



## *The Preacher's Wife*

You may think it quite an easy task  
And just a pleasant life;  
But really it takes a lot of grace  
To be a preacher's wife.  
She's supposed to be a paragon  
Without a fault in view,  
A saint when in the parsonage  
As well as in the pew.

Her home must be a small hotel  
For folks that chance to roam,  
And yet have peace and harmony,  
A pleasant home sweet home.  
Whenever groups are called to meet,  
Her presence must be there;  
And yet the members all agree  
She should live a life of prayer.

Though hearing people's troubles and trials,  
Their grief both night and day,  
She's supposed to spread but sunshine bright  
To those along the way.  
She must lend a sympathetic ear  
To every tale of woe,  
And then forget about it all,  
Lest it to others go.

Her children must be models rare  
Of quietness and poise,  
But still stay on the same level  
With other girls and boys.  
You may think it quite an easy task  
And just a pleasant life,  
But really it takes a lot of grace  
To be a preacher's wife.

—Author Unknown

- 3 Myths in Ministry
- 5 Secret Weapons of an Administrator's Wife
- 7 Year of the Paastor
- 8 Loving Your Administrator's Wife
- 11 Dear Lord, Help Me Now!
- 13 The Minister's Wife in Relation to Her Children
- 15 The Ordination Charge
- 18 Marcie's Miracle
- 20 What Are You Doing About These "Leftovers"?
- 22 Shepherdess International News

## *Between the Covers*

A warm welcome to all the new subscribers who will be receiving the *Shepherdess International Journal* on a regular basis. It is my prayer that between these covers you will find encouragement and spiritual strength as you serve your Lord in the role of a pastoral wife. Godly administrators, who believe in you and the contribution you are making to finishing the work here so we can all go home together, have committed to providing you with a tangible resource geared specifically for your needs. If you have comments (positive or negative), suggestions, or news, please write. I would love to hear from you.

In this issue of the journal you will find the second in our series of miracles in the lives of pastoral wives. Delba's story of the miraculous recovery of her six-month old baby is an inspiration to us all that the Lord still does intervene. Many of us can relate to Gina Wahlen's traumatic Sabbath in "Dear Lord, Help Me Now!" For me, it is always encouraging to know that I am not the only pastoral wife who has faced the ugly side of some disturbed peoples' characters. And when people do cause us pain, Jean Coleman gives us some practical advice in "What are you doing about these leftovers?" In my own life, it would be very easy to hold grudges and ill will against those who have caused me extensive grief, but it only makes me old and wrinkled and really does nothing to help the other person. May the Lord continue to be with each of us.

Happy reading!

*Sharon*

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# Myths in Ministry

Laurie Denski-Snyman

**M**any of us think that we know what is truth and error. We feel we can separate false assumptions from truthful assumptions. But, when we go about our everyday lives, we may unconsciously be doing things which add to our stress level, tear apart our marriages and families, and give improper role models to our congregations.

Because we are fallen human beings, only God knows the answers to many of the dilemmas that we face. Here are some statements to reflect upon and analyze. Is there a hidden myth in your life which rules you? Consider why these assumptions are not true or why they may seem true to you. Use your Bible as a guide. (This is good for Shepherdess get-togethers or for use in small groups.)

## Ten myths to ponder or discuss

1. It is always selfish to care for my own needs before others.
2. When people or the church have needs, I must always attempt to fill them.
3. I don't cultivate female friendships because my husband is my best friend, and he is all I need.

4. Because my parents were Seventh-day Adventists, I am the product of an ideal family.

5. Because I love God and am faithful to return tithes and give offerings, whatever hard situation I find myself in is His will.

6. Many times the church needs come before my husband and my family.

7. I should be available whenever someone wants to talk to me.

8. Because my husband is the head of our house, I do not feel I should ever question his decisions.

9. I must attend all functions of the church to show my support, even if I have children.

10. When I disagree with my husband or a church member, it is always better not to say anything.

## Points to ponder

Some comments and points to ponder:

1. When people ride in airplanes, adults are taught, in case of emergency, to put their oxygen masks on themselves first before their children. Is this because children aren't as important? No! This is so the adult can function adequately so he/she

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*Laurie Denski-Snyman is a pastoral wife from the Michigan Conference in the North American Division. Used with permission.*

—Via Shepherdess International



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can also help the child. Backwards, they may both become disoriented from lack of oxygen and perish. The Bible says to love your neighbor as yourself (Lev. 19:18). People who dislike themselves often dislike other people—they spend more time comparing themselves to others and competing with them than caring for them. We must take care of ourselves so we have the strength to care adequately for those around us.

2. We are responsible to God for how we manage our time. We need to put most of our energy into the responsibilities God has given us, our spouse, our children, and our health. When we have sufficiently covered our obligations, He will give us other responsibilities and give us the wisdom to keep balance in our lives. Spreading ourselves too thin can set us up for failure, burnout, and bitterness. Moderation in all things is important to remember.

3. God's plan is that we have close, intimate relationships with our husband. Only God can fill our deep longings, and our husband cannot be responsible for all our friendship needs. We need to nurture friendship bonds with other women with whom we can be friends, pray, and share. Too many pastoral wives look to their husband to fill all their social needs and miss out on other special relationships. We should take time to develop close spiritual bonds with other women.

4. Many times you may have said, "When I grow up, I will never do that," yet we often find ourselves walking down the same pathway as our parents. We are all creatures of patterns set down from one generation to another. We need to forgive our parents for their shortcomings, and we have a responsibility to see where

those ingrained patterns are taking us. We need to ask ourselves, "What would I like to do different in my parenting? How would I like to deal differently with my spouse? What can I learn from mistakes in comments or discipline?"

5. We know that trauma, sin, and suffering was never God's plan. The fact is we live in a world controlled by Satan and his evil angels. We are not immune to his malicious attacks, but God can bring positive things out of suffering. With every crisis, hopefully we will emerge closer and more dependent on Jesus for our every need.

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*Women have special perspectives which men need.*

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6. Similar to myth two, we must recognize our priorities. Many people have thrown all of their energy into the church only to lose their families. If church members consume all of our time, our family outings, vacations, and birthday celebrations are always on the back burner. Our children will know where they stand in order of importance. Message machines and cars can help us distance ourselves from everyday events so we can spend uninterrupted time with our family. These days, family time needs to be scheduled, and it must take priority.

7. Our motive to help someone is not always unselfish. Sometimes we want to solve problems so we won't be bothered again, sometimes it's to appease our

guilt, sometimes it's to win a friendship, and sometimes it's to get the person to join the church. Many times we do not guard our homes or personal boundaries because we don't like to take a stand on issues. We need to decide our priorities, time limits and our motives when we are helping others. Will our help make them dependent? Will we be encouraging their growth? Will this help them spiritually?

8. God made woman to be the helpmeet of her husband. Women have special perspectives which men need. If God did not expect woman to have an active role in her marriage, why the need to even create her? Many times opposites marry, and sharing both opinions will give balance to the couple's plans and issues.

9. Children do not become Christians because they are made to sit through endless meetings. We need to do everything in moderation. We can become calloused by attending church all the time if we lose the appreciation of the people and its services. Home life is important for our children. They need scheduled time to do their studies and have some normalness in the family schedule.

10. When we feel strongly about something, we should express it. Jesus cared to confront people in a loving way. Our attitude should not be one of antagonism, pride and control, but one of helping others and working together. Stifling opinions many times only adds to anger and frustration. The body of Christ needs all the talents, ideas, and gifts pastoral wives have been given by their Creator.

Ponder these myths in your own situation. Through prayer and a relationship with Jesus, be assured He will always guide you in the way He knows is best. ❀



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# For Administrators' Wives

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## Secret Weapons of an Administrator's Wife

Rae Lee Cooper



Rae Lee is an administrative wife. She is currently completing her nursing degree in addition to working at the Southern Asia Division where her husband, Lowell, is the Secretary. Used with permission.

—Via Shepherdess International

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et's face it, life is going to bring us roses and thorns regardless of what profession our husband may be involved in. Let's take a look at some of these work-related implications for wives.

### 1. A doctor's wife

Positive: Discount or free medical care

Negative: Lonely nights and interrupted meals

### 2. A farmer's wife

Positive: Wholesome country living

Negative: Long work hours involving home, field, and garden

### 3. A missionary wife

Positive: Long-distance separation from troublesome relatives

Negative: Called to work in other cultures than where you were trained

### 4. A minister's wife

Positive: Lots of opportunities for social interaction

Negative: Early sainthood expected and proficiency required in spur-of-the-moment quantity cooking

### The positives and negatives of administrative life

An administrator's wife's life also carries with it undeniable advantages. These include prestige, opportunities for travel, involvement in momentous events, and opportunities to meet important and interesting people.

On the other hand, disadvantages include finding herself alone frequently while her husband is involved in committees and appointments that keep him constantly traveling.

There will be many occasions when she may not know very much about what he is doing or the problems with which he is involved.

Because of his leadership role, he may have to terminate or discipline other workers which results in unpleasantness. Often anger is expressed in various derogatory ways against administrators and their families by people who have been disappointed or disciplined.

The administrative wife may feel isolated when others hesitate to become closely associated with her for fear of being accused of "buttering up the boss."

She may even begin to wonder who she is and where she fits into life in general.



### Reactions to role demands vary

There are a variety of ways to handle the pressures and stresses of being an administrator's wife. Some women withdraw and cloister themselves away in their homes refusing to become involved in community and church programs for various reasons including:

- fear of being hurt by gossip and remarks, or
- because of feelings of inadequacy and shyness.

Others bide their time, just waiting until their husband's term of office is over and they can once more lead a "normal" life.

Then there are those women who seem to actually flourish during their husband's administrative careers. Whether they are directly involved in his work or not, these women get involved in life in general and often grow professionally, personally, and spiritually. They are interesting people in themselves and are genuinely happy with their lot in life.

How do they do it? What strategies do they use that others don't seem to know about?

Following are seven secret weapons which most women can use to enhance their enjoyment of life, regardless of role pressures, and to help find fulfillment and joy.

#### 1. Find a quiet corner.

True peace and contentment has its roots in heavenly resources. When we take our problems, concerns, worries, and perplexities to Jesus, He *will* carry them for us and in turn fill us with peace and hope. We can always turn to Him especially when there seems to be no one else.

Make a special place in the home that will beckon and invite meditation and prayer. One woman told me how she made her quiet corner cozy and attrac-

tive by putting a desk next to a window that looked out through pretty curtains to her garden. On the desk, she had her favorite inspirational reading material, pictures, and special mementoes that reminded her of God's blessing in her life.

Another described an attractively decorated basket in which she kept her Bible, some inspiration books, a daily journal, etc. This basket was placed by a comfortable, favorite chair in the living room.

#### 2. Establish a goal.

There is real satisfaction in accomplishment. Women who are constantly learning new skills, studying and working toward a goal have something to share and be enthusiastic about. This is a great method of improving one's self-confidence.

One delightful elderly woman told me how when she was first married she had a terrible time entertaining the large and frequent dinner parties that she and her army-officer husband were required to give. She was very shy and afraid of the dignitaries with whom they were required to associate. But she took this problem as a challenge and really worked to improve her skills.

To broaden her knowledge base, she began to keep up with the local and national news, found out what she could about her guests *before* they arrived in her home, and then made determined efforts to speak to everyone at social gatherings. It was terribly difficult at first with lots of embarrassing moments. But she kept at it and eventually developed into a lovely, gracious hostess and a delightful conversationalist.

#### 3. Develop a good friend.

A close girlfriend is really

worth her weight in gold. What comfort there is to be found in being able to talk over problems and frustrations and to find support and companionship in one who can share our feminine points of view. Getting together for a visit, going shopping, or just sharing some time together is like a mini-vacation with all the benefits of helping us get on top of life's challenges once more.

#### 4. Create attractive surroundings.

You don't have to live in a palace in order to have an attractive, comfortable house. Keeping the house clean, decorating it with inspiring colors and things that have meaning to us can be done economically. Even our places of work can be made attractive and inviting.

We tend to be happier and feel better about ourselves when our environment is inspiring and interesting.

#### 5. Become interested in the needs of others.

Getting involved in helping people can be demonstrated in many ways. Some women enjoy helping out with church-related community outreach programs. Others become involved in special projects of their own, such as one woman who enjoys making clothing for a local orphanage and another works with a foster baby program. Still others open their homes and invite young people, the elderly, or those who need encouragement to come for fellowship and meals. There is something about helping others that is personally beneficial. Our own problems and worries seem to shrink in the light of the challenges that others face and the love we give often is returned in the most unexpected and interesting ways.



## 6. Make a time for yourself.

Whether you are worked to a frazzle or find a lack of things to fill the day, we all need time just for ourselves. Things we can do during this special time can include:

—Take stock of our wardrobe. Cull out what doesn't fit and give it away, mend what needs fixing, and organize the rest.

—Get a haircut or perm

—Give ourselves a manicure and pedicure

—Write a long overdue letter to a friend

—Begin reading an interesting book

—Try a new recipe

—Attend a community program

—Clean out the underwear drawer

—Engage in some form of exercise

These little boosts women give themselves are very helpful in contributing to their sense of well being and inner satisfaction.

## 7. Cultivate a sense of humor.

People heal faster, learn quicker, and cope better when humor is present. There are many things that can cause us to smile and laugh if we will take time to see them: kittens or puppies playing, interaction between small children, jokes and cartoons, the occasional mixed-up words of a public speaker, and, well, just the irony of life in general.

### Watch for other useful weapons

Along the road of life's experiences, we will pick up other secrets of success. The important thing is to studiously avoid becoming bogged down in negatives. All of us have some good things going for us. Even in the most adverse circumstances there are unique opportunities

and blessings. And overall there is one thing of which we can be *most* confident: along with God's calling to the responsibilities of administrator's wife (or to any

role for that matter), He promises to be there with us all the way and to help us develop the inner resources required to ensure our happiness and success. ✿

# Year of the Pastor

*A salute to pastoral wives*

**Meibel Mello Guedes**

A

message to pastoral wives:

I thank God for you—a woman of high ideals who is attentive, dynamic, and helpful. You use your talents so that the work of God increases, and you are a blessing as you stand by your husband's side.

You have been an exemplary mother and a faithful companion.

You have a living faith that comes from close association with God.

You have protected people in need, and in sorrow you know how to give a word of comfort.

You have been a motivation to your children, and to the children and young people at church.

*Meibel writes from A.F.A.M. in the Central Brazil Union Conference. Used with permission. Translated by Annabelle Kendall.*

—Via Shepherdess International

You have shared the Word of God by your personal testimony in the home, in the work place, and among your women friends.

Your words of encouragement have been a help. You work to advance the projects of the church.

You are quick to understand a discouraged woman and encourage her to go forward.

You find time to share words of sympathy and show that Christ is real in your life.

You love, encourage, and understand your husband-pastor. In this self-sacrificing work, you rejoice when he succeeds in the battles of life and in hastening the return of One who will reward you.

I recognize your work as a dedicated wife and precious mother whom God chose to be at your husband's side to care for His sheep on this earth. ✿



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# Loving Your Administrator's Wife

Gloria Bentzinger



*Gloria Bentzinger has served as a soul-winning pastoral wife, evangelist's wife, and administrative wife. She and her husband, Dan, currently serve the Adventist Media Center as an evangelistic team. They have two children: Brooks and Beth. Used with permission.*

—Via Shepherdess International

**I**t happened overnight. I was a very happy and contented pastor's wife, when suddenly I became "one of them." My husband accepted a call to conference administration. As I taped shut the cardboard boxes I wondered if administrators' wives were accepted, cared for, and loved. I was used to a church crowded with 800 people on Sabbath morning. These members showed their love for me in so many ways. Could 50 pastors' wives scattered throughout a state really be my church family?

It was a beautiful surprise! Those 50 wonderful ladies reached out to me in an unbelievable way! Pastors' wives cared for me by showing a genuine interest in my life, my children, and by realizing I was not simply an extension of my husband's administrative work. They respected my past experience and consistently prayed for me.

Following are some of the ways these wonderful women demonstrated support to me:

**1. Pastors' wives showed a genuine interest in my life.**

The gifts of appreciation—roses, plaques, and "thank you for visiting our church" cards—

are nice. But none of them compare with a handwritten note saying, "Gloria, it meant so much to me to be able to get to know you better. Thanks for listening to some of my frustrations. You know, I feel really comfortable around you... maybe it's because you cried a little bit when you told me what you've been through with your son all these years. When I think of you having to hook him up to machines four hours a day just to keep him alive, well, I can't complain. I can't believe he is suddenly okay after moving to our conference! I know God wants your family here, and I want to be your friend."

I appreciated it when the pastor's wife would make it a point to sit with me during potlucks so we could get to know each other better or catch up on happenings. Many administrators' wives tell about the loneliness of times when they sit at a head table with no one to talk to.

**2. Pastors' wives showed a genuine interest in my children.**

We travelled as a family to one hundred churches in our conference, attending our hometown church only twice a year. I appreciated the mothering and grandmothering from the pastors' wives. The handmade gifts



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for our children, including their names in fruit baskets and welcoming them personally from the pulpit on Sabbath morning meant much. If our children had helped deliver the sermon or music, their sense of self-worth was boosted by a note from the pastor and his wife a few days later.

Some of the pastors' wives grew so attached to my children that I was amazed at the outpouring of their love. My son, Brooks, received cards, cookies, and jelly beans in the mail when he went to boarding academy! One pastor's wife five hours away heard about the need of a better roommate for him, so she got her church together to pray about it! The next day a very popular spiritual leader of the campus came up to Brooks and asked if he could move in with him! My daughter, Beth, received little surprise packages and phone calls from around the state when I was far away from her in Moscow.

One evening I called Barbara, a pastor's wife, who lived an hour away. "Please, my child needs a grandma, right now. There's this big Home Economics assignment, making a little room with scraps of fabric." I'll never forget how refreshed I was that night as she helped create a beautiful miniature bedroom, complete with drapes and spread. Sitting on the floor cutting, pasting, and laughing, I felt a closeness like I felt as a child with my own grandma. When I left Barbara's house late that night, I was full of energy. My child was super-excited; this was a definite A! But more than that, we felt loved and nurtured.

### **3. Pastors' wives realized that I was not an extension of my husband's administrative work.**

They respected my request not to be a pipeline to my hus-

band. Initially some were surprised how confidential I would keep the details of their lives. They quickly caught on that I was not only trustworthy, but deliberately determined not to feed information to my husband that could sway him to make an administrative decision for their benefit or loss.

In response, I encouraged them to talk to my husband confidentially any time. They were assured that I would never pry him to find out details of their conversations. They also quickly realized that they were to go through administrative channels directly, rather than through spouses, and they respected me for this.

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*The tumor was gone,  
the surgery was  
cancelled, and I was  
discharged from the  
hospital. This was their  
miracle! God had  
answered their prayers!*

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### **4. Pastors' wives respected my experience and sought advice.**

Some wanted to know how to give Bible studies, and eagerly soaked up methods for soul winning. Others wanted specific skills in team ministry. Then there were those who had musical talent and would be a great blessing singing for their church's evangelistic meetings. I targeted a few of these women as my special project: to equip them to be the vocalists for their husband's

meetings. It meant staying up until 3 a.m., making back-up tapes in their voice ranges, calling all over to find specific songs to match their husband's sermons, and countless hours of practicing. I felt like a proud mother hen when their pastoral husband would call to say how great they did!

Some of our pastors' wives were younger than me, and some were much older, yet it really didn't matter. Because they had a respect for my personal spiritual, emotional, and physical experiences, age wasn't a factor. We sought to work through problems together, knowing that most of the time I didn't have the answers, but we could go on our knees together to Someone who did!

### **5. Pastors' wives prayed for me.**

They prayed for ten months while I went through diagnostic testing which eventually revealed a brain tumor. They witnessed me lose my "identity" when my left hand couldn't even play a scale on the piano. They knew I wasn't really okay even though I was smiling real big on the outside. Before my scheduled neurosurgery, our mailbox was stuffed full of cards of encouragement and notes with Bible promises. As I struggled to pray, "Thy will be done even unto death," they were praying for me. I went through a deep spiritual experience before my anointing, and was finally able to pray total submission for my healing. After that God was able to answer their prayers in a miraculous way. When the strength suddenly came back in my left hand, I immediately told them. They were excited and prayed that my surgery would be canceled. Right before my scheduled five-hour



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*"Thank you for the 50  
pastoral-wife friends  
that prayed them in!"*

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surgery, I requested another MRI. The tumor was gone, the surgery was cancelled, and I was discharged from the hospital. This was *their* miracle! God had answered *their* prayers!

I know that those women prayed for me as a person, and not just because I was an administrator's wife, because they're *still praying for me!* It's been two years since we said our goodbyes to enter full-time evangelism with the Media Center and the North American Division. They don't care that I'm not with their conference anymore. They write and call, wondering how our children are doing, and asking about our meetings. But what really made me feel warm inside was a recent call from a pastor's wife who organizes the conference-wide prayer chain. "When is your big altar call during the meetings?" she asked. "We all want to be praying for the people that need to make decisions."

At 9 p.m. my husband finished his appeal and invited people to come to the front that wanted to be baptized. As I started singing "Just as I Am" at the keyboard, I envisioned all those precious pastors' wives in their living rooms praying. Suddenly I felt an extra power—like I was not alone. I saw 50 people stream forward to the altar before I even finished the first verse, I smiled. "Thank you, Lord, for these 50 new babies in you," I whispered in my heart. "And thank you for the 50 pastoral-wife friends that prayed them in!" ❀

## Safety Travel Tips

- If you travel alone quite a lot, consider purchasing a cellular phone for safety reasons.
- Leave enough space between cars at a red light or stop sign to pull away if necessary. A good rule is to position yourself to be able to see the full rear tires of the car ahead of you. In potentially risky circumstances, use the middle lane to avoid being pinned against the curb.
- Keep vehicle locked and windows rolled up. If your vehicle is without air conditioning, keep the windows up enough so it will be difficult for someone to reach in and take your purse, wallet, keys or other valuables, and/or threaten your safety.
- Keep house keys on a separate ring from your car keys.
- If approached by a person with a weapon—comply! The loss of your wallet, purse, and/or keys to your car are not worth your health, safety, and possibly your life.
- Keep house and driveway well-lighted. When returning home, be aware of all vehicles and pedestrians—especially things or people out of the ordinary.
- Do not leave purse or other valuables in view while you are driving, or while the car is parked. Don't set yourself up for a break-in. Use the car trunk to store purchased items.
- Choose well-lighted, well-traveled facilities. If stopping to use a public facility such as a pay phone or gas station, park in a well-lighted place where the station attendant can see you.
- Keep vehicle well-maintained and make sure it has plenty of gas. To avoid being stranded on the highway or a strange part of town, check oil and fluid levels, tire tread and pressure, and engine drive belts, hoses, radiator and battery.
- If forced to pull off the highway, or vehicle becomes disabled, use extreme caution. Use common sense when people stop and offer help.
- Be careful after a minor rear-end accident. If you do not feel comfortable exiting your vehicle, write down the car tag, motion to the other driver and drive to the nearest police station, 24-hour store or service station, hospital or fire station.
- Beware of police officer impersonations. If in doubt, ask for picture ID before leaving vehicle. ❀

*—This article appeared in Foresight, July 1993. Used with permission.*

*—Via Shepherdess International*



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# Dear Lord, Help Me Now!

Gina Wahlen

**I**t was probably one of the most exasperating times I have ever experienced. In fact, it was so shocking that it felt unreal—like some bad dream.

But it was very real, right in church on Sabbath morning. Two people, who are not Christians of any faith, but who have attended our church semi-regularly, sat in the second row. The man is a convicted felon who wants to blame the church, and particularly the pastor and his wife, for his problems. We have had to deal with this man off and on for nearly the past two years, and he has disrupted various programs of the church—but never like this.

Our church has a “praise and prayer request” time, when an elder leads out while microphones are given to those in the congregation who would like to

share. On this particular Sabbath, the man’s wife got up quickly and took the microphone. She turned around and faced the congregation. After using Matthew 18:17, “tell it to the church,” as justification for their actions, she proceeded to read a very lengthy typewritten statement accusing my husband and me, along with three other families of the church, of various crimes. Lie after lie poured out of her mouth as the entire church sat in a state of shock.

My hands grew cold and I felt sick inside. I wanted to stand up and say, “You’re lying! Stop it! Stop disrupting the church while you’re on Satan’s errand!” Then I prayed, “Lord, help me now.” It was all I could pray, but I knew the Lord understood. I remembered a text I had read that morning during worship: “This is the word of the Lord . . . Not by might, nor by power, but by my Spirit, saith the Lord of hosts” (Zech. 4:6). A calm, wonderful peace came and as I concentrated on God and His promises, I didn’t even hear much more of what was being read.

Suddenly, someone behind me in the congregation asked if we could pray before the woman continued reading. Although the

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*Lie after lie poured out  
of her mouth as the  
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state of shock.*

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*Gina Wahlen is a pastor’s wife and lives at the Zaokski Theological Seminary in Russia. Used with permission.*

*—Via Shepherdess International*



woman who was reading and her husband didn't seem to want anyone to pray, someone else stood to their feet and immediately asked for God's Spirit to be there, and if this would bring honor and glory to His name, then let this continue, but if not, let it end. After the prayer, the woman tried to continue as many members and visitors in the church got up and left. Another church member stood up and asked the woman to stop. At that point, her husband grew frantic and started accusing the congregation. Things deteriorated rapidly and very soon the couple left.

As things calmed down, some of those who had left the service returned and a wonderful peace settled throughout the sanctuary. We felt ready to worship.

These two people are by far the most difficult people I have ever encountered. When I try to deal with them myself, it never works. When I hate them, bitterness only poisons my own soul. When I completely turned them over to God, when I forgave them and earnestly prayed for their salvation, then God worked things out in His way and delivered me.

It was remarkable how God provided comfort that Sabbath. The Sabbath school lesson dealt with Psalm 46: "God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble. Therefore will not we fear, though the earth be removed, and though the mountains be carried into the midst of the sea" (verses 1 and 2).

The scripture reading, 1 John 2:18-27, and the sermon entitled, "Protection from Deception" carried just the message we needed. The special music was also beautifully appropriate, and the words of the closing hymn "We are Living, We are Dwelling" had

a powerful message. We knew that God had been with us that day.

I still have much to learn about dealing with difficult people. What I seem to be learning, however, is this: God has called us to His service. He has called us as pastoral wives to love the unlovely, to reach the unreachable for Him. He has to use somebody to reach these people. He needs me to be so secure in

His love that I will allow Him to use me in His ministry of compassion, acceptance, and reconciliation.

I don't know how God will reach these two difficult people in my life, but I do know that I never want to be a hindrance to His working. I pray that these people, for whom Jesus gave His life, will one day soon accept His gift of salvation. ❀

## *Helps in Daily Living*

*"Cultivate the habit of speaking well of others. Dwell upon the good qualities of those with whom you associate, and see as little as possible of their errors and failings. When tempted to complain of what someone has said or done, praise something in that person's life or character. Cultivate thankfulness. Praise God for His wonderful love in giving Christ to die for us. It never pays to think of our grievances. God calls upon us to think of His mercy and His matchless love, that we may be inspired with praise.*

*"Earnest workers have no time for dwelling upon the faults of others. We cannot afford to live on the husks of others' faults or failings. Evil speaking is a twofold curse, falling more heavily upon the speaker than upon the hearer. He who scatters the seeds of dissention and strife reaps in his own soul the deadly fruits. The very act of looking for evil in others develops evil in those who look. By dwelling upon the faults of others, we are changed into the same image. But by beholding Jesus, talking of His love and perfection of character, we become changed into His image. By contemplating the lofty ideal He has placed before us, we shall be uplifted into a pure and holy atmosphere, even the presence of God. When we abide here, there goes forth from us a light that irradiates all who are connected with us."*

—Ministry of Healing, p. 492.



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# The Minister's Wife in Relation to Her Children

Margit Strom  
Heppenstall



Margit S. Heppenstall has authored four books for children and has a poetic gift, having written many devotional poems. Her hobbies include reading, writing, travel, needlepoint, and her 13 marvelous grand children. Margit is confined to a wheelchair now but is devoted in faith and an inspiration to all who know her.

This article appeared in the Central Luzon Conference Shepherdess Bulletin, January-March 1992. Used with permission.

—Via Shepherdess International

Have your children come home and complained of their playmates calling them PKs? It seems that “preachers’ kids” is an epithet often hurled at them by those who want to classify them as being different from other children. Just because their dad is a minister they are presumed to be more saintly than any other breed, and sometimes excluded from participation in many normal childhood exploits. If they do participate and get into mischief, there are those who would scold them far more severely than their peers, because as PKs they are supposedly expected to do better.

Children hate being different. It is unfortunate in the case of ministers’ children that people tend to form their own stereotyped image of what they should be like. It is true that the behavior of any child does reflect, for better or for worse, on the reputation of his parents. The minister has a serious calling and wide-searching influence. “The minister who allows his children to grow up unruly and disobedient, will find that the influence of his labors in the pulpit is counteracted by the unlovely course

of his children” (*Gospel Workers*, p. 205).

There is nothing unreasonable in this statement. However, it does not declare that the ministers’ children ought to be “better” than other children. It merely states that the minister is more vulnerable than other parents if he neglects to train his children correctly.

“The king upon his throne has no higher work than has the mother.... she has in her power the molding of her children’s characters, that they may be fitted for the higher, immortal life. An angel could not ask for a higher mission; for in doing this work she is doing service for God” (*The Adventist Home*, p. 231).

As this most challenging of all tasks faces the minister’s wife, she needs divine wisdom in walking the razor’s edge of the special problem mentioned above. How can she shield her children from the disadvantages of being more in the public eye than other children? How can she counteract the detrimental effects of people who single them out for special treatment?

There will be church members who fawn over the pastors’ children one day, and criticize



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them severely the next. Even church school teachers, no matter how well meaning, have been known to voice their expectation of superior performance from the pastors' children. This is unhealthy and unfortunate.

With tact and prudence the minister's wife may do much to minimize this harmful influence from outside the home. Her most important duty, however, is to help eliminate it inside the home. It is easy for a minister and his wife to become overly conscious and concerned about their children's behavior, especially in a small church and community where the family lives in a goldfish-bowl situation. In this sensitive atmosphere there is real danger that the minister and his wife may transmit religion to their children in a rigid, dogmatic, and critical spirit. Parents who are determined to uphold the standard at all costs will tend to expect too much from their children and harp on little mistakes and normal childish imperfections. By so doing, they create unbearable emotional tensions within the home. The end result is disastrous.

Parents must be emotionally secure and mature so they can accept and love their children for what they are as persons in their own right and not for what they may be able to do to please their parents or bring glory to the family name. To teach children they must be good because their father is a minister is to instill a false set of values and will have the opposite effect from the one desired. Children must learn from parental example that the only reason for being good is for the sake of principle. Parents must love their children enough to put the children's true interests and needs above their own selfish desires to present a "perfect

child" to the congregation. They must create a happy, relaxed home atmosphere, full of love and laughter. The home must be free from any anxious concern, and full of faith, trust, and mutual respect. As always, love is the solution. Mature Christian love lived out by the parents will engender love in the hearts of the children. This response of love cannot fail to bring forth in their lives the desired obedience. "Never forget that you are to make the home bright and happy for yourselves and your children by cherishing the Savior's attributes. If you bring Christ into the home you will know good from evil. . . . You will be able to

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*Parents must be emotionally secure and mature so they can accept and love their children for what they are as persons.*

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help your children to be trees of righteousness, bearing the fruit of the Spirit" (*Ibid.*, p. 17).

The mother's burden is made heavier because her husband is so often away from home. This ought not to be, and Mrs. White has written much about the minister's responsibility to his own family (*Gospel Workers*, pp. 204-206). A survey in 1960 revealed that the average Protestant minister spent about 26 hours a week with his family (*Pastoral Psychology*, September, 1960, p. 12). This included meals, family outings, devotions, watching

TV with the children, and helping them with homework. Thirty-three years later, many pastoral fathers spend only a few minutes a day nurturing their children. Modern conveniences have not enabled fathers to spend more family time, only work "faster". With the increasing and overwhelming temptations of our corrupt world today, the children more than ever need the steady influence of a father's presence, and proof of his personal interest in them.

When interviewed, several ministers' wives who can look back now and believe they reared their children successfully, emphasized how important it was to have their husband spend time with each individual child and to utilize every precious moment of family togetherness. These are the parsonages from which have gone forth young ministers who gladly follow in the footsteps of beloved, respected fathers, as well as a host of doctors, nurses, teachers, and others who have made great contributions in worthwhile fields of human endeavor. For no matter how tempted ministers' children may be at some time in their life to feel that being PK is a handicap, most of them who can look back on homes such as these will admit it was a high privilege.

I quote from the remarks of an outstanding, successful mother among the ministers' wives whom I know. When asked how she accounted for the fact that every one of her seven children has remained faithful to childhood training and is active in the church, she replied: "We just had an average normal Christian home. Sincerity is caught, not taught. Our motto was to do the right thing at the right time, and to remember that a loving heart is the truest wisdom." ❀



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# The Ordination Charge

Roselyne Raelly



Roselyne Raelly is the Shepherdess Coordinator for the Eastern Africa Division. She has three children and is currently finishing her certified public accountant requirements. Used with permission.

—Via Shepherdess International

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Matthew 24:14

As I sat and listened to Charge at an ordination service recently, I could not help but think why and how this Charge affects each of us as pastoral wives. It is very appropriate and important that pastoral wives be present as their husbands are being ordained to the gospel ministry. Wives play a very important role in the life of the minister as a helpmeet. It is the wife who shares in the joys and sorrows of the minister. The importance of her presence during this sobering service is so she may listen to the Charge and witness the commitments that her husband is making. These commitments will be made on behalf of the whole pastoral family.

### Meaningful aspects

The Ordination Charge has several aspects which make it especially meaningful to the shepherdess. Genesis 2:18 says, "And the Lord God said, It is not good that the man should be alone; I will make him an help meet for him." What does this word *helpmeet* really mean in our relationship as husband and wife? The *helpmeet* was to be appropriate for man's needs and complement him. No companion could be found for Adam among the animals. It had to be one of his own

kind. In God's plan since creation of Eve, the wife is therefore a *helpmeet* to compliment the man. Ellen White comments: "Man was not made to dwell in solitude; he was to be a social being. Without companionship, the beautiful scenes and delightful employments of Eden would have failed to yield perfect happiness. Even communion with angels could not have satisfied his desire for sympathy and companionship. There was none of the same to love and to be loved" (*Patriarchs and Prophets*, p. 46). God ordained that first marriage in the Garden of Eden.

After taking the rib from Adam to create Eve, Adam declared his love for Eve: "This is now bone of my bones, and flesh of my flesh: she shall be called Woman because she was taken out of Man" (Genesis 2:23). And God, to end the marriage ceremony, commands in Genesis 2:24: "Therefore, shall a man leave his father and his mother, and shall cleave to his wife: and they shall be one flesh."

This makes our role in carrying out the Ordination Charge even more sobering. Woman was to be man's *helpmeet*; the shepherdess is therefore the shepherd's *helpmeet* in carrying out the first command in the Charge: "O son of man, I have set thee a



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watchman unto the house of Israel; therefore thou shalt hear the word of my mouth, and warn them from me. When I say unto the wicked, O wicked man, thou shalt surely die; if thou dost not speak to warn the wicked from his way, that wicked man shall die in his iniquity; but his blood will require at thine hand" (Eze. 33:7-11). The shepherdess is equally an *helpmeet* in carrying out the message in 2 Corinthians 5:20.

The charge in 2 Corinthians 6:1-4, which is one of the commands in the Charge, is equally a challenge to the shepherdess. Verse three of 2 Corinthians reads: "Giving no offence in anything, that the ministry be not blamed." The pastoral family should be an example for the church and an example of ministry in practice, behavior, dress, and conversation. The family of the pastor should conform to biblical principles and not be a slave to earthly lusts. The key figure in building the shepherd's good reputation is the shepherdess; she is the key to his rising to higher heights just as she could be the key to his downfall. The pen of inspiration says: "I saw that the wives of the ministers should help their husbands in their labors and be exact and careful what influence they exert, for they are watched and more is expected of them than of others. Their dress should be an example, savoring of life rather than of death. I saw that they should take a humble, meek, yet exalted stand, not having their conversation upon things that do not tend to direct the mind heavenward. The great inquiry should be: 'How can I save my own soul and be the means of saving others?' . . . Their influence tells, decidedly, unmistakably, in favor of the truth or against it. They gather

for Jesus or scatter abroad. An unsanctified wife is the greatest curse that a minister can have" (*Adventist Home*, p. 355).

#### **Self-sacrificing ministry**

One of the commands in the Charge reflects on the aspects of a "self-sacrificing service." This means that being the shepherdess you have a major part to play in this "self-sacrificing ministry." "When Christ called His disciples to follow Him, He offered them no flattering prospects in this life. He gave them no promise of gain or worldly honor, nor did they make any stipulation as to what

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*I hope that you still  
have the love for the  
ministry you first had  
when you decided to  
marry a minister.*

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they should receive. . . . Today the Savior calls us, as He called Matthew and John and Peter, to His work. If our hearts are touched by His love, the question of compensation will not be uppermost in our minds. We shall rejoice to be co-workers with Christ, and we shall not fear to trust His care. If we make God our strength, we shall have clear perceptions of duty, and unselfish aspirations; our life will be actuated by a noble purpose, which will raise us above sordid motives" (*Gospel Workers*, pp. 113,

114).

The aspect of "self-sacrifice" carries with it the connotation of carrying the waves of the ministry patiently and with a spirit of long suffering. *Waves of ministry*—Yes, there are waves in the ministry. Christ met opposition and angry words; they even spat on him, but he never revenged or retaliated. He stood the waves, unshaken. It's His plan that we are to help the shepherd nurture the flock. Can we avoid being affected by these waves? No, that is only human. But 1 Peter 2:19-23 has the formula for us. The duty of the shepherdess is not to add salt to the wound of the shepherd, but to gently soothe and help point her husband to the final reward. The shepherdess is to support the shepherd as he stands firm like a rock by the shores of the ocean, which is hit by the waves every minute but never moves—for indeed our Rock of Ages, Christ, stood to the end.

In one of the waves of the ministry, finances, we find the aspect of "self-sacrifice." There are many social pressures in managing the clergy finances. The shepherdess has a big role to play in this. She is an advisor and controller of extravagant spending. "I was shown that you, my brother and sister, have much to learn. . . . You have not learned to economize" (*Adventist Home*, p. 376). We are therefore to live within our means in the self-sacrificing service.

I hope that you still have the love for the ministry you first had when you decided to marry a minister. It is not easy to accomplish all this. Humanly speaking it is impossible, but with Christ everything is possible.

#### **How to be a good helpmeet**

Listed below are some tips on



how to be a good *helpmeet* in the ministry as charged to the pastors in our Division:

1. *Possess a spirit of self-sacrifice and cultivate love for souls.* "The wife of a minister can do much if she will. If she possesses the spirit of self-sacrifice, and has a love for souls, she can with him do almost an equal amount of good. . . . A responsibility rests upon the minister's wife which she should not and cannot lightly throw off. God will require the talent lent her with usury. She should work earnestly, faithfully, and unitedly with her husband to save souls. She should never urge her wishes and desires, or express a lack of interest in her husband's labor, or dwell upon homesick, discontented feelings. All these natural feelings must be overcome. She should have a purpose in life which should be unflinchingly carried out. What if this conflicts with the feelings and pleasures and natural tastes! These should be cheerfully and readily sacrificed, in order to do good and save souls" (*Gospel Workers*, p. 201, 202).

2. *Live a devoted prayerful life.* "The wives of ministers should live devoted, prayerful lives. But some would enjoy a religion in which there are no crosses, and which calls for no self-denial and exertion on their part" (*Ibid*, p. 202).

3. *Live a life of conformity to the biblical principles, as an example to those of your flock.* In your dress, try to dress in a way that will keep you from being a stumbling block to some weaker soul in the congregation.

4. *Study God's word constantly.*

5. *Be patient and long suffering.*

6. *Through Christ, cultivate a love for those that make ministry hard for your family and pray for them.*

7. *Be courteous, hospitable, and cheerful.*

8. *Be willing to learn—do not possess the spirit of knowing it all.* The lessons of salvation are learned every day.

Remember that it is an honor to be co-worker with Him who gave His life for us. It is the ultimate joy to see many give their lives to Jesus because of a dedicated ministry by the pastor and his consecrated wife. We may not

be rewarded in this world, but like Paul's message to Timothy in 2 Timothy 4:1-7, we shall indeed say, "(We) have fought a good fight, (we) have finished (our) course, (we) have kept the faith." And indeed a crown of righteousness will be waiting for us when Christ the Master shall say, "Well done, thou good and faithful servant . . . enter thou into the joy of thy lord" (Matt. 25:21). What a joy it will be for all of us as pastoral wives! ❀

## Ask Him

*It is not the capabilities you now possess  
or ever will have that will give you success.*

*It is that which the Lord can do for you.*

*We need to have far less confidence*

*in what man can do*

*and far more confidence in what God can do  
for every believing soul.*

*He longs to have you reach after Him by faith.*

*He longs to have you expect great things from Him.*

*He longs to give you understanding*

*in temporal as well as in spiritual matters. . . .*

*He can give tact and skill.*

*Put your talents into the work,*

*Ask God for wisdom,*

*And it will be given you.*

—Christ Object Lessons, p. 146



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# Marcie's Miracle

Delba B. de Chavez



Marcie de Chavez at 18 months

Delba and her husband, Nelson, live in San Paulo City, Philippines, where he is the Executive Secretary of the South Central Luzon Mission.

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—Via Shepherdess International

**Y**our daughter is dead!"

Speechless and trembling, I held my breath as my six-month-old baby girl was pronounced clinically dead by the doctor. Instinctively I cuddled my daughter's lifeless body closer in my arms.

People who witnessed the unusual event on October 23, 1990, in Room 223 of the St. Paul Community Hospital will never be the same again.

The day before, Merosé, the younger of my twin girls was admitted at the hospital. The diagnosis—bronchopneumonia. The afternoon of the following day her twin sister, Marcie, joined her. She had a hacking cough which convinced us that she needed hospitalization too.

Many of our friends came to visit that evening. While we were

exchanging pleasantries, we saw the nurse walk in. She proceeded to the bed, lifted and looked closely at Marcie's arm where minutes earlier she had administered a skin test.

The doctor had prescribed similar medicines for both Marcie and Merosé. Since Merosé was admitted one day ahead, she had been given her shot earlier that day with no adverse effects. Then the nurse turned to me and asked, "Could you carry your daughter while I'm doing the IV push?"

Without further prodding, I cradled my six-month-old baby girl and leaned on the headboard.

"This will take about five minutes," she added.

My daughter had been sleeping for sometime so I was confident that she would not feel anything. I was wrong.

When the medicine started to flow into her IV, she stiffened. I patted her and smoothed her hair away from her face. She settled in my arms and went on sleeping.

Halfway during the IV push, Marcie again fidgeted. She tried to move her arms. Her fingers twitched.

The nurse finally emptied the syringe. She picked up her tray

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*"Your daughter is dead!" Speechless and trembling, I held my breath.*

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and left the room.

Then I felt my little girl grow limp in my arms. Her head drooped to one side. One of our visitors screamed, "Look! your baby!"

I tilted my daughter's face toward me. Her face was ashen! I felt for her pulse and heartbeat but there was not even the slightest flutter.

"Get the doctor!" somebody shouted and one of them ran out.

The nurse who injected the medicine came running back when she heard the commotion. At a glance, she took in the deathly pallor of my daughter. Without touching my baby, she raced back to call the intern who was on duty.

My mom, a retired nurse, was on the other bed with Merosé.

I demanded. "Can't something be done?" She shook her head and spoke, "The medicine is in Marcie's bloodstream. If she's allergic to it, there's nothing anybody can do."

Only then did the realization hit me. If nobody in this hospital can do anything for my baby girl, I know Somebody who can!

I yelled above the din to one of the visitors—a minister. "Pastor, pray for my little girl." He prayed and I prayed silently with him.

It seemed like ages before the doctor arrived; two nurses following closely on his heels. He came straight toward me. Without saying a word, he placed his thumbs on Marcie's chest and applied pressure. My daughter's body jerked!

"Lay her on the bed, ma'am."

Slowly, I placed my dead child on the bed and stepped out to the veranda.

My control broke and tears flowed freely down my cheeks. How will I ever accept my daughter's fate? My sister's tragic

death three months earlier had traumatized me. What will I tell my husband? He's not even around to see his daughter die!

Then I poured my heart to God. "Father," I sobbed, "if it is Your will that my little girl will live, then let her live to be a witness for You. If, however, her brain has been affected because of this experience and she will not lead a normal life, take her. Do as You see fit, dear Lord. Only, help me to understand the message You want to convey."

All our visitors were inside the room watching and waiting to see what would happen next. Patients from the other room crowded at the door to observe and offer sympathy. By that time,

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*Jesus does truly love to answer the prayers of workers' wives.*

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three doctors worked feverishly on Marcie. Minutes passed.

Suddenly, my close friend rushed out, hugged me tightly and exclaimed, "She's breathing!"

She pulled me into the room. My daughter, who still looked pale, was propped on the pillow. I sat beside her and tenderly touched her face. The doctors briefed me on her condition. Again, I requested for a special prayer of thanksgiving.

A few minutes later the medical team left. Soon our friends

who stood by during the crisis also left.

The succeeding medicines and the IV were discontinued. After five days, my babies were discharged from the hospital.

On our way out to the parking lot, we dropped by the nurses' station to thank them for making our confinement tolerable.

The doctor, who was instrumental in resuscitating my baby girl, was there reading the charts. He stood and walked over to shake our hands. He seemed to think for a moment.

I held my breath. What's he going to tell us next. That Marcie will not develop into a normal child? That her brain had suffered from lack of oxygen?

Then he uttered these words I'll never forget. "I can't believe what happened. I've had many cases similar to your daughter's, but this was the first time I've seen one come back to life. It's really a miracle!"

For several months, Marcie went through inconsolable crying fits. When awakened suddenly, she would move her head from side to side with eyes half opened. Her hands with fingers outstretched would shield her face and tremors would shake her tiny frame.

Today, she can say many words clearly and count one to five—quite early for a 15-month-old toddler.

Each day I thank God for the doctors who understood our anxieties and explained to us that this can happen to anyone.

Marcie's experience has inspired many of the sermons of the ministers of our Mission. Occasionally, I met some brethren who tell me how their faith has been strengthened because of Marcie's "rebirth." Jesus does truly love to answer the prayers of workers' wives. ❀



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# What are you doing about these "leftovers"?

Jean Coleman



*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, June 1993. Used with permission.*

—Via Shepherdess International

What's in this little glass dish in the back of the refrigerator?" my husband asked. He handed me a small glass container.

Lifting the lid, I carefully studied the contents. They were sea green in color with a covering of fuzzy moss. I had never seen anything like it before—or smelled anything like it either. "Maybe green beans?" I ventured.

Jack pulled out a second container. "How about this one?"

I examined the small jar he held in his hand. It was another mystery food item, but this one was a brownish-yellow covered with slime. Could it possibly have been a piece of meat? It would have taken the skill of a pathologist to discover the origin of this very dead object.

"Were you saving these for a special surprise dinner?" he asked sarcastically. "Or perhaps growing some homemade penicillin for medicinal purposes?"

Stooping down, I peered into the refrigerator and spotted several more "glass coffins" toward the back of the bottom shelf. "I've been meaning to throw out these

things," I explained, "but I just never got around to doing it." I glanced at my watch. "And I don't have time now either. I'll take care of it tomorrow." And I quickly slammed the refrigerator door, allowing the "deceased" to spend more time in the morgue.

How long had I been storing that rotting food in the fridge? Probably for weeks. Obviously it should have never been saved in the first place, but I have a habit of saving a little drib of this or a drab of that. My leftovers continue to mount up, unused and forgotten until they are unfit for human consumption. It was certainly no surprise to me that all those little coffins were hiding in there, but it was just too much trouble to scrape them out and wash the dishes. So they remained, filled with putrid and decomposing food.

Occasionally I would even open the lids of the little containers to take a look inside, but then I would quickly close them up and put them back in the refrigerator to rot a little more. Out of sight, out of mind!

Yet I had to admit it was embarrassing to have someone else discover the decaying matter I



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was saving. It was one thing if I knew, but quite another to have my husband uncover my secret coffins.

What do you have stored away in the refrigerator of your mind? Have you allowed bitterness, resentment, prejudice, and hate to remain when they should have been tossed out long ago? It's amazing what a short time it takes for a little stored up rejection to turn into some really repulsive resentment and bitterness. Even a small amount of prejudice shoved into the dark recesses of your mind as a child, can be brought forth later as hate-covered anger and violence.

As pastors' wives, we know that we should be renewed in the spirit of our minds. We acknowledge our responsibility to confess and be cleansed of our sins, to examine ourselves and remove any corrupt thing we find within us. But many of us tend to be "savers." A church member speaks a cutting word or makes an inconsiderate comment, and that little glass coffin is right there, ready and waiting to keep the offense stored away. The worst part is that the longer the offense sits in the dark corner of your mind, the more corrupt it will become.

We currently have an interesting situation in our church. Several months ago one of our long-time and deeply-rooted families decided to transfer their membership to a neighboring church. "We feel we've learned all we can here, so it's time to move on to another church," they informed us.

Needless to say, I had some difficulties with their departure. I battled the usual resentment, rejection, bitterness, and anger that so often seeks to come upon me when members leave the church. But after much prayer, I was finally able to release them

in my spirit. After all, it is Jesus who builds His church, and it is Jesus who knows where all the stones fit.

I really thought that I had dealt with all of my negative feelings toward these ex-members, but unfortunately, I still had a few leftovers that I stored away—little coffins filled with unresolved resentment and bitterness. The family was gone, and so I stood shakily upon the worldly adage, "Out of sight, out of mind." I even managed to forget that several glass coffins were hidden in the refrigerator of my mind.

But it seems that our runaway family occasionally gets homesick, and so they reappear every month or so at special meetings or movies that we have at the church. It never fails to shock me when I walk into the sanctuary and see them sitting there, just like they never left. They even come over to greet me with a hug. And to make matters worse, at the close of the service, they stand around chatting with everyone, relating how happy they are in their new church.

Have you noticed that when a refrigerator door is opened, the light goes on? And these frequent encounters with this family, seem to open the door into my hidden thoughts. The light goes on to reveal my secret resentment toward them, and I sense the stench of the small containers holding my leftovers.

I find myself walking to the sanctuary down the back hall to avoid meeting them, and leaving immediately at the close of the service so I won't have to spend time exchanging pleasantries.

"What are *they* doing here?" I murmur to myself. "If they don't like this church, why don't they just stay away! The nerve of them to come to this meeting!" Just the

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*The longer the offense sits in the dark corner of your mind, the more corrupt it will become.*

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sight of them can cause my blood pressure to rise. The glass coffins are opened and the corruption spills into my spirit. And my husband is right there to see it!

"You've got to do something about these people," I demand of Jack. "It isn't right for them to come to our meetings! And who knows what they're saying to everyone! Do something!"

And my husband looks into my refrigerator, amazed at all the garbage that is still stored there. "Don't worry about it," he patiently exhorts me. "It's wonderful that they feel they can still come here. It shows we're a loving church where everyone is welcome."

So properly chastened, I determine to clean out my refrigerator and fill myself with good food instead of rotting leftovers. It is clearly time to become cleansed through the washing of the water of the Word, time to fill my shelves with some fresh fruit of the Spirit.

The scriptures remind us that we are to examine ourselves (1 Cor. 11:28). What leftovers have *you* been saving that need to be thrown out in the trash? Why not take a few minutes right now to open the door of your mind, and check inside for any glass coffins that might contain leftover unforgiveness, resentment, or bitterness. Clean out the old things and once more fill your heart with love, peace, and joy. ❀





# Shepherdess International News

## Euro-Africa Division

- ✿ The Austrian Union invited all pastoral wives to a joint weekend meeting from November 19-21, in Semmering, located to the south of Vienna. Elder Johannes Mager, Ministerial Secretary for the Euro-Africa Division, was the invited speaker. Everyone felt blessed by his ability to transfer the idea of biblical stewardship into modern daily life. His main emphasis was 1 Peter 4:10, and the exchanges of experiences were encouraging. Daily discussions dealt primarily with the daily planning of a pastor's wife's work. Praying together helped settle many pastoral concerns. It was touching to see many young pastoral wives express a desire that their personal support would help their husbands become more efficient. The meetings ended on a high note. The responsibility for missionary work service in the church, time, money, etc., no longer seemed a burden, and the pastoral couples' attention was drawn to the one real Steward!

## Euro-Asia Division

- ✿ Olga Murga reports from our newest Division that over 20 pastoral wives came together for meetings in Novosibirsk from December 17-21. They

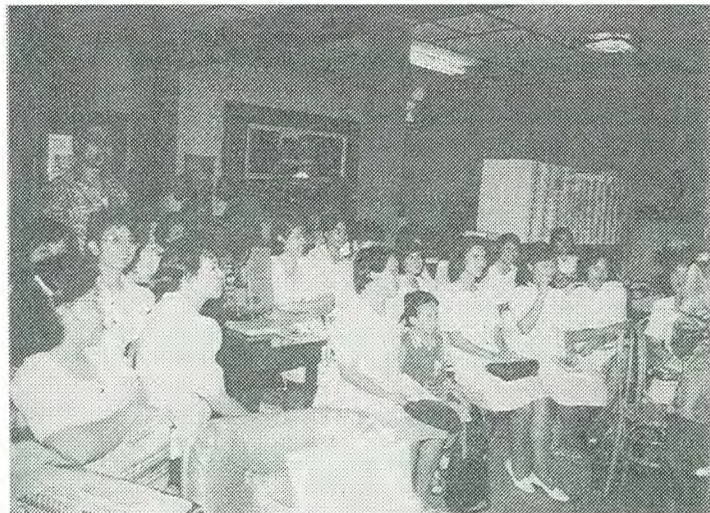
had a joyous time of fellowship. The Shepherdess organization of the Euro-Asia Division just published their first Shepherdess Journal in the Russian language. Praise the Lord!

## Far Eastern Division

- ✿ Vilma Nepomuceno, president of the Central Union Conference Shepherdess Chapter, reports that they held their second annual professional growth seminar. Dr. Gloria Itchon, from the Family Planning Organization of the Philippines, was the guest speaker. She spoke on "The Biological and Psychological Aspect of the Menopausal Stage" and "Family Planning/Maternal and Child Care in Apostolate Work." Sixty-four pastoral wives attended the seminar.

- ✿ Philippine Union College just completed their yearly seminar and orientation for ministerial students and their fiancés. This program, under the direction of Mellie Viloso, was designed to help these would-be pastors and their soon-to-be-pastoral wives to get better acquainted with the work that they will be doing when they leave the college campus. They were instructed in the expectations of church members and how they could cope with these expectations.
- ✿ The Mountain Provinces Mission sponsored a meeting for all pastoral wives in that area from January 26-30. The pastoral wives were actively encouraged to participate in

*Central Luzon Conference wives attend seminar.*





evangelism and outreach activities in their districts.

### Inter-American Division

✿ The French Antilles-Guiana Union retreat for pastoral couples should be listed in the Adventist Book of World Records! Seventy ministerial couples gathered in beautiful St. Martin, December 8-12. Union President, Antoine Oculi, was insistent that all wives attend with their husband, so one wife interrupted her university program and flew in from Paris, France. Dorothy Eaton Watts, author of the new continuing education program, *Team Ministry*, spoke to the couples on the team ministry concept. Seminar topics included "A Call to Team Ministry," "Communication in Team Ministry," and "Finding Your Role." Daily baby sitting for preschoolers, as well as planned recreational activities for older children meant that the wives could be free to attend all the meetings. Moonlit evenings found many pastoral couples relaxing on the beach, sharing stories of their ministry, and discussing plans for the future. An impressive graduation service for all seminars was held the last morning; the couples were called up together and received their diplomas for continuing education.

### North American Division

✿ The Atlanta Belvedere Church, in the Georgia Cumberland Conference, honored Pastor and Mrs. Albert Ellis as a part of the "Year of the Pastor" celebrations. Using the pretense of a church-wide



*Albert and Elaine Ellis*

harvest festival, church members surprised the Ellis' with a delightful program reminding them of their past pastoral experiences and a program designed around "This Is Your Life."

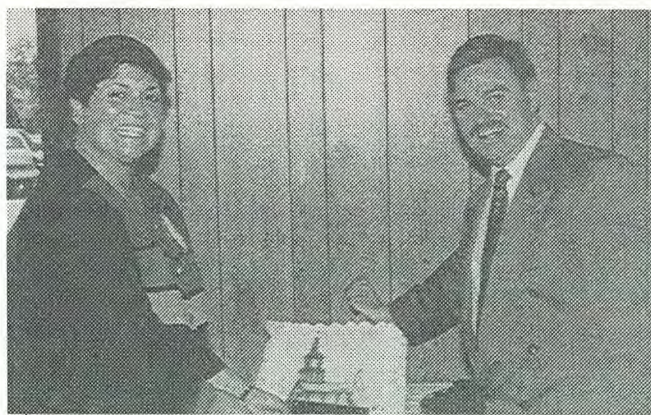
✿ Members of the Lake Charles church, in the Arkansas-Louisiana Conference, honored their pastoral couple, Alan and Terri Williams, for the dedicated service they have given the church in the past two years. Throughout Sabbath school and worship service, members wore "I Love My Pastor" buttons. The pastoral couple were presented with a specially decorated cake and an appreciation plaque.

✿ Nelva Chacon, pastoral spouse from Anchorage, Alaska, met Ana Tejada when she came through the door of the church for a Revelation Seminar. Anchorage Hispanic Adventists distributed literature door-to-door in an effort to find other Spanish-speaking people. Ana, became an Adventist while living in Santo Domingo, but hadn't attended church in over eight years. At first,



*Nelva Chacon and Ana Tejada following her baptism.*

Nelva thought Ana was looking for the English-speaking church; however, Ana showed Nelva the tract and said she was looking for "her" church. With Nelva as a good spiritual friend, Ana hasn't missed a service since then, and she was rebaptized on June 26.



*Terri and Alan Williams*





*Pastoral wives in Houston enjoy their own prayer breakfast.*

✿ The Texas Conference administration is expressing their appreciation to their pastors' wives in a tangible way. Five Sunday morning prayer breakfasts have been held in strategic places across the Texas Conference territory to honor these unsung heroes. From the Texas Conference Ministerial Department, Frank Tochtermann and his wife, Sally, hosted the breakfasts. In addition to breakfast with its specially set tables, each woman received a long-stem rose and a gift book. Devotional speakers were Carol Aalborg and Jean Voss, both veteran pastoral wives. Pastor Tochtermann states: "The pastor's wife is someone special. Not because she plays the piano, directs the Sabbath school, or types the weekly church bulletin. She is someone special not because of what she does, but because of who she is—the pastor's wife—a role

God has ordained for her. She needs no other office in the church. She is the supporter, confidante, and encourager to the pastor."

#### South Pacific Division

✿ Nearly a dozen pastoral wives from the two New Zealand Conferences met together for four days at the Tui Ridge camp near Rotorua on the North Island. Fellowship and discussions on raising children in the pastoral home



*Pastoral wives at Tui Ridge in New Zealand*

environment were beneficial. Younger mothers felt encouraged as they listened to more mature pastoral wives share insights they had learned through experience.

✿ Over 50 pastoral wives, from the Trans-Tasman Union, came together for fellowship at the Yarrahappanne church camp on the beautiful shores of the Pacific Ocean in Australia. A report on what Shepherdess International is doing worldwide was presented. The women appreciated time for fellowship and discussion on the benefits and



*Discussion groups meet at Yarrahappane.*

challenges of the pastoral family. Small discussion groups formed so the women could become better acquainted.



#### What is your Shepherdess Chapter doing?

Please let us know so we can share your activities in these pages. Send news item to:

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