

The Journal



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*The Way
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Leads
Home*

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The Journal

- 3 The Great Fish Sandwich Picnic
- 5 The Full Reward Will Come at Last
- 7 Becoming Comforters
- 11 How to Avoid Heartburn
- 13 How Men & Women Talk to Each Other
- 15 When They Criticize Your Husband
- 18 Wanted—A Pastor's Wife
- 19 Lost Luggage Lessons
- 21 King's Daughter, Is There Stress in Your Ministry?
- 23 We Sure Have Come a Long Way!
- 25 A Shepherdess' View of the Murehwa District
- 27 Mrs. Noah
- 29 My Letter Box
- 31 The Rush
- 33 Shepherdess International News

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Editor's Musings

*"'Tis so sweet to trust in Jesus,
Just to take Him at His word."*

This first phrase of the popular old hymn seems incredibly simple and sublime. The familiar words roll out of our mouths as if it were such an easy thing—to trust Jesus. But in my daily spiritual struggle, many times I find trusting Jesus anything but sweet. It is difficult, hard, frustrating and agonizing. You see, the consequence of living under Satan, CEO of Earth, means that I will be hurt. My family and ones I love will be hurt. When the tears flow and the hearts break—that is when it is really tough to trust Jesus. When the pain and sadness and uncertainty of our circumstances are more than we feel we can bear, it is then we so desperately need to trust Him and yet we find it so hard.

Louisa Stead wrote this poem after watching her husband drown while trying to save a little boy. She probably went through all the agony of questioning and grief before she finally pronounces it "sweet." The sour, bitter agony of hurt becomes "sweet." In the second phrase she says, "I am so glad I learned . . ." Trusting Jesus is a learned behaviour and like any other habit, the more we practice the better we get.

Today I took another little step in trusting Jesus. Like Louisa wrote, may we all have the "grace to trust Him more!"



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The Great Fish Sandwich Picnic



Karen Holford

*Hospitality
Jesus-Style*

Karen Holford is the wife of Bernie Holford, the family life director of the South England Conference. Together they enjoy developing seminars on all aspects of family life. They have three children:

Bethany, 10; Nathan, 7; and Joel, 4. Karen has written several books, including, Please God, Make My Mummy Nice!—a warm and humorous look at mothering and what it can teach us about God's love for our families. She also enjoys crafts of all kinds.



The impromptu day of fellowship was nearly over. Thousands of people had traveled many miles to listen to the great Preacher. The sermon was the most inspiring message any of them had ever heard. No one wanted there to be a conclusion or a benediction! But finally the melodious, heart-seeking voice ceased. It was time for the potluck.

“Potluck?!! Food?!! Yes please! We’re starving!”

“Okay, bring all the contributions this way, and we’ll spread them out over here.” There are embarrassed glances, shuffling feet, and averted gazes.

“Oh no! Who forgot the food?!!”

“I never saw anything about bringing food! Thought I’d be home before now!”

“I didn’t have time to get anything ready before we came out! There’s usually too much food at these gatherings anyway!”

“Has anyone brought any food?”

“No, it doesn’t look like it. There’s only a basket of fish sandwiches.”

“Well, don’t look at me! What do you expect me to do about it?! I’m only part of the preacher’s support group! And we hardly have enough money to feed ourselves, let alone this crowd!”

One small packet of fish sandwiches. All there was in the cupboard to feed a multitude of guests. A daunting prospect for even the most creative hostess! But not so daunting for the most creative Host. He knew exactly what to do.

He recognized the need

Jesus was presented with a crowd of hungry people and a handful of food. He was concerned primarily for their comfort. He didn’t let the embarrassment of the situation throw Him off balance. He put their needs first. He had catered to their spiritual needs, and now He would do all He could to meet their physical needs as well. He knew that what they needed was a simple, healthy, filling supper.

He remained calm

He didn’t panic. He trusted God and knew that He would provide. God had brought these people here for a purpose. And they desperately needed help, physically as well as spiritually. God would not let them down. Jesus didn’t worry that there was not much variety in the meal, or that there might be some people who wouldn’t like fish sandwiches. Panicking would waste time and energy, and He needed both to face the task ahead of Him.



Catering for five thousand or so people would throw most of us, even if we had a year's notice and unlimited freezer space!



He kept the decor simple

He used the beauty of the natural surroundings and the wild-grown flowers for His picnic.

He didn't rush out and spend lots of money

When faced with crowds of people to feed, He didn't feel pressured to go and spend more than He could afford in order to impress them with special food. He made the best use of what He already had.

He took stock of what He had

Jesus assessed the situation and made a meal of whatever He could find. If there were only bread and fish, then bread and fish it would be. Nothing fancy. No panic because there was nothing for dessert. The people were hungry, and bread and fish would fill them up nicely. There was no need for anything more.

He asked God to bless His efforts

Jesus asked a special blessing on the food that He had. He prayed over it, and God blessed the barley bread, and the little fishes, and provided food for everyone.

He did things simply

Jesus prepared no Martha Stewart gourmet meal. He spent no long

hours slaving over a hot stove, slicing, blending, stirring; He simply broke what He had into pieces, and then shared it. There was no need for silverware and plates, no need for hours of washing up! Eating outside meant that it wouldn't matter if anyone dropped any crumbs!

He was organized

Jesus planned the meal and recruited helpers. He didn't try and do it all by Himself. His disciples gathered the people into groups so that no one would be left out. While Jesus was preparing the food, the disciples planned an efficient way to disperse the food.

He didn't waste anything

The leftovers were gathered up so that nothing would be wasted. Other people might be hungry and could also have a share in this massive picnic. Nothing was to be

thrown away; every little bit would be useful.

Catering for five thousand or so people would throw most of us, even if we had a year's notice and unlimited freezer space! Catering for one extra person can sometimes cause us a major panic! Jesus knows how pressured we can feel. He knows how important hospitality is as a way to care for His people and to be a witness to others. When He sends people our way, we are privileged that He trusts us to care for them and refresh them. He doesn't want it to be a burden to us. He's been there before, and He can show us the way to make things easy for ourselves, so that our hospitality experiences can nurture us and not drain us.

And one day, faced with a field full of five thousand and five fish sandwiches, you, too, will be able to give thanks, and witness a miracle! 

Destiny

*Watch your thoughts;
they become words.
Watch your words;
they become actions.
Watch your actions;
they become habits.
Watch your habits;
they become character.
Watch your character;
it becomes your destiny.*



The Full Reward Will Come at Last

Margarida F. Sarli

Shepherdess
International
Devotional

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.



It has been my privilege during the last thirty years to work side by side with my husband. We have worked in different parts of the world, in different churches, and in different capacities.

It was not easy in the beginning for me to adjust to the role of pastor's wife. When we started working in Rio de Janeiro in 1964, I had been baptized just three years before. My former religion was still part of me. I was brought up in the Catholic religion and my family was a very strong support to the Catholic priest of my home town. But one day an evangelist came to the area. My family received an invitation to his meetings and that was the beginning of my new life.

God established new directions for my life. Three years later I was in a position I never dreamed of. But the Lord was good.

He taught me many things. He supported me in many situations and He helped me during the long time my husband had to stay out in the field conducting evangelistic crusades. He used me as mother, Bible instructor, and counselor to the ministerial students' wives in Brazil College. I am thankful to my Lord for the opportunities He gave me to serve Him.

Three Bible texts helped me during those early years as a pastor's wife.

Matthew 5:12 says, "Rejoice, and be exceeding glad; for great is your reward in heaven." Luke 6:35 states, "But love ye your enemies, and do good, and lend, hoping for nothing again; and your reward shall be great, and ye shall be the children of the Highest." Isaiah 49:4, 5 says, "Then I said, I have laboured in vain, I have spent my strength for nought, and in vain . . . yet shall I be glorious in the eyes of the Lord, and my God shall be my strength."

The sense of reward was planted deep in the heart of every human being by the Creator. The Bible is full of promises, because God knows our nature. He made us.

As pastors' wives we are not different.

It is true that many times we ask ourselves—What am I getting out of this situation? Is it worthwhile to continue moving from place to place every three or four years? What kind of compensation will my children have for not having the normal chances of developing steady friendships? Does our constant moving affect their education?

Those are only some of the questions that come to our minds as we follow our husbands when they receive calls to new pastoral districts. Truthfully, from the standpoint of our culture, most women do not want such a life for their families.

Most women want a nice house, not too far from an educational institution that has a good reputation, in a quiet area of an average city neighborhood in the United States. Many want to live in an area where the weather is mild throughout the year. They want to be able to plan and control their families' future lives.

But that is not the normal situation for most of us. We were called to be the wives of men who received a call from God to be pastors in the Adventist ministry.

We have to learn:

- ✿ How to adjust to new areas.
- ✿ How to make new friends in a short time.
- ✿ How to help our children adjust quickly to a new school environment.
- ✿ How to smile when we would like to cry.
- ✿ How to be happy when there are many reasons to be unhappy.
- ✿ How to be thankful to the Lord for small things that, according to the standard of the world today, there is no reason to be thankful for.
- ✿ We have to learn with the help of our Savior to look beyond the horizon, like Moses had to look to the Promised Land from the other side of the Jordan river.
- ✿ We have to learn to behold, beyond the dark clouds in the skies, the sun shining in all its splendor.
- ✿ We have to learn to go forward by faith and not by sight.
- ✿ We have to learn that our reward cannot be measured by the standards of today's society. Our reward will be given one day in the future when the work of our Lord will finish and we will go home to heaven.

We can enjoy our role as helpers. Our lives as pastors' wives can be a kind of romance if only we keep our eyes on our precious Savior, remembering that one day we will be

in the presence of our Master and He will give us the real reward at last. But until then, we have to keep our eyes on Him, seeing the invisible by faith.

I was told that a pastor here in the United States received a call to be a missionary in one of the countries on the African continent. He and his wife prayed about and decided to accept it.

After several years they had to come back. They could not stay there anymore. The tropical climate was too hard. The land was full of tropical parasites.

As they were flying back, the devil was working in their minds.

"What is the advantage of being a missionary?"

Colleagues who had stayed back home had prospered. Some had good positions in the denomination. Some had bought nice houses. Their kids were in good educational institutions.

The missionaries asked themselves, "Why did we go to Africa? Even the African people did not show much gratitude or recognition for what we did for them. It seems that we lost several years of our lives."

Those were the thoughts the devil was pushing into their minds.

To make things worse, when they arrived in the Kennedy airport in New York, they discovered that an important man from the American government was traveling in the same plane. They saw the red carpet rolled out for him. They heard the music of the martial band as it played its welcome home tune. They saw a lot of important people who came to welcome the government representative.

Again the devil began his work.

"You see? This is the type of work that gives some type of real reward. You see the difference. The red carpet. The people waiting for him. The society knows who he is. Can

you hear the music? But how about you? Nobody is waiting for you. There is no music, no recognition, nothing. Only deception and frustration!"

But at this time the angel of the Lord started speaking to the missionary.

The angel of the Lord said: "But He arrived already. He received His reward. Your arriving will not be in New York. Your arriving will be in heaven. Ten thousands of angels will sing. He will give you a golden crown. You will receive a white stone and a new name written on it. You will be with your Savior, forever and ever. Don't focus your eyes on things of this earth. Continue walking by faith until the day your eyes behold the city. Until the day God calls you home."

Maybe some of you know what it is to feel like a stranger. After you speak one word people ask, "Where are you from?"

In spite of the material things you may have, you always speak like a foreigner and feel like a stranger.

Paul says that in some ways all of us are strangers.

But we have to remember that the day is coming when together we will end our journey.

The angels will sing. We will join our voices in praising Jesus for the privilege He gave us to stand by the side of our husbands and help in the great plan of salvation.

Jesus refers to Abraham and other heroes of faith in the epistle of Hebrews when he says, "By faith he sojourned in the land of promise, as in strange country, dwelling in tabernacles . . . These all died in faith, not having received the promises . . . But now they desire a better country, that is, a heavenly one; wherefore God is not ashamed to be called their God; for he hath prepared for them a city." Hebrews 11:9, 13, 16.

May the Lord bless all of us. 



Becoming Comforters

Rae Lee Cooper

Part three in the
“Loss, Grief, and
Recovery” series.

Rae Lee Cooper and her husband live in Maryland where she works as an emergency room nurse, teaches music, enjoys singing with The National Christian Choir and loves to travel.



Nancy’s baby had died three days after his premature birth and she lay despondent on her hospital bed. It was the end of the day and her doctor, who was on his way home, walked into the room. He talked with her about her son’s medical complications and resulting death. When he was about to leave he asked, “Do you have any other questions about what happened?”

Nancy thought a moment, then blurted out, “I do have one question. Why won’t anyone talk to me?”

“Who won’t talk to you?” he asked, surprised. “Is it the other doctors? The hospital staff? Your family and friends?”

“No one really talks to me. When the nurse comes in, she takes my blood pressure and leaves. The doctors check me to see how I am physically. My family asks a polite, ‘How are you?’ and then tells me what everyone else is doing. My friends haven’t come to see me, except for a few, and those that have come by don’t talk with me. They just act happy and tell me what’s going on in their world.”

“I’ll be honest with you, Nancy. We all hurt for you so much we just don’t know what to say. When I’ve finished a long day caring for critically ill newborns and walk out of the nursery, I have a choice. I can turn left and go home to my family where

there’s happiness, fun and relaxation, or I can turn right, come down here to your room and share your pain. Quite frankly, it’s easier to go home.”

Everyone Needs a Shoulder to Cry On

It is easier to go home and ignore the hurting ones. It’s easier just to pray that God will be a comfort to your bereaved friend. It takes *effort* to express caring. It takes *work* to be supportive. It takes *time* to be a comforter. But that’s what your suffering friend needs.

Why reach out and support one another? Because God says so. “Comfort ye, comfort ye my people,” (Isa. 40:1).

In Isaiah 66:13 He puts it this way: “As a mother comforts her child, so will I comfort you.” But how many have seen God Himself walk into the room? He does comfort through His Holy Spirit within. But He also needs human beings through whom He can work.

So many of God’s people need help. They have lost loved ones, jobs, money, valued relationships, and homes. They are ill or facing surgery. They are divorced, widowed, or lonely. God needs us to be His arms around those who hurt. Although He is their inner and ultimate strength, He calls on us to meet their physical and emotional needs in times of crisis.

A Degree From Comfort School Not Needed

A comforter does not have to go to Comfort School. He does not need to be compassionate—to sympathize with others' distresses and want to ease them. If you're a comforter, be warm, empathetic, and have a sympathetic ear. Encourage those who hurt to talk about their feelings. Approach them with enthusiasm, out of genuine love for the family and sincere concern for each one.

Experiencing a loss in one's own life and knowing first-hand of the resulting pain and associated feeling perhaps is one of the best qualifications in becoming a truly understanding and sensitive caregiver. Life's experiences and a truly loving heart are the best tools needed to help a sorrowing friend.

There are three basic steps in comforting:

1. *Acknowledge that such a thing has taken place.*

This is simpler to do when there has been a death than in other situations where the loss is harder to identify. One woman who had miscarried about mid-term in her pregnancy felt very bad when after five weeks not one person had even acknowledged her loss. Her friends avoided the issue, trying to sweep it aside either as insignificant or because they didn't want her to focus on it.

It's important that we don't pretend a loss never happened. When a tragedy happens, it's appropriate to call the bereaved person and say, "I just heard of your brother's death. I'm so sorry this has happened. I want you to know that I love you and share your loss with you. I'm praying for you. Is there something specific you'd like me to pray about for you or your family?"

Another way to acknowledge his loss is to visit him. Personal contact allows him to see that you share his pain.

2. *Allow the hurting to express their grief normally and appropriately.*

Grieving is the second phase of the loss experience, and comforters need to help the bereaved do that normally and appropriately. This is a long, broad phase involving all aspects of grief and may include shock, denial, anger, bitterness, guilt, loneliness, depression, adjustment, and acceptance.

It's not up to us to decide what's the right way for others to grieve.



Everyone has tunnel vision when he is grieving, but there will come a time when he sees a tiny light at the end of that tunnel. . . .

Your role during this state is to guide him through his grief and enable him to see that there is a reason to go on.



They may be appropriately sad and immersed in their grief. Allow them to focus inwardly and try to understand what they are feeling. They may cry. Let them do that. They may question God and ask, "Why did this happen to me?" These are normal reactions, and they'll vary. Don't try to answer their "whys." Job's three friends tried to do that and failed miserably.

3. *Allow the grieving person to work through their grief in their own time.*

Everyone has tunnel vision when he is grieving, but there will come a

time when he sees a tiny light at the end of that tunnel. With a glimmer of hope, he realizes that the pain is diminishing and there is a new beginning on the horizon. Your role during this state is to guide him through his grief and enable him to see that there is a reason to go on.

It's hard for a comforter to sit and endure all their friend's sorrow. Often, they just want to pick up that person and move them over to an acceptance of their loss. What he needs is for you to just share his sorrow with him. Whatever it takes, however long it takes, be there with him. Allow him to work through all the stages of grief. It must take place. It cannot be hurried. As this grieving does take place, gradually—very gradually—the hurting person will move toward resolution.

Do's and Don'ts of Caregiving

✿ **Be there.**

Once when Col. James Chapman was asked what he'd learned about comfort in his 30 years as an Air Force chaplain, he thought briefly and shared this experience.

"The most valuable lesson I learned happened just a few months after I'd been ordained. I was in my twenties and assigned to an Air Force base in Texas. Outside the base was a ramshackled community where the residents lived in old World War II temporary housing. A couple worked as caretakers. The husband was a handyman and his wife looked after the area.

"One night, another chaplain called me. 'Get the police. There's been a murder in Cammes Village.' I'd never handled a murder before and drove out to the village not knowing what I'd do or say.

"When I arrived, I found that the son of this couple had brutally murdered his fiancée. Too stunned to do anything significant or dramatic,

I stood by while the police handled details and the body was removed. I moved a few things, made some phone calls, and tried to calm the mother.

"When I left at midnight, I didn't think I'd been very helpful or comforting. I felt guilty that I'd not known what to do, so I continued visiting this family as the weeks went on. Whenever I could, I'd drop in and say hello.

"As time passed, the son came to trial. It seemed inevitable that he'd be convicted of murder. I planned to sit with the family at the trial. But one day I received a phone call informing me that the son had killed himself. Although I knew I needed to be with the family, once again I felt totally inadequate to meet their needs. What could I say? What could I do?

"I spent time with the parents, listened to their thoughts and fears, and offered them my compassion.

"In the months that followed, I kept going to see the family, just sitting and visiting with them and letting them talk.

"One day, the father looked up and told me, 'Chaplain, we want to thank you for the time you've spent with us and all that you've done for us. I don't know how we'd made it through all this if it hadn't been for you.'

"I didn't know that I'd done anything that was either right or helpful. All I knew was that I kept going to see them. I was willing to sit with them and be part of their grief.

"This taught me very early in my ministerial career that it's not important to have big speeches prepared or to do major things, but rather *to be there*."

✿ Pray for them

As comforters we must not neglect to uphold our friends in prayer. For it is the Lord alone who brings about healing and peace.

✿ Avoid all platitudes

Sometimes in our lack of understanding, or in situations where we really don't know what to say and we feel we must say something, we will come up with some common statement—something we've heard people say before. Most of these platitudes do not help and only confuse or hurt the griever. The following list of do's and don'ts may be of help for such times.

✿ Do

Offer simple, understanding statements such as: "I feel for you during this difficult time." "This must be very hard for you." "I share your feelings of loss." "I wish I could take the hurt away." Comments like these let the person know you acknowledge their pain and it's okay for them to feel that way.

✿ Don't

Don't try to minimize their pain with comments like: "It's probably for the best." "Things could be worse." "You'll remarry." "You're young, you can always have another baby." "You're strong, you'll get over it soon." "You know God is in control." Comments like these might be an attempt to offer hope, but to a hurting person, they sound as though you don't comprehend the enormity of what's happened.

✿ Do

Say "I'm so sorry," then add, "I know how special he was to you." "I'll miss her also." "I want to help you; I'm available anytime you need me." "I've been praying for you." "Is there something specific I should be praying for?"

✿ Don't

Don't say, "I'm so sorry," and end the sentence. Your hurting friend is probably sorry, too, but he can't respond to that kind of comment.

✿ Do

Be aggressive with your willingness to help. Ask yourself, "What would I need if I were in a similar situation?" Offer specific things you can do for them, like, "I'm on my way to the store. What can I pick up for you?" "Would the children like to come over and play this afternoon?" Most of the time a person in a crisis can't decide what he does need. Besides, he probably doesn't want to impose.

✿ Don't

Don't just say, "Is there anything I can do to help?"

✿ Do

Agree when the individual expresses their feelings. Say, "Yes, what happened to you isn't fair and doesn't make any sense," whether or not you share the same perspective.

✿ Don't

Don't offer spiritual answers as to why they're facing this problem or tell them they'll be a stronger person afterwards. We don't know why tragedies happen—why certain people have to go through such trauma. We do our friends a disservice by offering possible explanations.

✿ Do

Allow them all the time they need to deal effectively with all the phases of their grief.

✿ Don't

Don't put time tables on your hurting friend's recovery. Your inference that they're not coping well or should be their old self by now, only hinders their progress.

✿ Do

Provide long-term, unconditional support. Let them know that everyone deals with trauma in a different

way. You have no expectation of how much time it should take or how they should behave. Assure them that whatever it takes, you'll be with them through it.

✿ **Don't**

Don't be critical or judgmental. Don't say things like: "This wouldn't have happened if . . ." "There must be sin in your life." "You're not trusting God with your feelings." Don't use "should's" or "if only's" such as: "You should give the clothes away." "You should go back to work and get over this." "You should have more faith." "If only you had watched him more carefully, etc."

✿ **Don't compare tragedies**

In trying to comfort, sometimes well-meaning people will say, "I know just how you feel." Every individual is unique—their feelings and reactions are completely different to any other person's. In grief, as in all other parts of life, no two persons react in the same way. One grieving mother said of her feelings, "People would call me up and tell me about their second cousin's mother-in-law who had a similar problem. I know it was an attempt to comfort me, but they weren't interested in listening to what I was feeling. I just couldn't listen sympathetically to someone else's problems when mine were so overwhelming."

✿ **Don't rush people through grief.**

✿ **Be available on the long haul.**

✿ **Let the grieving person talk without interruptions.**

✿ **Allow for individual differences in the healing processes.**

✿ **Help people identify their feelings.**

✿ **Enter into the person's pain**

Allow them to talk out the sorrow before you use Scripture and prayer.

✿ **As a caregiver, safeguard yourself against burnout**

Because caregiving is a matter of the heart, much emotional and physical energy is given as we participate in another's crisis and grief. We cannot escape being affected as we give so much of ourselves toward the healing of a bereaved friend. In order to preserve our strength and effectiveness, we need to be careful that we ourselves don't become overwhelmed and become burned out.

Caregivers need an outlet. Physical exercise, involvement in some other aspects of normal life, association with family and friends will keep us in tune with the flow of life and strengthen our reserves. We also need someone to talk to when we become very much involved in another's loss. Failure to do this will result in unresolved grief for us as

well. This unresolved grief in a caregiver can demonstrate itself in the form of *indifference* and a barrier of *professionalism*—both of which are forms of self-preservation.

In summary

There is a lot more that can be said about being an effective and successful caregiver. But perhaps these principles listed above will be of significant help in your ministry. The most important thing you can do for someone who is hurting is not to speak flowery words or perform marvelous deeds. Just give them your continued support. Accept the hurting person. As they progress through the myriad of questions and levels of painful recovery, encourage them to be honest with God about their feelings. He's the only one who can give them peace. But the most important thing of all is for you to simply *be there*.

"Surely He hath borne our griefs, and carried our sorrows" (Isa. 53:4). 



*The most important thing
you can do
for someone who is hurting
is not to speak flowery words
or perform marvelous deeds.
Just give them your continued support.
Accept the hurting person.*



How to Avoid Heartburn

Jean Coleman

As I walked down the hall toward the sanctuary, I saw Angela coming toward me. Forcing a smile on my lips, I greeted her with a simple “good morning” as we passed. She said nothing, just returned my smile and kept on going. It was obvious to me that she was also wearing an artificial smile. What a silly game for two mature Christians to play!

Have you ever had someone in your church who just doesn't seem to like you? Angela has been a member of our church for many years, and to my knowledge I have never done anything to turn her against me, but an invisible barrier exists between us that must be ten miles thick. I have tried to leap over the wall, break through it, and even find a way around it, but to no avail. Angela just doesn't like me!

“What's the answer, Jack?” I asked my husband. “I've tried to be friendly. I go out of my way to strike up conversations with Angela, make over her children, admire her new clothes, and compliment her on her latest hair style. I have prayed without ceasing over this situation for years now and nothing has changed. The woman hates me and I don't even know why.”

Ever encouraging, Jack replied, “Let's face it, Angela doesn't appear to like anything or anyone. She

certainly doesn't like me or my leadership style, and has made that very clear. And in all probability she doesn't like you simply because you're my wife,” he concluded.

“Then why doesn't she just leave and find another church?” What a simple solution that would be! Sometimes I feel like the Apostle Paul who prayed three times to have the thorn removed from his flesh. I have prayed at least three thousand times and my thorn still remains. Obviously it is a learning experience to teach me patience and long-suffering. Like Paul, I will come into the knowledge that God's grace is all sufficient.

I don't want to sound judgmental, but Angela is really a most disagreeable person who walks around with a big chip on her shoulder, almost daring you to knock it off. How I have tried to love this hateful woman, but she makes it so very difficult with her caustic tongue and negative attitude.

In all fairness to Angela, I must admit that she has never caused any of our members to pack up and leave. She has few close friends in The Tabernacle and for the most part stays very much to herself. Her animosity seems to be mainly directed toward Jack and me, and her disdain toward us as leaders is unmistakable. A short conversation with her can leave me shaken and distraught.

Jean Coleman is a pastoral wife from Laurel, Maryland, and the editor of *The Pastor's Helpmate*, a newsletter for pastoral wives. This article appeared in *The Pastor's Helpmate*.



As I pondered the Angela situation in my heart, I finally came to an understanding of how this challenging member affects me. She gives me spiritual heartburn! This simple revelation has set me free from all sorts of condemnation and guilt regarding my relationship with Angela and has even allowed me to feel love in my heart toward her. Nothing has changed at all except my understanding—but what a difference it has made!

Spiritual heartburn? How can a member cause spiritual heartburn? Let me explain. Angela isn't really a "dangerous" member in The Tabernacle body. There is absolutely no way that I can classify her as a spiritual cancer seeking to bring destruction and death to this church. She is not out to destroy the church, but simply has an irritating personality that causes people to feel uncomfortable when they are around her.

No, Angela is not a killer, but she can sure cause heartburn! Just like there are certain foods that can cause me distress when I partake of them, there are also certain people who can bring uneasiness and pain. Once you are aware that they don't set well with you, then you can use wisdom and not over-indulge.

For example, I love Mexican food, but Mexican food doesn't love me! Occasionally Jack and I will go to a Mexican restaurant for dinner, but before I pick up my fork, I double-check to make sure I have some antacid tablets in my purse. And then I am very careful that I don't overeat the offending foods, but take only small portions.

And as a pastor's wife, you are going to find that not every one in your congregation is always palatable. Although you may have purposed in your heart that you will love every member with the love of Jesus, there will always be one or two who are

going to be hard to swallow and just don't set well with your spirit. There is no way you can go through life completely avoiding people who don't agree with you, but I have learned from experience that they are much easier to digest when you take them in small doses.

And don't forget that God provides a spiritual antacid—His wonderful grace is always sufficient. As we walk in the spirit filled with patience and forgiveness, His grace is available when Mrs. Heartburn strikes again.



*Remember it is the
devil who condemns.
The Holy Spirit
brings only conviction,
and with that
conviction, He always
provides a solution—
a way out.*



Perhaps it doesn't seem very Christian to imply that as a pastor's wife you should avoid prolonged contact with a contemptuous member. God forbid that I have offended anyone with this suggestion. But what is the acceptable solution when you have prayed and prayed and prayed, reached out in love, humbled yourself, and turned the cheek over and over again? What should be the response when your hand of fellowship is refused time after time? Do you continue to allow yourself to be

battered and bruised as you come against the wall of hate that has been erected? Perhaps peaceful co-existence is the only answer in this situation.

It's so easy to come under condemnation when you experience rejection by a sullen member. We find ourselves asking, "What have I possibly done to offend this person?" And certainly this is a question that we need to ask ourselves. It may also be a question that we need to ask the disgruntled member. But when there is no apparent reason for offense, then we need to come out from under condemnation and walk with our heads held high as children of God.

Remember it is the devil who condemns. The Holy Spirit brings only conviction, and with that conviction, He always provides a solution—a way out. Condemnation can cripple us in our walk with the Lord, causing us to limp along with a vague feeling that something is wrong, but not knowing what it is. Conviction, on the other hand, clearly points out your sin and then shows you the way to repentance and forgiveness.

When Jesus had confrontations with the Pharisees and those who opposed Him, He didn't come under condemnation. The scriptures tell us that Jesus often withdrew from them. He didn't argue with them or try to win them over to His way. He simply backed off from them. If something disagrees with you, why open yourself to heartburn?

Have I given up praying that Angela will someday change her attitude? Of course not! With God all things are possible! You can be sure that I'm going to continue to smile and say "good morning" every time we pass in the hall. Breaking down the wall between us is worth risking a little heartburn every now and then.



How Men and Women Talk to Each Other

Norbert Schnabel

In many professions, the worlds of husbands and wives are separated; in our lives as ministers' wives, that is not so. Our situation has pros and cons. As ministers' wives we are in special demand because of our ability to communicate. Often third parties use us in order to present a concern to our husbands. Sometimes we see difficulties pop up for our families, for the church and for our husbands and we communicate such observations to our spouses. Though communication needs vary from one profession to another, it is a must in a minister's profession. As pastors' wives, we are part of that communication process.

Though communication is important, do ministers' wives really understand the concerns of their husbands? Are pastors able to relate their anxieties, joys and thoughts in such a way the spouses understand the whole picture?

The following article opens our eyes to the different ways men and women speak to each other. When two people are talking, they are not necessarily communicating. True listening is a skill, an art to be practiced, a talent to be perfected. It doesn't come easy but the rewards of true communication are rewarding and enriching.

—Introduction by Ulrike Hasel

Why do misunderstandings and hurts occur when men and women dialogue with one another even when both parties have good intentions? Why do some couples have the impression that they talk past each other? In her book *You Simply Cannot Understand Me*, Deborah Tannen, shows that many such failed conversations can be traced back to the fact that men and women prefer different styles of communication.

In her opinion, women talk to establish and maintain closeness, their primary concern is to nurture relationships and create harmonious understanding in order to avoid isolation. A woman wishes to be understood, to be accepted, and not to remain alone with her questions and problems. Women like to experience confirmation and affirm others. Thus in their conversations, they communicate this concept by using such phrases as: "This has happened to me in the same way." "I know very well what you are talking about." Women emphasize common things in order to create community and in order to strengthen their relationships. Whatever may cause distance or differences is avoided.

Norbert Schnabel writes from Germany. This article was translated by Minodora Kiesler.

Women are disappointed if confirmation is not expressed. When they are offered quick solutions from men they often interpret the message to be "We are not the same. You have problems—I have the solutions." Whoever is ready to pass on counsel presents himself as smarter, more rational, and more mature. In a word: superior. That creates distance.

Men accuse women of refusing to solve the problems they complain about. If men attempt to encourage women by making it clear to them that their situations are not as bad as they think, women feel their emotions are not being taken seriously or they feel devalued. But women like to hear that it is normal to feel bad in certain situations. Men often give women the impression that their problems are relatively simple to solve and therefore, women do not have the right to be unhappy. Men want to act and remove the problems from the world. Women want to talk in order to communicate their problems.

A wife tells her husband that she does not feel well. He offers to take her to the doctor. She is disappointed because she expects compassion and sympathy. He, on the other hand, concentrates on what he can do.

For women, the readiness to tell others about themselves is an expression of closeness. Willingness to listen is a sign of interest and sympathy. In the world of a woman, the exchange of information is the basis for intimacy.

In their conversations, men wish to guard their reputations and their independence. They are afraid to be manipulated.

A woman tends to repeat an unanswered wish because she is convinced that the man will fulfill her wish as soon as he comprehends how weighty this wish really is. But the man, states Tannen, hesitates to fulfill the wish because he needs

to feel he acts on his own free volition, not on the woman's insistence.

Men experience their world as an hierarchical order in which it is essential to remain independent and to avoid defeat. They consider life a competition where the winner is superior and the loser inferior. Dialogues of men often reflect this world view.

Women view life more as a struggle against the danger of being cut off from community. Therefore they have greater difficulties engaging in conflicts among themselves, and they shun confrontation because in their view such disagreements may endanger a harmonious relationship.

It is less problematic for men to express criticism openly and thus to call for an open confrontation. They are convinced that open confrontation strengthens the friendship. For men to quarrel with one another is a sign of intimacy, an expression of closeness. In their opinion, only people who are really close to each other quarrel with one another.

However, men often feel wedged in if they have to lead long debates about something they consider unessential or they have to always discuss with others first what they intend to do. It is normal for men to make decisions alone. Many women consider it as self-understood that decisions should be discussed and then made in unison.

Men do not like to speak about their problems. When depressed, they prefer to keep distance. Women fear this the most because, in their view, silence is isolation.

What is the reason for this silent distance in men? To show weaknesses may translate to being inferior to many men. Men fear the risk of opening up to others. They ask themselves the following questions: How will the other person react if I

reveal to him what goes on within me? Can I dare to become vulnerable? How will the other person deal with the information I impart to him? When women realize men's fear, they can accept the differences in the two genders and not be threatened by the way men react to different situations. Men are not necessarily avoiding intimacy, rather they are coping in their own masculine way.

Men, on the other hand, must learn to listen. They must not interrupt their wives with counsels or lectures. Some men do not like to listen for a long period of time because they believe they are inferior if the other person plays the first fiddle. Men need to take the risk and talk about themselves, their emotions, and their own experiences. It is important that they become better acquainted with the conversational style of the other sex and develop the courage to use it themselves occasionally.

True communication enriches a couple's lives and makes for a happier home. Men and women need to understand the other's communication style and endeavor to incorporate both styles into their lives. It is an art to be practiced everyday. True communication leads to happier lives. 



*True communication
leads to happier lives.*

When They Criticize Your Husband

Elizabeth Rice
Handford

Criticism: Perhaps the Ultimate Stress of Ministry

Elizabeth (Libby) is author of a number of books including *Me? Obey Him?*, *The Way Back*, and *Flight Into Terror*. She has edited for 15 years the bi-monthly magazine for Christian women *The Joyful Woman* and is now consulting editor. Libby has made her family the top priority in her life. She has 7 adopted children and 16 grandchildren. Libby and her husband Walter share a love for flying and both earned their pilot's licenses after they were 50.



I was trapped in a cubicle of the women's rest room at church, and the Sunday morning service was going to begin in five minutes. Already my seven little children were lined up on the front seat of the auditorium, where I'd left them with maledictions of what I would do to them if they misbehaved while I was gone.

I was trapped because just outside the cubicle door two church members were discussing with great enthusiasm the short-comings of their pastor, my husband. They were talking freely, not knowing I was there.

I thought I'd wait until they left, to keep from embarrassing them. But they didn't leave. They talked. And talked. And I fidgeted.

How dare they say things about their pastor like that?

Didn't they know how hard he worked?

Didn't they know how much he loved them and prayed for them? Didn't they realize how many evenings he spent in helping needy people, while they lolled at home watching television with their spouses?

Didn't they understand he was

trying to do exactly what he thought God wanted him to do?

Didn't they realize there was no way he could do all the work alone, that they should spend the energy they used in criticizing him to help him?

Then it occurred to me that they might have a valid point of view. It would help their pastor to know what they were thinking.

With that thought, I found the courage to open the door and peek out. Their faces flushed when they saw me.

"I heard what you were talking about," I said, hoping my voice had the gracious sound of a gracious pastor's wife instead of the pinched squeak I make when I'm upset. "Look, you two really need to talk to the pastor about this."

But it didn't matter how carefully I tried to respond to their criticism. The truth was, it hurt. It hurt dreadfully.

When Wal proposed marriage to me, he tenderly and firmly told me he intended to follow the Lord with all his heart. Unless I felt that same commitment, we should not marry. I assured him I wanted him to follow

God's leading at any cost. I had grown up in a pastor's home. I saw my father and mother gladly make great sacrifices for the ministry, and I was not afraid of the sacrifices the ministry would cost. I expected unbelievers to be critical and unreceptive—after all, they didn't know the Lord. But good Christians, surely, would follow their pastor—wouldn't they?

Well, maybe not.

In a recent *Los Angeles Times* article, psychologist Richard Blackmon says, "Pastors are the single most occupationally frustrated group in America." He says 75 percent of pastors go through a period of stress so great that they consider quitting the ministry, and that 35 to 40 percent of them actually do quit. The pressure is probably greatest for those who pastor small churches, because they have so many different tasks to juggle. But much of a pastor's stress occurs because he hears incessant criticism and struggles to placate all the different elements in the church while trying to follow God's leading.

How Can the Pastor's Wife Help Him?

It's human to want to scratch the eyes out of a person who's critical of your husband. It's an affront to your good taste! It's mean-spirited, uncaring, ungrateful of them.

But retaliation won't help your husband, as satisfying as it might feel. It's human to feel resentment. But what Jesus wants is for us to respond like He did. "When he was reviled," 1 Peter 2:23 says, "he reviled not again. When he suffered, he threatened not, but committed himself to him that judgeth righteously."

The truth is, a loyal pastor's wife will best enhance his ministry by not taking up his offense. God will give him grace to handle criticism correctly. If she responds in anger,

she exposes her husband to even more criticism.

So a woman must commit herself and her beloved husband to the God who judges fairly, and not retaliate.

Many times an apparent criticism is not meant as criticism. A church member might just be expressing her frustration at the realities of life, that her pastor isn't always available when she wants him. If so, you could acknowledge her frustration, and perhaps say you'll mention her need to your husband. "Counsel in the heart of a man [marginal reading: the purpose of a man's heart] is like



*Many times an
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is not meant as
criticism. . . .*

*Criticism might
be misplaced. . . .*

*A criticism might
be valid.*



deep water, but a man of understanding will draw it out" (Proverbs 20:5).

Criticism might be misplaced, perhaps not at all the fault of the pastor. He didn't visit her in the hospital? Perhaps no one told him she was ill. If not, then express your regret and encourage her to always let the pastor know when she needs his prayer.

A criticism might be valid. After all, the man you are married to is a

human being, with all the quirks and blind spots of humanity. If he truly did fail about a matter, apologize for him, and figure out a way you could help keep it from happening again. "Let no corrupt communication proceed out of your mouth, but that which is good to the use of edifying, that it may minister grace unto the hearers" (Ephesians 4:29).

But here's where a pastor's wife is especially vulnerable. She sees her husband at home, and might feel he doesn't use his time well. That's especially true if she's been to pastors' conferences with him, and learned all about how a pastor should follow up visitors, spend hours in sermon preparation, fast and pray, win people to Christ, visit the sick, take time with the teenagers, but also spend quality time with his family, be an exciting lover and friend to his wife, and somehow take care of the home finances and the "Honey, do this" lists you have.

No human being could do all those things perfectly, even if a pastor's spirits were up and his energy level high. But when the hard times come, when depression hovers because of the immensity of all the tasks, it's certainly impossible to do them all. Rarely does a pastor have an intimate man friend with whom he can talk things over. All he has is his wife!

So it's important for us wives to focus on the good things our husbands are doing, and not enumerate, even in our minds, all the tasks he's leaving undone. Then if you hear criticism of something truly needing to be done, you could say, "I'm sure that's what the pastors wishes he could do."

Sometimes people may disagree with your husband's leadership because their spiritual gifts or their priorities differ. The pastor may be taking the long look ahead,

preparing the church for future ministry, while church members—and the pastor's wife—may feel very comfortable with things as they are.

Certain things must never change for the church. There is only one Gospel, that Jesus died for our sins according to the Scripture, was buried and rose again. If any one teaches any other way of salvation, the Apostle Paul said in Galatians chapter one, then he is accursed.

But methods, the ways we communicate that unchanging Gospel, may need to change to reach this society for Christ. That's why the Apostle Paul said he made himself servant to all. "I am made all things to all men, that I might by all means save some" (1 Corinthians 9:22).

A wife who feels unsure of which things are the Gospel "once delivered to the saints" and which things are only form, to be changed as needed to reach pagans with the Gospel, will have some anxious moments when others criticize her husband.

First Corinthians 13:7 tells us what love bears all things, always trusts, always hopes, always endures. So a pastor's wife needs to trust the man she's married to, and always be loyal. Will he sometimes fail her? Yes, just as she will sometimes fail him. So they both must trust God to protect them and lead them.

"A house divided against itself shall not stand," Jesus said (Matthew 12:25). This home you and your husband are building together could be swept away by dissension and distrust. So be loyal to him in your heart, and let God teach him what he needs to learn.

And when your chronic complainer complains for the umpteenth time, look straight into her eyes with compassion and say, "I'm sorry you're unhappy, but aren't you glad Jesus loves us both?"



A Paraphrase of Psalm 1

Do not pursue happiness;

it cannot be caught, like a cold or a bouncing ball.

It is not found in fads or trends;

nor will it reward you for meeting others' expectations.

Happiness comes from submerging yourself in God.

Do not struggle to keep you head above water,

but yield yourself to the deep flow of God's universe.

You will not drown.

You will be swept along by forces you cannot imagine.

Foam on the surface gets blown around;

driftwood piles up on sandbars;

people obsessed with themselves

end up as hollow husks on the rocks.

But the current rolls on.

So let yourself get carried away

by something that will last longer than a social eddy.



Wanted—A Pastor's Wife

Neima Watson

*Wanted:
A pastor's wife
with these qualifications:*

1. Wanted a pastor's wife who is faithful, kind, loving, patient, and sincere thus attracting everyone in her church to form one big family.

2. Wanted a pastor's wife who is unselfish, unsensitive, who is considerate, thoughtful, and understanding; thus, attracting all to our Lord and Savior who is the head of the family.

3. Wanted a pastor's wife who is able to win the friendship and love of everyone in the church whether young or old. Yes, a sweet friend to the little ones, a kind sister to the youth, and a compassionate daughter to the elderly thus helping every person to share in the activities of this big family.

4. Wanted a pastor's wife whose husband can have full confidence in her and lacks nothing of value. She brings him good not harm all the days of her life. She wakes up early in the morning and provides food for her family.

5. Wanted a pastor's wife who can open her arms to the poor and extend her hands to the needy. One who speaks with wisdom and faithful instruction with her tongue and watches over the affairs of her household and brings happiness to the whole family.

Neima Watson has been married to a minister for almost 39 years. She and her husband have shared their faith in many different capacities. She has worked as a teacher in both elementary and secondary schools in Egypt for 27 years. Neima enjoys reading, writing, and cooking. The Watsons have four children and four grandchildren, who are residing in California. Although she is retired, she enjoys sharing her faith with others to hasten the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.



Who can find a virtuous woman? Who can find a wife of noble character? For her price is far above rubies.

"Yes, I found such a woman," her husband says joyfully. "Yes, many women do noble things, but you surpass them all."

"Yes, we found such a woman," her children say gladly. "Thank you blessed mother. You have helped us to live in a lovely, peaceful and happy family. You also encouraged us to share our love not only at home but in all the environment."

"Yes, we found such a woman," her friends and all those she worked for speak out and say. "Thank you, dear sister, because you have drawn us so close together in love here on earth so that we can be ready to enjoy the greatest fellowship with the greatest family in heaven."

"Yes, I found such a woman," the Lord Jesus Himself will say. "Well done, my good and faithful servant; you have been faithful with a few things, I will put you in charge of many things; enter thou into the joy of thy Lord." (See Matt. 25:23.)

"Yes, I found such a woman," the King of Kings and Lord of Lords will say, "I am going to prepare a place for you and if I go and prepare a place for you I will come again and receive you unto myself, that where I am, there ye may be also."

May the Lord bless us all as pastors' wives to say with one voice, "Amen. Come, Lord Jesus." 

Lost Luggage Lessons



Hazel Marie Gordon

Hazel Marie Gordon is the Shepherdess sponsor for the Southern Union Conference where her husband serves as the president. They have served in team ministry in pastoring, departmental leadership, conference administration, and now union administration. She writes for Southern Tidings, the Southern Union paper, and several articles in Women's Devotional books. Hazel enjoys music, both voice and piano. She has two grown daughters. Her hobbies include interior decorating and her three grandchildren. Also she reaches out to pastor's wives who have particular needs and challenges. She enjoys associating with them, encouraging them, and speaking to Shepherdess groups.



We stood wearily after another long day of travel watching the luggage carrousel endlessly circling bearing the same pieces of luggage none of which belonged to us. As the last of the passengers departed it became evident this time our main suitcase was lost. As you can guess this was not a first time occurrence, this was *deja vu*, reminding us of one of our short flights from Atlanta to Daytona Beach when our luggage inadvertently went to San Francisco instead. Every kind of scenario came flooding over me. Was this lost piece still sitting somewhere in the last airport we traversed through, or was it the previous terminal where they unloaded and reloaded cart loads and mountains of boxes, suitcases, golf clubs, baby car seats, etc. Worst yet, was it somewhere in the air to destinations unknown never to be seen again?

I thought of the various irreplaceable essentials and outfits that I had so carefully packed. I remembered the special shoes and matching purse that went with a particular suit. I also remembered how I had found these items at different times and different places. Almost all of which had one thing in common—they were on sale—not just a few dollars off but most at least 50 percent or more. It would be quite impossible to duplicate these items. I can tell you that at that

moment I would not qualify as a satisfied customer of ASA airlines.

It was then that it hit me loud and clear. Could it be that I was more concerned about my earthly belongings than I was about the garments that Christ tells me are necessary for my salvation. I had to ask myself, was I more upset over losing matching shoes and purse than about the garments that Jesus has promised would protect me against the wiles of the devil. You see, my Jesus has instructed and warned me that in the day by day battles of life on this crumbling planet I need to be clothed in His Spirit. In Ephesians 6:10-18 there is a wonderful list of what I need to be dressed for success, not only on this earth, but for eternity.

We read, *Finally, be strong in the Lord and stand in the power of His might. Put on every piece of spiritual armor. The Lord has given you all the weaponry you need to stand against the crafty enemy. We're not dealing with an enemy we can see or get our hands on, but with spiritual beings who were once near the center of power and are now trying to rule this world. The power of these supernatural beings and the force they generate are not to be taken lightly. That's why you must put on the entire spiritual armor God has given you and stand firm, not giving an inch of ground. Then when it's over, you'll*

still be standing. This is the time to stand. Tighten the belt of truth securely around yourself. Cover your chest with the breastplate of Christ's invincible righteousness. Put on the shoes of the good news of Christ's peace. Take up the shield of faith, trusting in the Lord to stop the flaming arrows which Satan sends your way. Then put on the helmet of salvation and take the sword of the Spirit, which is given you in the Word of God. Finally, pray constantly, as if your life depended on it. Keep alert to the needs of your brothers and sisters and pray for them too (The Clear Word, by Jack Blanco).



*"Dear Jesus, . . .
Help me to make things
eternal my biggest
concern and goal in life."*



And again in 1 Thessalonians 5:8 . . . Put on faith and love as a breastplate and let the hope of salvation be your protective helmet (The Clear Word, by Jack Blanco).

Now there's a list that really is essential for our day by day journey towards God's kingdom. I find it thrilling that these are things that cannot be lost or misplaced. Besides they are free. Not just on sale—but free! Now that's a price that can't be beat. Especially since each piece is priceless. It was then that I sent up a heart cry, "Dear Jesus, thank you for this graphic spiritual lesson. Help me to make things eternal my biggest concern and goal in life."

Oh, by the way, within 12 hours the lost luggage was found. ASA airlines came through after all. God is good!



This Is Life

A group of frogs were traveling through the woods, and two of them fell into a deep pit. All the other frogs gathered around the pit. When they saw how deep the pit was, they told the two frogs that they were as good as dead.

The two frogs ignored the comments and tried to jump up out of the pit with all of their might. The other frogs kept telling them to stop, that they were as good as dead.

Finally, one of the frogs took heed to what the other frogs were saying and gave up. He fell down and died.

The other frog continued to jump as hard as he could. Once again, the crowd of frogs yelled at him to stop the pain and just die. He jumped even harder and finally made it out. When he got out, the other frogs said, "Did you not hear us?"

The frog explained to them that he was deaf. He thought they were encouraging him the entire time.

This story teaches two lessons:

- ❖ There is power of life and death in the tongue. An encouraging word to someone who is down can lift them up and help them make it through the day.
- ❖ A destructive word to someone who is down can be what it takes to kill them.

Be careful of what you say. Speak life to those who cross your path.

The power of words . . . it is something hard to understand that an encouraging word can go such a long way. Anyone can speak words that tend to rob another of the spirit to continue in difficult times.

Special is the clergy spouse who will take the time to encourage another.

King's Daughter, Is There Stress in Your Ministry?

Elizabeth de
Pacheco

Elizabeth de Pacheco's ministry is in Tierralta-Cordoba, Colombia. She likes to read and work on the computer. She studied Enterprise Administration Technology and believes that the church is God's enterprise, and she likes to work for Him.



King's daughter, is there stress in your ministry? This is the question that came to my mind one Friday afternoon when I dropped into a comfortable chair. My muscles felt so tense; it had been a stressful day and my body was tired. I tried to think thoughts that would calm me. Instead I thought of the pending work in the office. Only a short time had passed since my husband and I had moved to this new district. My husband had a heavy load in the big, rural district. The church headquarters is near us and it requires a lot of attention and collaboration. My husband and I have always liked to work together as a team and I take care of many of the details. Women's Ministries has continuous activities at the church and I am their coordinator. I teach in the cradle roll division and am my husband's personal secretary. At home our two little children, our treasures, need to be looked after. We continuously have visitors who need some help, companionship, resources, etc., and I have to be there to help them when my husband is absent. There are times when I am frazzled by the many tasks I have to accomplish. Time marches on and I continually feel stressed as I look toward the clock and see what time it is.

What can I do? I knew at the rate I was going, I would soon collapse. Then I remembered a verse in God's word. It says, "Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest" (Matt. 11:28).

Could this be both physical and spiritual rest? Does resting in Jesus mean that I am inactive? No! His word is teaching me that this wonderful rest is to let Him carry me in His arms each day and when I work, realize He is there with me. He will carry that which we cannot. Often when we work our ministry, we think in terms of things to do, burdens to overcome, tasks to complete. We often forget who we work for and who we depend on. We are daughters of the King, and we are within His care.

That Friday afternoon, near the hours of Sabbath, I prayed. "Lord Jesus, thank you for permitting me to work for You, thank you for loving me, and for letting me be what I am. If someone comes to our home at an inconvenient time, let me be ready to help them because You are there. Our church members need attention that shows Your love. Everything that needs to be done will have its time. So thank you, Lord, for keeping me in Your love. Amen."

After praying I felt that God was with me. I began to organize and I

adopted some ideas that helped put order into my life. I want to share them with you.

✿ Make plans the night before. Tidy up the house and office. This allows you to have more time to spend for God.

✿ Take the opportune time, the first hours of the day, to have personal devotions.

✿ Do some sort of physical exercise, then relax, and stretch your muscles.

✿ Have family worship. Let the children participate and tell what they learned. Sing hymns or songs that give praise to God.

✿ Plan activities ahead of time.

✿ Use the time spent with children to teach them moral and educational

things. Share stories, sing the alphabet song, make being with your children fun.

✿ Use a varied menu so mealtimes are something to look forward to.

✿ Schedule your time for church activities. Plan ahead when you will work on Women's Ministries, Dorcas, etc.

✿ Plan a family activity and schedule time to do it.

✿ Each night, evaluate what you did that day and plan for the next day.

This is my general agenda. I have found it isn't wise to promise to do something you cannot do. When we over commit, our homes and family suffer.

Each of us need to remember that our daily life depends on God. We cannot do everything in one day. Life is like an hour glass, and each tiny piece of sand is a problem. Only one grain should fall at a time or the clock gets stuck. We can only live in the present. We cannot govern the past or the future. The past is gone and the future doesn't exist yet!

Dear pastors' wives, the equilibrium of our spiritual, physical, emotional, and family activities will keep us active in God's work. We don't have to be stressed out, because when we are we have stopped letting Jesus carry our load. Go forward, and God will bless your ministry.



A weekly calendar for the king's daughter

Sunday: Day to Mend

"Help me, oh God, to mend my mistakes and not serve as a bad example to others."

Monday: Day to Wash

"Help me, God, to wash away my egotism and vanity so that I can serve you with humility this week."

Tuesday: Day to Iron

"Loving Lord, help me to iron out my wrinkles of prejudice that have accumulated over the years so that I can see the beauty of others."

Wednesday: Day to Cook

"Help me, Savior, to prepare an enormous pot of fraternal love and serve it with the bread of human kindness."

Thursday: Day to Clean

"Lord, help me to clean out the dust that's collected through the years and is in hidden corners of my heart."

Friday: Day to Buy

"Oh, God, give me grace to be a wise and careful buyer so that I can buy eternal happiness for my family and for all that need Your love."

Saturday: Day of the Lord

"Oh God, I already have prepared my house for You. Please enter my heart as an honored guest so that I can spend the day in Your presence."

We Sure Have Come a Long Way!

Andrea Zöllner

There is a story in my family about a minister's wife who always stood beside her husband when church was over. She said a friendly good-bye to everyone but she looked a little sad, and when people asked her what the trouble was she would answer, "I don't feel very well, and I have so much to do." This way she got her windows cleaned and her laundry done because all the elderly ladies, who were able to, came to do her housework for her. She was the pastor's wife and therefore a respected person, and it was an honor for the people to help her.

Every once in a while I am tempted to try out that method to see if it would still work. But sadly enough, I know it wouldn't. The only thing I probably would be asked, standing beside my husband after the sermon is, "Could you take turns in Junior class for me next Sabbath?"

This story is true, but I am sure even 50 years ago this was an exception and not the rule. Actually, I am not interested in some elderly ladies working for me. I would have a bad conscience seeing them do it, and I would not want anyone to intrude that far into my private life. But we sure have come a long way! It would be nice if just a little of that respect for the pastor and his family were possible today!

When I was a student in Munich I heard a lecture of a famous psychology professor about the position of men and women in society. He dared to say (in the late 60s!) that a woman without a husband has no social position. He was an elderly gentleman and actually was talking of society rules that seemed ancient to us young girls.

I am glad to say that here we have also come a long way. A woman no longer has to get married to have a position in society. She can have a career of her own, and she can live as a single if she prefers so.

A lot of things have changed but not everything. Women are still closely affected by their husband's position in society. A manager's spouse is still expected to dress and represent in a way that is favorable for her husband's career, and if she does a good job she might be respected.

Sometimes that seems to be different in God's work, and this is one of the biggest problems of young minister's wives. Their husbands work long hours, like managers, but their salaries don't match. They are educated people but they don't get the respect other people in equal positions have. They often are the target of all kinds of unqualified criticism, and some church members

Andrea Zöllner is a pastor's wife in Germany, the mother of three girls, and an English teacher. Sometimes she translates for the German Adventist Publishing House.

must constantly tell them what they have to do, since they have been in church for a long time, and can quote long passages of counsel. They know exactly what is God's will, and they will never hesitate to tell their pastor. They don't respect him but consider him their servant, since he is a servant of God. And not only do they treat him that way, they include his whole family in this position, which they assign to their pastor. So the whole family has to live in a fish bowl; nobody helps them with the cleaning but everybody watches to see if it is kept "clean." A woman, who does not have a career of her own, maybe because she is raising her children, is undoubtedly affected by the way her husband is treated. It is easier to bear a small salary than constant disrespect.

I knew a young minister's wife, who at first was very proud to marry a pastor. She felt that it was an honor to wed someone working for God, and she was very willing to work along with him. When her husband was transferred to another church he was not as well accepted as he had been in his previous position. Usually it is not the whole church which is agitating against a pastor but a few people can poison the whole atmosphere. She was so hurt by the criticism that she got depressed, and because she was depressed she was not able to do her family work like she used to. This offered another opportunity to criticize, and finally that young pastor left God's work. He would have been a good worker, if he had gotten a real chance.

Criticism is not a new phenomena with people in exposed positions. Just think of Moses. He was criticized because of all kinds of things, even because of the color of his wife's skin. And I am sure that Paul was criticized a lot too, since he mentioned very distinctly all the

things he had done, preaching the gospel.

To think about those prominent "pastors" might help sometimes, but it will not help all the time.

The problem is that, since nobody is perfect, there is some truth in every criticism. A pastor who does not have a secretary, for example, must remember an enormous amount of different things. Most pastors, I know, forget something every now and then. Friends understand and help, enemies find it a good reason to criticize.

Although criticism is not something new it seems as though there have been changes. There is no respect anymore, and there are



Everything that happens to society as a whole has some impact on Christian life.



people in the church whose main interest seems to be to criticize. While there is helpful criticism, some people criticize in a way that tears down and hurts. They don't care if it is the president of the General Conference or the pastor of their home church. There have been changes in respect and attitude everywhere in society.

In all democratic countries the respect for prominent people has lessened. If people don't like what a

politician says or does, they even throw eggs or tomatoes. High politicians hardly have any immunity anymore, and famous people have no privacy. No wonder that there are changes among church members, too. Everything that happens to society as a whole has some impact on Christian life. For example, since divorce happens now more often in society, it also happens relatively more often among Christians.

So since there is much less respect in society as a whole, there is less respect among Christians.

A short time after the reunion of Germany we visited friends in East Germany. In the Sabbath School class we were talking about Christian freedom. We had the impression that we were talking about two different subjects. The people in that small church did not understand us, and we really did not understand them. It took us a while to comprehend that they had not lived in a free country as we had all our lives. Freedom for them had a different meaning than for us.

As we can see, the society in which we live, will always affect our Christian life. This must not necessarily be a sin but I think throwing eggs at anyone is a sin. Constant criticism is a sin, too, and while not all changes in society can be accepted, it can help us to understand them.

The fact that there is less respect everywhere brings a lot of new problems into church, one of them is that the pastor and his family are more readily criticized. No one today offers to do my cleaning for me just because I am a minister's wife, but there also is a positive side to this change. I don't have to live in such an exponential position like in times past and today there is the possibility to have good friends in the church, which means that if I really needed help with my cleaning, somebody would be there!



A Shepherdess' View of the Murehwa District

Edina Rwodzi

Edina Rwodzi lives in Murehwa, Zimbabwe. She and her husband have two daughters:

Great Joy, 4 years old and Proclaim, 1 year old. She holds a certificate in Education as a Home Economics teacher. However, her goal is to "join my husband in the gospel work." Edina enjoys reading spiritual books, gardening, and house crafts.



Soon after my husband and I were married in 1994, he was called to pastoral work. He was sent to work in an unentered area in Murehwa North District. There were only three known companies, and we were stationed at a non-Adventist school to start the work there. After many efforts to involve the people in the district, we finally found two Dorcas members who were willing to work with us. We had limited resources, so we started visiting the sick and collecting money, clothes, and soap to give to the needy. I would visit the other companies occasionally and encourage them to visit the poor and needy; however, since the companies were so far apart and I could not visit them often, these trips were not very fruitful. During this time, my husband was given the whole Murehwa District. The Murehwa South area had eight churches and over ten companies. My husband was stationed in an area 80 kilometers away and since I was employed as a teacher, I was unable to go with him. For one and half years my husband and I were unable to live together.

Dorcas Programs in the District

There are Dorcas programs in many of the churches in the District. The Dorcas mothers give aid during

funerals in their neighborhoods and sweep the churches. Two churches have strong Dorcas programs. These members collect weekly money contributions. They study topics such as church doctrine, family life and evangelism on Wednesdays. Members actively visit the sick, aged, and needy. Practical lessons on knitting, cooking, crocheting and sewing are given and each member contributes items like salt, sugar, soap, and clothes to a "needy" pantry to be used to help those less fortunate.

Future goals

We have many plans for our Dorcas mothers. Some of our future goals are to:

- ✿ Create more Dorcas Federations in the District. We need clarification on what is expected of Dorcas mothers.
- ✿ Plan more cooking schools and invite non-Adventists who will be taught how to make vegetarian recipes.
- ✿ Make visitation to the old people, the sick, and the needy a priority for our members.
- ✿ Encourage all the members to wear their uniforms.
- ✿ Have consistent meetings. Leaders need to be encouraged to discuss their problems so solutions can be found. People

with various talents and skills should be invited to give talks and/or lead discussions that will benefit the Dorcas members.

- ✿ Spend more time preaching. We have an evangelistic group of men and women who go and preach in unentered areas once a month. The grain is ready for harvest but the laborers are few.

Sabbath School in the District

I have met with quite a number of the officers to discuss what is expected in the Sabbath School program. The main problem we always face is that people do not come for the programs on how to run the Sabbath School. Some areas are far behind, especially in teaching kindergarten and primary classes. The people chosen to do the job are not interested; they feel the work of teaching pupils is the lowest duty given at the church level. Most do not prepare materials to use during the Sabbath School class. They come unprepared, the lessons are poorly presented and the classes are quite boring. Most of the teachers do not want to teach children at camp meetings, even though there, they can learn new skills. Thus the Children's Department is really neglected.

In an effort to improve the Sabbath School classes, I have encouraged most of the churches to have their classes divided into kindergarten, primary and early teens. I have collected some old quarterlies from the conference for the children to use. At quarterly meetings or when I go with the pastor to visit the churches, I give demonstrations on how to teach the different age-group classes. The church elders are encouraged to make sure the children's departments are not neglected.

My Experiences in Pastoral Work

I thank God for calling my husband and I to the pastoral work. So far, I have discovered that we cannot do

the work alone. We are instruments to be used by God. Jesus has promised never to leave us alone. Though we are faced with many problems, we still have faith in Jesus.

Because my husband is a district pastor, I am often alone with our children. Usually he is gone for two or three weeks at a time. During the times when the children and I are on holiday, we go with my husband on his trips. We usually live in tents. I am challenged to leave my work and be a full-time Shepherdess with my husband in the field of my Jesus. I have great joy whenever I am working with my husband. Since the district is quite big, we sometimes have to go to different churches. I have teaching responsibilities and I often give cooking and nutrition classes. When there is a youth camp, I camp with the youth and prepare lessons for the girls on topics such as marriage and performing household duties like cooking. My back-

ground as a home economics teacher has been very beneficial to my ministerial work.

The Shepherdess programs have been of great help to me. I thank God for such a program. I have found guidance in ways to relate to church members, suggestions on how to deal with the duties of a pastor's wife, tips for caring for the family and ideas on how to enrich my Bible study and prayer life. My relationship with God has been enhanced by the Shepherdess program.

Please pray for the success of God's work in the Murehwa District. Help us with materials like old picture rolls, kindergarten lessons, and other material that would be of help for children in the Sabbath School Department. We need information and ideas for leadership for our Dorcas and Youth programs. We are still a very young family needing to grow spiritually and mentally. 



Our Redeemer thirsts for recognition. He hungers for the sympathy and love of those whom He has purchased with His own blood. . . . As the mother watches for the smile of recognition from her little child, . . . so does Christ watch for the expression of grateful love, which shows that spiritual life is begun in the soul.





Mrs. Noah

Erna Alvarado de Gomez

Erna was born in Chillán, Chile. She began her ministry in 1971. She has her degrees in Basic Education and Pre-School and Teaching. She worked in Chile and North and South Mexico teaching in pre-school, primary, and secondary schools. She is the Shepherdess Coordinator for the South Mexican Union. She is married to César Gómez Jiménez, who is Secretary at the Union office. They have two children: Rocío and Nizayé. Erna's hobbies are writing, teaching, and counseling adolescents.



From the little window in the house, she watched the shadow of her husband coming and going.

The day had arrived. She looked at the imposing structure 300 cubits long, 50 cubits wide and 30 cubits high (450 ft. x 75 ft. x 45 ft.—see Gen. 6:15). The animals, in perfect harmony, came to the ark at God's command. Noah, with a twinkle in his eyes, came to her. He silently took her in his arms and pushed her toward the inside of the ark. A big smile was painted on his lips; everything was in its place: the ark, the animals, his children, and his most precious treasure, his wife!

This was the first time for her to be in the ark and she walked slowly, taking everything in with a critical eye. She observed each detail. "Humph!" . . . she thought . . . "This window is very little; we will suffocate." She cast a glance at her husband and with a wink asked about the bedroom. Noah turned his head and with a timid gesture pointed to a little corner on the first floor. Without a doubt it was the best place. The tapestry on the floor looked inviting. There were soft cushions and a multi-colored quilt gave the room a personal touch. Mrs. Noah's long fingers glided nervously over the improvised bed as she anxiously asked, "How much time will we be on the ark?"

He caressed her fingers and answered in a whisper, "I don't know

exactly . . . but don't worry, the Lord is our Guide."

The days of rain seemed so sad and filled with melancholy. She loved the sun, the flowers, walking, climbing up hills, coming back down, chatting with the people, going to the garden to get fruit, and sleeping at night with her face to the stars.

This was not her wish . . . The total darkness broken only by lighting rays that shone through the clouds; the thunder vibrated her brow, making her tremble. But the worst of everything . . . was the swaying of 40 days and nights. The swaying made eating difficult. Each bite brought on nausea, especially when the breeze barely moved through the narrow window.

This imaginary experience of the life of Mrs. Noah inside the ark intends to show the natural human side of a woman whom the Bible refers to only as the wife of Noah, who was in ministry with her husband.

She was a woman with needs, fears, weaknesses, and anxieties like yours and mine, a woman who felt uneasy in her stomach for such a long time because the smell of the animal corral was so bad. She was a woman who was pressed with the uncertainty of not knowing where she was going. Poor Mrs. Noah. This probably was the worst experience of her life. Can you understand her?

Many times people refer to us as "The Pastor's Wife" and we need to

remember we really are chosen by God.

Being a pastor's wife implies having many privileges. It also means experiencing frustrating feelings, feelings we shouldn't feel guilty about.

We see that:

✿ Mrs. Noah felt lonely when her husband left the house for various days to preach while the ark was being built.

Haven't you felt the same when your husband is entangled (engaged) in an evangelistic campaign and he only comes home to sleep?

✿ Mrs. Noah experienced sadness when she had to leave her things behind to submit to the inconvenience of her new and strange dwelling (apartment).

Haven't you felt the same when your husband is changing to a new district and the "pastor's house" (parsonage) isn't to your liking?

✿ Mrs. Noah suffered when the storm increased its intensity and the waters shifted from side to side until she thought they'd shipwreck.

Haven't you felt the same when you had to endure criticism, censure, and demanding expectations that sometimes church members have for you, your children and your husband's ministry?

✿ Mrs. Noah stayed there because she understood that in spite of everything, it was the best place to be, the only place of salvation. In all the earth there was no other place of refuge. She came out of that experience appreciative, feeling so fortunate to be the wife of a servant of God.

Can you accept with gratitude, while developing a spirit of praise from looking at a world filled with homes of torment and misery, and understand that being the "wife of a pastor" is the best gift that has been given you.

I pray that it will be so.



Because God Loves Me

1 Corinthians 13:4-8

Because God loves me, He is slow to lose patience with me.

Because God loves me, He takes the circumstances of my life and uses them in a constructive way for my growth.

Because God loves me, He does not treat me as an object to be possessed and manipulated.

Because God loves me, He has no need to impress me with how great and powerful He is—because He is God—nor does He belittle me as His child in order to show me how important He is.

Because God loves me, He is for me. He wants to see me mature and develop in His love.

Because God loves me, He does not send down His wrath on every little mistake I make, of which there are many.

Because God loves me, He is deeply grieved when I do not walk in the ways that please Him because He sees this as evidence that I don't trust Him and love Him as I should.

Because God loves me, He rejoices when I experience His power and strength and stand up under the pressures of life for His name's sake.

Because God loves me, He keeps on working patiently with me even when I feel like giving up and can't see why He doesn't give up with me too.

Because God loves me, He keeps trusting me when at times I don't even trust myself.

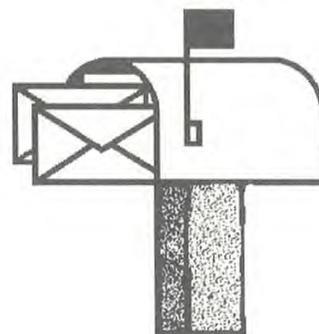
Because God loves me, He never says there is no hope for you, rather, He patiently works with me, loves me, and disciplines me in such a way that is hard for me to understand the depth of His concern for me.

Because God loves me, He never forsakes me, even though many of my friends might.

Because God loves me, He stands with me when I have reached the rock bottom of despair, when I see the real me and compare that with His righteousness, holiness, beauty and love. It is at a moment like this, that I can really believe that God loves me.

Yes, the greatest of all gifts is God's perfect love!

My Letter Box



Birdie Poddar

It has always been my desire to have a letter box of my own, perching somewhere close to our gate so that the postman could drop our mail in it any time. To my delight, my husband had already planned on making one even before I thought of asking him to do so. I learned of his plan when he asked me to come outside for a surprise. He showed me a nice red-letter box sitting on the post near our gate. He had even painted the words "Letter Box" in white on it. Not long after that, even the postman noticed it and dropped one letter in it for me. I then looked forward to receiving more letters from this pretty little box of my very own.

In the meantime, we acquired a dog. Even though it was a stray dog, it was a handsome one. He was looking for food and shelter and when we fed him one good meal, he decided to stay with us. He was a very good watchdog. However, he was so good he spoiled my new mail system.

One day when the postman came along to deliver our mail, he couldn't even drop the letters into our box because the dog frightened him to death! The dog thought he was doing his duty and did not allow the postman to touch the letterbox. He was guarding our property very seriously. So, since then, our letter box is sitting on its post, pretty but

empty because our mail is delivered to the Mission Office!!

Sadly, our dog died. We informed the postman so he could begin delivering our mail once again to our letter box. However, he conveniently refused to believe us and found it easier to divert our mail to the Mission Office.

One day my husband called my attention to the letterbox. What did you think I saw through the glass door at the back of the box? To my amazement, a little squirrel was taking his afternoon nap in the box. Unfortunately for that animal, he didn't know of our attitude towards squirrels. We had tried our best to get rid of these destructive creatures because they had been eating most of our guavas. We knew we couldn't allow the squirrel to nest there so my husband got rid of it.

Not long after this incident, another small creature decided to occupy the letter box. This time it was a pretty little mouse. Thankfully it was not a rat because I do not care for them. But for some reason, I admire mice, and this little mouse was so cute. He had pearly eyes and round ears that were erect and alert. When he sat up he formed a cute little ball; even his tail curled up neatly by his side. I didn't have the heart to evict this little mouse, so my husband had to do the honors.

Birdie Poddar and her husband, D. S. Poddar, are enjoying retirement in the beautiful surroundings of Maranatha Colony, Hosur, India. Birdie spent many years as a teacher and office worker.



It's sad to say, but my letterbox still sits empty. I long for the eventful day when my letter box is filled with mail again. Unfortunately, my little letter box doesn't have only fierce dogs and furry little animals to threaten its usefulness, now there is E-mail!

In today's electronic age, almost everyone but me owns a computer. Even the computer language makes fun of the mail I love to receive. It calls it "Snail Mail." Though I agree that snail mail may be an appropriate name for it, I still prefer snail mail over E-mail anytime. Snail mail means more to me because such letters are written personally by my friends and the letters are just for me.

In 1996, I came across an example of snail mail reported in the newspaper. Even though the snail mail was not known by that name then, this particular piece of mail did travel at a snail's pace. I cut that bit of news and kept it in my file until today. I would like to share it with you.

POSTCARD TAKES 48 YEARS TO REACH DESTINATION

Berhampur, Orissa: Believe it or not, a postcard took 48 years to travel a distance of only 80 kilometers. Hagannath Rao, a lawyer, posted the card to one of his clients on March 3, 1948. It was posted to Saudagar Ayub Khan at Rasulkonda, a town that is now known as Bhanjanagar. The letter, however, reached its destination on October 7, 1996. The postcard has a stamp portraying King George V and was worth half an Anna when it set out on its 48-year journey. Both the sender and addressee are no more.

Both the client and lawyer were dead before the postcard reached its destination! I wonder what happened to the case! After reading this bit of interesting news, I couldn't help but think of God's mail system. His angels, the swift messengers make no delay in carrying God's messages to their destinations. Yet I sometimes

wonder why the messages fail to enter our mailboxes.

We humans have a case pending and we desperately need a lawyer to help us out. Our only chance of winning the case depends on the lawyer, so no matter how high the fees he may charge us, we just have to pay, even if we run into debt.

I recognize that I, as a client and a guilty sinner, have a case against me for breaking the law. I am indeed grateful I did not have to look for a lawyer, nor do I even have to pay him. My lawyer, Jesus Christ Himself, took pity on me and came looking for me, bearing the full cost of the lawyer fees. The death sentence was passed against me, but Jesus came along to release me from the death row. He took my place, my death sentence and died for me. Oh, how grateful I feel.

This lawyer offers the same help to all guilty sinners, but why is it that

this wonderful message, the news of salvation fails to reach us so many times? Could it be that we fail to open the door for the message to enter in? Could it be that a destructive squirrel is in our heart building its nest to stay there? Or sometimes even a pet sin as pretty and cute as a little mouse has taken captive of our hearts, and we do not want to part with it. Satan himself claims ownership of our hearts and threatens any messenger coming close to us.

The message is the Royal Mail written by the King of kings, stamped and paid dearly by the blood of Jesus. Our lawyer wants us to win the case. Our lawyer is also our judge, therefore the case is in our favor. Why not open our hearts wide and welcome this wonderful news, and thank our wonderful lawyer for making it possible for us to win the case. Let us do this before it is too late. 

The Difference



I got up one morning
And rushed right into the day;
I had so much to accomplish
That I didn't have time to pray.

Problems just tumbled about me,
And heavier came each task.
"Why doesn't God help me?" I wondered.
He answered, "You didn't ask."

I wanted to see joy and beauty,
But the day toiled on gray and bleak;
I wondered why God didn't show me.
He said, "But you didn't seek."

I tried to come into God's presence;
I used all the keys at the lock.
God gently and lovingly chided,
"My child, you didn't knock."

I woke up early this morning,
And paused before entering the day;
I had so much to accomplish
That I had to take time to pray.

The Rush

*Delia Machore de
Adonia*

*We rush so fast, we
often leave Jesus
behind.*

*Delia is a pastor
and director of the
Women's
Ministries in
Nicaragua,
Central America.
She is working on
her masters in
family counseling.
She is the mother
of six and enjoys
crafts and
swimming.*



Oops, the laundry button has just buzzed. The door bell is banging. The telephone is ringing. In seven minutes, I have to pick up the kids at school and rush to an appointment with the doctor. The house is untidy and my hair is still a mess. And to make it worse, the elevator broke again, so I will have to rush down five flights of stairs! Such every day scenes seem to justify the argument that “life is a rush.”

But a careful look could elicit a different thought. Why do people rush? Some honest answers include the need to be on time, to act responsibly, to get everything accomplished. Some people even say they just can't avoid always being in a rush. Someone even said rushing was part of the three angels' message—John saw them flying (rushing). Yet the question must be asked: What price do we pay for the spirit of rushing? After all, isn't rushing a result of pride and disorganization?

From nearly the beginning of time, man has succumbed and been enslaved to the spirit of rushing. Cain rushed at his brother with a club instead of pondering the personal advice God gave him.

Ahimaaz, the son of Zadok, after the death of Absalom rushed to David only to stand aside as a fool. David was in a rush to slay his future bride, the prudent Abigail along with Nabal, the fool, and other innocent

folks. Pharaoh was in a rush to recapture the Israelites and it cost him his life in a water crash.

Uzzah rushed to the ark and crashed with death. Balaam rushed to curse for money and pierced his soul. Saul rushed to execute the Christians and lost his sight on the way. Pilate rushed from the presence of truth to heed public pressure and sentence his own soul.

In 2000, we haven't learned the lesson, and we are still rushing. A visible sign, perhaps, is the fact that the reader is rushing through these lines to finish the article as quickly as possible.

Slouchiness and rushing are on the same side of the battle. In this age of the Internet and computerized machinery, nothing seems to move quite fast enough. The driver in the front car is too slow. The school bell is taking too long to ring. The sermon is too lengthy and tedious. And just try meddling in a normal day of a single mother of four.

So often the consequences are discerned too late. Statistics seem to cry out to stop rushing. The consequences are too high, the risks too heavy. They include:

1. Emotional unease, restlessness, nervous breakdown, and dissatisfaction with ourselves.
2. Physical weakness, stress, gastrointestinal diseases, ulcers, heart problems.

3. Mental pain, excessive worries, mental lapses, confusion.

4. Financial disaster due to accidents.

5. Spiritual problems caused by our bouncing over people and their feelings in our crazy rush.

6. Family circles are broken, we rush through family worship and give no quality time for the family, thereby enhancing the generation gap; we deny our faith by not providing for our own which provokes loneliness and separation.

The spirit of rushing inhibits us from seeing the stop sign and urges us on in our rush, whether it be to



get married, find get a career, be the best, travel from airport to airport, or finish the meal even though the salt is absent from the dough. We rush to be good or do good as Martha tried to rush Mary. *We rush so fast, we often leave Jesus behind.*

It would be wise to heed these counsels to avoid the spirit of rush:

1. **Stop** in your rush and consider: Why am I rushing? Is this the Lord's plan? Am I pleasing God this way? Is this a habit of unhealthful practice or is Jesus rushing me on now?

2. **Listen:** Hearing is not listening. Practice the listening and heeding of the voice of God's spirit, wooing us to be organized and plan.

3. **Analyze the Spirit:** John said, "Try the spirits whether they are of

God." Try them with the light of God's word. God loves and blesses order.

4. **Choose the Spirit:** A right choice fortifies for another right choice. If you postpone the planning when you have some leisure time you will later obey the spirit of rushing and crushing to be at ease with man and you will be mad at yourself. Or you can plan now to use wisely the time of tomorrow by obeying the spirit of organization. You will receive a blessing and be at peace with God, man, and yourself.

But God is in no rush. He has never been in a rush. He took His time to create this world He could have made in five minutes, and it would have been good. But He took seven days and made it **very good**. And He made the Sabbath, a sign of calm, a sign of His attitudes. Yes, the Sabbath is a sign to stop rushing.

Now God's antidote to the spirit of rushing is the spirit of organization. Moses learned it from Jethro.

Isaiah said, "I saw also the Lord sitting upon a throne." He was sitting, not rushing. He was calm amidst the storm, for He is organized.

Jesus never rushed. He slept in a sinking ship and when he awoke, he was calm. He didn't even rush when his friend, Lazarus, was dying. When Jairus pressed the Master for the sake of his agonizing daughter, Jesus stopped to bless a needy woman.

It was the wise man who counseled: "Go to the ant, thou sluggard; consider her ways, and be wise: which having no guide, overseer, or ruler provideth her meat in the summer and gathereth her food in the harvest" (Prov. 6:6, KJV).

It's rather wise to lose a day or two to pursue the spirit of organization, for in losing you win. There may be a few exceptions, but remember: *A little silent planning will avoid a whole lot of loud rushing.* 



The Pastor's Wife

She enters, dressed,
In her Sabbath best,
And takes her place
In the House of the Blest.
And bowing her head
As she's seated there,
She breathes to God
This humble prayer:
"O Lord help him
My own true love
To speak the words
From Thy throne above,
Help him to bring
Thy message sweet
To those who come
With Thee to meet!"
And when he rises,
His sermon to give
Words by which
The lay people live,
He breaks to them
The Bread of Life
But **first** he smiles
Right at his **wife!**



Shepherdess International News

Africa-Indian Ocean Division

✿ Denise Ratsara, AID Shepherdess Coordinator reports that since the month of March she has traveled far and served the pastors wives in four Unions—one week at each Union. In Nigeria over 600 participated in the Shepherdess meeting. At the Indian Ocean Union about 600 attended and in Burundi and Rwanda there were about 650 despite all the tragedies the ministry families have suffered. Many pastors have been killed, along with their families. One pastor's wife told of losing over 100 relatives.



Paul and Denise Ratsara

Euro-Africa Division

✿ Maeve Maurer, Shepherdess Coordinator for the Division, reports on her service trips to Bulgaria and Romania:

In Bulgaria there were three meetings specifically for the pastor's wives. Maeve led the discussion topics which included "Today's Situation of the Pastors Wife", "The Education of the Pastors Kids" and a report of Shepherdess activities from around the world. Other meetings were held with the ministry couples attending together. Gabriel Maurer, Ministerial Secretary for the Division, spoke to the combined group.

In Romania Maeve was joined by Mary Maxson who also spoke to the



North East Mission Shepherdess Choir



Rivers Conference Shepherdess Choir



East Central Nigeria Mission Shepherdess Choir

women. Special time for individual conversations with the women made for a good time together.

Euro-Asia Division

✿ East Russia Union Mission—Marta Khiminets conducted a meeting of eighteen pastoral wives who met together in Khabarovsk. The theme

was "How to be More Useful in Serving the Church."

✿ Ukrainian Union—Two days of meetings were held in Lviv. Nadezhda Vertylo, Ukrainian Union Shepherdess Coordinator conducted the meetings. Topics included "The Ministerial Budget" and seminars on psychology. Kiev was the setting for a second meeting with sixteen present. Julia Larion presented the spiritual emphasis and Ludmila Danuluch shared experiences of conducting meetings with pastors kids.

✿ Minsk in the Belarus Conference hosted a meeting of 19 women. Topics included raising children and pre-marital counseling. In Yekaterinburg, Ural Conference, 28 participated in topics about the Spirit of Prophecy and Family Relationships.

✿ N. Novgorod, Colgo-Vyatskaya Conference hosted 45 pastoral wives where the topics "Why Pastor's Children do not Become Pastors," and "The Influence of the Family and Church on Pastoral Children" were discussed.

✿ Ludmila Krushenitskaya, ESD Shepherdess Coordinator, organized a meeting of ESD Shepherdess Coordinators. The women met at the ESD Division office building. The main agenda item was to create a work plan for 2000-2005. Specific topics discussed included the "Pastoral Family and Finance," "We're All So Different" and the "Privileges and Responsibilities of a Pastor's Wife."



Euro-Asia Division Union Shepherdess Coordinators at Planning Meeting

✿ West Russia Union Shepherdess Coordinators met together for two days of planning in Klimovsk. Topics discussed included criticism, mentoring, trusting in the Lord, the role of women in ministry, finding joy in life and Ellen White as a pastor's wife.



West Russia Union Shepherdess Coordinators

North American Division

✿ Southeastern Conference Shepherdesses met at the Gainesville



*Southeastern Shepherdess officers
Carol Johnson, vice president (left), Daisy O. Brown, sponsor, Cynthia Ware, president*

Radisson Hotel for an Agape Feast. Daisy O. Brown, Shepherdess Coordinator, organized the event. Hazel Gordon, Shepherdess Sponsor from the Southern Union delivered a spiritual, encouraging and pleasant message entitled "Ten Reasons for Being a Pastor's Wife." The ladies enjoyed a sumptuous lunch and left with memories of laughter and fellowship.

South America Division

Administrative and pastoral wives of the North Ecuador Mission met to share Shepherdess Fellowship and Seminars.



Thirty-one people were baptized in an evangelistic campaign led by Gilza Torres, pastor's wife in Maranhus Mission, Northeast Brasil Union. Gilza's sons helped her with the sound system and Abigail Pereira organized the music.

South Pacific Division

✿ Robyn Stanley reports on the Shepherdess retreat held at Historic Kenilworth Homestead. The venue of a lovely rustic retreat made an ideal setting for delightful laid-back fellowship. The meetings were held in the end room of a restored old barn around a fireplace which created a great deal of atmosphere. The program emphasized sharing and five of the women shared devotionals on topics relevant to pastor's wives. A

question and answer period was much appreciated, too. To finalize the week-end, the ladies drove to the famous Jacques Restaurant and enjoyed a delightful final meal together. Requests are already coming in to repeat the retreat again!

Southern Asia Division

✿ Mrs. S. Luikam reports that Shepherdesses of Chingmeirong, Manipur/Nagaland Section had the privilege of witnessing for the Lord by

singing for the television audience. Twenty women worked typing the songs and teaching the members to read the music. Harmony was developed to get the parts correct, and uniforms were made for the taping. When the big day finally arrived the pastors wives were escorted into the TV station and ushered to a beauty parlor to make themselves presentable for the shooting. The TV program was recorded to be enjoyed by hundreds!



*Manipur Nagaland Section
Shepherdess Sing for TV*

✿ Hepzibah Kore, Shepherdess Coordinator for the Southern Asia Division reports that two Shepherdess seminars were conducted in Dindugal,



*North Andhra Section Shepherdesses meet.
Seated in front are Vivolia Johnch, Shepherdess
Coordinator NAS and Hepzibah Kore,
Shepherdess Coordinator, SUD*



*South and West Andhra Pastor's Wives
Meeting. In front center are Mercy
Samson, SAS Shepherdess Coordinator,
Hepzibah Kore, SUD Shepherdess
Coordinator and Sarojini Moses, WAS
Shepherdess Coordinator*

South Tamil Conference and Trivandrum, South Kerala Section. Nearly 110 pastoral Shepherdesses benefitted from the seminars. At these meetings a new Shepherdess continuing education course, "New Life for the Pastor's Wife" was presented. There was also a cancer awareness session and a time for testimonies where the women shared thrilling experiences of God's guidance in

ministry. Shepherdesses are involved in regular Bible studies, prayer groups and home visitation. The results of these efforts have seen 213 persons baptisms, as well as 24 backsliders reclaimed and 128 people enrolled in the Voice of Prophecy.

✿ Two series of meetings were conducted for the South and the West Andhra sections and another in Lakkavaram for the North Andhra Section. Nearly 75 pastors' wives attended these meetings. Fourteen of them



*Pastors wives who are newly trained Bible
Women from South Andhra Section.*

were new pastoral wives and received the needed training to join the stream. Six projects have been undertaken by these women and they are engaged giving Bible studies, organizing prayer groups, visiting homes and hospitals,



*South Andhra Section Shepherdess
Meeting participants.*



*STC Shepherdess Meeting with Hepzibah Kore
(front center) and pastors wives.*

VOP enrollment and literacy classes. Tara Singh of Simia periodically broadcasts health messages and children's programs through Radio Simia. Ahiam Adai of Manipur/Nagaland was instrumental in establishing a company of believers in Ningthoujang, a village on the Assam border. Through these programs 1,084 people have been baptized! Praise the Lord!

Southern Asia-Pacific Division



*Singapore pastors' wives enjoyed supper
and fellowship with Sharon Cress at the
new Union office building.*

I thank Thee, God, that I have lived
In this great world and known its many joys;
The song of the birds, the strong, sweet scent of hay
And cooling breezes in the secret dusk,
The flaming sunsets at the close of day,
Hills, and the lonely heather-covered moors,
Music at night, and moonlight on the sea,
The beat of waves upon the rocky shore
And wild, white spray flung high in ecstasy:
The faithful eyes of dogs, and treasured books.
The love of kin and fellowship of friends,
And all that makes life dear and beautiful.

I thank Thee, too, that there has come to me
A little sorrow and, sometimes, defeat,
A little heartache and the loneliness
That comes with parting, and the word, "Goodbye,"
Dawn breaking after dreary hours of pain,
When I discovered that night's gloom must yield
And morning light break through to me again.
Because of these and other blessings poured
Unasked upon my wondering head,
Because I know that there is yet to come
An even richer and more glorious life,
And most of all, because Thine only Son
Once sacrificed life's loveliness for me—

I thank Thee, God, that I have lived.

—Elizabeth, Countess of Craven, England (1750-1828)