omana. These wonderful meetings were an unforgettable experience and ended by celebrating Mothers' Day.

#### North American Division

✿ Kim DeWitt, a pastoral wife, has always had a burden for reaching out to the community. In her own words she tells how she developed a new ministry in the local community:

"Our church in Marion, Indiana, had a food pantry with nonperishable goods that they used to give to people who called the church needing food, but there was no one to take charge of it. A small voice kept telling me to make it a beacon in the community, so I told the church board that I would gladly take the challenge.

I cleaned out the old food, reorganized the room, and then began to pray. 'Lord, what do you want? Lead me, Lord. Let this food pantry give glory to you!' The idea come to me to expand our services so we could also offer clothing, blankets, and other miscellaneous items. I prepared advertisements announcing that we were looking for donations of clothing and nonperishable items, and took them into town. I placed them on the radio and cable stations for free, and in the free section of the newspaper. I prepared the room

for the items that I knew God would send. I cleaned out my closets. I prayed, "Lord, you gave me this idea, and we are ready for the clothes. Please send them." The clothes started coming in, and soon the room was full of clothes, towels, blankets, and more.

Then I had a problem. I had clothes and food, but no clients! So I prayed some more.

I prepared application forms and added an interest survey for the expected clients, asking if they would be interested in any other services that the church could provide such as pastoral visits, Bible studies, and stop smoking clinics. I set up a waiting room, put literature out, and waited. No one came. Once again I got down on my knees and asked the Lord what to do next, and—why of course—one needs to advertise. I picked a day that the pantry would be open, no appointments needed. And off I went, back to the newspaper, radio and cable stations.

The next Monday I was there bright and early, ready for clients. I quickly said a prayer and asked God to lead, to send people, and to make our food and clothing



*Jeanine Preast, a pastor's wife and chaplain at Puget Sound Adventist Academy presents students for baptism.*



*The ladies who enjoyed the weekend of fellowship at the Idaho retreat.*

pantry a success for Him.

That morning I had more people than I could count! Now we are open Tuesdays, by appointment only, and my appointments are filled two weeks in advance. We have been feeding and clothing 60-75 families each month. About 10 families have asked for Bible studies, 15-20 have requested a stop smoking clinic, and others are planning to attend our vegetarian cooking school. They take all of the literature they can get their hands on.

Donations of clothing and other items are coming in so fast that we have outgrown our room in the church, and now we are in desperate need of either building a Community Service Center or moving into a store front in town. I know that God already has a plan for the future of our pantry. If we allow God to work in us, and open our hearts and minds, He will lead us and our churches in the most amazing ways."

✿ Mary Maxson was the guest speaker for the Idaho Shepherdess Retreat in Boise.

✿ Alice Peck reports on the Shepherdess Retreat in Anchorage, Alaska:

"Hawaii in Anchorage in January? It was -25° Fahrenheit outside but the Alaska Shepherdess brought the islands inside. On the 6th of January, the closing banquet for the winter pastors' meeting was a relaxing evening in the islands. We 'flew' there on Alaska Conference Air Lines, a very economical flight. Starting from the worship room the flight took us to the large committee room. We were very crowded but our flight attendants, Pastor Brant Berglin and his wife Shellie, made us

comfortable. They even served us peanuts and Hawaiian punch. Because the flight was so economical we had to share peanuts and cups of punch. After a safe arrival we were greeted in 'Hawaii' by our Shepherdess president, Barb Tatom, and her husband, Pastor Len Tatom, who presented us with leis. The tables were decorated with fresh pineapple boats, halved coconuts with candles, small umbrellas, shells, and flower sparkles. Several of our shepherdess ladies have served in the islands and they brought many shells and other decorations to transform our committee room into the tropics. We enjoyed island foods and Hawaiian music and then watched a video on the island of Maui. The evening was a good break from the cold outside and energized us for the trip home."

✿ Northern California Conference held their annual Shepherdess retreat at the beautiful Leoni Meadows Campground near Placerville. The weekend was planned and implemented by Brenda Groff and Stephanie Brusett along with their sponsor, Carol Ann Retzer. The speakers were Sharon Cress from Shepherdess International and Carol Thomsen a marriage and family counselor from Sonora, California. The ladies were treated to gourmet food from around the world and a special English tea complete with silver service and china. Saturday night fun included a fashion show coordinated by Judy Osborne and Judy Crabtree. It featured "nearly new" items which could be bought or in some cases "traded for." It was a delightful weekend of fellowship and relaxation in a most beautiful environment.



*Alaska Shepherdess experience "Hawaii" at their retreat.*

❖ North Pacific Union hosted the World Ministers' Council for their pastors and their spouses at the Doubletree Hotel in Seattle, Washington. The spouses of the pastors were invited to attend seminars of their choosing on a variety of topics. A special brunch and program for minister' wives was held in the hotel banquet hall. This event was emceed by Jan White, who serves as an associate pastor with her husband, Phil. President Jere Patzer gave words of appreciation and welcome to the women and then featured speaker, Dr. Edith Eva Eger, spoke on the subject: "You Have the Choice and the Power."

#### Southern Asia Division

❖ In the city of Madurai, pastor's wives have started a Branch Sabbth School under a tree. Families living in that area are visited each week, prayed with and given health talks.

A number of children from the



*Kamal Anil Pardhe and Sakuntala Sadarnarh Arsud*

*Pastors' wives from the Polish Union.*



pastors' families have been very helpful in taking care of the pre-session activities. During the week these young people collect clothing and give them to the needy children attending this Branch Sabbath School. Pray that a building will become available so this program can continue through the rainy season.

❖ Jean Sundaram, Shepherdess Coordinator for the South Tamil Conference reports that meetings were conducted for the pastors' wives in her area. Instruction in Bible and group study, prayer walking and discussions on the value of our children in school, at home and in the community were the main features of the meetings. One of the highlights was a special time of testimonies and witnessing experiences.

❖ Kamal Anil Pardhe and Sakuntala Sadarnarh Arsud, pastors' wives from Ahmelnager, Maharashtra go visiting together as well as with their husbands. Together they have been responsible for preparing 35 people for baptism during the years. The Lord has fruitfully blessed the work of these

faithful pastors' wives.

#### South Pacific Division

❖ Kay Winter, Shepherdess Coordinator for the South Pacific Division traveled to Papua New Guinea where she met with the pastors' wives. She brought clothing and other gift items for the women. She also held meetings for the pastors' wives in Tasmania. In October she met for one day with pastors' wives at the North New South Wales campmeeting.

The organization for pastors' wives in the South Pacific Division is called PIM—Partners in Ministry.

#### Trans European Division

❖ Pastors' wives from the Polish Union met with Sharon Cress in a picturesque village outside Warsaw.

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