Dennis Rainey on Keeping Romance Alive in Your Marriage 38

Winter 2009

Enriching and equipping Spirit-filled ministers

FIREPROFING Your Marriage and Family

Contents enrichment Winter 2009/Volume 14/Number 1

FIREPRODEING Your Marriage and Family

16 An Apostle's Counsel to Married Couples From 1 Peter 3:1–7

GEORGE 0.WOOD How well is it in your home? The apostle Peter lays out the essentials of being a healing wife and husband.

22 Happily Married in the Here and Now? H.B. LONDON

Here are seven reasons why ministry marriages are in jeopardy and ways to be happily married in the here and now.

28 Building Your Marriage To Last a Lifetime

GARY J. OLIVER

Even if you have mastered core relational skills that contribute to a good marriage, there are other choices you can make that will take your marriage to a whole new level.

38 Fizzle or Sizzle:

Keeping Romance Alive in Your Marriage DENNIS RAINEY

If you want to put some spark back into your marriage, follow these important tips.

44 Back From the Brink:

Just When Things Seemed Hopeless CHARLIE AND SANDY SALMON with SCOTT HARRUP Charlie and Sandy nearly became a divorce statistic just 11 years into their marriage. The lessons they learned from that experience have made them the man and wife — and the pastors — they are today.

52 Healing for the Broken Marriage DALE WOLERY

Some of the most successful ministers have terrible marriages. Here is what you need to know to keep from having a marriage meltdown.

62 Ministry and Marriage: Pastors' Wives Tell All (almost) GABRIELE RIENAS

What do four ministry wives have to say about being married to a minister? Listen in on this ministry-wives-tell-all meeting.

7() When People Throw Stones: Protecting Your Marriage and Family DON and JODI DETRICK

While you cannot hire security guards or build a fence to protect your marriage and family, you can find help with these suggestions.

78 Raising Happy and Healthy Children HENRY CLOUD

It is good for people in ministry to be vigilant concerning how their children are developing. That raises a question: What is worth worrying about?

86 Growing Up in a Pastor's Home — The Risks and Rewards CHRIS ARNZEN

A refreshingly candid interview with seven college-age PKs reveals the risks and rewards of growing up in a pastor's home.

94 Walking the Prodigal Path JUDI BRADDY

As parents of children who strayed from the faith and fold, four ministry couples admit their pain as they share how they found resolution.

102 Managing Financial Stressors to Maximize Resources: Tips to Stretch Your Family Dollar and Plan Your Financial Future GERRY HINDY

Economic pressures can have a negative impact on the minister's home, family life, and ministry. For relief, follow these helpful tips.



ENRICHMENT (ISSN 1082-1791) is published quarterly (January, April, July, October), ©2008 by The General Council of the Assemblies of God, 1445 N. Boonville Ave., Springfield, Missouri 65802. Assemblies of God ministers may reproduce nonbyline material from *Enrichment* in church publications, giving credit to the journal. Except for brief quotations, signed articles may not be reprinted without permission of the authors. Subscription rates: USA – 1 year \$24; 2 years \$42. Outside USA add \$30 per year. Subscriptions: All subscription correspondence, including change of address, should be sent to *Enrichment*, Customer Services, 1445 N. Boonville Ave., Springfield, MO 65802. Phone 1-800-641-4310. Periodical postage paid at Springfield, Missouri, and at additional mailing offices. Printed in the USA. **POSTMASTER: Send address changes to:** *Enrichment***, 1445 N. Boonville Ave., Springfield, MO 65802.**



Contents Winter 2009

FIREPROOFING Your Marriage and Family

- 6 **()** shorts 14 ej News & Trends
- 11() ej Online

EDITORIALS

- 5 *MINISTRY MATTERS* Fireproofing the Minister's Marriage and Family GARY R. ALLEN
- 16() *IN CLOSING* Winning the Battle for Your Marriage and Family RICK KNOTH

COLUMNS

- 112 THEOLOGICAL ENRICHMENT Binding and Loosing: A Biblical Perspective on a Popular Modern Practice W.E. NUNNALLY
- 118 THE GREATEST CHALLENGES OF PASTORAL CARE What Pastors Can Do to Help Couples Affected by Adultery LARRY E. HAZELBAKER
- 122 MANAGING YOUR MINISTRY Year-end Meetings: Do They Do More Harm Than Good? TIM MCGRAW
- 126 *CLERGY, CHURCH & LAW* Church Security: Does Your Church Need a Security Guard? RICHARD R. HAMMAR
- 134 MINISTRY AND MEDICAL ETHICS Science and Spiritual Matters: Drawing the Appropriate Line CHRISTINA M.H. POWELL

- 138 *Q&A FOR MINISTRY WIVES* **My Close Friend at Church is Avoiding Me** GABRIELE RIENAS
- 14() ORIGINAL WISDOM Maria Beulah Woodworth-Etter (1844–1924) "A Woman's Place Is in the Pulpit" DOUGLAS JACOBSEN
- 144 *iUNIVERSITY: EMPOWERING COLLEGIANS FOR CHRIST* **The Student-Friendly Church** HARVEY HERMAN

DEPARTMENTS

- 147 Marketplace
- $148\,$ Sermon Seeds
- 15() Book Reviews
- 154 News & Resources
- 158 With Christ
- 159 Advertising Index



Pastoral ministry is not always easy. Pastors carry the burden of their congregation as they work to minister to those who are hurting. But many times those who are hurting hurt the one who is trying to help them. Pastoral pain can also come from staff members, or in the case of a staff person, his senior pastor. This pain also extends to the families of those in ministry.

Many times those who have been wounded carry the pain with them as they continue to minister. Others turn from the ministry and look for a vocation that is less stressful.

This issue of *Enrichment* is designed to encourage healing for those who have been injured in ministry. Learn how to deal with pastoral hurts from Glenn Daman, Don Detrick, Wayde I. Goodall, David Horner, T. Ray Rachels, John Setser, Les Welk, Dale O. Wolery, and others.

enrichment

EXECUTIVE EDITOR Gary R. Allen

MANAGING EDITOR Rick Knoth

ASSOCIATE EDITOR

ASSISTANT EDITOR

Kevin Wilson ADVERTISING/PROMOTIONS COORDINATOR

Steve Lopez OFFICE COORDINATOR

GRAPHICS/DESIGN

Design Services



George O. Wood (general superintendent), C. Dan Betzer, L. John Bueno, Warren D. Bullock, Douglas E. Clay, Richard L. Dresselhaus, Douglas E. Fulenwider, L. Alton Garrison, J. Don George, Nam Soo Kim, John E. Maracle, Jesse Miranda, Jr., John M. Palmer, H. Robert Rhoden, Zollie L. Smith, Jr., Clarence St. John

ADVERTISING

For information on print or online advertising, call Steve Lopez at 417-862-2781, ext. 4097; go to **enrichment journal.ag.org** (click on Advertise); or E-mail **slopez@ag.org.**

ADVERTISING POLICY

Enrichment does not endorse any advertiser or product. Claims made in an advertisement are the sole responsibility of the advertiser. Enrichment reserves the right to reject any advertisement that is inconsistent with the journal's objectives, editorial convictions, and Assemblies of God doctrine.

E-MAIL:

enrichmentjournal@ag.org WEB SITE:

www.enrichmentjournal.ag.org



Member of Evangelical Press Association

Member of International Pentecostal Press Association

 All Scripture quotations, unless otherwise indicated, are taken from the HOLY BIBLE. NEW INTER-NATIONAL VERSION[®]. Copyright © 1973, 1978, 1984 by International Bible Society. Used by permission of Zondervan. All rights reserved.

Ministry Matters / GARY R. ALLEN

Fireproofing the Minister's Marriage and Family

his issue of Enrichment journal is tied to the theme of Fireproof, the recent film released in theaters. This is the first time the

Assemblies of God has endorsed a film shown in theaters. Our leaders made this decision because they feel the present crisis in marriages and families is so great we must do everything we can to help.

This is a must-see film for you and your congregants for the following reasons:

1) The film is directed to couples whose marriages are failing and who will attend a movie before they will come to a church for help. The biblical message of the film gives them hope for their marriage and directs them to a church for on-going help.

2) The film offers excitement and drama for men and tenderness and romance for women while presenting the biblical view of marriage.

3) The film presents an opportunity for your church to offer marriage resources to couples outside the community of faith who are seeking help for their marriages.

4) The film presents an opportunity for couples in your church to invite other couples who might be struggling in their marriages to an event outside the church and then invite them to attend a marriage enrichment conference at your church.

5) If *Fireproof* is no longer in the theater in your area, look for it on DVD and invite couples whose marriages are failing into your home to view it.

How About Your Marriage?

You cannot pacify your conscience by helping others with their marriage while yours is failing. You cannot lead your church families to healthy family relationships if you do not have a healthy marriage. The way you treat your spouse and children is how the people in your church will treat one another. While you and your family are not perfect, you can demonstrate a consistent model of excellence in every aspect of your marriage and family life. This issue of *Enrichment* contains numerous articles that will help you strengthen your marriage and family relationships.

The stresses of ministry can be destructive to a minister's home. Often the rate of marital failure in a minister's home is about the same as in the general population. With God's help and your intentionality, you can build a healthy marriage and home. Even if you come from a dysfunctional background, you can determine to change. The same transforming power that saved you will enable you to become the spouse and parent you need to be.

While ministry does present some unique dynamics that place a minister and family in vulnerable situations, marriages are more vulnerable today than previous generations. The stresses of the American lifestyle encourage personal gratification at the expense of shared intimacy. We can slip into a sense of entitlement: *I deserve to be happy*. Another destructive attitude is, *I want it all, and I want it now*. If we are not careful, such attitudes can sweep through our lives like a firestorm, bringing painful and permanent disaster.

A Suggested Pattern of Prayer

We trust you will take advantage of this opportunity to strengthen your marriage and the marriages of those in your church and community. May I suggest a pattern of prayer during a time of emphasis on marriage and family?

Sunday	Pray for God's Holy Spirit to be
	released in your community and for
	Christ to bind the power of Satan.
Monday	Pray for your spouse and children.
,	Thank God for them.
Tuesday	Pray God will empower you to be the
	best spouse and parent you can be.
Wednesday	Pray for families in your church to be
	strong examples in the community.
Thursday	Pray that those who view the film
	Fireproof will follow through in seek-
	ing help for their struggling marriage.
Friday	Pray what God would have you and
	your church do as an ongoing
	marriage and family ministry to
	families in your community.
Saturday	Pray for miracles of healing and
	restoration in the marriages and
	families of those who view the film.
The Enrichment staff is praying with you and for	
your church. We are trusting God for many families	

your church. We are trusting God for many families in your community to be transformed by God's presence and power. How exciting it will be to receive reports of revival in your community and growth in your church because of this effort. *(*



FIREPRODE

GARY R. ALLEN, D.Min., is executive editor of *Enrichment* journal and director of the Ministerial Enrichment Office, Springfield, Missouri.

WHAT'S UP WITH THAT

Percentage of Christians Dropping in Younger Generations

Many Christians believe fewer young people are becoming Christians. Is there any truth to that belief?

According to a September 2007, Barna Update, the number of people in the U.S. who are not Christians is growing while the number of people who identify themselves as Christians is diminishing.

About three fourths of those in their 40s and 50s identify themselves as Christians (73 percent), while one fourth describe themselves as being outside of Christianity (27 percent). This is down slightly from their parents' generation: 77 percent of those over 61 identify themselves as Christian while 23 percent say they are outsiders.

Compare that with 60 percent of older teens and twentysomethings today who describe themselves as Christians while 40 percent say they are outside Christianity.¹

According to a Barna Perspectives article by David Kinnaman, groups do not become more spiritual as they age. Over the past 15 years, studies have shown that the numbers stay relatively consistent within each generation over time.²

Although the numbers sound discouraging, we still know the power of God to reach the hearts and minds of individuals. These numbers show a rising need to equip Christians, churches, and pastors to communicate the reasons for our faith through our words and our lives. These numbers also represent the growing opportunity to reach others with the gospel.

DIANNE E. BUTTS, Pueblo, Colorado

NOTES

1. "A New Generation Expresses its Skepticism and Frustration with Christianity," *The Barna Update*, 9/24/07, http://www.barna.org/FlexPage.aspx? Page=BarnaUpdate&BarnaUpdateID=280 (accessed 7/21/09).

2. David Kinnaman, "The Secular Uprising," Perspectives, September 2007, http://www. barna.org/FlexPage.aspx?Page=Perspective &PerspectiveID=11 (accessed 7/21/09).



STOP, LOOK, LISTEN

iStockphotc

We Stopped Listening

kay, **l've lost you**,**" said my exasperated wife** as I tried in vain to multitask through an important phone conversation.

I have discovered that I am not good at doing several tasks at once, especially tasks such as sermon preparation, counseling a parishioner, and talking on the phone to my wife about travel plans. Inevitably, when I divide my attention, I end up giving each person a disengaged piece of myself.

I am not alone. We are a society of multitaskers. We can send e-mail and instant messages, talk on the phone, and read a book simultaneously. I think my generation is the first to be so multitalented. But multitasking may not be serving us well, because people have stopped listening.

- People used to stop and soak in life.
- Businessmen stopped for an hour and ate lunch with others instead of choking down a sandwich over their laptops.
- Families walked together to the

park or the store rather than divide in silence in front of their own entertainment (television, video game, Internet).

• Churches offered downtime in the service instead of nonstop entertainment.

People used to listen. Today our noisy culture has drowned out important voices. Our older generation who is telling us to slow down. Our spouse who is asking for time alone. Our children who are needing positive, full attention. Our parishioners who deserve to see us fully engaged in their problems.Most important, the voice of God. In Scripture, God repeatedly implores us to listen, wait, watch, and meditate.

Perhaps you feel you do not have time to stop. You have a schedule to keep, people to see, demands that need met.

Today, I challenge you to unplug and unwind. Invest some time in listening. @

DANIEL DARLING is author of *Teen People of the Bible, Celebrity Profiles of Real Faith and Tragic Failure.* Visit http://www.danieldarling.com.

6

CONGREGATIONAL LIFE

ECONOMIC DOWNTURN Impacting Charitable Giving by Christian Donors

A recent Wilson Research Strategies/Dunham+Company

poll of Christian adults in America found that nearly 50 percent of these adults have reduced their giving to charity as a result of the current economic situation. The skyrocketing price of gasoline and food prices are cited as the primary reasons for pulling back on giving.

Forty-six percent of Christians surveyed indicated they have reduced their giving to charity as a result of the sagging economy. Those most impacted by the faltering economy are age 55+ (53 percent). This is of particular concern in that this is the demographic segment of the population that is most supportive of nonprofit organizations.

The study also found that those who attend church frequently are less likely to have the economy affect their giving, while those who rarely attend church are more likely to decrease their giving. And those attending nondenominational churches overwhelmingly say the economy has not impacted their giving (62 percent).

The greater the household income, the less impact the sagging economy has on charitable contributions. Fifty-five percent of households with incomes of \$40,000-\$60,000 say the economy is impacting their contributions, while only 40 percent of households of 60,000-100,000 say the same thing. And less than 1 in 3 (31 percent) of households of 100,000 say the economy is impacting their support of charities.

Rick Dunham, president and CEO of Dunham+Company said, "What this study shows is that the sharp rise in fuel costs have already begun to impact giving by Christians who are the backbone of philanthropy in America. Christian nonprofits need to be proactive in communicating the importance of their mission...to their donors in order to sustain the same share of what may become more scarce donor dollars."

For an historical perspective on giving during recessionary periods and what you should do, go to http://www.dunhamandcompany.com/pages/default.asp?pid=26 @

MINISTRY ON THE HOMEFRONT 10 Tips for STRESS-less Parenting

Anything you perceive to be out of your control becomes stress.

This makes sense because it explains why each person stresses over different situations. At times, ministers may feel everything is out of their control, including their family. Parenting is a stressful task — not for the weak-hearted. Comedian Martin Mull quipped, "Parenting is like having a bowling alley in your head."

The Chinese use two characters to spell the word *stress*. One character means *danger*, the other means *opportunity*. These words explain the tension in childrearing today. Childrearing can be a hazard, but it also gives us opportunities to learn, laugh, grow, build relationships, and make memories. If you're feeling stressed about your kids, remember:

- 1. All kids can and do misbehave.
- 2. There are no perfect kids.
- 3. There are no perfect parents.
- 4. Parenting is a short season of your life.
- 5. Physical affection is therapeutic; give and receive hugs.
- 6. See humor (somewhere) in each situation.
- 7. Take a break. Exercise, listen to soothing music, read a passage in the Bible, or enjoy a cup of coffee.
- 8. Talk to other parents to ease frustration.
- 9. Overlook some behaviors.
- 10. Take comfort in knowing that the Perfect Parent is available to help you. He has children who are out of control, too. @

BRENDA NIXON, Mt. Vernon, Ohio

Stockphoto



<u>MANAGING YOUR MINISTRY</u> Get Out of Time Debt



hamster running on a wheel with no break, or your calendar is filled weeks or months ahead, you are in time debt. You have charged the hours before they have arrived and your days are too filled with activity. That causes stress that makes it hard to follow God's calling.

f you feel like a

TAKE ACTION!

Limit what you charge. Stop making commitments too far in advance. Live more in the present. This may mean delegating a spokesperson to attend meetings and answer calls. For example, book only two major functions a few months ahead. Keep one weekend (Monday and Tuesday, or Friday and Saturday) free every month.

Keep time for your calling sacred.

This includes the hours needed to pray and prepare your sermons or other activities you believe God has called you to do. These need to be scheduled first and not interrupted (except for emergencies). Allow time to hear God, dream big, and follow goals.

Use a timer to see how long it takes to complete regular tasks (even getting up and dressed).

Budget time needed for sleep, eating, family, administration, baptisms, weddings, and various commitments. Group and delegate what you can, but allow time for your own responsibilities.

Set work or ministry hours.

Schedule blocks of time, not detailed days. Daily planners are good for a business, but not for individuals. Limit each day to one or two major goals or activities.

Choose which weekdays you can counsel others and have meetings. Schedule time cushions between appointments.

Give yourself a day of rest weekly and take it.

Let others help you.

Delegate according to people's gifts. Spend more time using your strengths and find helpers who are strong where you are weak. @

KAREN H. WHITING, author and speaker

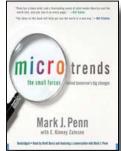
MICROTRENDS FOR MINISTRY

The Small Forces Behind Tomorrow's Big Changes

he name Mark Penn may sound

familiar. He served as campaign manager for Hillary Clinton's run for the presidency. Before that he coined the phrase *soccer moms* when he worked on Bill Clinton's 1996 re-election campaign. He leans to the democratic side of the aisle.

Regardless of your political persuasion, however, you might want to read his latest book, Microtrends. The subtitle, The Small Forces Behind Tomorrow's Big Changes, hints at the content, but the book delivers much more. A "microtrend," explains Penn, "needs to only involve 1 percent of the population to impact American life and culture - to launch a business or social movement - and affect elections." Based on solid research, Penn describes more than 70 of these trends and segments in our society, including "Extreme Commuters," "Protestant Hispanics," "Young Knitters," "Black Teen Idols," "Aspiring Snipers," "Caffeine Crazies," "Shy Millionaires," and "Smart Child Left Behind."



Marketers and sales people will benefit from this book, including those who want to make an impact for Christ. By identifying and focusing on a specific *trend*, we can be more effective in building relation-

ships with people in those niches and sharing the gospel. Each microtrend presents a profound opportunity. Youth leaders will want to read the section on "Teens." Children's ministry directors will appreciate the "Family Life" and "Education" sections. Pastors will gain much from "Love, Sex, and Relationships," "Work Life," "Race and Religion," and "Lifestyle."

Because of advances in technology and communication, our world has changed dramatically. Even though subcultures — pieces of society with unique interests and causes (true believers) — have always existed, never before have these subcultures been so united and accessible. In mission terms, these are *people groups*. Reaching them will require creativity and commitment, but identifying them is the first step. @

DAVE VEERMAN, The Livingstone Corporation, Grand Rapids, Michigan

UP-WORDS

l forgive you.

orgivenes

Forgiveness is essential to all intimate relationships. Marriages,

families, and friendships cannot remain healthy or survive very long without forgiveness.

Even in our relationship with God, Jesus makes it clear that God's forgiving us depends on our forgiving others.

For a large part of my Christian life, I thought forgiving others involved eliminating negative feelings, or somehow suppressing the memories of the offense. However, no matter how many times I chant, "I forgive you," my feelings did not change, and my memories did not fade. Yet I knew that forgiveness had to be possible, otherwise God would not have demanded it.

JACK AIKEN, Eagle River, Alaska

Although it may be an over-simplification, I now understand that the essence of the gospel is that God, because of what Jesus has done, has chosen to withhold punishment for our sins. In other words, God has chosen not to impose on us any consequences for our offenses.

In this I find the key to truly forgiving others.We, on whom God refuses to impose consequences, in turn, refuse to impose consequences on those who offend us.

This is real, practical forgiveness. While we may not be able to control our feelings or erase our memories, we can, by the power of the Holy Spirit, control our actions. By our refusing to impose consequences we truly forgive. (@

DID YOU KNOW? Feeling the HOSTILITY?

f you feel that the hostility toward your Christian faith is growing, it is not your imagination. According to *The Barna Update*, "91 percent of the nation's evangelicals believe Americans are becoming more hostile and negative toward Christianity."¹

The study shows that significantly more late teens and twentysomethings view Christianity unfavorably than did the same age group a decade earlier. The report states 10 years ago "the vast majority of Americans outside the Christian faith, including young people, felt favorably

toward Christianity's role in society."Today only 16 percent of non-Christians 16 to 29 have a good impression of Christianity. That figure drops to 3 percent when asked specifically about evangelicals (compared with 25 percent of non-Christians who were of the Boomer generation). Specific negative perceptions mentioned by young non-Christians included:

PERCENTAGE SAY TODAY'S CHRISTIANITY IS...

JUDGMENTAL
HYPOCRITICAL
OLD-FASHIONED
TOO INVOLVED IN POLITICS
ANTI-HOMOSEXUAL

(80 percent of young churchgoers agreed)

Two recurring themes were mentioned unprompted — by 23 percent of young non-Christians and 22 percent of young born again Christians:

"Christianity is changed from what it used to be," and "Christianity in today's society no longer looks like Jesus."

Whether it is the perception of what Christians are like or the perception of what true Christianity is supposed to be that is off base, the negative perceptions of today's younger generation give maturing Christians a growing opportunity to reveal both. @

efforts of young peers.

Children frequenting

Webkinsz are now seeing

DIANNE E. BUTTS, Pueblo, Colorado



New Challenges in Family Life

their virtual possessions being swiped by playmates who have managed to secure their friends' passwords. Managers of Web-based social networks are beginning to limit users' conversations to preapproved dialogue, and continue to warm users never to give out passwords to anyone.

The state of Missouri has developed new legislation that makes cyber bullying a crime in the state. The bill was inspired by a high-profile case in which a 13 year old hanged herself after being harassed by the mother of one of her peers. The law now includes harassment committed via computers, text messages, and electronic devices. Missouri's governor commented that social networking sites and technology have opened a new door for criminals and bullies to prey on their victims, especially children. This new Missouri law is meant to ensure that protections and penalties are present to safeguard people from Internet harassment. Diligence by parents on their children's participation in social networking via the Internet is now a reality.

BYRON D. KLAUS, D.MIN., president, Assemblies of God Theological Seminary, Springfield, Missouri

HOLLYWOOD

shorts

THE CULTURE CHRONICLES Hollywood's Love Affair with Scientology

Combine a self-help religion created by a sci-fi writer, two wildly popular movie stars, lots of money, and what do you get? Scientology, a controversial religion popularized by celebrity adherents Tom Cruise, and now, actor Will Smith.

"I was introduced to it by Tom, and I'm a student of world religion," Smith recently told *Access Hollywood.* "The ideas of the Bible are 98 percent the same ideas of Scientology."

Scientology was first established in 1953 by author L. Ron Hubbard, who acknowledged the influence of Hinduism, Buddhism, and even Gnosticism. Scientology teaches that each person is an immortal spiritual being — called a *thetan* — who has lived through many past lives and suffered spiritual damage. Healing comes through auditing sessions with a credentialed practitioner. Scientology also teaches that people are basically good and "endowed with abilities well beyond those which he normally considers he possesses," according to the official Web site.

Cruise, the number one box office star in Hollywood, has long been associated with Scientology. Smith, dubbed "the most powerful actor on the planet" by *Newsweek*, is the newest star associated with Scientology, even going so far as to fund a private school in Southern California based on the religion's education techniques.

Cruise and Smith's enormous influence worldwide guarantees a receptive audience for the ideas behind Scientology, which promises that it can make each individual "well, happy, and grant him personal immortality." @

SUSY FLORY, Castro Valley, California



THE HIM BEHIND THE HYMN Responding to the Headlines

reg, an evangelical minister in Naperville, Illinois, was preparing to preach a sermon on trusting God in hard times. Greg, however, could not find the right hymn with which to conclude his message. *Be Still My Soul* came close and *What a Friend We Have in Jesus* included words that approached his theme, but neither completely expressed what he desired to convey. Since sniper fire in Iraq had recently killed the 21-year-old son of a neighboring family, Greg hoped he could capture the confusion, pain, and honest faith the young Army sergeant's death evoked.

As he had done on other occasions, Greg decided to write original lyrics that the congregation could sing to a familiar tune. He found precedent in Martin Luther's great hymn of the Reformation, *A Mighty Fortress Is Our God*. Luther had written these lyrics to a popular 16th-century melody.

Choosing the melody of *What a Friend We Have in Jesus,* Greg wrote a hymn he entitled *God Remains Our Source of Courage.*

God remains our source of courage, when we're traumatized by terror;

When we're haunted by the headlines, and the violence everywhere.

Hear God whisper in the silence, 'Don't despair; I'm in control.

Hurting hearts and broken cities, will at last one day be whole.'

God can feel the pain of suffering, when grenades and bombs explode;

When a son is robbed of living, at a checkpoint on a road.

Then God whispers in the silence, Justice will in time be done.

I will stand with those who need Me, till My Kingdom fully comes.'"

Because of the candor of the lyrics, the hymn began to circulate on the Internet. Since September 11, 2001, congregations could readily identify with the final stanza that speaks of how to trust when faith is hard. I know, because I am the pastor who wrote this hymn in fall 2004.

God invites us to be trusting, when we find that faith is hard.

When we're fearful for our safety, and our nerves are frayed or jarred.

Still God whispers in the silence, 'Even when your faith is weak,

I will keep your feet from stumbling, when your way is dark and bleak.'

GREG ASIMAKOUPOULOS, Mercer Island, Washington



Any often quote research that infers Christians are just as likely to divorce as are non-Christians. While that

research seems to be sobering and compelling, it does not tell the whole story. Researchers for the Church of the Nazarene have provided an alternative opinion to the commonly held opinion that Christians are just as likely to divorce as are non-Christians.

While the Nazarene research acknowledges that conversion experience alone is not enough to make divorce less likely, there is more information that needs verification.

Religious faith, affiliation, and participation are not the only, or even the most significant factors influencing marital stability. Other factors, such as age of a couple when they get married, income, and education, interact with the influence of faith.

For couples to significantly affect their marital stability requires a level of Christian maturity beyond simply professing a personal commitment to Jesus Christ and regular church attendance. Married couples who have a shared faith and are involved together in a church are not as likely to divorce. While there is a certainly a need to improve, the church is not broken in the vital area of ministry to families. The church evidently can and does make some positive difference in this are of life. See the article by Kenneth Crow at http://www.nazarene.org/ministries/administration/researchcenter/papers/display.aspx @

BYRON D. KLAUS, D.MIN., president, Assemblies of God Theological Seminary, Springfield, Missouri

FAITH JOURNEY

LEAVING A LEGACY

Watching a child leave home isn't easy. As Pastor Kenton Beshore (Mariners Church)

approached this crisis

of letting go, he decided to try a novel approach. He says, "I knew [my son] would be alone in a totally new environment. He would be facing life-defining decisions, and I knew



Legacy Bible

God's Word would be the best place for him to go for counsel. My idea was this: If I wrote my thoughts, hopes, dreams, and insights of my faith journey in a Bible, I could give it to him to take with him when he went away to college. He would have a Bible complete with his father's love written in small prayers and thoughts for him. I could tell him what the Bible means to me. I could write lessons I had learned. He could see how I responded to God's truth."

Kenton purchased a wide-margin Bible and began to write. He also found that "the Bible came alive as I read it with a fresh perspective. I saw new insights. I had a motivating reason to carefully read each page."

Fast-forward a few years: What began as a project between a father and a son has become available to moms and dads everywhere. Anyone wanting to leave a legacy of faith for the next generation will appreciate this Bible.

Published by Zondervan, *Legacy Bible* contains Legacy Moments, places were you can record your involvement with specific passages.

This gift combines God's inspired Word with reflections from the mind and heart of the giver. *Legacy Bible* can help us leave a legacy of faith.

DAVE VEERMAN, The Livingstone Corporation, Grand Rapids, Michigan

YOUNG PASTOR

Are You Wearing Someone Else's Armor?

Binpossible battle with Goliath, David humored King Saul by trying on his armor. David may have already known that Saul's armor would not work. Saul was taller, stronger, and bigger than the little shepherd boy.

Young pastors can learn a lesson they might often miss when surfing through the too-common narrative of David versus Goliath: We cannot fight our battles with someone else's armor. Successful warriors bring whatever they have to the battle, and they let God work through their unique strengths and weaknesses.

Many young people, including myself, try to copy our spiritual heroes.



We try to borrow their blueprint for ministry and then feel frustrated and defeated when we do not succeed. Why can't I speak like Chuck Swindoll? Why can't I write like Max Lucado? Why can't I lead like John Maxwell?

David did not allow himself to play the futile game of *what-if*. Instead, he knew God had uniquely gifted him, and he was comfortable with who he was. He was his own man.

shorts

I used to beat myself up because I was not a type-A leader like most of my friends. I

am more quite, reserved, and deter-

mined. I even thought I was a failure as a husband, father, and ministry leader.

One day I realized God did not shortchange me. I had gifts. I was not absent when He passed out leadership muscle. He did not slip up when He gave me my unique talents. No, God has a different plan for me than He does for my type-A friends. And that's okay.

If you have recently looked in the mirror and chided yourself for not being someone else — stop it. You cannot fight your giants with someone else's armor. That is the way to failure.

Instead, bring what you have to the forefront and see what God will do through you.

DANIEL DARLING is author of *Teen People of the Bible, Celebrity Profiles of Real Faith and Tragic Failure.* Visit http://www.danieldarling.com



idlife adults are flocking to Facebook, a global social network of millions that was once accessible only to college students. Although the average age of a Facebook user is still 23, the demographics are changing with adults 35 to 54 now making up more than 40 percent of the site's users.

Facebookers post a profile and

photo, visible by invitation only, and carry on conversations, play games, post virtual photo albums, and create special interest groups. First launched in 2004 as an online community for Harvard University, Facebook threw open its doors to the public in late 2006. It has grown to become the seventh most used Web site in the world and is estimated to be worth over \$4 billion. Now, pastors and missionaries are increasingly turning to the use of Facebook as a way to support and publicize their ministries, much like youth pastors who frequent sites like MySpace. Ministry leaders are beginning to recognize the value of using new media for ministry purposes, especially as the user demographic continues to reach further across the age spectrum.

"Some may see it as just a waste of time or a pleasant technological diversion. But the fact is, Facebook is a community of people who need ministry, crave real relationships, and need the influence of the gospel and ministry from pastors," writes Chris Forbes of Ministry Marketing Coach. com. "There is an increasing demand from church members to have real and meaningful relationships with their ministry leaders beyond the Sunday morning service." (2)

SUSY FLORY, Castro Valley, California





LEADERLIFE CONFERRING THE CALL

As I grew up in a parsonage (a.k.a. fishbowl), my parents impressed me with their commitment to serve Christ and His church. Although I have since learned that some people in the churches they served were less than righteous toward them, I did not know about it at the time. My parents left me with a positive impression of a life spent in full-time vocational ministry. I have thus spent most of my adult life doing just that. I have no doubt the call of God on my life is a direct result of their powerful testimony.

As an education administrator, I hear reports from AG district officials and my Alliance for AG Higher Education colleagues noting the decreasing numbers of young people pursuing vocational ministry. While there may be several societal and cultural influences contributing to this dearth, I cannot help but wonder if the lack of significant role models is not part of the problem.

So, church leaders, here is my petition:

1. Live your life in such a fashion that it will inspire your children and other young people that you lead into full-time service for God.

2. In addition to your own children, prayerfully select at least 3 to 5 children to *disciple* into full-time vocational ministry.

3. Expose your children to other ministry role models (evangelists, missionaries, district leaders) to demonstrate the myriad ways they can devote their lives to serving God.

4. Confer the call. @

RANDY WALLS, D.MIN., director of continuing education, Assemblies of God Theological Seminary, Springfield, Missouri



WHAT IN THE WORLD **Outreach on** the Infield

On April 26, 2008, the 5-foot-2-inch right fielder of the Western Oregon University

women's softball team stepped to the plate. It was the second inning of the second game of a double header. Western Oregon was playing Central Washington University on Central's ball field in Ellensburg. Western Oregon had won the first game. As Sara Tucholsky took her practice swings she eyed her two teammates on base. She wanted to help them score, but she also knew her batting average was not too impressive — only three hits in 34 times at bat.

She swung at the pitch. To her amazement (and that of her cheering team), the ball sailed over the fence in center field. Tucholsky had hit her first home run in 4 years of playing college ball.

As Tucholsky began her ceremonial victory lap around the bases, she failed to touch first base. Realizing her mistake, she turned to go back and

collapsed in agony. She had injured her leg and could no longer stand. Even though her two teammates had scored, her home run would only count as a base hit unless she could round the bases. Her teammates could not run for her or even assist her.

FFFFFffffffffffff

At that moment, the first baseman of the opposing team, Mallory Holtman, the most accomplished softball player in Central Washington's history, suggested a solution. Why not allow the opposing team to assist her so Tucholsky's first home run would count? The umpires applauded the decision, as did those in the stadium.

Helping the injured player up, Holtman called to Liz Wallace, her teammate at shortstop. The two carried Tucholsky around the bases, allowing her to touch each base with her uniniured foot.

The servant-hearted attitude demonstrated at Central Washington's softball field is what Paul described in Philippians 2:3,4:"Do nothing out of selfish ambition or vain conceit, but in humility consider others better than yourselves. Each of you should look not only to your own interests, but also to the interests of others."

GREG ASIMAKOUPOULOS, Mercer Island, Washington

UTHTRAX

When a **Baby** Hits the Spot

ccording to the National Center for Health Statistics, \ the rate of pregnancy among teens is rising for the first time since 1991.¹ Does this make you want to preach a few sermons on saying no to premarital sex? Think again. While the rate of teen pregnancy is up, according to this report,

the percentage of teens having sex — 46 percent — has remained stable for the past few years. Perhaps it's not about sex, but

about commodity.

Huh?

A commodity is something that meets a need. If you are mowing the lawn in 90-degree heat, a swig of Gatorade hits the spot. Gatorade is the commodity.

If you are a teen girl and you are cynical about relationships whether with the opposite sex, family, or even God — then perhaps the love you can give and receive from a child will meet the need. The baby becomes the commodity. Television programs like The Baby Borrowers are working with the National Campaign to Prevent Teen and Unplanned Pregnancy to send a clear message for adolescents not to get pregnant.² It is a great effort by the media, but does it address the underlying heart issues?

Last summer, reporters believed seventeen girls who live in a small Massachusetts town had made a pact to get pregnant. This story hit national news.³ When interviewed, Amanda Ireland, a teen and new mother, said,"They're so excited to finally have someone to love them unconditionally. I try to explain it's hard to feel loved when an infant is screaming to be fed at 3 a.m." Instead of responding to this

trend with another sermon on modesty or purity, perhaps we can address the deeper questions: Why do these girls want to be mommies so badly? What happens when a child is not able to fill the hole in a young mother's heart?

And what does Christ offer to a teenage girl looking for unconditional love?

Helpful Resource: Kern, Jan. 2008. Seduced by Sex: Saved By Love. Cincinnati, Ohio: Standard Publishing. NOTES

1. July 11, 2008 Foxnews.com "Teen Pregnancy Rate Hits 15-Year High"http://www.foxnews.com/ story/0,2933,380323,00.html (accessed July 21, 2008) 2. "New NBC Reality Show National Campaign to Deter Teens from Getting Pregnant" http://www.medicalnewstoday .com/articles/112100.php (accessed July 21, 2008) 3."Pregnancy Boom at Gloucester High," June 18, 2008 - Time.com http://www.time.com/time/world/article/ 0.8599.1815845.00.html (accessed July 21.2008)

T. SUZANNE ELLER is an author and a youth sponsor at First Assembly of God in Muskogee, Oklahoma. Contact her at tseller@daretobelieve.org. See real teens sharing real life stories at http://daretobelieve.org.

9 News & Trends Compiler

Is the IRS Intruding Into Pulpits?

he Alliance Defense Fund has launched a *pulpit initiative* to oppose groups that threaten pastors with Internal Revenue Service free-speech restrictions on political matters.

Erik Stanley, senior legal counsel with ADF, a Scottsdale, Arizona, religious liberties organization, says groups such as Americans United for Separation of Church and State "intentionally trigger IRS investigations that will silence churches through fear, intimidation, and disinformation."

Stanley claims that AU is trying to stifle pastors from speaking biblical truths from the pulpit. AU has warned pastors that an IRS probe could remove their church's tax-exempt status if the pastor discusses a political candidate's position on moral issues.

For most of the nation's history, churches could freely evaluate a candidate's position on moral issues without fear of an IRS investigation. But, in 1954, Congress amended the tax code. Stanley contends that since then pastors have self-censored their speech and ignored immorality in government rather than risking government confrontation.

Clergy law expert Richard Hammar notes that only one church has ever had its tax-exempt status revoked for engaging in a political campaign — and the reason had nothing to do with pronouncements from the pulpit.

In 1992, the Church at Pierce Creek in Binghamton, New York, paid for full-page "Christians Beware" newspaper advertisements in USA Today, urging voters to not cast a ballot for Bill Clinton because of his stands on abortion and homosexuality.

Although the church lost its exemption status, the court ruling said churches could form separate non-exempt political action committees for such activities.

At the request of AU, the IRS has launched several investigations in recent years, but no action ever resulted. That includes All Saints Episcopal Church in Pasadena, California, where a guest speaker in 2004 criticized President George W. Bush's war efforts as well as Southern Baptist Pastor Wiley Drake of Buena Park, California, endorsing (on his Internet radio show) candidate Mike Huckabee in 2008.

Hammar covers what church political campaign activities are permissible and prohibited in his *Church & Clergy Tax Guide*.

"Congress has the authority to impose conditions on a church for tax exemption," Hammar told *Enrichment*. "It's not a First Amendment violation. No court is going to say it is appropriate to openly endorse a candidate. There is a lot you can say — and a lot you cannot say." @

Women in Ministry Retool Web Site, Focus

The Assemblies of God Women in Ministry Web site has been renamed *The Network*, to reflect growing, interactive components as well as the new direction of a called community of women.

"Our goal is to develop a genuine connected community among AG women ministers who are focused on mentoring, leadership development, and fulfilling God's call in relationship with one another," says Beth Grant, chairperson of the ninemember Web site team. "Our purpose is to equip, encourage, resource, and connect women ministers and women ministers-in-training in the AG."

Enrichment partnered with the Women in Ministry Task Force in 2003 to sponsor an Internet link for women ministers (http://womeninministry. ag.org). In late 2007, the task force became an executive appointed steering committee for the newly forming Network for Women in Ministry. The recently implemented improvements to the site reflect the new focus of the network on nurturing a relational and mentoring community among AG women called to vocational ministry. The network steering committee and Web team are working hand in hand in this shared vision.

The Web team includes women from different generations who have diverse gifts, and experience as pastors, retired ministers, educators, and missionaries. "There is a synergy among these women of excellence that is always refreshing and creative," says Grant, who, with her husband, David, has been a missionary to India for 31 years and is U.S. liaison for Project Rescue.

Grant notes that obtaining credentials as an ordained minister is a privilege and responsibility for which women in most other denominations do not qualify. Women in the AG have been an integral part of ministry in missions, education, evangelism,

and pastoring since the beginning, she says.

"The fact the AG leadership acknowledges that God calls women as well as men to serve as pastors, evangelists, and leaders provides a great open door," Grant says. "Because of the opportunity to be credentialed, we have opportunity to be a part of the governance of our denomination as decisions take place that will shape the present and future of the Assemblies of God."

The number of female ministers in the AG has been gradually growing during the past two decades, rising from 13.8 percent in 1987 to 19.2 percent last year, according to Statistician Sherri Doty. The number of female ministers during that two-decade span has grown from 3,770 to 6,502.

Of the total, 1,815 are church staff members, 457 are senior pastors, 410 are world missionaries, 187 are evangelists, 186 are U.S. missionaries, 55 are chaplains, 41 are AG college teachers, and 11 are sectional presbyters, according to Doty.

> Grant says the themes, resources, and articles at http:// womeninministry.ag.org also can be pertinent for laywomen in leadership. The AG National Women's Department Web site (http:// womensministries.aq.org/) is

undergoing change and is a vital source for women in ministry. @

How Many People Really Attend Church?



For decades, respected pollsters, such as George Gallup, Jr. and George Barna, have consistently reported that more than 4 out of 10 Americans attend church every week.

However, researcher Dave T. Olson, author of the new book *The American Church in Crisis,* says fewer than 1 in 5 Americans attend church on any given Sunday — and the numbers are falling.

The numbers make a noticeable difference. If pollsters are correct, around 140 million people are packing the pews every weekend. If Olson, director of TheAmericanChurch.org (http://www.theamericanchurch.org) is right only 52 million people attend church weekly. Olson contends that Americans exaggerate their church attendance in an attempt to look better.

While attendance is relatively unchanged from 15 years ago — in part because of an influx of Asian, Hispanic, and other immigrants — Olson notes that an additional 48 million people are living in the country now. Only 9.1 percent of the population, or 26.9 million people, attend an evangelical church service regularly, says Olson, who has examined attendance figures that individual congregations report.

"We're not making any dent in keeping up with population growth," Olson told *Enrichment*.

The news for Pentecostals is more optimistic. Olson says Pentecostals are exceeding general population growth in 40 states, with the fastest gains occurring in Massachusetts, Rhode Island, Iowa, South Dakota, Hawaii, and Virginia.

Even though the Assemblies of God has the third highest closure rate for churches, Olson says that is not necessarily a bad thing because the

AG also has the fourth highest church-planting rate."The lower the closure rate, the more likely a denomination is declining," Olson says. "The groups that close few churches also start few churches." About 3,000 congregations fold annually in the United States.

Church planting is a key to reaching those who do not attend church, Olson says, especially those who believe churches are hopelessly out of touch with the times.

"The world has changed, and the church must move on," Olson writes in *The American Church in Crisis.*"The audience for the Christian message has changed. A post-Christian world means we can no longer assume that people know anything substantive about Jesus, His message, His mission, the Scriptures, or the church."

Olson told *Enrichment* that a church must be clear about its goals to connect with visitors.

"The denominations that are thriving today are nimble, fast, and multiplying strategically through grassroots ownership of the denomination's missional vision," Olson writes.

Established pastors need to pay attention to the skepticism and frustrations of those ages

Lethe skepticism and frustrations of those ages 16 to 29 to understand the changing shape of Christianity, according to David Kinnaman, president of The Barna Group.

"This generation has a growing awareness of the need for a sense of global justice, a sense of being able to make a difference, a sense of doing something about people affected by sin,"Kinnaman told *Enrichment.* "God is preparing and shaping this generation to do substantial things."



Kinnaman, who joined Barna in 1995, believes some older ministry leaders marginalize and minimize the effectiveness of younger leaders by delaying their release into ministry. There never will be a perfect time to hand over the

reins of ministry, says Kinnaman, 35.

"Older leaders imagine they are dictating when and how young leaders will assume their place at the right time," Kinnaman says." The truth is, God is in control, and He will elevate people at the right time."

Young leaders who grow weary of waiting for ministerial authority tend to try to reinvent the wheel and disregard the toil of older workers, Kinnaman says.

Younger people are searching for deep answers to issues such as social justice and environmental protection, Kinnaman says. They do not necessarily view these issues through a biblical worldview or express their concerns properly, he says. In addition, there are more moral failures sexually, ethically, and financially — with young church leaders because they do not have a clearly defined understanding of right and wrong, Kinnaman says. They tend to see access to pornography and technology piracy through a moral relativism lens, he says.

Young Christians embrace many behaviors that older believers staunchly reject. The Barna Group's research shows that most born-again adults in their 20s and 30s consider gambling, cohabitation, and sexual fantasies as morally acceptable. Likewise, less than one-third of Mosaic (born 1984–2002) and Buster (born 1965–1983) churchgoers believe homosexual lifestyles are a major problem, compared to half of Boomers and nearly 3 out of 5 elders.

While middle-aged and senior pastors usually believe their congregations are places of unconditional love, younger Christians believe pastors require them to

jump through hoops to become part of the club.

"We want young generations to participate in our churches, but we expect them to play by the rules, look the part, embrace the music, and use the right language," Kinnaman writes in *Unchristian: What a New Generation Really Thinks About Christianity*, in which he details his research.

"A faith that does not effectively address convoluted and thorny issues seems out of tune with a generation asking big questions and expressing candid doubts," Kinnaman writes. "Spirituality that is merely focused on 'dos and don'ts' rings hollow."

Don't Despise Youth, Barna Leader Warns

An Apostle's Counsel to Married Couples Im 1 Peter 2:1-7

By George O. Wood

- ----

Without a doubt, marriage is in trouble — even among Christian leaders. You know the stories and the statistics. Few of us are immune to marital strife.

I think of the apocryphal story of the young couple who went back to the minister who married them. They were on the verge of breaking up. The minister reminded the husband, "But you took her for better or for worse."

"Yeah," he replied, "but she is worse than I took her for."

Several years ago Ann Landers received a letter from a distraught wife who complained that her husband of 5 years continually spent on himself and neglected household bills. The situation had become so extreme she suffered from weeklong headaches and high blood pressure.

Ann replied: "Forget about changing him. No way. Now that you have an opinion from your doctor, I suggest you get one from your lawyer. This I can tell you: No man is worth week-long headaches and high blood pressure."

Do you agree with Ann? Do you think the apostle Peter would agree with Ann?

The wives Peter addresses in 1 Peter 3:1–6 were, for the most part, probably married to non-Christians. You will notice he devotes six verses to them and only one verse to husbands. The reason? The lives of women were much more socially difficult than men. Many of these women were in unpleasant situations.

I wonder if Peter ever received a letter such as this:

Dear Apostle Peter,

I became a Christian 2 years ago. My husband does not like what has happened to me. Occasionally, he curses at me and Christ. He makes fun of my Christian faith and me personally. He has made my life hell with his unpredictable anger. Sometimes he gives me the silent treatment and will not talk to me for days. I have tried witnessing to him, but he will not listen.

In our prayer group at church, I have met a wonderful, unmarried Christian man who could give my children and me a good Christian home. My husband does not want to divorce me, and I know he has been faithful to me, but I am tired of his treating me this way. Furthermore, we are not compatible. I want out. What do you think? And will you perform my remarriage to this wonderful Christian man if I divorce my husband?

, Signed, Tired of being mistreated

What would your answer be? We know Peter's answer because he gives it in 1 Peter 3:1–6. He lists the three essentials of a healing wife.

Counsel to the Wife

The healing wife is submissive (3:1,5,6)

There it is — that dirty word — *submissive*. Probably no word in the contemporary discussion of a wife's role in marriage is more maligned or misunderstood than the word *submission*.

When Marabel Morgan's book, *The Total Woman*, was at the peak of its popularity, *The Wittenberg Door* ran a cartoon of a frazzled Christian woman with her hair in rollers and her feet in a basin of warm water and Epsom Salt. The cartoon was captioned, "The Totaled Woman." For many, that is the negative image of a submissive wife.

However, we have no problem knowing what Peter means by submission, because he uses the word in his instructions to citizens in 2:13 and slaves in 2:18. It means *to place yourself under the authority of.* It has nothing to do with inherent worth. It has everything to do with living without resort to escapism or violence. Submission is the opposite of doing your own thing.

Submission does not involve doing what is morally wrong (Sapphira wrongly submitted to Ananias' lie in Acts 5:2,7–10), yielding up your sanity, or becoming a doormat of cowering passivity.

It does involve following the example of Sarah who, despite her own troubled marriage, respected Abraham by calling him "lord." In other words, she did not demean him. She stayed true to Abraham despite the fact he frequently changed locations and occasionally mistreated her. She won through her behavior. She kept the right attitude, she took the right actions, and she kept the right affection blessing her husband rather than cursing him.

Some might say, "Well, if Sarah lived in today's culture, she certainly would have alternatives now that she did not have then." But would she have taken them? Each of us may choose the path of what we perceive to be selffulfillment, or we can hear the call of Jesus to embrace self-denial, take up our cross, and follow Him. Self-denial for wives or husbands means staying committed to their An Apostle's Counsel to Married Couples

spouses even when the marriage is less than ideal.

We must also notice that the apostle Paul's counsel on submission is not exclusively for the wife. The husband also has responsibility for submission: "Submit to one another out of reverence for Christ" (Ephesians 5:21).

The healing wife is virtuous and respectful (3:2)

Peter counsels wives in difficult marriages that they may actually win over their husbands "without words" by their behavior when husbands "see the purity and reverence of your lives."

The wife of great Russian writer, Leo Tolstoi, wrote this about their married life: "There is so little genuine warmth about him; his kindness does not come from the heart, but merely from his principles. His biographies will tell of how he helped the labourers of warmth gnawed at Mrs. Tolstoi. It would affect any wife. I feel for her. But I also wonder, *Did she show any* warmth toward him? *Did she ever look* him in the eye, and say, "Leo, I love you, but we need to talk about your behavior toward me and the children."

Did Mrs. Tolstoi become a thermometer or a thermostat in their marriage? Did she withhold affection and sex as punishment? A thermometer reflects the temperature of the room while a thermostat changes the temperature. If Leo was cold, did Mrs. Tolstoi simply give cold back? Would Leo have changed if she had projected back warmth?

The apostle Peter takes this tack in his counsel to wives. He does not promise it will always be successful. He notes the husband *"may* be won over" (emphasis added). But, clearly, Peter believes it is worth attempting.



A wife may let her inner beauty fade by becoming argumentative, hostile, aggressive in an unwholesome sense, or domineering.

carry buckets of water, but no one will ever know that he never gave his wife a rest and never — in all these 32 years — gave his child a drink of water or spent 5 minutes by his bedside to give me a chance to rest a little from all my labours."

When you read that, can you not feel her pain? Her husband was perhaps like some ministers — wellregarded by the outside world, but careless and selfish in his relationship with his wife and children.

After 32 years, it is clear that this lack

The healing wife is inwardly beautiful (3:3,4)

Peter counsels wives to have inward beauty. His words on outward beauty, however, have often been misunderstood. Peter does not prohibit the wife from looking good outwardly; he simply notes that real beauty is internal, "that of your inner self, the unfading beautify of a gentle and quiet spirit, which is of great worth in God's sight."

When a wife has a difficult husband, she may let her inner beauty fade by

becoming argumentative, hostile, aggressive in an unwholesome sense, or domineering. Her attempts to change her husband denigrate into nagging. The more she nags, the more he resists.

Peter says that the wife needs to calm down and have a quiet spirit. A quiet spirit does not mean a door mat personality nor does it mean silence — it means a spirit at rest.

Years ago, the late Alice Reynolds Flower, a pioneering mother in Pentecost and the Assemblies of God, wrote a book on marriage entitled, *The Home: A Divine Sanctuary.* As a teenager, I won that book in a contest. Of all the youth, I took the best notes from the pastor's messages on dating and marriage.

As I grew older and got to know the Flowers, I realized that the phrase — a divine sanctuary — described their own home. When you stepped into their humble dwelling, you always felt such a presence of peace. Why? Because there was great love, great prayer, and humble service to Jesus Christ and family.

The apostle Peter pleads with wives to make their homes divine sanctuaries. My own mother exemplified that. Rising before dawn every day, she would spend the first 2 hours of the day in prayer and the Word. She made our home a place of peace, and she was a beautiful woman because she had a gentle and quiet spirit.

Counsel to the Husband

Without a doubt, every church has struggling marriages. And if the truth were told, many who hold ministerial credentials have struggling marriages.

William Barclay commented: "Any marriage in which all the privileges are on one side and all the obligations are on the other is bound to be an imperfect marriage with every chance of failure."

Next, Peter talked to husbands (3:7). Granted, he took six verses to speak to wives, and only one to husbands, but he packed that one verse with strong counsel.

The healing husband shows thoughtful consideration for his wife

Notice that 3:7 and 3:1 use identical phrases: "in the same way." What is the antecedent of "in the same way?" The example of Christ. "To this you were called, because Christ suffered for you, leaving you an example, that you should follow in his steps" (2:21).

Both husband and wife must pattern their response to one another after Christ's response. How would Jesus treat your husband? How would Jesus treat your wife?

I can tell you some things Jesus would never do to your wife. He would never:

- curse at her.
- yell at her.
- insult her.
- hit her.
- be rude to her.
- bully her.
- treat her like a slave.
- tell her to shut up.
- allow her to or demand that she wait on him hand and foot.
- give her the silent treatment.
- insist that His demands be met without consideration of her own needs.
- be unfaithful to her.

Several years ago a friend declined to attend the wedding of a leading Christian author who had divorced his wife without biblical cause and was now marrying another woman. When my friend confronted him, this author replied, "Well, I just cannot understand why God would not want me to be happy." what happened to this man! He took his eyes off Jesus and failed to treat his wife as Jesus would. How exactly would Jesus treat your wife?

He would model the response He desired. Did Jesus want His disciples to learn to be servants? Rather than lecturing them, He demonstrated service by taking a towel and washing their feet. Although headship was His by right, He earned it. Even as there are those who want an honorary doctoral degree without having to work for it, some husbands want the title of *head* but have never earned it.

He would initiate communication and reconciliation. Who repairs the relationship between Jesus and Peter after Peter's three-fold denial? Jesus. After His resurrection, He personally appeared to Peter. If the husband is to follow in the footsteps of Jesus, it falls to the husband to initiate the steps needed to repair trouble in a marriage. Why is it that nearly 80 percent of counselees with marriage difficulties are wives rather than otners, and always looked for ways to help, strengthen, and encourage.

The healing husband is gracious

Peter calls on husbands to treat their wives with respect as the weaker partner. What does he mean by this? He was not speaking about wives being weaker spiritually or morally. Rather, he speaks to the wife being weaker physically.

Christ has the same relationship with us. He treats us with respect as the weaker partner.

He does not lead from the power of His position. Jesus never won people by barking orders, but through drawing us in love.

The husband cannot say, "I am the boss — you follow orders." Pride of position and an authoritarian spirit are destructive to relationships.

In 1551, Bishop Becke translated 1 Peter 3:7 as follows: "And if she be not obedient unto thee, endeavor to beat the fear of God into her head, that thereby she may be compelled to learn her duty and to do it."

The husband needs to see his wife as a full partner in life — his friend, the one he talks with, plans with, prays with, and plays with.

husbands? Husbands need to take the lead in repairing marital damage and not leave it to their wives.

He would exhibit responsibility, provide security, and take the lead in demonstrating tenderness. Jesus would not come home from a day's work, sit in a lazy chair, and begin barking orders. He excelled in giving love to Obviously, he misread the text and put himself too much into it.

Husbands must not lead from the vantage point of superior to inferior ("I am better than you"), from a need to control, or through utilizing fear to get agreement. Jesus tells us that whoever would lead must be servant of all.



An Apostle's Counsel to Married Couples

The healing husband comprehends his wife's spiritual equality

Peter counsels husbands that their wives are "heirs with you of the gracious gift of life." The wife, therefore, is not a thing or property. She is equally a child of God, and a joint heir of all the blessings that come with belonging to Christ.

This means that the husband needs to see his wife as a full partner in life — his friend, the one he talks with, plans with, prays with, and plays with.

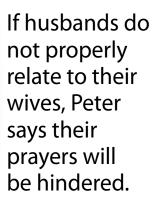
The husband needs to encourage

realize His glory. Selfishness breaks communion, destroys prayer."

The Early Church father, Tertullian, wrote this letter to his wife around A.D. 202. It represents for all time the ideal relationship between husband and wife.

"How beautiful, then, the marriage of two Christians, two who are one in hope, one in desire, one in the way of life they follow, one in the religion they practice.

"They are as brother and sister, both servants of the same Master. Nothing



the full development of all the gifts and graces that the Holy Spirit has given his wife. Rather than be jealous of her strengths, he needs to rejoice in them and provide every opportunity for her ministry to mature.

The healing husband guards the marriage's relationship to God

If husbands do not properly relate to their wives, Peter says their prayers will be hindered. Failure to live considerably and appropriately with your wife negatively impacts your relationship to God.

Paul S. Rees said: "Marriage is not an end in itself; it is a means by which we may grow in the Lord, and divides them, either in flesh or in Spirit. They are in very truth, two in one flesh, and where there is but one flesh, there is also but one spirit.

"They pray together, they worship together, they fast together; instructing one another, encouraging one another, strengthening one another.

"Side-by-side they face difficulties and persecution, share their consolations. They have no secrets from one another, they never shun each other's company; they never bring sorrow to each other's hearts ... Psalms and hymns they sing to one another.

"Hearing and seeing this, Christ rejoices. To such as these He gives His peace. Where there are two together, there also He is present, and where He is, there evil is not."

Conclusion

How well is it in your home? Are you a healing wife? A healing husband?

Unlike Tertullian, Sam Shoemaker once talked about the fact we may not find utopia in the Christian home, that "the Christian home is not one in which relationships are perfect ... but one in which imperfections are acknowledged and where problems are worked out in prayer and obedience to the light God sends. In such homes there is great freedom for people to say what they think and express what they feel. ... People are allowed to grow up, to make mistakes, to be themselves, to laugh."

I pray that for your home. Several years ago, I officiated a marriage where the flower girl stole the show. As she came down the aisle, she stopped after every step, carefully extracted a few pedals from her basket, and carefully placed them on the runner. It was a long 18 rows to the altar, and I thought she would never make it. The congregation had titters of joy as this child carefully went about her work of preparing for the bride.

As the wedding concluded, I turned to the groom and said: "Now you have the same task as the flower girl. Your job, as husband, is to strew flowers on the path your wife will walk."

We will all have good marriages when we do that for one another. @

To comment on this article go to *Enrichment* journal forum at http://forums.ag.org/enrichmentjournal.



GEORGE O.WOOD, D.Th.P., is general superintendent of the General Council of the Assemblies of God, Springfield, Missouri.

Happily Married in the Here and Now

By H.B. London

The telephone rings. A compassionate receptionist answers the phone: "Focus on the Family Clergy Care Line. How may we help you?" She then transfers the caller to one of our five pastors who handle the 400 to 600 calls and e-mails we receive each month from clergy family members around the world.

Between 35 percent and 40 percent of these calls deal with issues related to marriage and family conflict. Many of these calls are so serious that it is difficult to imagine a Christian leader fulfilling his assignment while enduring such heartbreak and sin. Nevertheless, it happens day after day. Pastors also face many of the family challenges they deal with as they lead their congregations.

Some time ago I was working toward restoration with a high-profile Protestant pastor. Because it was taking a great deal of my time, the board at Focus on the Family asked for a progress report. As I began to talk, I passed out a sheet of paper that contained the circumstances of several other families we were dealing with. All of them were troubling, but not with the same high-profile status. Here are some examples:

James Polk/Danielson Desigr



Happily Married in the Here and Now

- A pastor called because his wife had recently had an emotional attraction with a man in the church. She has a flirtatious nature.
- A pastor called because his wife had recently divorced him after 7 years of marriage.
- A pastor's wife called after she and her husband had been involved in a heated argument. The pastor has a history of physical and verbal abuse.

The list goes on and on, but you get the picture. Challenges to happy, loving marriage and family relationships affect not only the people in the pew, but also those behind the pulpit.

In a recent survey, we referenced more than 425 of the most recent contacts to our Clergy Care Line. We discovered that 65 percent of those calls came from the pastor and 35 percent came from the pastor's

When a pastor is engaged in the work of the church, he can easily neglect the most important members of his congregation his spouse and children.

- A pastor's wife called because her husband is dealing with same-sex attractions.
- A pastor called because his spouse was struggling with the abuse he had suffered at the hands of church members. She said she would not stay married to a man who lets people dictate their lifestyle.

spouse. Each call had its own level of urgency, but all reflected the subtle method Satan uses to undermine those whom God has called to lead His church.

On our Clergy Care Line we promise four things: (1) we will listen; (2) we will pray for you; (3) we will attempt to get you further



help through a reputable referral in your area; and (4) we will resource you if we possibly can. Today, as I write this article, the telephone is ringing at our toll free number — 877-233-4455.

Why does this happen to those who are called to lead people from the abyss of family failure? I encounter several reasons when working with clergy couples. My list is not exhaustive, but it makes the point.

Ministry Pressures

The first reason deals with the intense pressure ministry can have on the family and ultimately on the pastor's marriage. When a pastor is engaged in the work of the church, he can easily neglect the most important members of his congregation — his spouse and children. The admonition of the apostle Paul covers all marriages, "Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her. ... He who loves his wife loves himself" (Ephesians 5:25,28). "And the wife must respect her husband" (Ephesians 5:33). "Fathers, do not exasperate your children" (Ephesians 6:4). These passages are for everyone.

Pastors who refuse to take days off, postpone vacations with their families, are not home for the evening meal, and work long hours with little or no *fun* in their lives are prime candidates for marital and family shipwreck. My wife, Beverley, used to say to me, "Who do you think you are impressing by not taking a day off — certainly not your church members?" She was right. They would let me work 8 days a week, if that were possible.

Ministry Schedules

The second reason involves one's upbringing. Many pastors' wives especially those who were raised in a pastor's home — have a greater tolerance for ministry schedules and demands than those not raised in pastors' homes. That is not an excuse, but the truth. Many struggle with the unrealistic expectations of ministry. Regardless of one's upbringing or background, each family must come to grips with reality and set its own course. "Speaking the truth in love" (Ephesians 4:15) is a great place to begin. Each one in the household must have the freedom to say what needs to be said: "I am feeling lonely." "I am concerned about your schedule." "The kids never see you any more." "Can't we just go for a walk?" "Why are you so moody?" "Are you doing okay?" "I want to help you, but you will not let me." "I was proud of you today." Any or all of these statements might apply.

Regardless of your background be it from a home that talked about everything or one that operated as ships passing in the night — each clergy family must determine how it will communicate, and deal with the inevitable roadblocks that affect its family. If clergy families do not, the church and its leadership will continue to pile expectations on them.

Tim Clinton, president of the American Association of Christian

Counselors, writes, "All marriages go through times when love grows cold or lacks the closeness we desire. When our marriage gets into trouble, we hurt. Many times we cannot even pinpoint what went wrong."¹

He is right, but the words of the apostle Paul help keep things in perspective. "Wives, understand and support your husbands by submitting to them in ways that honor the Master. Husbands, go all out in love for your wives. Don't take advantage of them" (Colossians 3:18,19, THE MESSAGE).²

We must be sensitive to one another. Just to know someone cares about what we are feeling and why we are feeling that way speaks volumes.

Ministry Surroundings

The third reason concerns your ministerial surroundings. More clergy marriages are in jeopardy because of one's physical placement than we might think.

Before coming to Focus on the Family, Beverley and I pastored four places during our 31 years of ministry. The first two locations were difficult and taxing on our marriage. At the first place we were young and new to ministry. I had come out of four generations of clergy, and she was a layman's daughter. I thought Beverley would want to become the super pastor's wife that my mom had been. That was not her idea; she wanted to be a wife and mother. Her greatest concerns had little to do with church attendance or building programs. I could not understand why she felt that way until I realized how she could better use her gifts. Immediately she was happier, and so was our family.

A pastor must let his spouse seek her place. Wives find fulfillment in doing what they do best. Trust me.

Our second church was much larger, but lacked leadership. I thought I had to do it all, and just

Three Nutrients for a Successful Marriage

Nutrient No. 1 — Prayer Produces a Fresh Perspective

Commit to pray together. Praying together gives a view of each other's hearts that cannot be seen in any other realm. It gives a fresh perspective when you hear each other praise and confess sin. You begin to see each other in a different — and stronger — light.

Nutrient No. 2 — Prayer Produces an Increased Power for Your Relationship Practice praying together, even before a crisis comes into your life. It is amazing the difference it will make in your life. When prayer is a serious part of your relationship, there is power in it like no other experience. Grace, mercy, and peace come from Christ when you go to Him in prayer.

Nutrient #3 — Prayer Produces an Increased Passion for God and Each Other As you grow serious about prayer, you grow more passionate about each other. King David showed this kind of passion for God when he wrote: "O God, you are my God; I earnestly search for you. My soul thirsts for you; my whole body longs for you in this parched and weary land where there is no water. ... Your unfailing love is better than life itself; how I praise you! ... You satisfy me more than the richest feast. I will praise you with songs of joy. ... Because you are my helper; I sing for joy in the shadow of your wings" (Psalm 63:1,3,5,7, NLT).¹

How would you like to have that kind of passion in your relationship with God and with your spouse?



GARY J. OLIVER, TH.M., PH.D., Siloam Springs, Arkansas.

NOTE

1. Scripture quotations marked NLT are taken from the Holy Bible, New Living Translation, copyright © 1996, 2004. Used by permission of Tyndale House Publishers, Inc., Wheaton, Illinois 60189. All rights reserved. about killed myself. Bev was a stayat-home mom to our two boys, but she was lonely. I was so engrossed in doing what I felt called to do that I ignored her silent cry for help. Today, as I look back on that situation, I still get a sinking feeling. She was young, I was ambitious, and the consequences might have been fatal to our relationship. Mickey who writes, "In an earlier era of clergy marriages, we find unambiguous, stylized roles and behavioral expectations. The early portrait is of a family in which the minister is male, the spouse is a faithful Christian homemaker who reflects the virtues of the Virgin Mary, works with spiritual industriousness of the mystics, and is willing to martyr

I was so engrossed doing what I felt called to do that I ignored her silent cry for help.

The time came when we determined that we would make our surroundings a sanctuary. We, as a family, would not compete with the church. Our home, regardless of how humble, was our escape. Bev guarded this sanctuary and our *house* really became our *home*. Every clergy family needs a place of solitude and privacy — a safe place.

Ministry Marriage Roles — Finding Your Best Self

In our book, *Pastors at Greater Risk*, Neil Wiseman and I quote Paul A.

herself (on behalf of her pastorhusband and 'his' church)."³

Clergy marriages begin to unravel or a kind of relational malaise sets in when we are either unwilling or unable to help the other find his best self.

Recently, a pastor's wife sent us an e-mail. Can you hear her frustration?

"My husband (pastor) has a terrible time balancing church and family. I feel like all I am is a pastor's wife with the pasted-on smile and the constant check of what I said to whom, or whom I did or didn't call, or why I didn't talk to such-and-such on

Sunday morning. I'm so sick of it, I just want to go to Wal-Mart. I just wanna be me."

In Pastors at Greater Risk, Neil and I ask, "What makes clergy marriages different from other marriages? What points of tension do we need to consider?" We named several.

Competitive vows

When we were married, we

made vows to God and to one another. When we were ordained into ministry, we made vows to God and to the church, but perhaps not to one another. In truth, if we are not careful, the competing vows do not leave much room for one another. It seems almost inevitable that the two will conflict.

Ministry overload

Pastors are out saving the world, helping people through difficult circumstances, praying for healing, and preaching life-changing sermons. Then they come home to reality — their house is in disarray, their children are needy, their spouses are spent, their bills are unpaid, and their water heater is leaking. So much for the man and woman of God. Now the real work begins.

Management, not necessarily balance, becomes the key to overload. To be honest, I am not sure balance is possible. Management is.

Ministry temptations

Temptations accompany any peoplebased vocation — especially the ministry. Why? Because we encounter people in so many situations in which we might compromise our standards. We counsel and visit in homes and hospitals. We see people who are needy and alone, and we offer comfort. At times, we are bigger than life to some. Each one of these presents a threatening situation. At other times, we find ourselves believing our own press or we use questionable judgment that compromises everything. It is not worth it. Flee from it.

These three things in themselves — along with faulty judgment — can be threatening to clergy couples: lost perspective, grandiose ideas,



and arrogance. Any of these can spell trouble for any occupation, but especially for those in ministry.

Maximizing a Ministry Marriage

Several things will minimize the negative aspects of your marriage and enhance your ability to minister more effectively.

Allow marriage to be an adventure. To have a satisfying marriage needs to be the goal of every clergy couple. Meeting this goal requires work, patience, and a great deal of give and take. You must not only continue to renew your commitment to one another, but you must also seek to establish a relationship with your church community that is fair and manageable.

Always keep your marriage growing. When you spend as much time as Beverley and I have spent together, you will begin to think alike, even completing one another's sentences. You will not be able to fool one another any more.

But marriage is much more than just longevity. Couples need to drape their marriages in expressions of gratitude, and work toward healing when they break promises and speak harsh words. Marriage is a series of experiences that takes you from one event to the next each event affects how you arrive at the next. You make progress as you unload negative baggage.

Heed the warning signals. Automobiles have a check engine light that comes on when a problem or a potential threat arises. The same thing is true with your marriage. The check-your-marriage light can come on at any time in your relationship. Nowhere in our calling do I find: "Have a successful ministry at any cost." Do not allow the demands of the ministry to undermine your relationship. Stop. You must be proactive, protective, and pre-emptive of yourself and one another. Nothing is worth a dreary, unfulfilling relationship. Remember, the check-your-marriage light can come on regardless of who might be at the wheel.

Practice what you preach. How many times have you heard that phrase used to characterize your ministry? Add it to your home life. Neil Wiseman writes, "Practice grace, forgiveness, and mercy in the details of your marriage."

Your relationship and the influence you have on others are powerful when you put biblical principles into practice. For starters, apply the fruit of the Spirit to each day you have together, even when there is a disagreement. Consider what the following biblical actions — "love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control" (Galatians 5:22,23) — would bring to your union if faithfully applied. When you live like this, our Lord will enable you to establish a high, transparent level of communication. He will celebrate with you "as an example to the believers in speech, in life, in love, in faith and in purity" (1 Timothy 4:12).

Put marriage on your calendar. Many of us in ministry live by our calendars. If we are good stewards of our time, we are faithful to our schedule. At the top of our list must be our family and their schedule.

This includes games your children are involved in, taking days off, and date night with your spouse. Every clergy couple needs to plan to spend at least one night each week together. We can deal with and resolve most family struggles if we can sit down and calmly work through the various aspects of our situation.

When you say to your spouse or children, "I am gladly taking time to

be with you," you are valuing them. You are giving them a place of honor. You are endearing yourself to them, and setting an example for them to follow in their own relationships.

Conclusion

I am convinced that every marriage can be better. Mine can — yours can. I also know for that to happen couples must pay a price. We must put ministry into proper perspective. Pray for one another. We must continually re-evaluate our relationships. One's walk with the God who called us must be constant. An unselfish attitude must replace "my way or else," and we must demonstrate in our marriages that the message we preach concerning commitment, integrity, accountability, and virtue are not empty words, but words backed by consistency. No one is always perfect, but we can always try to be sensitive to one another.

I received a call from a pastor who said, "Out of the blue this morning, my wife called my office and said, 'Thank you for loving me and our family.' I'm not sure what prompted her to do this, but it definitely made my week."

He may not know, but I do, and I can imagine you do as well. @



H.B. LONDON, vice president, Church and Clergy, Focus on the Family, Colorado Springs, Colorado.

To comment on this article go to *Enrichment* journal forum at http://forums.ag.org/enrichmentjournal.

NOTES

- 1. Tim Clinton, *The Soul Care Bible* (Nashville, Tenn.: Thomas Nelson, 1982).
- 2. Scripture taken from THE MESSAGE. Copyright © 1993, 1994, 1995, 1996, 2000, 2001, 2002. Used by permission of NavPress Publishing Group.
- 3. H.B. London and Neil B. Wiseman, *Pastors at Greater Risk* (Ventura, Calif.: Regal Books, 2003), 88.



Building Your Marriage To Last a Lifetime

Unfortunately, the tragic reality is this: many ministry marriages do not last a lifetime.

By Gary J. Oliver

"Until death do us part." You probably made this pledge when you were married. You have also performed weddings where the couple made the same commitment. It is a great idea because it is God's idea. Unfortunately, the tragic reality is this: many ministry marriages do not last a lifetime. Marriages that last, however, do so because of characteristics such as endurance and resignation rather than the love and fulfillment God wants His children to enjoy.

I grew up in a strong, conservative, Bible-believing, evangelical church. In 15 years, our senior pastor had taken the congregation from several hundred members to more than 2,000 members. He loved the Lord. He taught the Word. He spoke out clearly against sin. People in our community and denomination lauded him.

In my junior year of high school, the church asked him to leave because of an adulterous relationship that had lasted several years. A year later the church asked my youth director to leave because of his extra-marital affairs. At the time, I did not understand it. It confused me. How could someone who loved the Lord, taught the Word,

Dave Danielson

and pastored a church have such a lousy marriage that he needed to lie, cheat, deceive his spouse, and betray the sacred vows he had made before God, family, and friends?

While attending Bible college and seminary, I continued to hear about failed ministry marriages. In my first few years of ministry, I learned that some of the people I had gone to seminary with were getting divorced. I then began to hear of nationally known Christian leaders whose marriages had crumbled and were getting divorced.

What's the deal? If Christ cannot make a difference in those who have devoted their lives to Him and have proclaimed His message, why should anyone believe Christ's other claims — salvation from sin and eternal damnation? Granting salvation seems much harder than helping someone have a great marriage.

In more than 30 years of ministry, including more than 15 years of teaching and training pastors, many of the most miserable and unhappy marriages I have encountered involved Christian leaders. These same leaders declared with great clarity and conviction that Jesus died and rose again to save people from the consequences of sin. They invited people to receive the good news that could change their lives forever. They taught that Jesus wants to make a difference in our lives. They said that Christ came to give us life and give it more abundantly. They taught that Christ is able to do "exceedingly abundantly beyond all that we ask or think" (Ephesians 3:20, NASB).¹ Then they went home to a mediocre, mutually endured, and sometimes miserable marriage. The only things exceedingly abundant are the fear, hurt, frustration, loneliness, isolation, discouragement, and anger a husband and wife experience from living as married singles and from knowing they are living a relational lie.

For more than 10 years I traveled coast to coast training thousands of pastors to use the Taylor Johnson Temperament Analysis counseling assessment. As part of the training, participating pastors and their spouses took the Taylor Johnson and assessed themselves. In the second or third year of my teaching I began to notice a disturbing pattern in the hundreds of sample profiles I had seen. Many of the pastors' wives had profile patterns similar to the *suicide profile*. I asked my mentor, H. Norman Wright, if he had noticed the same thing. With a sad look on his face, he told me the problem was much greater than most people realized. Loving the Lord, teaching the Word, and being in ministry do not guarantee you will have a good marriage. Good marriages and godly marriages do not just happen, especially if you are in the ministry.

Satan does not want any marriage between two Christians to thrive. But the evil one brings out his biggest and best weapons for his attacks on the marriages of Christian leaders. Having a ministry marriage, however, does mean that Satan will consistently attempt to drain, discourage, deflate, depress, defeat, and destroy you. I am convinced that one of the critical factors in a successful ministry is a healthy marriage, not just a surviving marriage. (*See sidebar, "The Private Side of a Successful Ministry."*) Preaching well, good administration, and wise management are important, but the ultimate apologetic for the truth claims of our Lord is when they make a difference in the most important human relationship we will ever have.

I agree with Joe Aldrich: "The two greatest forces in evangelism are a healthy church and a healthy marriage. The two are interdependent. You cannot have one without the other. It is the healthy marriage, however, that is the frontlines weapon. The Christian family in a community is the ultimate evangelistic tool, assuming the home circle is an open one in which the

The Private Side of a Successful Ministry

What really goes on behind the closed doors of the minister's marriage? Data from more than 200 ministry couples seen at EMERGE over a recent 3-year period and information gleaned from the past 2 years from the Ministerial Enrichment Helpline suggest that some ministerial families are facing significant challenges.

Sexual difficulties, including pornography use, comprise the greatest challenges (28 percent) of those who sought help through the Helpline. Marriage and family conflicts were the complaints of 21 percent followed closely by tensions created in the work of ministry itself. Financial strain, anxiety, emotional downturns, poor ministry boundaries, and marital stresses gave evidence to a loss of balance between work, home, and ministry.

How can the pastor protect the private side of his marriage and thus remain successful in the ministry? Years ago, my friend and mentor, Richard Dobbins, taught me the importance of building healthy boundaries around my marriage. These include:

1. Boundaries of time and space. Every couple needs special times and places set aside to nurture their marriage. A regular date night is a great idea.

2. Boundaries to protect our marriage from our parents. While it is important to ask for appropriate parental advice, remember that your marriage is a separate decision-making unit.

3. Boundaries to protect our marriage from our peers. Set proper conversational and physical boundaries among your friends. Too often careless talk and touch lead to adulterous relationships.

4. Boundaries to protect our marriage from our work. Since you have already given the better part of your time and energy to your work during the day, avoid bringing the overflow of your work into your home. Allow your home to be a sanctuary of peace and rest.



DONALD A. LICHI, PH.D., is a psychologist at EMERGE Ministries, Inc., in Akron, Ohio, where he serves on the Clinical Leadership Team. He

is also an adjunct professor with Trinity Evangelical Divinity School. He has served in the same capacity with Assemblies of God Theological Seminary and Ashland Theological Seminary.

Building Your Marriage To Last a Lifetime

beauty of the gospel is readily available. It is the old story: *When love is seen, the message is heard.*^{"2}

Carrie and I were married 27 years. We started out with the normal share of bumps. God gave us three boys. We were busy doing the things young married couples with children are supposed to do. But our marriage was mediocre. We began to realize that we were not experiencing the kind of marriage God desires His children to enjoy.

Over time, God helped us develop a good marriage. By God's grace, we spent our last 15 years together cultivating a Christ-centered marriage. On July 2, 2007, my beloved bride went to be with the Lord after a 2-year battle with metastatic pancreatic cancer. I thank God that we spent our last years together living, enjoying, and modeling the difference Christ can make in a marriage.

Based on many years of observing ministry marriages — including my own — and more than 30 years of teaching, training, researching, and doing marriage ministry, I have discovered some key aspects to cultivating a ministry marriage that will not just last, but flourish and grow for a lifetime. It involves the factors that books on marriage (including some of my own) discuss - good communication, conflictmanagement skills, and good financial management. But in this article, I will highlight some unique factors that characterize a healthy, vibrant, God-honoring marriage.

Someone once said that a slow leak, not a blowout, causes most marriage failures. In my experience, that statement is true 99 percent of the time. Great ministry marriages need core relationship skills, but also involve several core choices that make an important difference. Perhaps you have acquired, even mastered, some of the core relational skills that contribute to a good marriage. But the following choices can take your marriage to a new level.

Choose To Cultivate an Intimate, Passionate, Growing Love Relationship With Jesus

A great ministry marriage does not start by focusing on your marriage. It starts by focusing on yourself, your love relationship with the Lord, and Him that I failed to cultivate my own relationship with Him.

In their book, *Marriage Made in Eden*, Alice Matthews and Gay Hubbard state, "God's case for marriage is not about a prescription for thrills and feelgoods. It is not a game plan designed to produce soul mates whose overarching achievement is personal, emotional fulfillment. God's case for marriage is based on His goal of the transformation of His people into faithful image bearers. But Christians discover (often

Do not start by asking, *How can I have a better marriage*? The better question is: *How can I become a better spouse*?

the degree to which you daily allow the Holy Spirit to help you "become conformed to the image of His Son" (Romans 8:29, NASB).

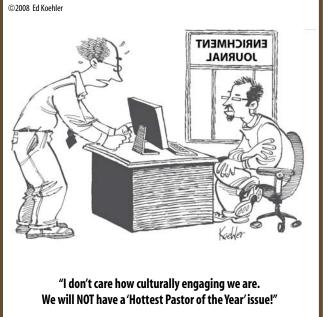
In John 21:15–17, Jesus asked Peter, "Do you love me?" That is still the big question. To what degree do you daily choose to cultivate an intimate, passionate, growing love relationship with your Lord? To what degree are

you in the Word, not just to prepare a message, but also to discover the manna your loving Father has for you?

Remember the hymn, Jesus, Lover of My Soul? Is the greatest desire of your heart to have Jesus as the lover of your soul? For much of my ministry that was not the case. I was so busy helping others with their relationship with to their surprise) that once they buy into God's program, personal fulfillment at an undreamed-of-level comes as an unlooked-for-by-product of oldfashioned obedience and willingness to fit into God's plan."

Choose To Apply the Psalm 139:23,24 Principle

Do not start by asking, How can I have



a better marriage? The better question is: *How can I become a better spouse*?

After thousands of hours providing marriage counseling, I discovered that every person is an expert on how his partner could be more kind, thoughtful, and loving. *If he* would only be more patient and listen better, it would solve their marital problems. It seems our fallen human nature is to focus on how our spouse could improve and how he could be more positive.

Note that this passage does not say, "Search my wife, dear Lord, and know her heart," or "Try my husband, dear Lord, and know his thoughts." Rather "Search *me*, O God, and know *my* heart; Try *me*, and know *my* anxious thoughts" (emphasis added). According to the well-known spiritual, it is "not my mother, not my father, but it's *me*, O Lord, standing in the need of prayer" (emphasis added).

Ask God every day to help you more effectively love, give, forgive, serve, encourage, nourish, and cherish those whom you love, starting with your spouse.

When I began to pray Psalm 139:23,24, I realized that having a great marriage started with me owning my own stuff. Seeing my own sinfulness helped me understand how much I was like everyone else — broken, longing for love, prone to blame, yearning to be understood, self-deceived, and desperate for mercy and grace greater than all my sin. Once I became secure enough to allow God to help me acknowledge that I was a sinner, I became free to enjoy God's grace. I also did not need to fake it, or feel threatened that I might be wrong and lose an argument, or worry that Carrie would learn that I was nothing more than a redeemed sinner. In fact, she already knew that and still loved me.

Do you spend as much time

thinking and praying about how you could better love your spouse as you do thinking about how he could better love you? How much time do you spend asking God to help you love your spouse "as Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her"? (Ephesians 5:25). After all, the greatest apologetic for the truth claims of Christ is love (John 13:34,35; John 17; 1 Corinthians 13).

Choose To Understand

In the early years of my marriage — and with most of the couples I have worked with — one of the first responses to a conflict is to try to help our spouse understand our point of seeking clarification, and trying to understand his perspective. If you do this consistently for a month, you will be amazed at the results.

Choose To Pray

Pastors are aware of how important prayer is, but most ministry couples spend little time in prayer together.

Prayer is important. I have written on prayer. I probably have 30 books on prayer in my library. But Carrie and I spent little time in prayer together unless someone was sick, there was a crisis, or a problem with our children. Prayer, for me, was often a preamble or a conclusion. Even though I grew up in a church

Pastors are aware of how important prayer is, but most ministry couples spend little time in prayer together.

view (which we know is the correct point of view). We believe that if they understand things as clearly as we do, they will agree with us. How many times has this worked for you?

When two people spend most of their time trying to get their spouse to better understand them, neither one walks away understanding much of anything. A critical dimension of a healthy marriage is for couples to spend more time trying to understand their spouse's heart than they do in trying to make their spouse understand theirs. The Bible has much to say about the power of seeking understanding. Proverbs 4:7 says, "Though it cost all you have, get *understanding*" (emphasis added).

The next time you have a disagreement with your spouse ask God to help you set aside your desire to enlighten your beloved with the reasons for your perspective. Invest that time listening, asking questions, where we had prayer meetings, most of the service was a Bible study with 5 minutes of prayer at the end. No one was vulnerable in his prayer requests or prayers. We prayed for our missionaries and Aunt Bertha's bunions — all the safe things. No one asked: "Would you pray for us because we're struggling in our marriage? Tonight, my wife said she didn't like me. And you know what? I don't like myself." Or, "I've been grappling with depression and feeling like a failure." That would have been too unspiritual and inappropriate.

Through a series of circumstances, God began to convict us about our lack of prayer. We began to ask, "Lord, what would it look like for us to become a man and a woman of prayer? What would it look like for prayer to be a distinguishing characteristic of our marriage?" If there is a secret to a strong marriage in terms of love for God, love



Mae Chambers and Erika Chambers. 2008. Can My Marriage Be Saved? Hendersonville, Tenn. Pass It

MINISTRY

On Publications.

Can My Marriage Be Saved? is filled with more than 20 true stories of couples whose marriages were restored, even after being deemed "hopeless" by their friends, family, counselors — even pastors.

Each of these couples overcame devastating circumstances such as adultery, sexual addiction, clinical depression, bankruptcy, substance abuse, and the loss of their children.

The true stories in this book offer hope for any troubled marriage. And the ministries listed at the end of each story can provide practical help for hurting couples in even the most desperate circumstances.

Can My Marriage Be Saved? shines a vital light into the darkness of today's divorce culture.



Alice P. Mathews and M. Gay Hubbard. 2004. Marriage Made in Eden: A Pre-Modern Perspective for a Post-Christian

World. Grand Rapids: Baker Books. Our culture's version of marriage is not as God designed it to be. With a lot more emphasis on individualism and consumerism, today's married couples tend to lose sight of God's original purpose for marriage — a call for His people to take Jesus' message to the heart of everyday life.

Marriage Made in Eden provides a radical alternative to today's view of marriage, giving a glimpse into the historical and cultural aspects that have shaped marriage in America. With this insightful analysis you'll learn how marriage has come to be in the state we now find it and about God's model and purpose for a sacred Christian union.

Marriage Resource List

USTRY

Les and Leslie Parrott. 2008. Marriage Ministry in the 21st Century. Loveland, Colo. Group. Marriage Ministry in the 21st Century is your one-stop resource for building a marriage ministry — and getting

couples connecting at your church, enjoying a fresh spark, and growing together in Jesus.

You'll find tons of important guidance on: Biblical counseling. Sharpen your skills.

Ministry tips and encouragement. Empower engaged couples, newlyweds, marriages going through rocky times, remarried couples, and blended families.

Powerful events. Couples' nights out (and nights in), movie nights, marriage getaways, and spiritual retreats. Bonus: Reproducible handouts for small groups and marriage ministry events.

Encouraging late-in-life marriages. You'll discover great ways to support these often-ignored couples — through some of their best years yet.

Marriage mentoring. Learning how to find potential marriage mentors in your church.



Gary and Barbara Rosberg. 2002. Divorce Proof Your Marriage. Carol Stream, Ill. Tyndale.

Would you allow rainwater to leak into your house? Homeowners don't allow their homes to fall into disrepair. Yet millions of couples allow their marriages to fall apart. Disappointments lead to discord and distance ... and then emotional divorce. Couples don't have to be legally divorced to have given up on their marriage.

Broken marriages lead to broken communities ... and a broken nation. We need to rebuild our communities and nation — and it starts with rebuilding marriages.

Gary and Barbara Rosberg can tell you how to:

• Heal hurts in your marriage.

· Meet each other's love needs.



- Weather the storms of life.
- Protect your relationship.
- Enjoy and celebrate each other.
- · Love each other day after day.



David and Jan Stoop. 2002. The Complete Marriage Book. Grand Rapids: Revell. Thirty-two of the most

respected Christian marriage experts have joined forces — creating an original book that offers real answers to your biggest challenges as a couple. The Complete Marriage Book shows you how to make your marriage exciting, fulfilling, and strong.

Find constructive ways to break the cycle of conflict while nurturing a passionate love. Discover how to manage crises and use healthy anger to grow your relationship. And get straight talk on maximizing your sex life.

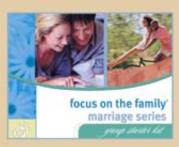
From in-laws to finances, romance to childrearing, spiritual growth to intimacy, The Complete Marriage Book shows you how to bolster every area of your relationship. With this wealth of collective wisdom, you can take home all the tools you need to make for better or for worse better than ever.



H. Norman Wright. 2002. The Marriage Checkup. Ventura, Calif. Regal.

Like most marriage couples, you want your marriage to be exceptional. To get there, the first step is to take the pulse of your marriage. Give it The Marriage Checkup.

One of America's best-loved Christian counselors provides you and your spouse with an excellent tool for diagnosing the overall strengths and areas for improvement in your marriage. Your checkup includes user-friendly, self-scoring questionnaires as well as take-away questions that address communication levels, a marriage inventory, a marital satisfaction assessment, and much more.



Focus on the Family Marriage Series Group Starter Kit

The in-depth, foundational Bible study series provided in the *Focus on the Family Marriage Series Group Starter Kit* strengthen marriages by bringing couples a better understanding of God's plan for marriage. The flexibility of this study allows for small group settings, Sunday school, counseling sessions and more. Bringing additional flexibility, the eight studies stand independently and focus on issues that can impact a couple at every stage of married life. Help bring faith back into the picture.

Order from Focus on the Family.

for each other, and passion, it is daily choosing prayer.

Concerning prayer, Richard Foster says: "Prayer catapults us onto the frontier of the spiritual life. It is original research in unexplored territory. Meditation introduces us to the inner life, fasting is an accompanying means, but it is the discipline of prayer itself that brings us into the deepest and highest work of the human spirit. ... To pray is to change. Prayer is the central avenue God uses to transform us." If you want to experience transformation, choose to cultivate the habit of meaningful, regular, spontaneous, faithful prayer.

Prayer does not need to be a big production. It is more important to pray often than to pray for hours at a time. We began to pray on the phone, before we said good-bye, or we would send a prayer by e-mail. We started our day with prayer. Whenever we had a crisis, we would not simply say, "I'll pray for you." We would pray. We would pray in the middle of a conversation. Often when I would land at an airport, Carrie would have left me a greeting and a 30-second prayer. Prayer became a part of our daily living.

In our book, *Mad About Us*, we share how making prayer a normal part of our lives had a transforming effect on our ability to understand each other. This led to an increased sense of safety, trust, and intimacy. God used praying together to transform our marriage and our love life. We discovered that prayer provides several relational nutrients that are essential to a healthy marriage.

Choose a Growing Marriage, Not Just a Lasting Marriage

What is the difference? If you choose a growing marriage, you will have a healthy marriage that will last. If you strive for a lasting marriage, you may end up with neither. (See sidebar, "Characteristics of Healthy and Unhealthy Ministry Families.")

Characteristics of Healthy and Unhealthy Ministry Families

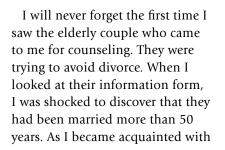
Most marriage experts agree that when a marriage is going well, there is nothing like it. On the other hand, when a marriage is *not* going well, there is nothing like it. In the broadest terms, couples that have healthy marriages express verbal and physical affection, are free in sexual expression, cooperate with one another, and can request and grant forgiveness to each other.

The following dimensions are most evident in healthy marriages. If you and your spouse rated each on a 1 to 10 scale with 10 indicating "completely happy" and 1 "completely unhappy," you would obtain a snapshot of where the current hot buttons are in your marriage. Here are the 11 dimensions:

- · Household responsibilities.
- Rearing of children.
- Social activities.
- Church activities.
- Money.
- · Communication.
- Sex.
- Professional/academic/position progress.
- Personal independence.
- Spouse independence.
- · General happiness.

Each of you needs to complete the scale. Celebrate the areas where you are strong, but realize you may need to seek help in areas where either of you scored low.

DONALD A. LICHI, PH.D., Akron, Ohio



Divorce Proofing Your Marriage



A wise pastor will learn the secret of healthy bonds within the marriage. Remember, God

has uniquely designed our bodies to be bonded to sources of its pleasure. Knowing this secret allows ministry couples to divorce proof their marriage. In the hundreds of couples I have seen professionally (and thousands seen by Richard Dobbins), we have never seen a couple divorce who have bonded their marriage together in the following ways:

1. Pray Together. While this does not necessarily need to be lengthy or elaborate, the ministry couple that regularly prays together bonds their marriage to God.

2. Lay Together. Develop the bond of comfortable freedom in sexual expression as well as verbal and physical affection for each other.

3. Play Together. Develop an interdependent relationship by working together on projects as well as enjoying recreational time together.

DONALD A. LICHI, PH.D., Akron, Ohio

them, I learned that while theirs had been a marriage that lasted, it had been an exercise in endurance and learning how to deal with denial, disappointment, discouragement, and unfulfilled desire.

Choosing a growing marriage acknowledges that there will be ups and downs, springs, summers, falls, and winters. The fires of passion will not always burn with the same intensity. But whatever the season or situation God is using, the iron of our relationship will sharpen the iron of our lives. God will use our spouse as the key tool to help us become conformed to the image of His Son. This makes all the difference in the world.

In a growing marriage, we begin to experience new levels of intimacy we never dreamed possible. What is intimacy? "Intimacy is the place where we experience and enjoy all that God created us to be and become. It is the place where we feel safe to express our deepest longings for significance and security. It is the place where we can gradually let down our barriers and masks. It is a place where we can celebrate our strengths and expose the weaknesses and fears and doubts that plague us. It is a safe haven of encouragement where we want to listen and can bask in the warmth of someone who wants to listen to us. It is a place where the presence of Christ becomes very real to us through the presence of another person."3

Conclusion

In this article hopefully one or two things have stood out to you. Perhaps the Holy Spirit prompted you to take note of them and strongly impressed them on your heart. I cannot count the times I have read an article and said, "I'm going to work on that," only to end up doing nothing about it — the tyranny of good intentions.

If you want a better, stronger, and healthier marriage, let me make one final suggestion. Reread the five choices that God has used in my marriage and in the marriages of many other couples to increase understanding, safety, trust, and intimacy, and deepen relationships in His love. Does one of these choices stand out to you? Do you sense God's Spirit drawing you to consider a choice? Then go for it.

Before you move on to the next article in this issue, pause and ask God to help you make this choice for the next 30 days regardless of what your spouse is doing or how he is treating you. Make this investment in your walk with the Lord and in your marriage. You may be surprised at the difference. @



GARY J. OLIVER, TH.M., PH.D., is executive director of The Center for Relationship Enrichment and professor of Psychology and Practical

Theology at John Brown University, Siloam Springs, Arkansas. He is the author of *Mad About Us: Moving From Anger to Intimacy With Your Spouse*.

To comment on this article go to *Enrichment* journal forum at http://forums.ag.org/enrichmentjournal.

NOTES

- Scripture quotations taken from the New American Standard Bible[®], Copyright © 1960, 1962, 1963, 1968, 1971, 1972, 1973, 1975, 1977, 1995 by The Lockman Foundation. Used by permission (http://www.Lockman.org).
- Joe Aldrich, Lifestyle Evangelism: Learning To Open Your Life to Those Around You (Sisters, Ore.: Multnomah Books, 2006), 20,21.
- Gary J. Oliver and Carrie Oliver, Mad About Us: Moving From Anger to Intimacy With Your Spouse (Bloomington, Minn.: Bethany House, 2007).

Keeping Romance Alive in Your Marriage

By Dennis Rainey

A television talk show host was interviewing one of Hollywood's biggest male stars, a man known for his romantic image. The host asked him, "What makes a great lover?"

"Two things," the star replied. "First, it is a man who can satisfy one woman over a lifetime. And it is a man who can be satisfied with one woman for a lifetime."

What a great answer. To build a lasting marriage of oneness and intimacy, you and your spouse must be committed to meeting each other's physical and emotional needs — for a lifetime. And one of those needs is *romance*. To ensure that we do not miss the importance of romance, God dedicated an entire book of the Bible — Song of Solomon — to the subject. Reading this poetic book is like eavesdropping on a romantic dialogue

While we cannot base marriage solely on romantic feelings, we also cannot deny our need for closeness and intimacy.

between a man and his wife. Solomon describes his love as a hot fire. "Even much water," he declares, "cannot put out the flame of love" (Song of Solomon 8:7, NCV).¹

We need that fire in our marriages. The problem is that within the first year or two after the wedding, the romantic



flames that burned so brightly during engagement seem to crumble into faint, glowing embers.

Romantic love is part of God's character. He made us in His image, and He gave us emotions. Just as He woos us to follow Him and express our love for Him, so a husband and wife attempt to win each other's affections. In many regards, husbands and wives are modeling how God pursues people.

While we cannot base marriage solely on romantic feelings, we also cannot deny our need for closeness and intimacy. Without these qualities in their relationship, a couple will drift into isolation.

Solomon also uses the vineyard metaphor to describe romantic love. In Song of Solomon 2:15, he describes the "little foxes that are ruining the vineyards, while our vineyards are in blossom" (NASB).² These thieves steal the fruit of love before a couple has a chance to enjoy it. Pastors are especially vulnerable to these foxes. In addition to the normal challenges of marriage unresolved conflict, unrealistic expectations, and young children who wear you out — the weight of pastoral ministry is one of the more difficult assignments in life. The work schedule alone can create tensions at home. One pastor told me, "We have become ministers because we have this great passion to care for and love people to Christ. We will do whatever it takes, and sometimes we get misguided. We put so much energy into the work of the church that we don't realize what we are doing to our own families and to our own lives and children."

I will never forget attending a day-long focus group of more than 20 pastors. For hours we discussed family issues and what the church needs to do to strengthen



families. At the end of the day I asked, "What is your greatest need concerning strengthening families in your church?"

I was unprepared for the response these church leaders gave. Nearly in unison they said, "My marriage and family." Ministry was exacting an incredible toll on these men's families.

On another occasion I talked with a group of pastors' wives. I asked them what advice they would give young pastors and their wives about marriage. Here are some of their answers:

• "Make dating a priority — see if you can have a date without

discussing the church. Tell your husband if he's home by (a reasonable hour), you will make it worth his while." activities are not church related (have a life outside the church). Laugh about things instead of getting defensive."

Like any good fire in the fireplace, romance needs attention and fuel.

- "Advise them to take care of themselves as a couple first. They need to remind themselves as they counsel others, particularly the unmarried, that they must focus on their oneness in Christ."
- "Talk. Be sure that some of your



If you are creative, pleasing your mate may be a natural part of your personality. But a less creative person may need some coaching to become a partner pleaser. All wives need an occasional reminder to reach out. Here are a few ideas:

- 1. Write him a letter and send it to his office, or put a love note in his lunch box or briefcase.
- 2. Prepare his favorite meal.
- 3. Arrange an evening out for just the two of you.
- 4. Wear his favorite dress with your hair done the way he likes it.
- 5. Purchase something small and frivolous for him that he will not buy himself.
- 6. Give him a nicely framed picture of yourself, or of you and the children, for his office.
- 7. Surprise him with an all-expensepaid trip to do something he likes, such as golf, fishing, or hunting.

- 8. Put the children to bed early and prepare a candlelight dinner.
- 9. Do something that especially pleased him when you were dating.
- 10. Read Scripture and pray with him regularly.
- 11. Take walks together.
- 12. Keep your junk out of the garage.
- 13. Greet your husband warmly after work.
- 14. Wear his favorite negligee, or buy a new nightgown to add sizzle to your evening attire.
- 15. Clean out the car for him.

Sometimes the smallest gestures can make the biggest difference in your marriage. Pick out something you have not tried before; do not give complacency a foothold in your marriage relationship.



BARBARA RAINEY, Little Rock, Arkansas

- "Be who you are, not what others expect you to be."
- "Pray about developing healthy boundaries for the two of you

 what God would have you do to protect yourselves from being consumed by others. You desire to help everyone, but without healthy boundaries, the two of you will suffer."
- "Have a family day once a week. Read and learn together."
- "Each week set aside at least 3 or 4 hours to spend together discussing what is important, what is going on that week, and concerns, as well as doing something fun. Pray together daily."

Do you recognize the underlying desire these women have for a real relationship with their husbands? They want connection. They want romance. They want their marriages to be a priority.

If you want to put some spark back into your relationship, I have a few tips:

Seek To Meet Your Spouse's Romantic Needs

Become a student of your spouse. Learn what pleases him or her. Do you know that men and women view romance through different lenses? To confirm this, the next time you are in Bible study or Sunday School class, divide the men and women into separate groups and ask: "What romantic gesture would you like your spouse to do for you?"

I guarantee that, if they are honest,

the men will focus on physical intimacy: "Dress up in a sexy negligee," or "Meet me at the front door without any clothes." The women, however, will say: "Take me to a romantic, candle-lit restaurant"; "Spend time talking with me"; or "Sit in front of a fire and cuddle." Sight and touch motivate men; women want to develop a relationship.

Meeting your spouse's romantic needs involves more than understanding male/female differences. It also means remembering what pleases him or her. And it means sacrificing your own needs to meet those of your spouse. Selfishness and romance do not mix well.

Make Romance a Priority in Your Relationship

Everything of value or everything that requires a time commitment finds a place on your schedule. Romance should, too. Sit down tonight with your spouse and your calendars. Find a time in the next 2 weeks when both of you can go out. Make sure both of you write down the date if you use a day planner or a PDA, put in the information. This exercise will cause both of you to anticipate your time together.

This also means making time in your schedule for sex. One reason so many marriage beds seem frozen over or boring is that couples do not have time for sex. Let's face it, today our jobs and businesses seem to get our best. Our children usually get our best. Even church work can get our best. But adding romance and adventure to our marriages seldom gets our best.

Make Your Home — and Especially Your Bedroom — a Creative Setting for Sex

Your bedroom needs to be a private, secure, romantic hideaway, not a

S Romantic Needs of a Wife

To most women, the word *romance* is spelled *relationship*. I have spent the better part of my marriage learning and adjusting this summary of a woman's romantic needs. I developed this list through observation and conversation with Barbara and other women, and through studying the Song of Solomon.

A wife has more than five romantic needs, but I consider these the top five:

1.To receive spiritual nourishment from her husband. A woman wants a man to be her protector, someone who cares not only about her security and physical needs, but also (and even more important) about her spirituality — the well-being of her soul.

Pastors are no different from many men in that they, too, struggle with providing leadership in the home. One pastor told me that it is easier for him to lead his church spiritually than it is to lead his wife and family. But being a spiritual protector and advocate for your wife can be as simple as praying with and for her daily, sharing Scripture and initiating conversation on spiritual issues, and giving her some time to pursue her spiritual growth.

2. To feel safe and secure with her husband. When a woman feels her husband's covenantal commitment to stay married and to love her and accept her, she feels safe to give him the gift of who she is in the marriage relationship. The Shulammite woman who was the object of Solomon's passion said, "I am my beloved's and my beloved is mine" (Song of Solomon 6:3, NASB). She obviously had a strong sense of contentment and security.

3.To share intimate conversation. Many husbands do not realize that for our wives to consider us romantic, we first need to be a great friend and a conversationalist.

Grunts and one-word answers to questions will not cut it. Too many women do not feel that their husbands need them, and bare-bones conversation confirms their sense of low personal value. Many men who engage in romantic, deep conversations during courtship lose this talent later. Rediscover romantic conversation. Make a commitment to learn to make intimate conversation a priority with your wife.

4. To receive a tender touch and hear gentle words. There is great power in tender touch, whether it is a long, full-body hug, or a lingering kiss. Or the touch may be a gentle caress of her face that has no motive to make sexual demands but communicates, "I love you, Sweetheart, and I care for you tenderly."

Gentle words have similar power. A husband needs to habitually praise and compliment his wife.

5.To feel pursued and set apart by her man. A wife wants a husband who will swoop her off her feet, carry her away to the castle, and say, "Let's spend time together." Focused attention is like precious gold in a relationship.



DENNIS RAINEY, Little Rock, Arkansas



place where the husband rebuilds his motorcycle or the children gather to sculpt play dough.

When we had children at home, Barbara and I worked hard to save some of our best for each other. Our children learned over the years that Mom and Dad often like to have quiet evenings alone. When the children were younger, we occasionally turned the kitchen into a famous, big-time restaurant called the Rainey Rainbow Room. We let each child order a As we communicated, we reminded ourselves of what attracted us to each other, and romance had opportunity to ignite. We did not need to worry about a baby-sitter and did not need to leave the house to get away alone.

Look for Creative Ways To Communicate Love and Commitment to Your Spouse

When two people are dating and considering marriage, they often come up with creative ways to woo and attract

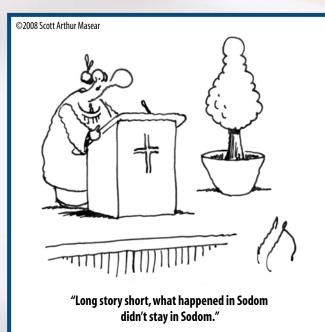
Become a student of your spouse. Learn what pleases him or her.

special meal from a special menu. Barbara and I served as chef and waiter, and the kids had a great time learning a little about how to eat out.

Later in the evening, they knew they were to stay in their rooms except for bathroom runs. At 8 p.m., Barbara and I turned our bedroom into our own romantic cafe, complete with a small table, candles, and flowers. There we would eat, talk, and relax. each other. They talk on the phone, send notes and flowers, and plan special outings. Isn't it a shame that this courtship fizzles within a few months of the wedding? We need to court our spouses with the same enthusiasm.

Plan Some Special Dates or Weekends Together

You may be thinking, How can you plan romance? It is supposed to be spontaneous.



Sometimes that is true. But we are amazed at the number of couples we meet who rarely spend meaningful time together. Many couples attending our Weekend To Remember marriage conferences say they have not been on a date in more than a year. Even more shocking is the fact some have not been away alone together

overnight since their honeymoon. How long has it been for you?

I know a man who planned a romantic getaway as a surprise for his wife. About 2 weeks before they were to leave, he began to scatter little hints around the house. Using clues he gave her, she would find these hints and collect them.

Finally, she took all the clues and pieced together a map of New England. Then the husband told her what was happening and all she had time for was to pack and kiss their kids goodbye. They took off and spent their 10th wedding anniversary in New England. His wife still talks about that trip — and is ready for another one.

Rekindling the romance in your marriage does not require a great deal of money, and it often does not even take much time. What you do need is a long-term commitment to do it. Like any good fire in the fireplace, romance needs attention and fuel. Take some time today to throw another log on the fire — the warmth is worth it. @



DENNIS RAINEY is the president, CEO, and cofounder of FamilyLife, a subsidiary of Campus Crusade for Christ. Rainey has written and

cowritten more than a dozen books, including Staying Close, selected in 1990 as the outstanding book on marriage and family. He can be heard daily as cohost of the nationally syndicated radio program FamilyLife Today™. He and his wife, Barbara, live near Little Rock, Arkansas.

To comment on this article go to *Enrichment* journal forum at http://forums.ag.org/enrichmentjournal.

NOTES

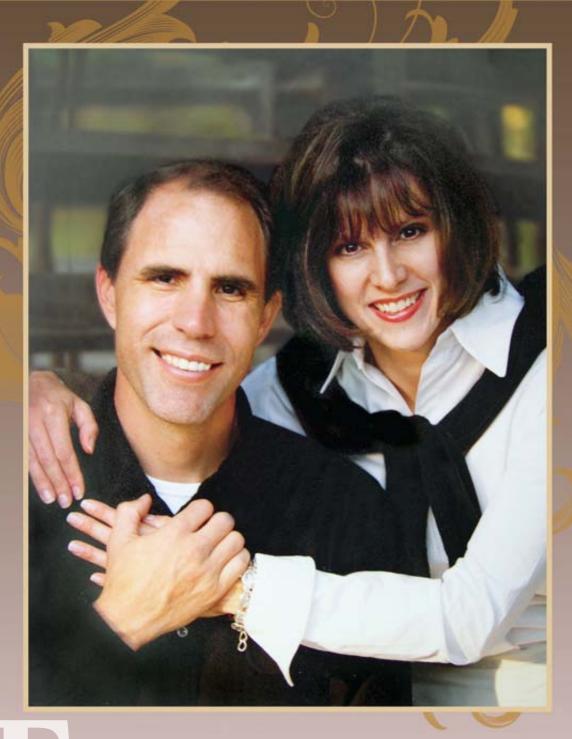
- 1. Scripture quotations marked NCV are taken from the Holy Bible, The New Century Version[®]. Copyright © 1987, 1988, 1991. Used by permission of Word Publishing.
- 2. Scripture quotations taken from the New American Standard Bible®, Copyright © 1960, 1962, 1963, 1968, 1971, 1972, 1973, 1975, 1977, 1995 by The Lockman Foundation. Used by permission (www.Lockman.org).



Back From the Brink: Just When Things Seemed HOPELESS

By Charlie and Sandy Salmon with Scott Harrup

No one at the conference, including any of the men from my church, knew the secret sin I had hidden for years.



They are a young, energetic couple with three children and a thriving ministry at a church that has enjoyed a triple-digit growth rate since opening its doors just 4 years ago. But Charlie and Sandy Salmon, pastors at Church on the Ridge in Snoqualmie, Washington, would never claim to be the ideal 21st-century ministry family. While they are looking forward to their silver anniversary in 2009, they nearly became a divorce statistic just 11 years into their marriage. The lessons they learned from that experience have made them the man and wife — and the pastors — they are today.

Charlie's Story

In July 1995, I took 40 men from our church, The Church on the Hill, formerly, Turner Freeway Assembly of God in Turner, Oregon, to a Promise Keepers rally at Seattle's King Dome. We joined 50,000 men in a concerted time of praise and affirmation. This was during the height of the Promise Keepers movement, and millions of men across the nation were encountering God in a radical way.

During one of the sessions the speaker wanted to honor the pastors, so he invited them to gather at the stage. I was reluctant to join the crowd of ministers, but every man in my group urged me to step forward. I made my way down front to the growing roar of applause and cheers.

My reluctance only gnawed deeper into my gut as I stood self-consciously among fellow clergy. No one at the conference, including any of the men from my church, knew the secret sin I had hidden for years. But after this conference, I would be hiding no longer. I would visit the Oregon District The lack of communication and the growing resentment we had seen building in our relationship the past 4 years only intensified. — Charlie

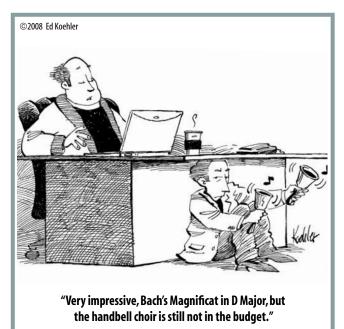
office to confess to my superintendent my adulterous relationship with a woman in my church in 1990.

Then I was going to go home, beg my wife to let me have \$1,000 from our bank account, and drop off the face of the earth.

Married to Ministry

Sandy and I had married 11 years earlier in June 1984, after I graduated from Northwest Bible College. She had graduated from nursing school in the Seattle area and was ready to support me financially as I continued my studies at Southwestern Baptist Seminary in Fort Worth, Texas. My initial salary as a children's pastor at Fort Worth's Bethesda Community Church was never going to pay the bills.

We made the move to Texas in



August, riding high on newlywed optimism. We had no idea just how shallow our relationship was. To begin with, we came from opposite backgrounds. Sandy had been born and raised in a family committed to Christ and to ministry. My father was an alcoholic, and my parents divorced when I was 11.

I had been saved and called into ministry, but did not know what a healthy marriage looked like.

In Texas, I dived into my seminary studies full time while maintaining full-time hours in children's ministry. I earned my master's degree and grew our church's outreach into the surrounding community. Knowing how to minister did not prepare me to be a godly husband and serve the needs of my wife.

After I graduated, we bought a home and Sandy became more involved in my ministry. There was no doubt we could do ministry together well. Whether it was weekly services, a Fall Fun Festival for thousands of kids, or training others in children's ministry, we were a respected team.

In 1988, I had the opportunity to go back as Christian education pastor to my home church, People's Church in Salem, Oregon. Sandy and I packed up and pursued what appeared to be the next step in our American dream. My salary jumped significantly, Sandy was able to find full-time work, and we began investing in real estate.

But the lack of communication and the growing resentment we had seen building in our relationship the past 4 years only intensified. I continued to ignore the problems at home as I tried to prove myself at my new church. This only created more problems. Not only was I a poor husband, I was an arrogant seminary graduate who thought he could teach his senior pastor a thing or three about ministry. He fired me within a year. Losing my job was hard, but we had saved money and did not feel it economically. My brother, Adam, invited us to work with him at his AG church in Livermore, California. He and I would also build houses together. That move was short-lived, as a downturn in the housing market cost us both dearly. Financially, we lost everything.

Taking two blows to the chin did me some good. I was humbled. In 1989, I was ready to accept a ministry invitation anywhere. That's when Turner Freeway Assembly of God opened. This time the position was senior pastor.

The church had been around since 1923. The congregation was beyond elderly; several charter members still attended. They could not afford to pay us at first. But Sandy was again willing to work, and we moved into the doublewide trailer on the church property and began reaching out to the community.

I was 26. Sandy was 25. I had preached exactly three sermons to adults in my entire life.

Meltdown and Mirage

Whatever the handicaps in our marriage behind the scenes, we were something to see on a church platform. Sandy led worship and I preached. People started coming and getting saved. We established a second service fairly quickly, then a third. We built a new sanctuary and added education space. I was riding high. People loved me. One after another, members found an opportunity to tell me what a great pastor I was. I basked in the adulation and found myself drawn into my expanding ministry for larger and larger portions of each day.

Sandy, meanwhile, was coming apart. When she was not working, she was often returning to an empty home. And when I came through the door, I was waiting for my ego massage from church to continue. I was too good to take out the garbage — at church I had people taking out my garbage for me.

I had never really gotten to know my wife. I had no idea she struggled with self-confidence, terribly magnified her

🕨 Where To Turn To Rebuild Your Marriage

A t the core of most serious marital conflicts is a breakdown of love and respect. The Holy Spirit inspired the apostle Paul to identify these two elements in Ephesians 5:33. As a rule,

she needs love; he needs respect. Emerson Eggerichs thoroughly deals with this issue in his book, *Love and Respect*.

Couples at the breaking point have already engaged in a *destructive dance* or cycle that they cannot break

on their own. The jabbing, wounding, and pain lead to emotional shutdown and, at times, emotional or physical violence. The key is to learn to hear the heart of your mate. Eggerichs claims that if we could hear our spouse's heart, we would respond with understanding, be more loving, and more willing to give respect. He calls this an *energy cycle* — his love motivates her respect and her respect motivates his love. At a recent marriage retreat, EMERGE

President M. Wayne Benson and his wife, Kathy, modeled one of the most powerful techniques I have ever seen. They asked



couples to pause, be still before God, and while holding hands, ask the Holy Spirit to reveal to each what God is most pleased about in their mate and

then speak it as part of a prayer. Why not try this powerful tool soon?

Another innovative program for couples in serious trouble is a *Marriage Intensive*. Organizations that offer marriage intensives include EMERGE Ministries in Akron, Ohio, the Smalley Relationship Center in Branson, Missouri, and other groups throughout the country. Sessions involve either a small-group format or individual couples counseling. Intensives usually last 3 to 5 days. Goals of a marriage intensive are to:

- rebuild trust.
- stop conflict.
- heal past hurts and wounds.
- learn how to attack the problem, not the person.
- learn advanced communication and conflict resolution skills.
- learn how to meet each other's deepest needs.

The Ministerial Enrichment Helpline (800-867-4011) is another source of help for Assemblies of God clergy and spouses. This number is on the back of the AG credential card. Callers can remain anonymous. The Helpline is available 30 hours a week and provides prayer, brief counseling, consultation, resources, and a nationwide referral network.

DONALD A. LICHI, PH.D., Akron, Ohio

flaws, and diminished her successes. I was blind to her growing eating disorder, even to the bruises that I later discovered were self-inflicted.

When I came home to find Sandy in a fetal position in our closet, it should have raised every red flag in my spirit. Instead, I lectured her on her need to pray more, to study the Word more, to overcome her discouragement through God's peace and joy.

I ache today when I remember her pleading with me, "I need a husband, not a pastor." Instead of answering her call for help, I wrote her off as the crazy person I had married, as an impediment to my obviously successful ministry.

The church was still going strong. So I spent more time there, less at home, and eventually turned my attention at church to another woman. Nine months later that relationship fell apart. She eventually left her husband and the church. She didn't tell; I didn't tell. The shock of what I had done long and was not prepared to believe I was genuinely committed to her. We now had two children, Stephen and Hannah. I was trying every suggestion in every book I studied to discover what made my wife tick. But she had checked out of the relationship and put up walls that showed no signs of cracking.

As 1994 moved into 1995, everything continued to expand in our ministry. From outside appearances, we were on top of the world. But sin does not go away just because you bury it. I wanted to put my affair out of my mind, but God wanted to deal with it. The other woman decided to tell some people in our church what had happened. Those people came to me with a simple ultimatum — I could tell our congregation of my unfaithfulness, or they would.

Sandy's Story

Charlie and I met in 1983 and were married a year later. Early in our

When I recognized our marriage was close to failure, I became even more obsessive in other areas of life. — Sandy

made me realize just how far I had fallen from Christ's standard.

Thus began a mirage period in my relationship with Sandy. I knew I had blown it as a husband. I began to read every book on marriage I could get my hands on. I began working overtime on the home front in the midst of continued growth on the church front.

But from Sandy's perspective, it was too little too late. She did not know about my affair, but she still did not trust me. She had seen me put on the façade of a caring husband for too marriage all of our efforts went into doing great ministry together; we did not do nearly enough work on being a great husband and wife. We just immersed ourselves in the church while growing farther and farther apart relationally and emotionally. There was a great deal of resentment.

At first we did not recognize it was happening. We simply developed and grew one ministry after the other during the first 5 years of our marriage. We poured ourselves into everyone and everything else but ourselves. But as the years went by and Charlie found increasing fulfillment at the church, my own emptiness began to emerge.

I knew I did not fit the standard profile of a pastor's wife. I was not very musical, even though I led worship. I worked outside the home, which set me apart from the more traditional model of ministry spouse. I did not even like the pastor's wife persona.

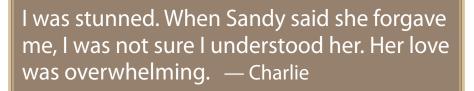
When I recognized our marriage was close to failure, I became even more obsessive in other areas of life. I was wrapped up in presenting the perfect picture to everyone and trying to be everything for everybody. All the while I was resenting Charlie for supposedly making me feel this way. Much of our time together was a silent war.

Honest About the Pain

I hit rock bottom during 10 months of post-partum depression after our first child, Stephen, was born in 1991. Even as a nurse, I did not recognize the serious condition I was in. I became withdrawn and obsessive about my new baby, believing I was the only person who could care for him appropriately.

My crisis point, and the beginning of my recovery, came when I was running late for a discipleship class we were holding with guest speaker Ray Brooks. I slipped in the back bringing Stephen in a baby carrier. Ray did not know who I was, but he stopped his lesson and said, "This woman in the back is so hurt and so broken. We need to stop now. I want her to come forward. We need to pray for her."

Until that point, I was always "Sandy who had it all together." To even look at these 30 people from the church and walk forward as



someone in need was a step I would never have imagined taking. But that became the beginning of the end of my self-doubt, self-hatred, and chronic perfectionism. God began to touch me and bring me out. I was so broken and hurt, but I had to get to rock bottom before it did not matter who saw how bad I was so God could begin to touch me.

We would have several more years of our strained relationship before Charlie's secret came out, but that initial breakthrough began my healing.

Choosing To Forgive

On my birthday Charlie picked me up from my parents' home in Seattle after the Promise Keepers rally. I had hoped we could all enjoy a family dinner, but Charlie said he had something he needed to talk with the superintendent about.

I dropped Charlie off at the district office and went home to pray. The kids were busy in another room. I began to pray in the dining room about Charlie and whatever situation he must be going through at the district office and that God would do His will. Then an incredible thing happened.

God communicated to me the reason for Charlie's dilemma just as clearly as if I had heard an audible voice. The Lord impressed on my heart that Charlie was at the district office confessing to an affair. All my anguish over our marriage surfaced. At the same time, I experienced relief. Suddenly, after 11 years I had a way out. I could walk away from our marriage and no one would fault me for it. It felt like a huge door had opened for me.

But if I have ever heard the voice of God, I heard it at that moment. The Holy Spirit showed me my marriage as if it were a wall with a door and a window. The door was my hope for escape. But high up in the wall I could see the small window, though I could not see through it. "God," I prayed, "I don't know what's through that window, and the door is open and looks easy. I think I will go home to Mom and Dad. They will take care of me and support me. I can make these last 11 years just go away."

But God began to speak to my heart about the window, urging me to choose it over the door. *I want you to climb through the window*, the Holy Spirit whispered. *Will you trust Me that My way is better than your way?*

Charlie and Bill Gallaher, the district superintendent, walked in to find me kneeling in our dining room already in tears. God had been preparing me for what Charlie was going to say. As the story emerged, I remember Bill Gallaher asking me, "Can you forgive?"

With that question, I realized the window I had seen was the window of forgiveness. I looked up immediately and said, "Yes, I can forgive."

I discovered I truly wanted to climb through that window of restoration. As I did that in obedience, the incredible love of the Holy Spirit flowed over me. Love for Charlie engulfed me. I had never experienced such love before. That step of obedience opened the floodgates. I loved Charlie more than I ever had even though I had just heard this devastating news.

Charlie's Story

I was stunned. When Sandy said she forgave me, I was not sure I understood her. Her love was overwhelming. That moment became a foundation stone to rebuild everything we had lost.

Ironically, we were about to revive our marriage that had been in shambles. On the other hand, we were about to be ripped from a thriving church. The next night at an emergency board meeting I confessed my affair. Everything moved at lightning speed. I was allowed 2 minutes in each service the following Sunday to tell the congregation I was sorry. After those presentations, the board directed me to leave and never return. On Monday, while I traveled to Seattle to confess to Sandy's parents, men from the church delivered my office to my driveway in a pickup truck.

I entered our district's rehabilitation process. Sandy and I attended weekly counseling for 18 months, 6 more months of monthly sessions, and a week at EMERGE with Richard Dobbins. These sessions put hope back into us. We came through counseling and ministerial rehabilitation with a much stronger marriage, a new sense of God's grace, and a beautiful third child, Caleb, born in 1997, a fantastic year.

We were attending First Assembly in Albany, Oregon, when the opportunity came to return to Texas to the church where my ministry had started. Pastor Des Evans wanted to take me under his wing as an associate



and turn the church over to me 2 years later when he planned to retire. We served together 6 years and Des was still going strong when God called Sandy and me to plant a new church. We thought the project would take place in North Texas. God had other plans. The Northwest District contacted us about a building in Snoqualmie, Washington. In 2004, we opened the doors of Church on the Ridge to just 28 people. On Easter 2008, about 1,400 people joined us for worship.

Charlie and Sandy

We have learned some hard lessons. Whenever we share our story, we pray that (1) couples will see that with Christ, there is hope for even the worst of homes; (2) couples will seek help before they hit the bottom; and (3) marriage can be the greatest of all earthly relationships.

Preparation: If you visualize marriage as a building, you recognize godly courtship and premarital counseling as the foundation. Our foundation was almost nonexistent. In retrospect, many of the communication tools we have learned during our rehabilitation process would have been invaluable from day one of our marriage.

Balance: Early on, we had no clue how to balance ministry and family responsibilities. In the midst of serving a rapidly growing congregation today, we are committed to discerning when ministry begins to intrude on family. We realize we can drop everything for a while. After all, it is not our ministry; it is God's. We can step away for a couple days or a weekend. We can take a break and go skiing. We do whatever we need to do to stay connected.

Biblical ideal: It breaks our hearts to watch ministry couples whose lives parallel our lives before. They might not end up as we did, but we know they do not have the relationship we enjoy now. Satan is ripping them off from enjoying the marriage God has planned for them and the full potential of ministering out of a healthy marriage. God's idea of marriage goes beyond anything a couple could possibly imagine or hope for. But to take a marriage to that level may require the humility of getting help. Pastors need to be willing to acknowledge when a growing ministry has become a threat to their marriage through our marriage meltdown it would be a testimony to the people we have shared with. They would never see God's ability to restore in our ministry if we had cut and run. Today we minister out of our pain because God has healed us. We are not perfect, but truly forgiven.

A similar motivation has led us to tell our story wherever we minister today. Again, well-meaning people have suggested that we would never need to mention anything we had gone through. Our district never

We believe sharing our past from a position of marital health today gives others who are struggling in their marriage hope for the future. — Charlie and Sandy

and family, and then see a counselor. It's not enough to say, "It will be okay; I'm serving God."

Accountability: We know the history of infidelity in our marriage carries with it the risk of future failure. Maintaining accountability is a high priority for us. After 13 years, the trust level is established and strong. We can reach each other anytime we need to. We spend time with the Lord. We make sure our spiritual disciplines are in their rightful place. We love Jesus and are walking with Him. Although our heightened commitment to accountability is the result of crisis, we urge couples to pre-emptively establish accountability measures before a crisis even hovers on the horizon.

Transparency: Well-meaning people urged us to move out of the area when we lost our pastorate. But we wanted the people we had ministered to, led to the Lord, and shared with to know that God's love is real, that forgiveness is real. We knew if we could get revoked our ministerial credentials. They put them on hold. We were Assemblies of God ministers in good standing, and that is all anyone needed to know. But we believe sharing our past from a position of marital health today gives others who are struggling in their marriage hope for the future. @



CHARLIE AND SANDY SALMON are pastors at Church on the

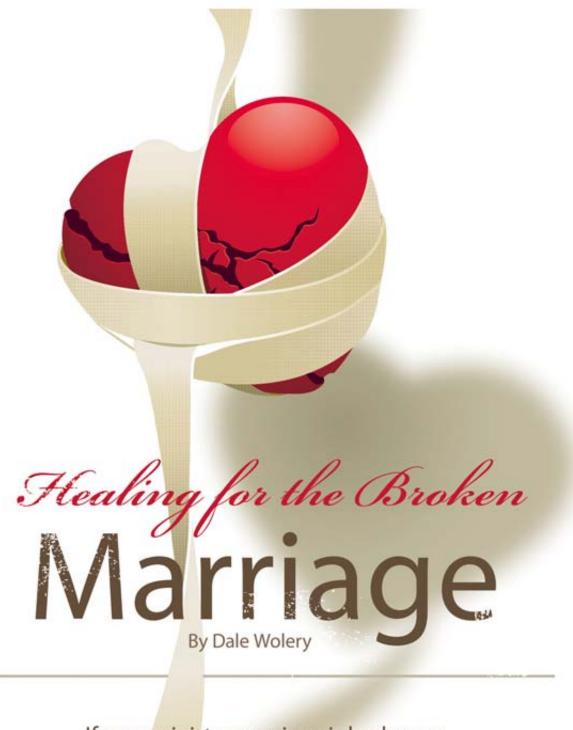
Ridge in Snoqualmie, Washington.



SCOTT HARRUP is senior associate editor, *Today's Pentecostal Evangel*, Springfield, Missouri.

To listen to another ministry couple who experienced moral failure and found God's grace and healing, go to: http:// www.enrichmentjournal.ag.org. Click on current issue, find this article, then click on the audio link.

To comment on this article go to *Enrichment* journal forum at http://forums.ag.org/enrichmentjournal.



If your ministry marriage is broken or struggling, you are in great company.

He stared at his computer monitor, thinking, *She has done it again*. He had to finish his sermon. He couldn't. His cluttered mind threw punches.

What is she thinking? Why unload right now? I've been busy, blamed busy, and she knows it! "Why aren't you ever here for me?"

She slugged back. He jabbed. Be there for her? With the weight I carry? She knows I'm trying. I'm running as hard as I can. She knows what I carry. Two funerals this month. The men's retreat. A whole church. The weight of all this prep. I never take time for myself. She thinks I don't care? She's the one who doesn't care.

Why God? he screamed silently. Why can't she just let up, understand me, support me, appreciate me? Can't she see Your blessing? The

church is growing, the people talk about my messages, the board just gave me a raise. She is just not trying. She's crazy! he concluded.

The blank monitor reminded him of his sermon. Deciding to switch to e-mail,

he tried to push forward but stopped. The heaviness of cumulative cycles of conflict and continuous pain overwhelmed him. Last night's rupture just added to the string of endless beatings pummeling their worn-out marriage. His head dropped into his hands. It was like his wife was constantly knifing him in the heart. He had never falt more wear

him in the heart. He had never felt more weary. He could not imagine feeling more alone. He ached.

The door opened. He moved to greet her and stopped, remembering how wrong she was. She was not smiling. Handing him a slip of paper she blurted, "I'm not going through this again. All you care about is the church. You do not even know the kids and I exist. I cannot remember when I felt like you cared. We need help. I want you to contact these people and see what they tell us to do."

He started his rebuttal, but the door closed. He sat down. Furious, frustrated, and fuming, he sighed. His only consolation was that no one knew about their daily struggles and broken marriage.

Broken Ministry Marriages Are Too Much the Norm

If you are a pastor or pastor's spouse who identifies with the above scene, you are not alone. If your ministry marriage is broken or struggling, you are in great company. Some of the most successful ministers in North America have terrible marriages.

Instead of model marriages that reflect well on Christ, many ministry marriages are fighting for survival. The families and staff pictured inside church directories or brochures appear happy and healthy. Off the brochure and in the bedroom, this is seldom reality. Clergy families are

> not always as they appear. They are in trouble. The increasing disfigurement of clergy family life abounds.

My own ministry marriage knows this pain. Sara and I struggled with the confusion of a marriage meltdown and ministry demands. I had fostered

> addictions, and danced the dance of congregational expectation. When I appeared most successful in ministry, my marriage and personal life were in the most trouble. As long as I convinced myself that our marital struggles were

marital conflict, battled

largely Sara's fault and delayed her seeking help for us, I could proceed without changing. As my church applauded my ministry, I expressed my avoidance to Sara this way, "When I get through with ______ (whatever the stressful project), things will get better between us."

I found smiling in public — even when I did not feel like it — easier than genuine closeness in daily, married life. Sara courageously asked for more while I gave less. I could have avoided the crisis that began our healing journey if I had been willing to hear her say: "We are drifting apart. We are not as close as we used to be."

My understanding of pastoral-marriage struggles is personal as well as professional. We have ministered exclusively to pastors and their families for more than a decade. The hope, grace, and healing offered below is an outgrowth of our professional and personal experience. I hand you a slip of paper and pray that you will accept the help it offers. I wish I had done the same earlier, much earlier.

When I appeared most successful in ministry, my marriage and personal life were in the most trouble.

What Breaks Ministry Marriages?

We have seen God work in ministry marriages in which silence and distance never escalate to verbal attack and preaching throats are raw with angry words. God works when addictions are an issue and when they are not. He finds ways to nourish

Top Ten Reasons Ministry Marriages Remain Broken

- 1. Dysfunctional churches resist their pastors becoming healthy.
- Pastors dispense spirituality without saving enough for themselves.
- Ministry survival and advancement depend on ministry marriages *appearing* healthy.
- Pastors deceive themselves. When genuinely deceived, one is deceived about his deception.
- Seeking help requires role reversal. Pastors enjoy giving help, not getting it.
- 6. Initiating change is harder than maintaining the status quo.
- 7. Pastoral couples know that the church pays them to be good, not broken.
- 8. Pastors are ashamed of their flaws.
- 9. Neither spouse is courageous enough to break the silence and tell the truth.
- 10. Seeking help requires humility.

DALE WOLERY, Joplin, Montana

weary people with grace and healing when they stagger under hopelessness. But He works deeply, sometimes using pain as His main language.

Healing for the Broken Marriage

I did not willingly embrace His grace and healing because this threatened what I believed and pointed loving fingers at my sin. His healing hand led me to grab after concepts and practices I had preached against. He did not do it my way. What God did for me, He did the long, hard, humiliating way.

To discover the Lord's constructive work in ministry marriages, one must look deeper than most in the current church are willing. One must analyze the sources of the widespread damage and propose solutions that work, instead of beating the same soundless drums. Worn-out, easy answers are useless.

Dysfunctional churches hurt ministry marriages

One source contributing to broken ministry marriages is the church. The church is a powerful purveyor of ministry marital damage. Churches have devolved into dysfunctional organizations that eat their young and kill their wounded.

Churches are hooked on the powerful god of numeric growth, choked on the we-have-always-done-it-this-way poison, mesmerized by celebrity-status leadership, bound by the business model, and therefore blinded by collective denial. These approaches grind relentlessly on ministry marriages. Without forethought or malice, churches just do what churches do.

Church expectations hurt ministry marriages

In most churches, years of institutionalized dysfunction fray the fabric of pastoral marriages. Churches expect too much and care too little. Under the scrutiny of stated and unstated

expectations, the strongest spirits of our clergy wilt. As media-savvy Christians gather on Sunday, most unconsciously form negative conclusions about their church's leadership team. Church music competes with recording artists they listen to on their drive to church. When the pastor stands to speak, people wordlessly compare him with the crème de la crème. Through the week, church attendees listen to exceptionally gifted and edited Christian radio speakers, and watch communicators on the Internet and television who are at the top of the communicator heap. In the pew, they wonder why their average pastor seems so average.

Outside the pulpit, people expect a pastor's counsel to rival New Life radio host's highly competent advice. Others compare his ability or inability to coalesce critical factions in the church to the latest success story from the pens of our nation's best business executives and authors. These unfair evaluations, comparisons, and other dysfunctional ways of doing church place enormous strain on clergy marriages.

Pastors are supposed to excel in preaching, teaching, leadership skills, people skills, and biblical knowledge. The congregation expects them to work every weekend of the year and have the best marriages. In my own marriage, the dysfunctional, unstated demands of the congregation ignited by my personal ambition burned our marriage beyond recognition, almost beyond rebuilding.

At the time, I was not aware of the church's systemic sin or my own as I dug the grave of our marriage deeper. I knew churches hurt their leaders' marriages and leaders' marriages hurt the church, but I was not aware of these processes at work in my life. When a leader's mistakes, sins, When a leader's mistakes, sins, and failures — no matter how unintentional — combine with a church's poorest practices, the combination is deadly to his marriage.

and failures — no matter how unintentional — combine with a church's poorest practices, the combination is deadly to his marriage. Healing a leader's broken marriage requires honesty regarding church ills. We must also examine the common ills pastors bring to their marriages and churches.

Hurting Ministers Hurt Ministry Marriages

Denial in ministry is powerful. Christian leaders are mostly blind to their sabotaging behavior. The road to destruction in ministry marriages is paved with our best theology, teaching, effort, and intentions. The powerful denial traps that hold us in their grip are largely invisible to us. I did not know how flawed I was. I pray you will be open and, I warn you, it is not easy.

Ministers are pressured to keep marriage-damaging secrets Courageous self-discovery is necessary for God to change a pastor's marriage. This is problematic. At the Clergy Recovery Network, where I now serve, we find it is more difficult for pastors to honestly face their problems than it is for people in the pew. Pastors know intuitively that they must avoid the truth about their flaws and keep

them covered. The church clings to its notion of the perfect leader family and its corresponding expectations. Your church likes you being the flawless leader. You probably enjoy this, too.

Our culture exerts powerful energy that motivates pastors to keep the lid on the truth. It loves to shoot pastors down when they are less than perfect. Public error by imperfect pastors is easy fodder for a hungry press. The church and culture make it easy for pastors to deceive themselves into damaging silence about what happens behind closed doors. Pastors cannot mend their marriages without admitting they are broken. Honesty is essential. While pastors are pushing for truth, it is important that they be honest about the power of the pedestal.

People place ministers on pedestals that isolate

Churches place pastors and their spouses on invisible pedestals. People intend to honor and distinguish their pastors, but the pedestal becomes a force that hurts their pastors as leaders. The feelings of importance and honor associated with being on the pedestal draw pastors initially, but this shared group dynamic creates unique isolation that breaks its share of ministry marriages.

The clergy/laity caste system fostered by our consuming celebrity mind-set makes normal, nurturing friendships almost impossible for pastors and their wives. As ministry couples face life's difficulties, they often face them



Where To Turn When Your Marriage is in Danger of Meltdown Warning: Ministry marriage meltdown is complex. Professional help is usually required. Bandages on cancer do more damage by delaying quality healing. 1. Turn to friends who have received the

- professional help they needed.
- 2. Turn to denominational leadership, if they are trustworthy and astute. Threatening? Yes. Telling one's boss seems counter intuitive, but seeking help despite perceived consequences begins healing.
- **3. Turn to Christian counselors**. Interview two or three to see if you both trust their competency and instincts.
- **4. Turn to recovery groups** that address your addictions.
- **5. Turn to http://www.covenanteyes.com** for Internet monitoring.

- 6. Turn to an intensive. Christian counseling centers offer concentrated counseling called *intensives*. Counselors design some intensives exclusively for ministry couples. For information, visit http://www.clergyrecovery.com.
- 7. Turn to entities such as the Clergy Recovery Network. Confidentiality, crises mentoring, needs assessment, referral guidance, and encouraging your resistant spouse to engage the healing process are the specialties of such organizations. Visit http://www. clergyrecovery.com.
- **8. Turn, turn, turn**. Do not stop until you find the help you need.

DALE WOLERY, Joplin, Montana

No news is more sensational, spreads more rapidly, or sullies Christianity more than the news of a pastor's marriage gone wrong.

Healing for the Broken Marriage

alone. When they hurt relationally or spiritually, the unstated rules of the pedestal force them to suffer in silence. As the Clergy Recovery Network analyze intake forms, we are surprised by how dramatically pastors and their wives declare they are lonely and friendless. The phrase we hear most as we talk with pastors about their problems is, "I had no place to turn." Pedestals damage marriages.

The enemy works strategically

The most obvious reason for so many broken marriages in clergy ranks is the attack of the enemy. The strategic nature of pastoral marriages makes them favorite targets of the enemy. When a ministry marriage crumbles, Satan wins. No news is more sensational, spreads more rapidly, or sullies Christianity more than the news of a pastor's marriage gone wrong. Scoffers delight and demons dance when a Christian leader's fall leaves his parishioners abandoned.

Wounded People Populate Clergy Ranks

The overpopulation of clergy ranks filled by wounded people is a natural marriage-injuring phenomenon. Thoughtful observers believe those damaged most in their childhoods are the ones most likely to enter ministry. People often accuse psychologists of joining their field to fix themselves. We believe many ministers enter ministry hoping they will become closer to God, become better people, and have better marriages. This doesn't always work. As wonderful as the work of God's salvation is, it does not save ministers and their wives from

their own deep, personal problems.

Focused satanic assault, the pedestal's isolation, and an unconscious desire for spiritual healing create disproportionate numbers of broken marriages among Christian leaders. This vulnerability to marital breakdown is also compounded by the customary marital challenges other couples face.

Cultural Family Breakdown Damages Ministry Marriages Ministers were wounded as children, too

The breakdown of the family in the latter half of the last century profoundly impacts ministry marriages today. This breakdown caused increases in divorce, chemical dependency, emotional distance in family relationships, driven lifestyles, uncensored materialism, addictions, abuse, and neglect. Each successive generation produces more wounded children. The arrested development of these wounded children results in wounded children in adult bodies leading more and more churches.

Comprehending this vast change occurring in our character and relationships awakens us to the full import of Jesus' harsh words. "It would be better for him to be thrown into the sea with a millstone tied around his neck than for him to cause one of these little ones to sin" (Luke 17:2). The sins done to children that cause them to sin are capital offenses. Childhood trauma compounds when it remains unresolved and encounters the rigors of ministry and marriage.

Ministers are hooked on addictions, too

Another byproduct of general family breakdown is a dramatic increase in addictions. This onslaught compromises ministry marriages. The addiction of choice in conservative clergy ranks is sexual addiction. Sex addiction and pornography hook increasing numbers of vulnerable pastors. Unlike crack cocaine, pornography is inexpensive, easily accessible, and highly addicting. No profession is more susceptible to its power than the pastorate. Who else is expected to spend long hours alone in their offices behind closed doors with





unmonitored Internet access? This enslavement binds good and otherwise godly men, making them powerless.

Pastors also battle chemical dependency, violent outbursts, inappropriate relationship dependencies, and process addictions, such as watching television. Pastors meeting ministry's pressure while having difficult marriages find temporary solace in habitual escapes. These grow into consuming addictions.

Congregations unwittingly applaud work addiction, obsessive pleasing, serving, and placating others. Similarly, leaders who display narcissistic arrogance and practice manipulative controlling behavior often rise to the top as powerful Christian leaders. Is there hope?

Hope for the Ministry Marriage Half measures do not work

Pastors and churches must meaningfully change. Unfortunately, when Christians propose solutions to these kinds of issues, they most often cover reality with biblical sounding words or apply impotent half measures to these deeply engrained marital problems. Therefore, they assume occasional weekends off, annual retreats, or quick fixes, such as accountability groups, will solve these problems.

Half measures and accountability groups usually produce more denial and damage. These add to a church's group denial because the church assumes a deterrent is in place when it isn't. They do not help pastors, either. Most pastors who come to us after being caught in addictions are in accountability groups. If a pastor will lie to his spouse, he will lie to a group assigned to check on him. It is hard enough to tell our friends we are struggling, but even harder to tell the truth to people who are appointed to ensure that we do not slip up. Solutions for broken ministry marriages are considerably more complex than appointing hall monitors. Half measures fail.

The Church Must Seek Outside Help

Churches that desire spiritual health must seek outside help. The best outside help is up. God can heal. But a church's inability to divert board and other leadership groups from the priority of business agendas to the higher priority of prayer is an indicator of how little it genuinely desires God's help. If we want His help, we will ask for spiritual and relationship growth, instead of praying only for Aunt Suzie's knee surgery. Our asking Him to reveal and change our systemic and personal bankruptcy is vital. If God does not build the church, we labor in vain.

In addition, the church can enlist consultants, seminary professors, and denominational leaders to observe, survey, and reframe errant institutional values and address blind spots. Healthy pastors invite this kind of scrutiny for themselves and their churches. Using consultants and intentional interims while a church is between pastors is effective in producing constructive change. During this time, churches can become graceful and honest about their own flaws and needs, instead of remaining prideful and closed. When a congregation refuses to allow celebrity seeking, building programs, and numeric growth to drive the church, the congregation can minister effectively to one another in love and care for their leadership teams.

Lay education regarding clergy care, organizational values, how groups change, and the nature of health and dysfunction fosters quality change in the church. When congregations are honest regarding their struggles, allow thoughtful biblical truth to guide them, value giving grace, and encourage the use of quality Christian counselors, they create healthy environments for themselves and their leadership.

Church Leaders Must Seek Outside Help

Are you and God genuinely close? If you are a minister or minister's spouse with a smoldering marriage, you know the church may throw fuel on this fire, but you also know you must put it out. Accepting responsibility is necessary. If you are a leader who is struggling to hide marital pain, you are working against God. He wants to expose the problems so He can use you and other leadership couples to lead the church toward health and renewal. Until the problems surface, they cannot not be healed, and your leadership effectiveness will be blunted.

The complexity of ministry marital issues requires outside help. Again, the best outside help is up. God alone can give you the healing, grace, and intimacy in marriage you desire. This acknowledgment, however, is less helpful when spoken to pastors. The genuine spirituality of spiritual leaders is complicated.

Several months ago a minister who had served the Lord for more than 50 years was arrested for solicitation. Sexual sin had haunted him almost as long as he had served the Lord. When he called, one of the first questions I asked was, "What was it about your relationship with Christ that didn't work for you?" His response shows the complication.

He said, "Oh, no, my relationship with Christ is fine."

Because the ministry profession and its functions are so tightly entwined with ministers' personal relationship

(Continued on page 60)

Enrichment Renewal Retreats and Vacations

	National Institute of Marriage		
Address	250 Lakewood Drive, Hollister, Missouri 65672		
Phone	Intensive Marriage Counseling 1-866-875-2915		
	or main office 417-335-5882		
E-mail	Provided on Web site		
Web site	http://www.nationalmarriage.com		
Intensives Couples Intensive — 4-day marriage			
	counseling program		
	 Approximately 30 hours with NIM marriage 		
	counselors.		
	 A safe and supportive environment with a 		
	maximum of 5 couples and two NIM marriage		
	counselors.		
	Luxury accommodations.		
	All meals included.		
	• A participant manual and other follow-up services.		
	Marriage Intensive — 2-day marriage		
	counseling program		
	Additional preassessment.		

- Two days of exclusive marriage counseling.
- Two nights lodging and two breakfasts, two lunches, and one dinner for each individual.
- Approximately 15 hours with NIM marriage counselors.
- A participant manual and other follow-up services.

Spouses Intensive — 4-day counseling program

- Approximately 30 hours with NIM marriage counselor(s).
- A safe and supportive environment with a maximum of 8 individuals and NIM marriage counselor(s).
- Luxury accommodations.
- All meals included.

Cost

Phone

E-mail

 A participant manual and other follow-up services. Contact National Institute of Marriage for information.

EMERGE Ministries, Inc.

Address 900 Mull Ave., Akron, Ohio 44313-7597 800-621-5207 emerge@emerge.org Web site http://www.emerge.org Counseling The department of Clinical Ministries to and cost Ministers and Missionaries was established in 1989 and is under the direction of Wayne Taylor, a mental health professional who also has several years of pastoral experience. The Broken Heart Fund underwrites mental health care for full-time ministry families in crisis: pastors, full-time evangelists, and

missionaries, so no one is ever turned away

because of inability to pay for services.

- Inexpensive, temporary lodging is offered nearby (on a space-available basis) for out-of-town ministry families.
- Several appointments are generally scheduled over a period of a few days for out-of-town clients, and homework assignments accompany them back home ---- to be completed before the next visit to EMERGE.
- EMERGE also offers other counseling services.

Ranch of Hope

	кансполноре			
Address	2283 Country Road 323, Westcliffe, Colorado 81252			
Phone	719-783-9642			
E-mail	info@ranchofhope.org			
Web site	http://www.ranchofhope.org			
Cost	5-day Program			
	Check for special introductory rates.			
	Couples (regularly \$160 per day).			
	Family (regularly \$180 per day).			
	 We seek to serve all that qualify in need. Do not 			
	let finances be the barrier to restoration.			
	 Prices include an entire day of: Ranch of Hope 			
	counseling, scriptural lessons for life, life			
	applications, and tools for successful living.			
	(Prices do not include food, lodging, or car rental.)			
Contact	See the ministry partner link and ask for Ranch of			
	Hope special low rates. Coordinate with in-take			
	counselor, Hope Taylor.			
	Leadership Renewal Center			
Address	2650 Amalfi, Chowchilla, California 93610			
Phone	360-929-2207			
E-mail	info@leadershiprenewal.com			
Web site	http://www.leadershiprenewal.com			
Cost	8-day Comprehensive — \$3,200 per couple;			
	5-day Essential — \$2,300 per couple;			
	3-day Strategic — \$1,400 per couple.			
Address	The Cottage on Coronado Island 261 H Avenue, Coronado, California 92118			
Address Phone	877-472-9333			
Fax	619-435-7792			
E-mail	waltbecker@aol.com			
Web site	http://www.coronadocottage.org			
Contact	Walter Becker			
Cost	\$3,500 per couple (covers accommodations,			
	meals, and all counseling sessions.)			
	Oasis Retreat			
Address	P.O. Box 300 Station A, Vancouver, BCV6C2X3			
	Canada (near Sumas, Washington)			
Phone	604-850-8795			
E-mail	oasisretreat@crusade.org			

Web site Cost	http://www.oasisretreatscanada.com Retreat costs kept to a minimum.Fees are listed	Web sites	http://www.stonegateresources.org and http:// www.restoringsexualpurity.org
	on registration forms. Financial scholarships for needy applicants are available. \$100 deposit is refundable up to 4 weeks before retreat begins.	Contact	Harry W. Schaumburg, executive director Beside Still Waters
Address	Blessing Ranch 900 Red Mountain Rd, Livermore, Colorado 80536	Address Phone	Manatee Religious Services, 3111 29th Ave. E, Bradenton, Florida 34208 1-877-608-0999
Phone E-mail Web site	970-495-0920 info@BlessingRanch.org or BlessRanch@aol.com http://www.BlessingRanch.org	Fax E-mail Web site	941-744-9755 marybsw@lionmail.com http://www.beside-stillwaters.org
Contact Cost	John Walker, executive director \$2,875, \$2,975 for couple. This includes a	Contact	Mary Moore Dove Shores
	minimum of 20 hours of private counseling. Ministry discounts available. Eagles Nest Retreat	Address Phone Contact	14520 Perdido Key Dr., Pensacola, Florida 32507 850-492-3682 (DOVE) Mike or Sharon Hill
Address Phone	P.O.Box 1165; Ouray, Colorado 81427 800-533-4049	Web site Cost	http://www.thedovecenter.org \$185 per day (no extra charge for couples).
Contact Cost	John and Kay Gowins, directors \$40 per night donation to the ministry for the use of a unit.	Address	The Father's Heart Ministry 58 Misty Ln., Cleveland, Georgia 30528 (90 min.
Address	Marble Retreat 181 Bannockburn, Marble, Colorado 81623	Phone E-mail	north of Atlanta airport) 678-596-3916 fathershart@alltel.net
Phone Web site Cost	888-216-2725 http://www.marbleretreat.org \$2,500 per person (covers 9 nights lodging,	Web site Contact Cost	http://www.fathersheart.com Jerry and Denise Basil, counselors and co-directors See Web site or call.
COST	meals, 27 hours of group counseling, 3 hours of individual counseling.)	Address	Fairhaven Ministries — Tennessee 2198 Roaring Creek Road, Roan Mountain,
Address	Quiet Waters Ministries 9185 East Kenyon Avenue, Suite 150, Denver,	Phone E-mail	Tennessee 37687 423-772-4269 info@fairhavenministries.net
Phone E-mail	Colorado 80237 866-5-waters (866-592-8377) info@qwaters.org	Web site Contact	http://www.fairhavenministries.net Calvin Swanson, director
Web site Contact Cost	http://www.qwaters.org James L. Schlottman, executive director \$3,600 per couple for 2 weeks, \$2,600 per couple 1 week (meals not included).	Cost	 Lodge units are \$49 per night for one or two full-time Christian workers; \$60 per night for one or two laypeople. The chalets and cottages are \$10 per night higher (\$50 and \$70, respectively).
Address	Renewal Ministries P.O. Box 740100, Arvada, Colorado 80006		Extra persons (beyond 2) in all units are \$3 per night, regardless of age. No pets. Biblical
Contact Phone	J. Blair & Wendy L. Dalton, founders/directors 1-888-277-7256 or 303-467-0777	Address	counseling is also available for a modest fee. Ministries Resource Center, Inc. 14190 Barker Hollow Rd., Woodman, Wisconsin
Fax E-mail Web site	303-423-7585 RenewalMinistries@comcast.net http://www.RenewalMinistries.org	Phone Contact	53827 (Millville, Wisconsin) 608-988-4326 or 608-988-4649 Gerald and Alita Robertson, executive program
Cost	\$3,995 per couple for a 9-day Renewal Retreat (including first-class accommodations, gourmet meals, all ministry materials, and 6 months follow-up).	Cost	 directors Daylight getaway \$10; overnight for one \$25; overnight for two \$30; overnight for family \$35.
	Stone Gate Resources		Request information for group prices. PastorCare
Address Phone E-mail	11509 Palmer Divide Road, Larkspur, Colorado 80118 888-575-3030 or 303-688-5680 info@stonegateoffice.com	Address Phone	P.O. Box 52044, Raleigh, North Carolina 27612 919-787-7024
L man	interstonegateonication	Web site	http://www.pastorcare.org

Because the ministry profession and its functions are so tightly entwined with ministers' personal relationship with God, it is easy for pastors to assume they are close to God when they are not.

1 Healing for the Broken Marriage

with God, it is easy for pastors to assume they are close to God when they are not. For example, pastors continually speak God's words on His behalf. All of this speaking breeds a casual familiarity that allows them to feel closer to God than they are. This is further complicated by pastoral duplicity. While we speak God's perfect Word on God's behalf, professing the availability of resurrection power, we find ourselves repeatedly confessing the same sins. This, too, often diminishes our integrity, instead of motivating us to rely more completely on Him.

Worsening matters, our congregants assume we are close to God. If we are not, this makes it more difficult for us to be honest with them, or anyone else. Our shame is heightened by this complication. What would they think if they knew the truth?

As you can imagine, pastors wrestling with marital problems or struggling in their relationships with the Lord carry a great deal of shame. Despite God's design in the body of Christ for us to share our pain with one another, pastors prefer to keep it between them and God alone. It is less embarrassing this way, but it does not work.

My embarrasing spiritual struggles are teaching me to only trust the vitality of my relationship with the Father as far as I am willing to seek, find, and honestly engage the safe human help He graciously provides in the body of Christ. In short, if you are part of a ministry marriage in meltdown, you must seek professioinal help. If you are unwilling, I encourage you to question

the authenticity of your relationship with the Father who loves you.

Have you disclosed your addiction? If you are addicted, the addiction must stop. The sooner you disclose your habit before you are caught, the better. Addiction's preoccupation destroys emotional intimacy in marriage. Healing for your marriage requires your addressing your bondage. If you wonder whether you are hooked, online evaluations will enable you to objectively make an assessment.

Are you avoiding common pitfalls? All professional help is not equal. If we engage ineffective counseling, our marital meltdown will continue. Six pitfalls commonly defeat the helping process. Quality counselors will not allow pastors to engage in these practices.

First, we must not focus our attention on our spouse's faults. We can only change ourselves and must focus here.

Second, we must reject spousal accusations because they are only partially true. The slightest exaggeration of our flaws in a spousal accusation mobilizes our defenses against it, even if most of what our spouse says is true.

Third, we must not allow our shame to control our reactions. If we do, we will refuse the truth because we already feel so badly about ourselves.

Fourth, we must realize that childhood trauma intensifies present-day conflict.

Fifth, we must acknowledge that

our arrested development causes us to react by fleeing, fighting, and freezing emotionally.

Sixth, we must not approach relationships from a hierarchical perspective. This causes us to react on the fruitless level of I'm right and she's wrong; or husbands shouldn't have to do this and wives must do that. Instead of using this controlling destructive approach, we need to move beyond rigid roles and rules to a more godly and helpful relationship approach.

Throw away the *shoulds* and *oughts* and ask: How can I change, be more honest, more helpful? How can I give more grace? What can I do to solve the conflict? How is she experiencing me? What is the kernel of truth I'm missing? Who can help me see how I *hurt my spouse?* Shift your relationship paradigms to engage in this more productive approach.

Reflect on the scenario at the beginning of this article. Despite the wife's frustration, her instincts were correct. She knew they needed help. To switch paradigms, change from the inside out. Start practicing more graceful approaches with your spouse. To reignite a vibrant relationship with the Lord will require skilled outside help. You and your marriage are worth it.

We always can find reasons to hope. Whether your spouse wants help or wants you to reach for help, I urge you to do so today. Wives usually reach first, but men may surely take the lead.



DALE WOLERY, MRE., is founder and executive director of Clergy Recovery Network, a nondenominational resource for ministry professionals in crisis located in Joplin, Montana.

To listen to a ministry couple who has gone through a difficult ministry experience and how it strengthened their marriage, go to: http://www.enrichmentjournal.ag.org. Click on current issue, find this article, then click on the audio link.

To comment on this article go to Enrichment journal forum at http://forums.ag.org/enrichmentjournal.





Ministry and Marriage: By Gabriele Rienas

The statistics concerning ministry marriages are startling:

- 80 percent of pastors say they have insufficient time with their spouse and that ministry has a negative effect on their family.
- 33 percent say that being in ministry is an outright hazard to their family.
- 50 percent of pastors' marriages end in divorce.¹
- 80 percent of pastors' spouses wish their spouse would choose another profession.

Most ministers' wives surveyed said the most destructive event that has occurred in their marriage and family was the day they entered the ministry.² Especially startling is the input from pastors' wives. A high percentage wish their husbands would choose another profession. They believe that ministry is destructive to their marriage. These compelling concerns need attention.

Life in the ministry adds a particular set of challenges to a marriage relationship. Apparently, these are serious challenges. The obstacles, while not insurmountable, need careful attention because they can cause destruction.

On a mild January day four ministry wives met to compare notes on the topic of being married to a minister. Their goal was to talk about the specific challenges and benefits of this role. Tentative at first, they quickly warmed to one another and discovered their common experiences and shared lessons learned.

The group was well represented. Joyce (names have been changed) has been married for 37 years and has 2 grown



Pastors' Wives Tell All (almost)

children. She and her husband began as evangelists and moved on to pastoring. Recently, they left a long-term pastorate to accept a position at a new church.

Diane has been married 16 years and has 2 adolescent children. She and her husband pastor a large, prominent congregation. Previously, they held a number of associate roles spanning several years.

Abby is called to pastoral ministry along with her husband. They have worked together in youth ministry for their entire married life of 10 years. They have been in a multistaff, suburban church for 3 years. They have 2 children under the age of 5.

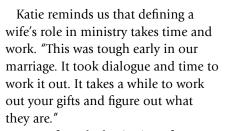
Katie and her husband have been at a large metropolitan church for 3 years. They have been married 7 years and have 3 preschool children. Her husband is an associate pastor. Before this they were youth pastors in another district.

What do four ministry wives have to say about being married to a minister? Let's listen in to this ministry-wives-tell-all meeting.

A Wife's Role

One of the biggest challenges for a pastor's wife is defining her role and purpose. At first, this seems personal and may appear to have nothing to do with her marriage. Yet, it has everything to do with her level of contentment in her life and marriage. "A pastor's wife needs to be who she is. She needs to be comfortable in her own skin. Her husband plays a significant role in affirming this," offers Joyce, who has enthusiastically supported her husband for many years.

A woman who knows who she is and who she is not, understands her God-given calling and purpose, and uses her gifts will be much more content in her relationship with her husband. The husband can either empower and bless his wife in her uniqueness or impose his own agenda. "Congregations like to know their pastor and his wife are a team and that they support one another," Joyce adds.



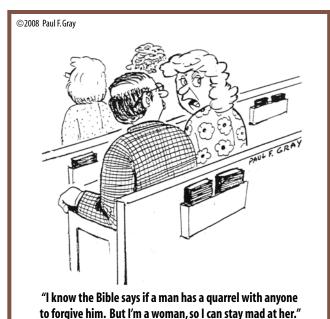
Most often, the beginning of a marriage and the beginning of ministry coincide. That means the ministry couple enters both new roles without any experience. Idealism gives way to real life and practical application. Couples need to work together on this.

Sometimes husbands can impose expectations on their wives out of sheer need, desperation, or unrealistic thinking. Communication and negotiation become important. Expressing and receiving input are necessary in any marriage, but they are especially important in the pastor's marriage because of the outside pressures of ministry.

Diane, who has a busy husband in a prominent, thriving, suburban church, uses a powerful analogy: "I see expectations in a marriage relationship as bank withdrawals and deposits. When I meet my husband's expectations or requests, I am making deposits into our relationship. When I set boundaries or decline a request, I am making a withdrawal. To have a healthy balance in the relationship account, I only make withdrawals when I feel strongly about something. If I make frequent deposits into the account, my husband sees me as supportive of him, and he is more likely to understand, even celebrate my wishes when withdrawals must be made."

Time Constraints

Finding time together as a couple is often a challenge. As previously stated, 80 percent of pastors say they have insufficient time with their spouse.³ Pastors' wives affirm this statistic and place this problem among the top five challenges of being a ministry wife. Lack of time with their husband is especially difficult when children are young because wives feel overwhelmed by the responsibility of caring for them and running



partnership with her husband for many years, shares, "We've been in the ministry a long time. You could say my husband is a workaholic pastor. Our generation just expected this. We learned to cope with it. Many days, my husband worked from 6 a.m. to 10 p.m." She, however,

the household.

Joyce, in ministry

chose to celebrate this as God's calling in his life, choosing to see her role as main household organizer and parent as significant and empowering to her husband.

"Even though I wouldn't want anything different, I did, however, throw in the guilt every once in a while," she admits.

While they had conflicts about it at various times, they look back on their years of ministry as rewarding now that they are in the empty-nest years. "I used to have the kids at church on Sunday by 6 a.m. We picked up donuts and let them play and watch video games while we prepared for the service. Recently my grown children reminisced about the good times they had on Sunday mornings, especially the donuts. I was both surprised and delighted to hear their take on it. I think it had something to do with their making it a positive experience rather than grumbling about it," Joyce recalls.

Abby, a youth pastor's wife with 2 preschool children, shares the emotional struggle she felt when her children were born. She had a specific call to ministry herself. Married for 6 years and partnering with her husband in every aspect of ministry, things changed drastically when their first child came. "As much as I loved my child, I felt jealous of the time my husband could continue to devote to ministry, when I was now preoccupied with caring for our child. I felt distant from the things I was so passionate about. At first, I struggled."

Time, perseverance, and marital communication helped. "Things are much better now. My husband values home and family time. This helps me feel connected to him. We talk about how I feel, and he tries to understand. The kids are older now and participate with us in ministry. They have a great time at youth events and church



"If I become a great sex partner with my husband, it goes a long way toward affair-proofing the relationship." — Diane

outings. I think it's enriching their lives," Abby supposes.

"Our church leadership emphasizes healthy families; therefore, they encourage the pastors to make their families a high priority," shares Katie, who is from a multistaff church. "The ministry wives at our church are viewed as valuable partners to their husbands. This brings a strong sense of team effort." This kind of encouragement from a church family is a powerful blessing in a young ministry couple's life.

Diane is pragmatic about the time issue. "We're new into it, and it's sink or swim. My husband is gone a lot. He traveled 20-some days last month. It's just the way it is right now. The good thing is that when he walks in the door, he completely shuts off the world and he is with us." She celebrates her husband's role at the church and admires the work he does.

A pastor-husband's demeanor toward his wife about his schedule can help immensely. Even if he is busy, if he communicates clearly that he loves his wife and values her as a crucial part of his life and ministry, it will help gain her support of his obligations. Often, a woman needs to know that her husband longs to spend time with her and seeks opportunity to do so. Defensiveness and conflict about his schedule will only escalate the problem. If the couple can mutually agree on the challenge and cooperate as a team, it will increase satisfaction on both sides.

"I'm thankful to the Lord for making me an independent girl," Diane adds. "Obviously, I depend on God, but I can deal with time alone. When my husband travels, I sometimes get lonely. At those times, I thank the Lord for texting. I also have a few good friends I can call."

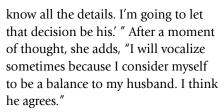
A woman who develops a sense of well-being and independence has a much easier time. Waiting for life to begin when her husband walks through the door leads a woman to frustration and victimization. If she develops personal passion and meaning in other activities, she will be more fulfilled and less resentful. If she adds good friends into the mix, she will benefit even more.

Advice Givers

Most, if not all, pastors' wives would say they want to support their husbands and seek to encourage them rather than tear them down in ministry. Some time ago some seasoned pastors' wives were talking about listening to their husbands preach week after week. They compared notes about what it was like to hear sermons from the same person week after week, year after year. Most stated they enjoyed listening to their husbands preach. A few others admitted they were painfully aware of times when their husbands seemed unprepared in their delivery. They also admitted they were sometimes tempted to correct their husband's grammar or his choice of words after the service. One wife sheepishly pulled a long, tattered list from her wallet. She kept this list week after week, meticulously recording mistakes her husband made so she could correct him after the service.

Most wives are not acutely aware of the day-to-day details of their husbands' work. Their awareness of his job performance is based primarily on what he tells them, rather than on first-hand experience. Pastors' wives, however, often observe their husbands at work. This familiarity brings with it the temptation to evaluate him and critique his actions.

"Over the years, I've learned that I can trust his choices," Joyce volunteers. "Of course, we've disagreed at times, and then it becomes a matter of prayer. At those times I say, 'He's the pastor of this church and I'm not. I don't see all the workings every day, and I don't



"I'm not a natural leader, but I am opinionated. At times, I pick apart ideas when my husband comes home," admits Abby. "I have to be careful about that."

Katie is honest about this struggle in the early days of their marriage. "When we were youth pastors, I found myself doing this more. I loved those kids, and I had my own ideas of what could work. I wasn't clear about what partnership looked like. I couldn't understand why he didn't use my ideas if they were good. I learned that he had a good plan, even if it wasn't my plan. I had to step back, respect him, and support his vision." She has learned quickly.

Perhaps couples that enter ministry and marriage together might have a slightly idealized view of what it will be like. This is especially true if the wife considers herself called to the same kind of ministry as her husband. Picturing harmonious unity, making decisions together, and working shoulder to shoulder in the kingdom of God seem desirable, even godly. However, the reality is that no two people think exactly alike or approach things in the same way all the time. Factor in personality differences, and potential for conflict increases.

Respect for your husband and his methods and approach takes precedence over being right and having things done our way. Diane admires her husband. "I have deep respect for the calls that my husband makes. I want to be like him." She went on to say that, because she rarely tries to sway him, her input carries that much more weight when something



"Over the years, I've learned that I can trust his choices." — Joyce

important comes up.

Good communication is the key. "I'm careful about how I phrase things. Dogmatic questioning wouldn't go over well," Diane offers candidly. "Usually, I'll phrase concerns in a question: 'Hey, what do you think about ... ?' I get his response and then come back with, 'Here's how I'm feeling about that.' It's like taking the medicine with a little sugar."

Diane shares a smart communication tool. "We discovered this little trick a few years ago and now we use it constantly. We rate things on a scale of 1 to 10. I'll say to him, "This is an 8 or 9.'

"He'll say, 'This is only a 4 to me.' This helps us know where it is on the scale.

"I use 8 to 10 rarely unless it's extremely important. If I do use it, he knows it is extremely important. I use 4 and 5 a great deal. If it's a 6, I know this is important to him. We discovered this scale by accident, and suddenly a light came on. It works for our communication."

Respect and Admiration

Recent books have emphasized a man's great need for respect and admiration from his wife. This

need is as great as a woman's need for her husband to love her. Men agree that this is true.

However confident and self-assured a pastor appears on the outside, vulnerability and basic insecurity can be present at the same time. Most men do not verbalize these feelings. Diane shared that her husband frequently says, "I just want you to be proud of me."

Wisely she adds, "When wives constantly correct their husbands, men think, You think I'm stupid, and you don't believe in me. The wives may be just trying to give feedback, but their husbands don't read it like that. He needs affirmation more than advice."

Being a pastor is a highly visible position, and the church is the family of God. Therefore, the pastor is open to much scrutiny and analysis. Every time he preaches, he makes himself vulnerable, giving people opportunity to examine or critique what he offers. Wives choose to either become their husband's ally or become another source of tension in his life. "When my husband walks through the door, I know immediately what kind of a day it's been," Katie offers. "He's strong. No one would ever think he's insecure. But he admits that deep inside he needs affirmation."

Marriage Security

Many of us have been affected by the revelations of moral failure in some visible ministry marriages. We also know that our husbands deal with troubled souls who often do not have healthy boundaries. Katie readily admits that the revelations of moral failure in public ministry personalities scare her. When she hears of such a case, she wonders how couples can safeguard their marriages.

Prevention and marriage maintenance before a problem arises is key. If the marriage relationship is solid before a temptation comes, the couple will be much more likely to overcome it. Fighting for the success of their marriage seems to be common in long-term ministry marriages. An attitude of *we're in this for life* leads to perseverance and prevention.

Diane shares that she and her husband have discussed this. "We're in this for life. Whatever difficulties arise in our relationship, I want a fast recovery. I will do everything in my power to work it out between us and move on from there." This kind of commitment perseveres through the hard time and brings the relationship security.

On a practical level, Diane adds, "If I become a great sex partner with my husband, it goes a long way toward affair-proofing the relationship. Sexual unity with his wife is huge for a man. On a scale of 1 to 10, it's a 12." A wife has a great deal of power in this area to either build up or tear down her husband.

In addition, proper boundaries and safeguards are necessary for anyone working with people. This includes accountability and hedges that prevent even the appearance of improper conduct.

It is best for a ministry couple to predetermine boundaries and agree

on them. Under what circumstances, if any, would the pastor be alone with another woman? What would be the safeguards? What about office meetings? When would these take place and under what conditions? Who holds him accountable? Who will raise these questions and address them?

The wife's visibility to the congregation also plays a role in protecting the marriage and has multiple other benefits as well. While roles, responsibilities, and even the degree of involvement may vary greatly, pastors' wives need to be present in church life. A husband who celebrates his wife's unique presence invests in his marriage. He also contributes to the confidence she has in herself and in her unique calling, whatever that may be.

Getting Help

What do ministry couples need to do when difficulties arise that seem insurmountable? What if attempts at communication fail and unresolved issues cause wounds and weariness in their relationship? The fact is that ministry marriages are not immune to divorce. When this happens, the destruction is great and farreaching. In the past, seeking outside help seemed an unpopular and remote possibility.

Thankfully, counseling and marital help have become increasingly acceptable. Katie confirms this. "The first year of our marriage was hard. My husband went to the senior pastor and asked for help. There was no shame in his response to my husband. He recommended outside counseling." Freed to pursue it wholeheartedly, they were greatly helped by what they learned.

"If you go to a medical doctor for physical health, why wouldn't you

go to a marriage counselor if your marriage is in trouble?" Diane adds. "If we were perfect, how would we relate to our people? People are talking more about what's really going on. We live in an Oprah society. People talk about everything. Everything is in the open. The benefit is that we can be freer to ask for help when we need it."

Spiritual Unity

Even though there are definite benefits to greater openness and honest dialogue, there are also drawbacks. The danger is that we will become so cognitive in our approach to problems that we will factor out the spiritual component of a strong marriage relationship. The adage is old but true: The family who prays together stays together.

The cry of many women is for their husbands to take more spiritual leadership in the home. Pastors' wives have the privilege of observing their husbands exercise spiritual leadership in a church. Whether this extends into the home depends on the couple.

It seems logical that a man who passionately exhorts and prays publicly would do so in the privacy of his home. In an atmosphere of total honesty, however, many ministry couples admit they do not pray or exercise a devotional life together. One survey reported that 95 percent of pastors do not regularly pray with their spouses.⁴ This is a mysterious fact. Perhaps public spirituality is safer than private, intimate spiritual expression. One's spirituality is most vulnerable in a setting where your spouse intimately knows you. Whatever the reason, ministry couples need to strive to make prayer a normal, comfortable part of their relationship.

Unexpected Benefits

While being married and in the ministry presents its challenges, it also has its benefits. When asked to share what she loves about her marriage, Joyce says, "I have a husband who is passionate about God. He is a man of God. He runs his household according to the Word."

"I am blown away by the things we have seen God do in our church and family," offers Katie. "We have seen Him provide. We have seen miracles, and we have been blessed. We have raised our children in a home where they have witnessed miracles time after time." Enjoying these blessings together brings a special bond into a family.

Abby points out that a pastor's wife benefits from the flexibility her husband's schedule brings. "Even though he may be busy at times, he can also help me do things in the middle of the day if the need arises. I love this flexibility."

She also points out the benefit of a loving church family. "No matter what, you are special because you're the pastor's family. Most of them love you and are understanding. They love to love on you." This kind of congregational support is reminiscent of the kind of support young couples used to receive from extended family before our society became mobile. It enriches a relationship and provides perspective, counteracting the stress of isolation with which many couples struggle.

A list of the benefits a ministry wife enjoys is not complete without



"When my husband walks through the door, I know immediately what kind of a day it's been." — Katie

mentioning the many prayers people offer on behalf of their marriage. The pastor's wife appreciates the encouragement and comfort that comes from the assurance that saints are daily praying for her, her marriage, and her family. They are on multiple prayer lists from the day they accept the call to a church.

Most people know about ministry marriages that have fallen apart. Whenever we hear of such a tragedy, we grieve. We become more aware of how fragile our lives can be. It reminds us of our humanity and our vulnerabilities.

I admire ministry couples who are pursuing a passionate, unified, healthy relationship. The recurring theme that emerges with pastors' wives in such marriages is keeping a positive, solution-oriented outlook toward the challenges of the ministry marriage. Maybe attitude is everything.

Joseph Barth said, "Marriage is our last, best chance to grow up." Even though each person is different in personality, strengths, and passions, a determination to make a relationship work by adapting and pursuing personal growth seems to be the key. A pastor's wife who is honest about her challenges, but adapts her expectations pragmatically, can pursue solutions and enjoy success and fulfillment in her marriage relationship.

We are not alone in our journey. If we could describe marriage as a stool with three legs, the help of the Holy Spirit is the third leg in the relationship. We do what we can, and depend on His help. Diane sums it up. "I am

not a victim. I choose to take an active role in my life." This approach to life and marriage in the ministry makes a difference. @



GABRIELE RIENAS, M.A., has been a pastor's wife for 27 years and a professional counselor. She lives in Beaverton, Oregon. She speaks at

retreats, conferences, and events worldwide. Contact her at 503-705-9230.

To hear audio interviews with these pastor's wives, go to: http://www.enrichmentjournal.ag.org. Click on current issue, find this article, click on audio files.

To comment on this article go to *Enrichment* journal forum at http://forums.ag.org/enrichmentjournal.

NOTES

- 1.H.B. London and Neil Wiseman, *Pastors at Greater Risk* (Ventura, Calif.: Regal Books, 2003).
- 2. Statistics compiled from organizations such as Barna, Maranatha Life, and Focus on the Family.
- 3. London and Wiseman, Pastors at Greater Risk.
- According to Shiloh Place Ministries (http://www. shilohplace.org), which drew its information from Focus on the Family, *Ministries Today, Charisma* magazine, TNT Ministries, and other respected groups.

When People Throw Stones

Protecting Your Marriage and Family

By Don and Jodi Detrick



Sunday, December 9, 2007, dawned cold and crisp, like most December mornings in Colorado. But unlike most December Sundays, shots rang out as a gunman aimed at worshipers leaving the morning service at New Life Church in Colorado Springs. Frightened parishioners, gripped with terror, suddenly turned from lunch plans and fellowship to survival tactics and barricades. As the drama ensued, the gunman took two young lives and wounded three others. A female security guard bravely intervened to end the massacre by wounding the shooter, who then took his own life.



Earlier in the day, the same gunman unleashed a torrent of bullets in a dormitory at Faith Bible Chapel in nearby Arvada, killing two Youth With a Mission students and wounding two others. What had motivated Matthew Murray to such violence?

Murray's parents had home schooled him and raised him in a Christian atmosphere. A few years earlier, nevertheless, Youth With a Mission had dismissed 24-year-old Murray. Embittered, he had recently sent hate mail to the Arvada campus. For Murray, the wounds ran deep. His perceived offenses and unresolved pain turned to resentment, bitterness, hatred, rage, and ultimately the revenge he unbridled against innocent victims on that cold December Sunday.

In the wake of the New Life shootings, many churches are taking another look at security and evaluating their plans and procedures regarding the health and safety of their parishioners. We call this *risk management*. Perceptive churches have been doing this for years. Armed guards may seem an extreme measure, but how does one determine the importance of security, particularly when children are in the *sanctuary* a place that is considered safe from harm and intruders?

Fortunately, tragic events such as the New Life shootings tend to be an anomaly, rather than a regular Sunday occurrence. Most people do not fire bullets in church. But many do throw stones — but not the kind that might shatter stained glass windows. Instead, the stones they throw shatter emotions, hearts, dreams, and hopeful perspectives. These stones can hurt. Ask any pastor who is nursing wounds he received from the verbal ambush of an unhappy parishioner or board member.

My wife and I have been there, too.

After pastoring for nearly 30 years in small, medium, and large churches — while raising three children — we have had experience and education in triage while staffing our own first aid stations. Since serving as a district official for the past few years, I frequently help pastors and their families express angst and maintain their balance while recovering in the ministry and running on adrenaline, pastors can easily ignore the impact of negative circumstances on their spouses and children — but they will live to regret it.

Our own naiveté early in our ministry made us feel exempt from the damage we had seen in other ministry families. We reasoned, *If we love Jesus and everyone in our church loves Jesus*,

My wife and I believe in the importance of risk management to protect our marriage and children from those who would intentionally or even inadvertently cause them emotional harm.

from *stonings* at the hands of those they serve.

My wife and I believe in the importance of risk management to protect our marriage and children from those who would intentionally or even inadvertently cause them emotional harm. How many adult children of pastors loathe the church and are far from God because no one protected their dignity and shielded them from assaults in church while they were growing up? How many ministerial marriages that seemed made in heaven ended because conflicts in the church disrupted and eventually destroyed family life? While you cannot hire security guards or build a fence to protect your marriage and family, consider these suggestions.

Recognize the Dangers

"If I'd only known."

I cannot tell you how many times I have heard those words spoken regretfully by pastors who failed to recognize the negative influence church turmoil was having on their marriages and families. Enmeshed *surely we can all get along.* That foggy reasoning quickly evaporated in the light of reality.

Years ago, as a 22-year-old rookie pastor, I made an innocuous comment while teaching an adult Sunday School class. Referring to a steady diet of manna, I mentioned that I could relate to the Children of Israel since I preferred more variety in my regimen than a daily ration of beans. I was not prepared for the explosion I was about to experience from one of the older men in the class.

"Why, you don't know what it means to suffer. You didn't have to live through the depression. And if you had spent weeks in a foxhole like I did during World War II, you would have been happy to have some warm beans to eat." His tone was vicious. The longer he spoke the louder he raged. Humiliated, his wife finally calmed him down.

Although stunned by his outburst, I also learned a few things that day. First, even a simple Bible lesson can be fraught with danger when people misread or misrepresent your comments and intentions. Second,



even though you may not have much history with a person, you may represent someone or something from his past that triggers a negative reaction.

These people are not just responding to you; they are throwing stones as a response to baggage they have carried for a long time. Finally, we learned to watch what we said around him and guarded our children when in his presence — always wary of another eruption from that volcano.

Place Boundaries Between Home and Church

We lived in a parsonage next to the church. While some may enjoy this arrangement, we found it challenging because there was no clear separation between home and church. Church members might stroll by at any time. Privacy was difficult to preserve. While being gracious and hospitable, we intentionally informed our parishioners that we viewed our home as personal space and wanted our children to feel secure there.

Because I (Jodi) was heavily involved in ministry as an unpaid staff member, and our children were young, I felt the tension between being a minister and a mother. Occasionally, someone would let me know I was not meeting her needs or expectations. That would sting. I appreciated my husband making public affirmations of me and our decision for me to be primarily a stay-at-home mom. He encouraged people to respect the fact I was not available 24/7 as the church counselor, Women's Ministries leader, Bible study teacher, choir director, and pianist (even though I was active in all those roles). If we had it to do over again, we would probably erect even clearer boundaries with a better realization of our own limitations.

Too many ministry spouses feel the pain of comparison with their predecessor or with someone's imagined ideal of whom they should be. Don and I have made an intentional effort to regularly be each other's best cheerleaders — both privately (even in e-mail exchanges) and publicly. Sometimes a wellplaced, *Way to go! You're amazing!* written or spoken by your best friend goes a long way in strengthening the heart against stone-induced damage.

We also made a conscious decision not to force our children into ministry roles they did not feel called to or could not embrace enthusiastically. Over the years, they developed their own gifts and passions, often different from our own.

For the most part, our congregations were gracious and allowed our children to explore their individuality beyond the context of being the preacher's kids. Do your children feel the freedom to be themselves and express their own individuality and style without facing criticism from people in the congregation?

Guard Your Children

Even if you live far from the church, it is too easy to blur the boundaries and bring home church problems. This creates an unhealthy environment for children. If you are not careful, your children can begin to associate church with negative feelings.

While the church may be the place Mom or Dad works, it needs to also be a place where children feel secure and valued. If parents come home from

Pause for Perspective

Before picking up that stone and throwing it back, take a few moments to think instead of allowing your emotions to take over. We tend to judge other people by their actions, but we judge ourselves by our own motives. We know our own motives and intentions are usually good. The fundamental error is assuming that another person's motives are bad, based on their actions. Is it possible that the person who threw the stone was just offering a suggestion? Would you be wiser to consider it for a while before responding? Might there be good reasons to wait before sharing this with your spouse or children?

In 2 Samuel 16:5–13, Shimei had some choice words for David, yet David chose not to retaliate. Instead, David seemed open to the possibility that God might be speaking to him through this unlikely subject.

The desire to have the last word gets many of us into trouble. What if we respond in silence, or simply say, "You've given me something to think about. Let's get together next week and talk about it." During that time, reflect on the following:

- Is God using my pain to show me my blind spots that need attention?
- Should I share this with my spouse and family? Why or why not? How might this affect them emotionally?
- Does God want me to reframe my perspective and turn this critic into a coach?



DON DETRICK, North Bend, Washington



church nursing their wounds, children may begin to feel anxiety about church and view it as a place of pain rather than a place of peace and enjoyment.

No matter how you feel about firearms, it is tragic to hear about children who died after playing with a loaded weapon in their own home. If pastors and their wives are not careful, their own unresolved anger or bitterness toward those who have wounded them can be like a loaded weapon that is left unguarded.

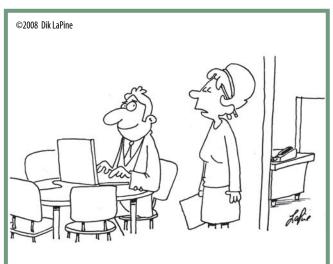
Though pastors never intend their children to pick up their angst and negativity, if children find it at home, you can be sure they will be curious and start playing with it themselves. The results can be tragic. Do a check to ensure you have safely unloaded the bullets of bitterness, cynicism, or pessimism from your attitudes so your children do not pick them up at home and injure themselves.

Having unrealistic expectations that our children will be perfect examples (in behavior, athletics, talent, godliness, scholastic achievement) for the other children in the church can also be dangerous. Once a year, I (Don) did a Parson to Person Chat on a Sunday evening with our congregation. I communicated that our children were just like theirs, and were under no obligation to try to meet everyone's expectations of the perfect PK. Even with our best understand the joys and challenges of being PKs. Many districts have PK retreats or camps designed to offer specialized encouragement and connection with peers. Take advantage of these opportunities. Remember, you can listen and provide a safe place when your child needs to vent

A strong marriage relationship is the best defense against outside influences and stone throwers.

intentions and a loving congregation, at times our children still felt compelled to live up to a certain standard that their peers did not need to.

Today, we encourage parents to create an atmosphere of grace and mercy in their home. Pastors need biblical standards of behavior, but they also need to allow their children to be who they are. Be proud of them, spend time with them, and never stop trying to build bridges of communication to their hearts. Parental love and acceptance provide the best



"Pastor, I'm not an expert in the field of pastoral ministry, nor do I pretend to know anything about the ministry. But I'm pretty sure adding pictures to your Facebook page doesn't count as adding members to your church."

bulletproof vest for a child. Communicate with your congregation that if they want to do something for you as a pastor, they can love your children and affirm them whenever possible.

Your children also need friends that share the same circumstances in life. They need connection with peers who or voice struggles associated with life in a ministry family. Do not take it as a personal attack or the last word on how they will feel. They may just need to put words to what is bugging them. Knowing that you will listen will be a great help.

Avoid Extremes

A normal family life cannot flourish in an environment where crisis is common. People will throw stones. Conflict is a normal part of life.

In a healthy church environment, people can manage conflict. Many articles and books are available to help you learn to manage conflict.

Do not view every disagreement as a major crisis or battle. Good people can disagree, and do so agreeably. Not every person with a different perspective or who questions a decision is an enemy or a tool of the devil. Not every mountain is worth dying on, so choose your battles wisely. As a pastor/parent, resist the urge to enlist your spouse and children in formulating battle plans.

Pray

Prayer is our best line of defense when we become targets. When people stir our emotions and hurt our feelings, the discipline of prayer requires us to pause and reflect before engaging in



words or actions that might further exacerbate the problem. There is a time to act — to defend, deliberate, or discuss — but prayer needs to be our initial response when a stone wounds our heart and bruises our spirit.

Jesus told us, "Love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you" (Matthew 5:44). Paul reflected, "When we are cursed, we bless; when we are persecuted, we endure it; when we are slandered, we answer kindly" (1 Corinthians 4:12,13). It is nearly impossible to respond this way unless you have first prayed and received the Holy Spirit's enablement to respond correctly.

Many times we were heavy-hearted and joined hands as a couple or with one of our children to pray over a hurtful situation. Our kids need to know that we run to Jesus first when people wound us. They also need to hear us praying, not only for the people who have wronged us (if they are aware of the situation), but also for insight and forgiveness for our part in conflicts. As imperfect people, we need to admit that stones sometimes fly from our fingers, too.

Cultivate Friendships

Too many of God's servants choose to suffer alone. Either their circumstances embarrass them, or they hope it will blow over in time. Others suffer in isolation because they lack a trusted friend and confidant.

In 2005, we drafted a survey for ministers and spouses in the Northwest Ministry Network regarding challenges they faced in ministry. One question was: How many times in the past year have you experienced *critical* challenges in your ministry?

Thirty-seven percent of the respondents to that question circled "2 or more," while nearly 11 percent reported "4 or more" critical challenges in the past year. Only 23 percent reported "none." We asked a follow-up question: Where do you most often turn for help when you are experiencing major challenges in your ministry? While the top answer (46.5 percent) was "a friend or colleague in ministry," more than 17 percent of respondents indicated "they just try to plow through on their own."

Solo suffering is like trying to scratch your own back. You may know exactly where the problem lies, but are at a loss as to how to reach it on your own. We often lack the objectivity and dexterity necessary to diagnose and treat ourselves. Our emotions may blind or obscure details that offer potential solutions — details that a friend's fresh eyes may readily spot.

Over the years we have discovered that people who crawl off into the bushes to hide and nurse their wounds often die there. There is a time for solitude. Personal reflection is impossible without it. But there is no substitute for a trusted, faithful, uncritical friend to help you unpack your pain and mine the depths of your emotions until the precious gems of character come polished to the surface. George Eliot wrote, "Oh, the comfort, the inexpressible comfort of feeling safe with a person, having neither to weigh thoughts nor measure words, but pouring them all out, just as they are, chaff and grain together, certain that a faithful hand will take and sift them, keep what is worth keeping, and with a breath of kindness blow the rest away."

The *breath of kindness* is a refreshing and rare breeze with medicinal powers, particularly when it follows an extended session of listening. Both as a couple and as individuals, we would not have survived in ministry had it not been for encouraging friends who listened to our battle stories as they walked with us through the halls of suffering.

We must have friends we can go to during a time of crisis. Unless we cultivate friendships during seasons of fruitful activity, we will not reap

Reflections From a PK

One of the most essential things my parents did while raising their children was to never talk about others negatively in our home. If I ever heard those painful accounts, it was because of my gift of eavesdropping, not their airing of salacious stories. They shielded us from many bullets and potential hang-ups.

I know several people who carry deep wounds because their ministry parents did not filter what they said around their children. They often spoke angrily and openly about confidential church situations, making a volatile environment in the home.

As a family, we prayed together about situations, instead of having detailed discourses about things that did not directly affect all of us. Nevertheless, the three of us children were not completely out of the loop about what was going on in our parents' lives. We were perceptive enough to sense tensions, but I am extremely grateful that I have remarkably few scars. My home environment greatly motivated and inspired me to choose a lifestyle of ministry involvement.



JANA DETRICK, North Bend, Washington



the benefits of friendship during seasons of lonely adversity.

Too many pastoral couples have confided in us that they do not have close friends. Our advice is always the same: find a friend, talk to someone, invite another couple to lunch, be a friend — do something.

Don't assume that everyone is too busy, no one cares, or pastors of other churches (especially large ones) are problem free. Years ago while pastoring a smaller congregation, we regularly met with another pastoral couple in similar circumstances on our day off. Because we lived an equal distance from a larger city, we usually met there and spent the day having fun and processing whatever situations and feelings we were experiencing at the time.

On one particular day, the husband and I (Don) did some guy activities while our wives went shopping. While driving past one of our larger denominational churches I asked, "Have you ever been in that building?" Because neither of us had, we decided to stop. After introducing ourselves to the receptionist, she indicated that the pastor would probably enjoy showing us around. We protested that we were just smallchurch pastors from the area and knew that he was a busy man, but she seemed insistent.

For the next hour the pastor gave us a tour of the facilities and shared his vision for ministry. We learned he had some stone throwers in his congregation as well. Before leaving, we prayed together. Our presumption that he was a busy person and would not be interested in a couple of smalltown pastors could not have been less accurate. His parting words provided a lesson I have never forgotten: "I have pastored here for a number of years. This is the first time another minister has stopped by to see me. Thank you guys so much."

Above All, Guard the Sanctity of Your Marriage

A strong marriage relationship is the best defense against outside influences and stone throwers. Determine what kind of shields will best protect your marriage relationship and the emotional/ spiritual health of your spouse. Some couples do not discuss certain church-related items at home. Some pastors choose to shield their spouse from negative church circumstances or conflicts they are facing. Other couples (we are among these) believe the marriage relationship provides a safe, confidential sounding board to debrief, get perspective, and pray together about stone-throwing people or rocky church situations. (Even when this is the chosen pattern, some confidential issues must remain undisclosed, even to a spouse.)

Whatever your strategy, be careful that all your couple time is not consumed by counting and examining your pile of stones. If you are not careful, it will be easy to pick up the stones that bruised you during the past week and, in frustration, sling them at the one closest to you - usually your partner. Having fun together, believing in each other, creating time and space for romance in your marriage are some of the best ways to absorb the impact and lessen the sting of a hurtful attack from the outside. If we are secure in our primary relationships — with the Lord and with our marriage and family — we will be able to withstand many challenges.

Forgiveness and reconciliation provide the greatest healing from thrown stones. Shortly after the New Life shootings last year, Senior Pastor Brady Boyd quietly organized an emotional meeting with Murray's parents and the parents of the two teenage girls he had killed. Murray had also shot the father of the girls. The father, along with his wife with tears — offered forgiveness to Murray's parents. As a result, reconciliation began. "As Christians, we can talk philosophically about forgiveness and redemption, but I saw it modeled in a way I've never seen it this week," said Pastor Boyd.

Until we get to heaven, where the only stones will be brilliant jewels that make up the walls and gates, occasionally those who hurl insults, accusations, and criticisms will hurt us. Those dents and dings in our armor of faith probably mean we are doing something right. If we pray, develop and rely on safe friendships, and ensure our homes and marriages are healthy, joy- and grace-filled stone-free zones, we will be able to deflect and disarm the weapons others form against us. @



DON DETRICK, D.MIN., has served as secretary/treasurer for the Northwest Ministry Network since 2004. He also serves as a general presbyter

for the Assemblies of God. Don and Jodi live in North Bend, Washington.



JODI DETRICK has served as Women's Ministries director for the Northwest Ministry Network since 2001. She is also a life coach and

frequent conference speaker. She serves on many boards and committees, including the Ministerial Enrichment advisory committee and the General Council Women in Ministry Task Force.

To comment on this article go to *Enrichment* journal forum at http://forums.ag.org/enrichmentjournal.

"I love the ministry more than I can say," Scott, a pastor at a leadership training retreat, told me. "But the fear of what being in the ministry might do to my kids keeps me from enjoying what I love."

•

"What do you mean?" I asked. "First, I was a PK. I remember hating a lot about that. I felt as though I represented my dad, and his entire ministry rested on my shoulders if I ever did anything wrong. I don't think I do that to my kids, but I worry they might feel that way. Beyond that, I worry about not having enough time. I feel torn between ministry and family. When one side has what it needs, it seems the other does not. That is the hardest part for me."

Raising Happy and Healthy Children

By Henry Cloud





"We had a good talk, and my heart went out to him. Even though he was concerned, I was not worried. Having worked with ministry leaders for more than 20 years, I am familiar with these kinds of problems. He was not in danger. He was highly relational. The fact he was concerned puts him in a different camp than most of those who harm their children. His worries, however, are valid. It is good for people in ministry to be vigilant concerning how their children are developing. That raises a question:

What is Worth Worrying About?

In my experience, that is the right question. When people answer this question correctly, their children usually do well. If they miss it, they can be heading for trouble without even knowing it.

Parents sometimes think because they have good parenting skills there is no danger. But there is. Ministry parents often don't see this danger because they focus primarily on the spiritual life — hearing the message, learning the belief system, and exhibiting right behavior. While those are important, they must happen in the right kinds of relationships that help a child develop character.

Remember, your relationship with your child is the means for developing his character and belief system. Your child is developing into a person through his relationship with you. with our children, and on the character structure these interactions are building. This focus will help provide the basic *hardwiring* in your child the healthy soil where you can help cultivate values, beliefs, and behavior.

In raising children, it is easy to get the cart before the horse. For example,

We can fall into the problem of trying to control our children to ensure things go well, instead of raising children who have *self-control*.

How you love, discipline, deal with failure, and equip him provide the ingredients that shape him into who he will be. These *daily experiences* are the fabric of character development.

The word translated *character* in the New Testament means *experience*. What experiences are we providing our children in every interaction? They are *taking them in* and it is shaping who they are. The internal voices they follow will be the ones they hear from you.

When we think this way, we begin to focus on the nature of the interactions

we might think *finishing homework* or *staying away from bad behavior* are key issues — a deal-with-the-problemof-the-day approach. These issues are important, and become a context for what we do. But sometimes we do not focus on what *produces* a child who *finishes his homework* and *stays away from destructive behavior*. We can fall into the problem of trying to control our children to ensure things go well, instead of raising children who have *self-control*. This is one the highest biblical virtues. We need to remember that while behavior is important, *character produces behavior*. Our focus needs to be on character-producing things. Here are some to keep in mind.

Love: Becoming Connected

The first and foremost goal in making sure your child is healthy is to help him become a *connecting* person. The Bible tells us repeatedly that abiding in love with God and others is the most important issue. Many times I have counseled with troubled ministry families, looking at how the parents and children have failed to connect. Troubled behavior was the key to connecting with a child's heart, so empathize, understand, and encourage your child to speak. Reflect back to your child that you hear him. When he is talking, make sure he feels as though he is the only person in the world.

- Find times and activities that lend themselves to connecting. Take walks together, go fishing or rollerblading. Play a board game or cards. Participate in activities that require you to focus on each other and create good interaction.
- Keep a personal log to track your

The more you connect with your children, the more they will develop a character that equips them to connect with others.

result. When we consider the sources of problems with children, we need to first ask: "Where and how is the connection becoming lost?"

Research shows, for example, that having family dinners multiple times a week produces many good benefits. Children whose families eat dinner together are less likely to have drug or tobacco use, promiscuous friends, depression and suicide, and eating disorders. Also, they earn better grades and report overall better mental health. This results from one measure of connection — a family dinner.

This does not mean, however, that every family dinner or other family time makes for great connection. But it suggests that those who connect well do better than those who do not. What ingredients build bonding with your child? Consider these thoughts:

• Connection comes from *safety*. Listening and making an emotional connection earns you the right to teach and correct your child. A parent needs to focus on what his child is saying and listen actively to him. Empathy is the *abiding time.* I am astounded when I audit the time I spend with my children. I think I spend time with them because we are together a great deal. But when I look at how much of that time was in the hustle and bustle of going here or there, or in doing activities that did not lend themselves to real emotional

connection, it amazes me. I realize that we might have been together many hours on a weekend, but I still needed to have some focused time. I will take one child on a walk so we can enjoy time together. Audit your connecting moments and make sure you have enough every day.

• Do not allow your child to isolate his feelings. Make him tell you what is wrong. When a child unplugs because something is bothering him, do not let not communicating be an option. Encourage your child to talk. But remember, he will not talk if he does not receive empathy and understanding from you, or if he receives a lecture or correction before he tells his story. Once it is out, and your child knows you have heard and understand him, you have opportunity to give input and guidance. Your child needs your input, but he will not hear it until he knows you have heard him.

The more you connect with your children, the more they will develop a character that equips them to connect with others. This will serve them well for life. They will be healthier, less prone to emotional and relational problems, more compassionate, and choose better people to love. It is the foundation of God's love, the ability to create *chashaq*, (*khaw-shak*), a loyal, abiding love. God desires it more than



sacrifice (Hosea 6:6), and they will need it for the rest of their lives.

Discipline: Establishing Boundaries

Boundaries concern one main issue: self-control. Probably 99 percent of ministry parents I have met believe discipline and setting boundaries for their children are important. But many are *not doing it even when they* you are the issue: *If I did not have this mean mom or dad, everything would be okay.* But, if you stay out of the way and let discipline be between the child, his behavior, and the consequence, he learns he and only he is in control of his quality of life. This is an important spiritual lesson that God gives us every day: Choose life and you will live, choose death and

To equip your child to lose well, fail well, and to keep on going is a great gift.

think they are. Many parents think they are disciplining their children when, in fact, they are teaching them to be out of control. Usually parents do this through nagging, or repeatedly telling a child to "stop," or "don't do that." They may become angry or upset and give emotional consequences such as guilt for the child's behavior. Each of those responses, even though they seem to correct behavior, only serves to make it worse.

What works are freedom, choices, and consequences. Give your child the expectation or the rule, allow him to make a choice, and then give appropriate consequences. Do not join a power struggle or become caught up in emotional noise. Do two things: enforce the consequence and empathize. "Oh, Johnny, that is sad. I asked you to not do that, and you did. Now you will need to go to time out for a while. Bummer." When Johnny becomes upset, empathize: "I know, it's tough. I feel for you. But maybe being in time out will help you remember the next time I ask you to not do that. Now go."

The main thing about discipline is to make sure you do not become the problem for the child. His behavior is the problem, not you. If you become upset and escalate, then he will think you will die (Romans 8:13). He gives us the freedom to make that choice.

This approach helps prevent the power struggles ministry parents can have with their children. These struggles foster rebellion against the faith or the church. The more you are not the issue — and the more you allow your child, his behavior, and the consequences to be the issue — the less chance your child will rebelliously act out against the *over control* sometimes confused with God. Do not control. Give freedom, choices, and consequences. Be clear, firm, kind, and consistent.

Forgiveness: Foster Acceptance of Being Less-Than-Perfect

Healthy children develop the ability to live in the tension caused by the coexistence of *good and bad*. They can have ideals and at the same time be comfortable with their imperfections and failures. They try to be the best they can, but when they fail, they need to know there is grace and forgiveness. They can still accept themselves for who they are. They know it is okay to be imperfect. They do not hate themselves or beat themselves up when they make a mistake.

To learn self-forgiveness, they need to internalize it from you. In raising your children, look at your own

comfort level concerning imperfection. To the degree we are perfectionists, black and white, or narcissistic people who are only satisfied when we, or our children, are ideal, our children will become as we are — or break under the pressure. We need to have a biblical self-image. This includes both realities: God created us in His image, and we are fallen sinners who sometimes make mistakes. If parents have learned to accept God's forgiveness and live in a state of no condemnation, when they fail, they are more likely to pass on that freedom to their children.

The following principles will help your child develop an appreciation and striving for God's ideals, and an ability to work through failure:

- Tone, tone, tone. The biggest problem is not that you correct your children when they fail. They need correction. The biggest problem is *how*. If your tone is kind, loving, and firm, you can tell the truth as much as you want. But if it is angry, guilt inducing, heavy-handed, spiritualizing, or shaming, they will have problems. Watch not only what you say, but also how you say it. Calm down and speak with a loving tone, even when telling them they have done something wrong.
- Develop a family culture that admits failure, mistakes, or sins. I have a point system for my children who are ages 6 and 8. When someone does something wrong, if he admits what he did wrong, he earns a point. If he blames someone else, he loses a point. When a child earns 10 points, he receives a reward. I reward my children for ownership and confession. The way out of failure is to become comfortable with being honest and confessing what is wrong, and then solving the problem. We teach our children this

when we show them it is *normal* to fail. Confession and doing better becomes a normal way of life.

- Model confession yourself, and model accepting yourself when you make a mistake. "I did that wrong. That was my mistake. Will you forgive me?" Those messages give your child a good model so he can become as you are and self-correct in the same way — with honesty and kindness to himself.
- Have what-went-well-today and whatwas-not-so-good discussions. This helps your child understand that he and life are neither *good nor bad*, but every day is a combination of both. Your child will learn to be comfortable with his strengths and weaknesses.
- Help your child become comfortable discussing his negative feelings and resolving them. Do not let his anger, sadness, failures, or hurt go unexpressed. At the same time, require *proper* expression of those feelings.
- Laugh when you make a mistake. Develop a culture of *practice makes perfect*. Make learning fun. If your child reacts to failure harshly or tries to pout or pull away, make him come back, participate, and stop the drama. Make your child face it with you.
- When your child has done something wrong, go through a drill. Ask: "Before you leave time out, tell me what you did wrong. Why are you in time out?" Make sure he can say it, be clear about owning his behavior, and then ask for an apology. When he has apologized to everyone necessary, make sure he knows everyone forgives him.

To equip your child to *lose well, fail well,* and to *keep on going* is a great gift. Do that by combining *grace and truth,* as God does with us. Give your child love and acceptance, and at the same time, honesty about what needs improvement. This way, he will become comfortable in his own identity and not need to be perfect or ideal. If you do this, you prevent many emotional and behavioral problems, and help your child learn how to be successful.

Ten Commandments of Advice for Ministry Parents

Research suggests that growing up in a ministry home has risks and rewards. The rewards include well-developed social skills, opportunities for interaction with spiritual leaders, and resiliency. On the other hand, it is well-documented that ministers' children are under a microscope and often held to higher standards than other children. Based on God's commands to Moses, here are some guidelines for the pastor in the role of parent:

- You shall not make your ministry a higher priority than God and your family. Instead, you shall remember that your first call is to be a minister to your family as a spouse and a parent.
- You shall not make idols for yourself. Remember to *use* things and *love* people, not the other way around. Model for your children a healthy perspective on material things as well as place a higher value on relationships.
- You shall not misuse the name of the Lord your God. Instead, you shall model for your children a healthy submission to God's authority and submission to other constituted authorities. Children need to learn that all are under authority. This structure is God's provision for our guidance and safety.
- You shall keep a day of the week as your day off. This *sabbath* is a day to rest, refresh, renew, and recreate. Model for your children that the world (and ministry) goes on without you and that a sabbath is a gift of God.
- You shall honor your own parents. This models for your children a healthy intergenerational perspective of care and sacrificial living.
 You shall not murder. In practical ways you shall model for your children how to bless those who curse you, do good to those who despitefully use you and speak well of those who speak ill of you. Furthermore, you shall model a forgiving spirit.
- You shall not commit adultery. You shall model for your children that you are still madly in love with your spouse. This includes loving eye contact and gestures, affirming words, thoughtfulness, and couple time together away from the children.
- You shall not steal. You shall model for your children a spirit of generosity, giving, and serving.
- You shall not give false testimony against your neighbor. You shall model the value of building trusting relationships and nurturing several close friendships.
- You shall not covet. You shall model a lifestyle that is devoid of complaint and one that exemplifies contentment with God's provision.

DONALD A. LICHI, PH.D., Akron, Ohio,

Where Do I Find the Time?

In parenting, time has no substitute. Quality time does not make up for not spending enough time. Your child needs you, but you are busy also. This is the problem. Today, with Internet, cell phones, and PDAs, work and ministry relationships can spill into the evening at home, at the soccer game, and invade each area of your life. In my book, *The One-Life Solution*, I discuss how time and space boundaries that used to be on our work, no longer exist.¹

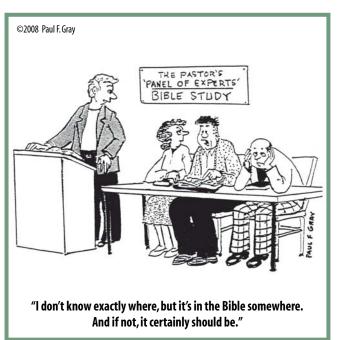
You used to *go to work* because there was a location where work took place. You used to be *at work* for a certain time, such as 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. When you were there, you worked. When you were not there, you were no longer working; work time was past, and you were *at home spending time with your family*.

Now, work follows you. Work has no time and no space where you cannot be answering e-mail, or talking to someone about a ministry issue. The built-in boundaries are gone. If you do not create your own time and space boundaries around ministry, your family will not have the *you* that they need. If you do not put that time — *in stone* — into your schedule, it will not happen. Some urgent need will always interfere. messages, or to our own driven natures that cause us to overextend ourselves. Not having enough time, except in times of crises, is usually a character issue. When we find

If you do not create your own time and space boundaries around ministry, your family will not have the *you* that they need.

Treat your family time as you treat your money when you make your budget. You only have so much money, and you only have so much time. As you pay the rent or mortgage first, write your *time check* to the family first, so you are not using leftover time. There will never be enough time to spend with your family.

Write those checks with your spouse. "Monday night will be family movie night." Or, "Saturday morning I will take my 13-year-old out to breakfast." Schedule those events as you would other vital matters, such as a church board meeting. If you do not allow yourself to spend that time for other things that come up, you will follow through with your family.



Also, in The One-Life Solution, I explain the real reason why people do not have enough time: Our own character weaknesses allow various activities to steal our time. We should not allow these activities to have that power over us. We find it difficult to say no to controlling people, to our own guilt

ourselves in patterns in which we are overextended, it is time to become honest and evaluate what character weakness is driving that behavior.

Be Confident

God has not given us a spirit of fear. You do not need to fear your child's future. His ways will protect our children and us, causing us to prosper (Deuteronomy 6:20–25). Make sure the main things are the main things — love, self-control, and forgiveness. Guard enough time to continually build those things into your children through your relationship with them. If you do that, you can trust that when your children are old, they will not depart from it (Proverbs 22:6). @



HENRY CLOUD, PH.D., a clinical psychologist in Los Angeles, California, has written or cowritten more than 20 books, including the

million-seller *Boundaries.* His recent books include *The Secret Things of God and Integrity: The Courage To Meet the Demands of Reality.* He cohosts the nationally syndicated radio program *New Life Live.* He has an extensive executive coaching background and experience as an organizational and leadership consultant, speaking regularly across the United States and internationally at corporate and leadership events.

To comment on this article go to *Enrichment* journal forum at http://forums.ag.org/enrichmentjournal.

NOTE

1. See Henry Cloud, *The One-Life Solution* (New York: Harper Collins, 2008).

Growing Up in a Pastors Home The Risks & Rewards

By Chris Arnzen

Neil confided in me, "My fear is that my girls will grow up and not have anything to do with the church, and not follow the Lord. What are the pitfalls of ministry and how do I avoid them?" There was sincerity in his voice.

These questions did not surprise me. Neil had recently graduated from Bible college, was married, and is the father of three young children. He directed these questions to me because my father was his pastor, and I had once been his Sunday School teacher. It made sense for Neil to ask these questions. However, I have not lived in a pastor's home for more than 25 years. I was concerned that my experience may no longer be relevant. What would today's PKs say? One evening seven college-age Assemblies of God PKs and I shared a meal and discussed their experiences. Even though they engaged the typical topics — the fish bowl existence, struggles with the expectations of others, isolation, and feeling inferior concerning the ministry — this group of PKs was refreshingly candid.

Lebron's (names have been changed) family pastors a church in the inner city. During his lifetime, his parents have held four pastorates. Aaron has lived in a major Midwest city for the last 9 years. Ellie and Kyle are siblings from a small, rural town in the Midwest. Their father has pastored the same church for 12 years. Although Tessa and William are not related, their fathers have held several positions in churches (West Coast and Midwest), as well as district and national offices. Sam's parents lived on the West Coast and in the Midwest. Although his parents have moved 5 times in his lifetime, they have spent the last 11 years in the same pastorate.



As I talked with these PKs, they expressed both the positive and negative aspects of growing up in a pastor's home. Despite living in a fishbowl environment, they made positive remarks about living in the parsonage.

Kyle: Every year a lady in our church gave us Nike tennis shoes for Christmas. Now that I am in college, I receive an anonymous check every month or every other month.

Ellie: Being a PK gives you a sense of leadership. You know how the church runs, and different things that come up do not surprise you.

Sam: It helped me connect with people more easily. I'm not shy. When we do a meet and greet, I'm comfortable meeting people and finding out about them. My top strength is connecting with others. That ties to the compassion I saw my parents show people. I also feel that I have compassion. I see God in everyone. Growing up in the parsonage helps me have confidence when talking to people.

Even though these PKs had a positive view of their lives, they also had issues to deal with.

William: I felt I had to share my dad and mom with other students. It felt like it was not just our family and siblings, but everyone's family and siblings. The good thing, though, is when my dad was home he spent a lot of time with my brothers and me. He made the most of the time he had with us.

Kyle: I had to attend every single church event. It wasn't that bad all the time, but I still remember my sophomore year having to miss a concert because we had a fish fry

at church. Things like that would happen, but it wasn't a big deal.

One issue these PKs mentioned was living in the shadow of their fathers. Their developing identities were impacted and feeling different was common. They had difficulty explaining their parents' career to their friends. At times, adults assumed they had a certain type of character based on their father's reputation. Interestingly, none of these PKs struggled with being labeled rebellious, even though many of them said they struggled internally and knew other PKs that did act out. Aaron: Going to public school was challenging. The other kids didn't understand what my dad did. Some kids asked if we lived in the church.

Lebron: Sometimes my dad would drive me to school in the church van. It got code named *the God-mobile*. Try to live up to that.

Another downside — although my dad and mom were good at hiding it — is the negative things I saw going on in the church. It gets you frustrated at the church and how it's run. For a while, it turned me off a little to church. Then in high school, I realized that's just the way things are. Sam: I went through a couple of years where I felt people held a high standard for me and my family. Sometimes we would walk in the church after we had been fighting. Mom and Dad would say, "Okay, put a smile on. Let's deal with it afterward." They were just trying to help us not look like brats. For me, though, it made me feel that I had to be a fake and always happy at church because I was the pastor's kid.

The other kids were looking up to me because I was the pastor's son. I didn't feel I was good enough to be their role model, so I acted as if I didn't care what they thought. I entered a rebellious stage — not doing drugs and stuff — but having an attitude of I don't care what you think, because I don't have to meet your standards.



Kyle: My dad was well liked. I realized early on that as long as I put on a good face in front of people,

no one would know what I was like. As long as they knew I was my dad's son, I was a good person. To this day, when I meet district officials and tell them who my dad is, they say that I'm a great

"There's a growing process. I had to realize for myself that my reputation is based on who I am as a person." — Kyle

Tessa: When I went to high school, people asked what my dad did, or they would find out my dad was a pastor. I felt that I had to be perfect for the people who didn't go to church or weren't Christians. They would call me a hypocrite because my dad was a pastor. kid. I could go to my car and smoke weed, and I'd still be a great kid.

There's a growing process. I had to realize for myself that my reputation is based on who I am as a person. I remember during my second semester at college I started to realize people didn't know who my dad was. My reputation is based on who I am and the people I hang out with.

People expect pastors' families to attend, participate, and contribute in many church events. In small churches, participation is a matter of necessity. PKs are called on to fill in the gaps. This often can make PKs feel people are taking advantage of them. Although some of these PKs could identify with these feelings, they have been able to reframe their experiences as something positive now that they are young adults.

Aaron: I've moved more people than anybody else. My dad always volunteered my brothers and me. We would wake up on Saturday morning, and my dad would tell us what we were going to do that day. That's just how it was and how it still is. Sunday mornings, if something needs to be done, we're the first ones they go to. I guess that builds character later in life.

Ellie: I was in the choir, a nursery helper, and the kids church helper. If someone didn't show up to teach a class, either my sister, brothers, or I would do it. It was a forced thing, and it made me bitter toward church involvement. When I started college and attended a different church, my No. 1 goal was not to get involved. I'm involved now; I can't help it.

Pastoring and parenting can be complex. Many of these PKs expressed the longing for their fathers to interact with them as their child, and not as another person in their congregation. Not until these PKs entered college and experienced relational distance could they appreciate

the complexity of these two roles. These PKs did have many positive things to say about how their parents raised them.

Sam: It wasn't until I came to college that I realized how complicated being a parent and pastor is. My parents have been telling me about things that happened in the church that I never knew about. They did a good job of not telling me and my siblings about some bad things that happened. My mom said they knew we would hear things about the church, and they didn't want to add to that, so they kept those things to themselves as husband and wife. I'm thankful for that.



Tessa: I agree. My parents did a good job of keeping church information from me that I did not need

to know, especially when I was little. They had their job, and they kept the family separate.

Kyle: I always appreciated the fact my parents made it clear why they were in the ministry. Dad always said that God had called him to this town. I've been in the same town my entire life. Dad still gets offers to go to different places, but he believes for now that he's to be here. To see that call of God helps me. I don't feel called to the ministry, but it helps me with whatever God wants to do with my life. It will be worth it, even in the hard times.

Sam: My dad and mom attended every event that I had. It was second nature for me to see them in the audience. In high school, we'd have a choir concert. It wasn't very big. I'd say, "Dad, don't go. It's going to be boring. I do not want you to go." But he was always in the audience.

I'd say, "Dad, you did not need to come to that."

He'd say, "No, I love you. I want to come see you." It was nice, even though I told him he didn't need to come to everything.

Looking back, though, these PKs did wish their parents had done some things differently.

Kyle: I wish they had exposed me to the outside world. I was in a Christian bubble 24/7. I wasn't exposed to non-Christians much. All my friends went to church. It was hard on me going through high school, going to youth conventions, and hearing about witnessing because I didn't know whom to witness to. It was hard to be a Christian when the No. 1 thing you're supposed to do is witness to other people. It made me feel like I was failing. It's kind of a weird situation. My parents were trying to do their best, but I wish they had exposed me more to the outside world.



Sam: I saw my dad as the *enforcer*. Then on Sunday, he was a peaceful, loving dad, even though

he had just spanked me Saturday night. As a 6-year-old, I thought my dad was a hypocrite. My dad had an anger issue. He'd speak about anger on Sunday, but on Tuesday he'd be yelling at us.

PKs see the human side of their parents. Most people in the congregation don't see that. They see the pastor on Sunday and think he is a great man, and he is, but you see his flaws and his worst times. So as a kid, I got the idea my dad was a hypocrite. Lebron: My parents were not too legalistic or too hard on me, but did give me too much freedom. I was allowed to date or go out whenever I wanted. I had no curfew. I was probably a couple of bad choices away from completely being lost. I easily could have gotten involved with the wrong crowd more than I did. Looking back, I wish my parents had a few more rules.



Ellie: I think my parents emphasized the church too much. I know they were pastors,

but there were days when I felt if they had to choose between salvation and church, they would choose the church. I think I saw what they did for the church more than anyone else. I saw the sacrifices my family made. There were times we needed a break and the freedom to not go to every church event or function. With the daily demands of a pastorate, it is easy to overlook the fact a PK may be experiencing internal conflict. Although PKs often appear confident and display good conversational and leadership skills, they struggle with varying levels of insecurity. Looking back, there were some things they would do differently. **Kyle:** I was insecure throughout high school. I was home schooled, so I automatically thought anyone who went to public school was cooler than me. It didn't matter who they were. Even the smelly kid was cooler than a home schooler. I'm glad I was home schooled, but I think I could have been a better influence on my friends if I had been a little less insecure. I think I could have had a lot more fun.

Tessa: I wish I had put myself out there more in high school. I was so involved in church. I wish I had participated in more high school activities that would have connected me with more people. My freshman year in

high school was

the first time I had

ever gone to public

school. I attended

a small Christian

school and was

home schooled

I was not ready

I was insecure

until high school.

for public school.

and shy, and too

sheltered. I didn't

know how to act

around people. I

cared as much

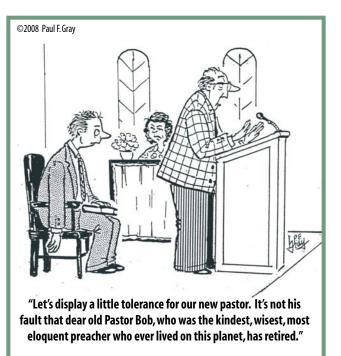
thought of me,

and I wish I had

tried new things.

wish that I hadn't

about what people





Aaron: I was insecure in high school, too. I think the reason was because I couldn't act like the other kids.

They were going out and partying on the weekends. I didn't have anything to talk to them about at the lunch table. I could share the gospel, but you can't do that at lunch, every day. I would probably do high school different. I'd build relationships with people, instead of just sitting there being quiet.

Sam: I honestly wish I had gotten more involved in church. The only thing my parents pushed was that I go to church every Sunday — even if I was sick. I had to be deathly ill to miss. That made church attendance a job to me. I always said I was too busy, but I think it was still the resentment wearing off from my younger years.

With parents in the ministry, all of the PKs had to wrestle with whether or not full-time vocational ministry was in their future. For some of these PKs the process of working through this question was painful. Sometimes pastors or church people put pressure on PKs to go into vocational ministry that wouldn't otherwise be there.

Sam: I'm from a multigenerational pastor's family, and the only boy in my family. Even if people don't say it, you know what they're thinking. I had believed that no matter what, I was going to be a pastor. It took years for me to realize that if it is God's will, it will happen. But I also want to be open to other things. I never thought, *Oh, I could be a journalist,* because people expected me to be a minister.

It's in your blood; you have to do it. My parents, however, never pressured me that way.

Kyle: My three older sisters went to Bible college. I'm the first boy, so I want to follow in my dad's footsteps.

One time we had a missionary at the church. My dad told him that God had called many kids into the ministry. He called them up front. The youth sat together, and I was the only one left. I felt like going up because everyone else did. I remember praying, "God, why don't You just call me?"

In my college sophomore year, my dad was speaking, and he mentioned my four siblings had been or were currently at Bible college. He then mentioned that I was at a Christian university. He said, "My son Kyle (in a low, serious tone) is going into media ministries." I sat there and almost cried. I'd never heard my dad say anything that made me feel like I was less; it had always been unspoken. At that moment, I felt it was spoken; it was pressure. It was something for which I had to forgive my dad. It was a hard time for me, but I had to trust in God and know He has my future planned for me.

Ellie: I felt pressured by my siblings, more than by anyone else, to go to the mission field. All of them were called to missions. It was the cool thing to do. I would tell people I was going to be a missionary when I felt more of a call to youth ministries. But my dad was proud of them. He would always tell people that my older siblings were going to be missionaries. So I tried to fit in.

When asked what these PK students would tell a young pastor about raising kids in the parsonage, they expressed the necessity for family time even if it is simple. They claimed the security of a strong relationship between mom and dad was invaluable and protective during difficult times of pastoral transitions. They added that a lack of integrity and affirmation leads to confusion.

Kyle: With my family, we knew Mom would be there and Dad might be there. One of my greatest memories is

kids know that you love your spouse and that you're treating her the right way. They need to know that. My parents always tell me they love me, and it never gets old.

Sam: My parents have always had an amazing relationship. I never thought they would divorce; it never entered my mind that it could happen. It was just an amazing relationship that I got to watch. Whenever they fought,

"I think my parents emphasized the church too much." — Ellie

watching *Seinfeld* with my dad. That's still the greatest show ever to me, because every time I watch it, I think about my dad. That's what we did during my high school years. For me, it was something I could count on. I feel I coped with family time better than my siblings. I could tell it hurt them when they didn't get one-on-one time.



William: My dad took advantage of the time he was with us. It was fun when he was home. My

mom was involved just as much as my dad. Her role made the difference.

How our dad treated my mom was important. I didn't date until I was 16, but I was ready. I knew how I should treat a woman: The same way my dad treated my mom. He set the example. They'd have arguments, but there were certain things they wouldn't talk about around us. The thing they made a point not to do is argue over little things that make no difference.

Tessa: Always tell your kids and your spouse that you love them. Let your

I either didn't know about it, or they kept it to a minimum in front of us kids. They never fought about the church in front of us. I think that was part of their protecting us from the bitter side of pastoring.

Lebron: It's important to realize that your kids aren't part of the congregation. They need a dad and mom; not just a pastor. Make sure you're playing both roles.

Sam: My biggest concern is that you base your rules and your lifestyle on being a parent, not a pastor. It's not your kids' choice that you're a pastor, and their life is connected to a church. Make sure you discipline them and set certain rules not because you're a pastor and your family has to look a certain way. Otherwise, those expectations may cause your children to become bitter and rebellious.

Ellie: Don't be afraid to admit to your kids when you're wrong. When you haven't spent time with them, or you have preached a sermon you knew you weren't living, don't be afraid to tell them you were wrong.

The PKs' spirituality was the last topic we discussed. These PKs were in transition; their spiritual development had moved beyond church activity and now took on personal meaning. They talked openly about their relationship with God and how having parents in the ministry hurt or helped that relationship. What they reported might seem discouraging and frightening to a pastoral couple. If this is a reflection of typical PKs' spiritual development, however, a pastoral couple can better prepare for their children's faith crisis, and turn it into an opportunity to demonstrate faith in real time.

Sam: I grew up hearing about how I could have a relationship with God, but I didn't fully know what that meant. I knew Jesus lives in my heart, and I was to read my Bible, but I never understood it. I went through a stage of resentment. The older I get, I've discovered that I process spiritual things differently.

I realize that developing a relationship with God is my choice, especially since I no longer live with my parents. When parents are teaching their kids, they need to make them understand that having a relationship with God is their choice. That's the big difference. You're not being forced to serve Him; you're being offered opportunity to make a choice.

Kyle: Growing up in a pastor's home hurt and helped my spirituality. It hurt my spirituality because I grew up thinking Christianity was a lot of rules. My parents disagreed. They said it was not about the don'ts, but about the dos. But that's not how I lived my life. I was legalistic in high school. Serving God was following a list of rules to "It wasn't until college that I saw the importance, especially since I was going into the ministry, of having a relationship and time alone with God." — Lebron

me. It's good to know it's all about God loving people, and the rules fall into place after that.

Ellie: I felt my Christianity became routine. I had to go to church; I had to do this and that. I never stopped reading my Bible or praying, but I did go through a time when it didn't mean squat to me. I did it because I had to.

When I went to Bible college, I was bitter toward church and didn't want to go. I would go Sunday mornings and leave early. I was extremely bitter toward church my first semester. Church involvement had to be my choice. Now I'm involved in church, and I love church. I love being able to go, because now it's my choice.

Aaron: I felt I was saved because my dad was the pastor. I rode on his coattails for a long time until I moved out and went to college. After high school, I had to make a personal choice to serve God. I no longer served God just because my dad was a pastor.



Lebron: I'd say being a PK hurt my spirituality. I didn't feel the need to be in prayer and in the Word as much.

I thought I already knew everything. I felt that by association I was a good Christian. It wasn't until college that I saw the importance, especially since I was going into the ministry, of having a relationship and time alone with God.

Conclusion

As the PKs were reflecting on their spiritual lives, they all referenced moving away from home as a critical point in their choice to serve the Lord. Parents also face a critical point as well. Even though parents are concerned for their kids, showing it may communicate that they do not trust them. This could cause a rift in the relationship. One PK said, "How can you not trust me when I've helped you and the church for 18 years? I've done everything you've asked me to do; yet you can't trust me to go on my own for 4 years. I think that trusting your kid is important." This is the time when faith is tested and love is demonstrated.

It was clear these PKs had a great deal to say. They shared the positives and negatives of growing up as PKs. A lack of integrity, family time, and exposure outside the church created internal conflicts. However, experiencing the security of their parents' marriage, their affirmation and support, and the freedom to choose positively influenced their experiences. Regardless of their experience, it was clear that their spiritual lives were dynamic and maturing into a personal faith. @



CHRIS ARNZEN, MA, LPC, Springfield, Missouri, is director of Clinical Services, National Institute of Marriage, Branson, Missouri.

To comment on this article go to *Enrichment* journal forum at http://forums.ag.org/enrichmentjournal.



Walking the Prodigal Path

As pastors and parents of children who strayed from the faith and fold, four ministry couples admit their common ground was pain, but their hope is in sharing how they found resolution.

By Judi Braddy

All it took was one question: "How has having a prodigal child affected your marriage and ministry?" It seemed someone had pulled a giant plug, draining the cheerful chatter from the room. Now there was silence; no one wanted to speak first.

Yet this was the very question four couples had gathered to discuss. Even though it meant allowing painful memories to surface once more, our collective hope was to toss a lifeline to others now treading those same unknown waters.

Ranging in age from mid-forties to early sixties, we represented different backgrounds and situations. John and Jennifer, the youngest couple, serve in a fairly new pastoral position and are still raising children. Ken and Brenda are senior pastors who formerly served as missionaries. Larry and Hilda raised two biological sons while pastoring and took in more than 30 foster children. Following more than 25 years in pastoral ministry, my husband Jim and I have served the last 15 years as district denominational executives.

Like age and appearance, our stories also vary. Yet as pastors and parents of children who have strayed from the faith and fold, all have sad similarities. Even though our common ground is pain, our hope was to share how we found resolution.

How It All Began

I opened our session by asking that each couple relate where they were in ministry when their problems with their prodigal began. Taking a breath, John and Jennifer spoke first.

"We had just opened a new church and were conducting home groups. To be honest, we had anticipated that our oldest son might eventually exhibit behavioral problems stemming from a 5-year period of early childhood abuse by an extended family member."

Sadly, John and Jennifer became aware of this abuse after the fact. Because the abuser was underage, the revelation resulted in a hurtful and emotional legal battle to determine his penalty. This drove a wedge in the extended family and brought even more as-yet-unknown negatives to light. By the time their son reached junior high and puberty, the real ramifications of what had happened caused his emotions to suddenly explode. It started with anger and defiance at home, and John and Jennifer soon discovered he was stealing and selling drugs. For the next 8 years his struggle turned their lives upside down.

In Larry and Hilda's case, it was not their biological children who created chaos, but a darling foster daughter for whom they became legal guardians. They had been pastoring a new church for only 1 year when the turmoil started that would span their entire 18-year tenure.

The problems with Ken and Brenda's son started with troublesome bouts of misbehavior when he was 14. At first, they considered it normal teenage turbulence. They, too, were pastoring, with one difference: theirs was a temporary assignment to satisfy requirements toward becoming missionaries. Immersed in itineration, they never suspected how their son's problems were simmering. Nor could they know then that their prodigal path would cover 25 years of increasingly rough terrain.

Walking the Prodigal Path

As for Jim and me, we have elaborated our oldest son's situation my book *Prodigal in the Parsonage: Encouragement for Ministry Leaders Whose Child Rejects Faith.* Following the Lord's undeniable leading, we had just moved from one city to another, leaving a staff position at a large church to serve as pastors of a smaller congregation. Our son had just turned 13. For reasons still unclear, the move caused some latent insecurity to emerge, thrusting him into a rebellion were friendly and hospitable. Then our son shaved his head because he joined a group called *skinheads*. Any further pretense was pointless. "What were we going to do," Jim laughed, "make him wear a wig?"

Jim decided to tackle the truth before it became an issue. He explained to the church board and offered his resignation. We are eternally grateful that they declined, committing to prayerfully support us instead.

Ken and Brenda were dealing with

When problems with children arise, parents' natural tendency is to keep them concealed.

of unimagined proportions, lasting more than 20 years.

All four couples agreed. Each was completely caught off-guard by what developed. But develop it did. Soon our situations were becoming plain to those in the pews.

To Hide or Not To Hide

When problems with children arise, parents' natural tendency is to keep them concealed. We want to protect them; yet we, too, need time to process what is happening. Floundering with feelings of failure and humiliation, we fear what may happen when others find out. Sometimes you have no alternative.

"Our son's outward appearance made his lifestyle impossible to ignore," Jim interjected.

Looking for a place to belong, our son had almost immediately joined a group of unchurched teens from school. To his credit, he brought many of them to church, mainly because we required that he attend while he was living at home. Our consolation was that many of his friends heard the gospel. Our concern was how the congregation was processing these teens with spiked hair, leather, and tattoos. Outwardly, most a different kind of board — the world missions board of their denomination. Not wanting the board to disqualify him, Ken felt it best to keep their son's struggles quiet, praying that once they were on the mission field things would smooth out.

When they arrived overseas and observed how other cultures deal with drug issues, they suddenly realized the seriousness of their son's situation. In that part of the world, these crimes were punishable by death.

"Fear finally overrode embarrassment," Ken states. "I knew we needed help."

Even so, after they returned from the mission field and became pastors again, Ken was determined to preserve their ministry and protect their son's privacy. Only when he saw that many in their congregation were going through similar problems did he finally embrace openness. It took Brenda a little longer.

"I still felt just the opposite," she admitted. "Given the choice, I didn't want anyone to know."

Eventually, she learned how helpful and supportive people who loved them could be. This was especially apparent when their son joined the military. The congregation rallied behind Ken and Brenda, praying for him in his absence. Being secretive was not an option for Larry and Hilda.

"At one summer camp, some ladies in our church had already noticed the problem our daughter had with lying," Hilda said.

John and Jennifer also opted for the open-book philosophy, noting that having meetings in their home made it obvious.

John agreed, "It would have been harder to try to hide it."

Nevertheless, while those close to them knew more of the personal details, John and Jennifer did not make those on the edges privy to any more information than necessary.

The group's common consensus, in fact, was the importance of using wisdom in how much they shared, when and to whom. More than personal embarrassment, they did not want others to become discouraged.

The people in the pews were not the only ones who needed encouragement. Some of our peers in the ministry needed encouragement as well. I related Jim's first invitation to do a breakout session on parenting a prodigal at a ministry conference. Not expecting many to attend, he was shocked to enter a room full of clerical colleagues. Hearing our story helped others find courage to process their pain as well. This also affirmed my future decision to write a book on the subject.

Truth and Consequences

We have personal perceptions of how others may react to our prodigal problems. Sometimes it is better than expected, sometimes worse.

"Most of our daughter's acting out took place at home," said Larry, "so the congregation was not really involved. When they did see things, they seemed to take it in stride." John and Jennifer faced mixed reactions.

"Some people felt bad, almost apologetic, for what was happening to us," Jennifer remembered. "I know many prayed for us.

Some also left the church.

"They simply couldn't understand why we had to place our son in a rehabilitation program." As Jennifer spoke, fresh pain permeated her words. Sometimes, we were grasping for straws. This is more evident when it concerns the myriad opinions about how best to discipline.

Deciding How To Discipline

Like generations of parents before us, we did our best to discipline, often trying to follow our parents' model. The problem is that we were

We have personal perceptions of how others may react to our prodigal problems. Sometimes it is better than expected, sometimes worse.

John described it as the perfect storm — meaning that the storm struck from several sides simultaneously. As mentioned, they were planting a new church when their son's struggle started. Their home church, where John had served for 18 years, committed to help them both financially and physically. Unfortunately it ended up pulling back because of infrastructural problems.

"In the end, the greatest support came from those on the district level," John reflected. Following their wise collective counsel, John and Jennifer decided to close the church, help their fledgling congregation find other churches, and then go back to their home church.

Following a year off from ministry, the next church they pastored had its own unfortunate history of problems. Combined with everything else, it was almost too hard to handle. Describing the pressure this put on their personal relationship, John admitted feeling like they were living dual lives — one at home, a different one at church.

At times, we wonder how much better we might have handled things if not for the outside pressures. dealing with difficulties our parents never imagined — drugs, blatant promiscuity, lack of respect — not to mention today's liberal media influence. What worked for them did not always work for us. No wonder we were floundering, even arguing about ways to discipline.

In John and Jennifer's upbringing, two different dichotomies came into

play. John's dad ruled the home and was a harsh disciplinarian while teenage hippies raised Jennifer.

Muddling matters even more are the current politically correct limitations on what kind of discipline parents of a juvenile can legally employ. When dealing with downright defiance, having to take a hands-off approach leaves parents feeling helpless to control their child's actions. Surely many can relate to Jennifer's lament that this resulted in countless sleepless nights.

"His actions finally caught up with him," she said with sad resignation, "and he ended up in juvenile hall. We're just fortunate he didn't hurt anyone else."

This creates another frustration because the law still holds parents of underage kids responsible for their actions.

Regarding discipline, Larry and Hilda faced even more restrictions. As legal guardians, the state and county absolutely dictated how they were to handle conflicts.

"I had to step back because of the *male* issue," Larry explained. Hilda had to be the main disciplinarian. The rigid rules meant either talking or removing privileges.

"Hilda did a great job. I simply tried to be supportive," stated Larry.

They both admit it was hard and caused a great deal of stress for the entire household.

©2008 Dan Pegoda



"My soul is being spoken to on the deepest level right now. So, would you *mind* with the *pen-clicking*?"

Walking the Prodigal Path

Pressure on Personal Relationships "There's no doubt that a prodigal's actions set the emotional tone in the home," said Jennifer. "Our younger children understood clearly what was going on and sensed the tension. This only added to the trauma and drama. Every time he walked in the door, the unspoken question was: *What is going to happen*?

As a result, siblings often became chameleons, blending in just to keep the peace. At times, they would create distractions to take the focus off the prodigal — anything to avoid the conflict and stress. Sadly, these same siblings missed many activities because of the time and money spent in counseling and program placement.

Even though Jim and I determined not to let our prodigal be the focus, his actions inevitably demanded everyone's attention. Sometimes we felt the situation held our family hostage in our own home.

"You hesitate to put more stress or guilt on the prodigal," said Jennifer, "but you still wish they'd take responsibility for how their actions affect others."

Unfortunately, until they repent, few prodigals ever come to terms with the time they have taken or the emotional duress they have inflicted on others.

"This is my life," our son often said. "It's not about you or anyone else."

Yet the consequences of a prodigal's choices have an unending ripple effect on others, especially those closest to him.

The chaos can affect the extended family. Equally as painful to John and Jennifer were Christian family members who suggested that they needed to resign the church because their house was not in order. To Jennifer, whose parents did not raise her in church, their reaction was not as Christlike as she had expected. This unnerved her, caused her to withdraw, isolate herself, and eventually she suffered a season of depression. *Who can I turn to*, she thought, *if not them*?

Added to this were outside pressures. More than one would-be comforter told us, "Put his bags on the doorstep and tell him not to come back until he straightens out."

Comparing ourselves with our peers also added to the pressure. Most of us know pastors with seemingly perfect children who are attractive, wellgroomed, and win every contest. It is hard not to look at them and wonder what happened to your own child.

Managing the Meltdowns

In a prodigal pressure cooker, emotions eventually boil over. The tension affects your personal relationships — arguing, finger pointing, and laying the blame. From anger to compassion, the range of emotions we each experience varies drastically, as do our reactions. If we are not deliberate in our decisions, it can drive a dangerous wedge between husband and wife.

Brenda commented on how common it is for each person to look at the situation from a different angle. "For instance, because I was in denial for a long time, I couldn't understand why my husband got so angry."

"That sometimes made me feel she wasn't being supportive," replied Ken. "Looking back, I am sorry. I realize I wasn't always sensitive to her feelings."

He also regrets acting one way in front of the congregation and another at home. "Our actions should be consistent."

"Somehow, though," Brenda interjected, "we always managed to agree on important decisions."

For Jim and me, it resembled a tag team sport where one parent picked up when the other became tired. Finally, we had to make a conscious decision to preserve our marriage above all else.

As Jim put it, "We were husband and wife before we were mother and father." We made sure our children understood that nothing would destroy our commitment to God and each other. Like Ken and Brenda, when it involved important decisions, we determined to act as one.

It is hard when you feel torn between love for each other, your child, and the church. Nevertheless, when your child no longer shares or understands your commitment and makes choices contrary, even destructive to it, you must ask: "If we allow our child's choices to destroy our marriage, ministry, and family, what will be left?"

Even under the best circumstances, teens are smart and will play both ends against the middle. Eventually, those kids will move out. Then, some couples struggle because their lives so revolved around their children that nothing is left. Couples must find time to get away, renew their relationship, and allow a change of scenery to bring a new perspective, especially if they sense their marriage or ministry — or both — is in danger of disintegrating.

"That's why we took a year off from ministry," John said, "and went back to our home church."

With all that had happened in such a short time, they needed space to process it. During this time, they sent their son to a Christian program in Colorado.

"One of my biggest struggles," John reflected, "was feeling that to be congruent in ministry, you must be able to process forgiveness in your own life. Otherwise you feel you're living a lie."

Admittedly, this took a while for him to sort out. At one point, he even considered relinquishing his ministerial credentials. Finally, through conversations with other ministry mentors, he managed to get a handle on it and did not feel so guilty.

"Only then could we truly chill out," John said.

Even so, he wondered if he would ever go back into ministry.

Conversely, Larry and Hilda were able to stay active in ministry while dealing with their daughter's issues. They credit openness and good communication for keeping it from becoming a real conflict in their marriage and ministry.

"Actually," Hilda emphasized, "it was a strengthening time."

It would seem there is wisdom in both scenarios. A wise and courageous person realizes when he must step back and give himself time to properly process what is happening, to ensure both his marriage and ministry are preserved. The hard decision is whether a person can do that in the context of ministry. To be honest, you emotionally — perhaps even physically — putting not only your marriage and ministry at risk, but your health and well-being also.

Though neither was in jeopardy for Hilda and Larry, they still chose to meet with a licensed marriage and family counselor. Admittedly, the issues did not all disappear, but counseling helped everyone cope.

Choose a counselor carefully. Ensure he or she is a good match for your family. Jim laughed, remembering one counselor who fell asleep during our session.

"That really impressed our son." Jim said. "Still, when in crisis, do not try to figure it out alone or let a bad experience keep you from seeking professional counsel."

Why? It is impossible to extract ourselves from the swirl of emotions. During our difficulties, we had an understanding board and congregation.

Talk to a trusted mentor in ministry or a professional counselor when the situation is not getting better, is becoming all-consuming, or you are no longer coping.

much depends on one's ability to support himself financially in the interim.

Often God intervenes. In our situation, God knew if we were to heal emotionally, we would need to move. At a critical point in our prodigal parable, a new church several hours away called us. This time our son opted to stay behind.

When To Consider Counseling

Talk to a trusted mentor in ministry or a professional counselor when the situation is not getting better, is becoming all-consuming, or you are no longer coping. Seek counseling when the situation begins to affect Still, we needed someone who could be dispassionate and objective, someone who would not judge or make comparisons like another pastor might.

Jim admits he doesn't remember much of the advice, but he does remember how good it felt to unload the burden on someone.

I concurred, recalling a few times when the entire family could not keep a counseling appointment and I went alone. Perhaps it sounds selfish, but I benefited more when I did not share the counselor's time with others, because I could address specific personal needs. I left with a more positive perspective. This ultimately benefited my entire family.

Adding It All Up

As varied as our situations are, the current circumstances of each prodigal represented varies as well. One prodigal has finally come home; three are still on the journey. Even as we pray for restoration, each of us recognizes how much we have learned. Looking back, our panel offered the following encouragement.

John and Jennifer's son is now 18 and has been in and out of juvenile hall. Released again recently, he is living in a near-by state with a close friend of John's who he describes as an angel in disguise. This friend also did time as a young man, but has been clean and sober for more than 28 years. "Our son can't pull anything over on him," John said, laughing.

It seems true. Since he has been there, their son has earned his high school diploma and is now an apprentice in a carpenters union. John and Jennifer believe his life has taken a turn and that God has him in a place where he will finally make much-needed spiritual changes.

John's advice to ministry parents is to keep serving God no matter what happens. "The biblical prodigal came home to an industrious household," he says. "His father was still going about his work, not victimized by his son's choices.

"It's easy to feel like giving up when we're in pain, especially as pastors who point others to the Cross. What happens when we can't see it ourselves? In dark moments, we may falter. God reminded me that it was dark when His Son died, too, but it wasn't the end."

John realized how God understands our times of discouragement. That is what kept him going.

Jennifer emphasized the importance

Walking the Prodigal Path

of finding two or three people with whom you have built a relationship, whom you can talk with about your situation.

"The worst thing we can do," she related from experience, "is isolate ourselves and break off communication. Consistently debrief, even if it means seeking professional help."

She adds a word of caution: "Don't force your situation on those who are too weak spiritually or emotionally to handle it. Not everyone knows how to respond when those they love are in pain."

"Even as pastors," Larry elaborated, "we don't have all the answers. That's why it's important to seek those who can pull the curtain back a little farther and help us see."

Their daughter is now living independently, making her own choices. Hilda knows she will never forget the special spiritual moments in her life — times when people prayed for her and youth conventions when she went to the altar.

"Looking back," Hilda stated, she'll remember." Those bright moments serve as lights to lead our children home. "Train a child in the way he should go," Proverbs 22:6 reminds us, "and when he is old he will not turn from it."

I have come to understand this as a two-partner principle. Our part is to train; the rest belongs to God. He alone can bring it to their remembrance.

Jim and I, too, still pray for our son's safe return to the fold. He has made significant progress over the years, but unfortunately continues to live with the consequences of his many poor choices. Like many parents, we pray daily that he will soon surrender his will and ways to the Lord.

Ken and Brenda also walked many miles down the prodigal path while their son nearly destroyed himself with drugs. At the end, he wrecked two cars, almost killing himself.

Attempting yet another intervention, Ken and Brenda went to his house. This time, to their great joy, he responded tearfully and positively, accepted the Lord, and agreed to go to Teen Challenge for rehabilitation.

> Four months later, Teen Challenge allowed them to see him. Their son related how the desire for drugs and alcohol left him when he walked through the Teen Challenge doors. Not long after, the Holy Spirit filled Him and transformed his life.

Now, 3 years out of Teen Challenge and 39 years old, he will soon be a church board member. He is a walking miracle.

Ken reminded us that practically every Old Testament character had a prodigal to deal with. "In fact, God's own first kids were prodigals. So pastors should not wonder why they are not exempt."

The good news is that we know God's promises better than anyone.

"Never lose hope," Brenda added. "God knows best and uses situations we don't understand. No matter how hard or unpleasant, only God knows the future and what our children must go through to get where they need to be. God is still in control even if it doesn't look that way to us."

Their son is now an encouraging example for others to keep trusting and believing God for the best outcome. More is happening in the heavenly realm than we can possibly see or know.

To that end, I shared my life verse, 2 Timothy 1:12: "Yet I am not ashamed, because I know whom I have believed, and am convinced that he is able to guard what I have entrusted to him for that day."

The last word, after all, is always God's. @



JUDI BRADDY is a writer, motivational speaker, licensed minister, pastor's wife, mom, and (very young) grandma. She is author of four

books: It All Comes Out in the Wash, True North, Simple Seasons, and Prodigal in the Parsonage. She and her husband, Jim, live in Elk Grove, California. For more information about her writing and speaking, visit her Web site at http://www.judibraddy.com.

The full interview can be heard at: http://www.enrichment journal.ag.org.Click on current issue, find this article, then click on the audio link.

To comment on this article go to *Enrichment* journal forum at http://forums.ag.org/enrichmentjournal.





Managing Financial Stressors To Maximize Resources

Tips To Stretch Your Family Dollar and Plan Your Financial Future

By Gerry Hindy



Being a pastor is one of the toughest, yet most rewarding vocations. As I have assisted pastors and ministry leaders over the years, I have seen the negative impact economic pressures can have upon the minister's home and family life. Financial stressors are powerful and encompassing.

They can impact every aspect of a minister's life, person, family, and ministry — even hindering his ability to follow God's call. By using these resources and tools, a minister can maximize his limited resources, alleviate financial stress, and be better equipped to cope with the demands of family life, focus on ministry, and succeed.

Stressor: Financial Amnesia

Strategy: Keep Good Records, Prioritize, Plan Strategically

Ministers juggling family responsibilities and ministry demands can easily neglect the important for the urgent. This can stall ministers into *financial amnesia* — a vague unawareness, estimation, or neglect of their finances. Like any successful business, families must know their financial position, keep good records, budget, and proactively plan. Consider how accounting and business principles can help.

Past: net worth

To plan where you are going, you must know where you have been. A good reflection of a family's finances is not their toys, but their net worth. To calculate net worth (positive or negative), total the value of your assets (home, auto, investments) and subtract your total liabilities (loans, credit card debt). Net worth gives a big view of how past purchasing habits and investment decisions have impacted your family now and potentially at your death, should your position remain the same. The best investments appreciate (home, art, gold, jewelry), not depreciate (electronics, automobiles), and contribute to net worth.

Present: budget

Harness the power of a budget versus happenstance to steer your financial ship. Consider making changes to eliminate debt, reduce expenses, and free up extra cash flow. Reducing spending by just over \$3 a day (one Starbuck's) will result in an extra \$100 a month. Simplify budgeting by using programs, such as Quicken, and online tools that pay all bills from one place on an automated basis. Take advantage of budgeting resources, such as Crown Ministries and Dave Ramsey's Financial Peace University. Receive a free copy of *Escape the Debt Trap* by contacting Assemblies of God Financial Solutions.

Future: strategic planning

Luke 14:28 says, "Suppose one of you wants to build a tower. Will he not first sit down and estimate the cost?" In business, we call this *strategic planning*.

At AG Financial Solutions, we periodically evaluate the past, set goals, and determine steps to get where we want to go. Have a strategic planning retreat with your spouse once a year. Know your net worth, adjust your budget, and review investment planning. Talk, pray, and dream. Write down specific, quantifiable, and attainable goals, and post them where you can see them daily. For example, a goal to "increase retirement contributions by 1 percent per year" is more empowering than "contribute more to retirement."

Do not dwell on the unchangeable. Set aside the ideal for what you can realistically do now (instead of 1 percent per year, perhaps \$100 more per month), and do it — no matter how small. As you move forward, hold each other accountable and have regular "state of the financial house" conversations. Most important, commit your plans to the Lord, and they will succeed (Proverbs 16:3).

If you have neglected your financial house, do not let guilt hinder you use it as an opportunity to change direction. Be not only a spiritual leader, but also a *financial leader* and role model for your family, children, and congregation.

Stressor: Will My Family Be Cared For if I Die?

Strategy: Do Not Neglect Estate, Insurance Planning

A family who has tragically lost a parent knows the importance of adequate life insurance coverage and estate planning. Without it, survivors may struggle with the courts, a myriad of bills, and an unnecessary tax burden.

Every minister, regardless of age or marital status, needs to have a will. A will ensures that distribution of assets and care for minor children occur as you, not the courts, designate. A will, however, only takes effect on your death. Financial and health care durable powers of attorney empower those you designate to make financial and health care decisions for you — without court intervention — should you become unable to make those decisions.

Trusts provide additional tax benefits. Gift planning and protections are especially beneficial for those with significant resources or complicated assets. In most states, AGFS offers charitable gift annuities. This can Adequate estate planning can be the greatest gift and assurance that a minister can leave his family. Information on life insurance, wills, and DPOAs is available through AGFS at: http://www.agfinancial.org.

Stressor: Looming Mortgage Strategy: Redirect Extra Cash Flow,

Invest in Retirement

Ministers feeling the stress of their largest debt — their mortgage can mistakenly focus on paying off their mortgage while neglecting retirement contributions. Paying off a mortgage early:

1. Negatively impacts housing allowance. Paying off a mortgage could reduce your housing allowance, if actual costs are lower than the rental value of a home fully furnished.

2. Subjects to SECA (selfemployment) taxes. Extra funds formerly paid toward your mortgage are subject to SECA taxes.

3. Eliminates a tax deduction. When a pastor pays off his mortgage, he may lose his mortgage interest deduction on his income taxes.

While retiring debt is a great thing, paying off a home at the neglect of retirement can be a mathematical misstep.

be a valuable planning tool with income benefits.

Gift annuities can be attractive for donors who are age 75 and older. Insurance companies often aggressively target ministers at age 60 for annuities. A charitable gift annuity from AGFS can provide attractive payments to the donor and ultimately a gift to ministry. Like any other financial decision, charitable gift annuities have a multitude of considerations and questions that you need to have answered before entering into an agreement. 4. Forgets current interest rates. With current mortgage rates at alltime lows and house values in many markets appreciating more slowly, invest in higher yielding investments and enjoy the profit margin. With the average family moving every 7 years and retirees downsizing, a low-interest mortgage is a reality most people can live with.

5. Locks up assets. Having most of your investment dollars in a home keeps you from investing those dollars elsewhere. With house values

in some markets on the decline and the potential for losses if you need to sell, invest extra dollars in more liquid investments.

6. Reduces retirement savings. Statistically, savings trends are on the decline. Most pastors have inadequate retirement savings. Those paying off their mortgage early while neglecting their retirement often need to borrow against their home equity to make ends meet.

7. Hurts credit rating. The amount of credit available versus the amount of credit used affects your credit score. Regular payments on large loans help your credit score; paying off a mortgage early can negatively impact it.

While retiring debt is a great thing, paying off a home at the neglect of retirement can be a mathematical misstep. Consult your tax advisor and investment professional and consider maximizing contributions to retirement and other wealth building investments

that you can later use to pay off your mortgage.

Stressor: Having Enough for Retirement

Strategy: Have a Plan, Start Early, Maximize Contributions

With a slim salary, saving for retirement can be a major stressor. Coupled with the demands of life and ministry, retirement planning can fall to the back burner. Unfortunately, ministers who neglect to plan now will find it much harder to maintain their lifestyles later.

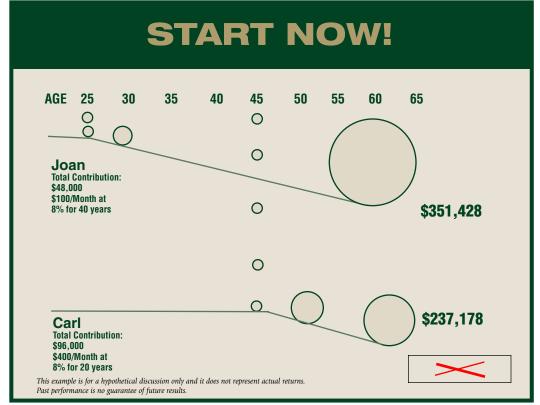
1. Reprioritize. Lifestyle decisions drastically affect one's ability to save for retirement now and in the future. If you are living above your means, make adjustments. The less you spend, the more you can save.

2. Start somewhere. Do not wait for a bigger salary and forsake the realistic for the ideal. If you have high-interest debt, work to eliminate it, but do not let that hinder you. Contribute something, even if it does not seem like much.

3. Start early. The attached chart illustrates the importance of starting early. (*See sidebar Start Now!*) By starting 20 years earlier than Carl, Joan's investment of only \$100 a month for 40 years (\$48,000 total) yielded her \$351,428. This is \$114,250 more than Carl's. His investment of \$400 a month (four times Joan's monthly contribution) yielded him \$237,178 after 20 years. Let compound interest work for you over time. Saving as early as possible gives limited dollars a much-needed advantage. 4. Watch out for inflation. Set annual goals to increase your contributions even by a small amount. Prices increase over time because of inflation, so your contributions need to increase as well. To help you remember when to increase your contributions, sign up for our 1 percent club by e-mailing: onepercentclub@agfinancial.org.

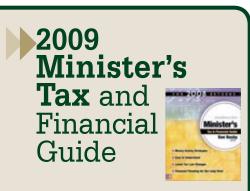
5. Stretch contribution dollars. Your pocket may be a little deeper than you think:

• Forty percent off sale. Tax savings. Remember, you can exclude retirement contributions from your taxable income and SECA taxes (within limits and IRS guidelines). If done properly, every dollar invested in your MBA 403(b) can *cost you less than 60 cents* and be eligible for housing allowance when you take distributions later in life. *That is a 40-cent return on every*



dollar. What an incentive to invest more now.

• One hundred percent return. **Employer matching**. Take advantage of employer matching for a 100 percent immediate return on your contribution. Many ministries do not match employee contributions because they do not realize its ease and affordability. It only takes the board approving the matching contributions and recording it in their minutes. The church's budget is not affected; for example, when converting a portion of the pastor's pay raise to a retirement contribution, the church no longer pays that portion of a minister's SECA (for employees, FICA) taxes. Most church board members



This complete guide for 2008 returns will help ministers, church treasurers, and business administrators prepare tax returns and plan their financial future. The most understandable, easy-to-follow tax guide of its kind explains complex tax concerns in plain language. This easy-to-understand workbook simplifies the tax code and offers dozens of tips to reduce your tax bill. Available January 2009. Order your copy at http://www. gospelpublishing.com. work for companies that provide retirement matching. Pastors and church staff need to enjoy this same benefit.

6. Know what you will need and plan. Consider how you would like to live when you retire. A general rule is that you will need 70 to 100 percent of your preretirement annual income for living expenses.

To find out what your retirement needs will be, use our online calculators at: http://www.agfinancial. Click on Retirement Individual and Retirement Calculators for financial, loan retirement, savings, and insurance calculators.

Stressor: Dipping Stock Market, Recession Talks

Strategy: Diversify, Stay Invested Long-Term

Recent fluctuations in the stock market have been more like a roller coaster, making investors' hearts skip a beat. As stocks fall and gas prices rise amidst talks of recession, investors need to refrain from kneejerk reactions and remember the sound principles of investing.

1. No investment is without risk. Investing involves risk and fluctuations over time. Successful investors minimize risk while maximizing return. If you have sound diversified investments and a long-term strategy, do not make hasty adjustments. Stay the course.

2. Diversify to minimize risk. Diversification spreads investment dollars over a wide range of investment types (stocks and fixed income) in numerous companies, giving you better average returns and reduced risk *over time*.

3. Get a bargain. A bear market has its benefits — dollar cost averaging. By regularly investing equal amounts in diversified investments *regardless*

of performance, investors get bargain prices, buying more shares when prices are low and fewer shares when prices are high.

4. Do not sell off and lock in losses. A common mistake investors make is selling off stocks when the market is doing poorly in favor of safe fixed-income investments. Selling stocks when they are low not only locks in losses, it also locks out future gains that you would have earned, had you stayed invested.

5. Have an appropriate allocation. Determine your portfolio allocation not by market performance, but by time horizon. Investing too heavily in lower yield fixed income can reduce your long-term earnings; portfolios need stocks that on average outperform fixed income as a hedge against inflation. As you near retirement, your fixed income allocation should gradually increase and stocks decrease.

6. Invest for the long term. Today's economic environment underscores the importance of a long-term strategy. Resist the temptation and stay the course. Time is on your side. Let your investments do their work.

7. Reject market timing, get-rich**quick schemes.** Market timing — the attempt to buy low, sell high, and reap huge profits — is a risk that rarely pays off. Do not be tempted by the promise of high returns through chasing the latest hot stock. Once a stock becomes a hot performer, it generally is too late; the greatest returns have already occurred and prices are high. Likewise, cannot-fail investments with guaranteed high returns are a red flag. In both cases, your entire investment is at risk. If it sounds too good to be true, it probably is.

Stressor: Monitoring Retirement Investments

Strategy: Automate Changes Through Target Date Funds

Pastors no longer need to worry about when to adjust their portfolio allocation as they approach retirement. Instead, let Target Date Funds handle it for you. Target Date Funds automatically adjust your portfolio's percentage of stocks and fixed income as you approach retirement. Investors benefit from a simplified investment process and proper diversification, while removing the emotion of investing. For information about Target Date Funds, contact AGFS at 417-831-4776.

Stressor: Social Security Taxes and Less Take-Home Pay Strategy: Do Not Opt Out

The prospect of no Social Security taxes and greater take-home pay can be tempting for ministers on a tight salary. This is a topic of hot philosophical debate. Legal requirements and opinions aside, those who opt out lose the benefit of Social Security survivorship, disability, retirement, and Medicare benefits, requiring even more aggressive saving.

Statistically, however, most who have opted out still save less than those who do not. Ponder what you will do if you do not qualify for Medicare or run out of retirement savings. Considering the benefits received through Social Security versus cost, opting out may be a short-term fix, but is not a better long-term financial decision. Those who have already opted out need to save as much as possible and consider revoking their exemption at the next government-provided opportunity to minimize penalties. Richard R. Hammar, attorney for the General Council of the Assemblies of God, has his opinion along with legal advice on opting out and its requirements. This information is found in his *Church and Clergy Tax Guide*.

Stressor: How To Pay for Your Children's College Expenses Strategy: Save Only if You Are

Maxed Out in Retirement For ministers who have struggled to pay off their school loans, a child burdened with school debt is a difficult consideration. When evaluating what is right for your family, first answer these questions:

1. If I do not save anything, what other options are available? A multitude of options make a college education more affordable for anyone:

• Sweat equity, money management. Children need to learn a good work ethic and begin saving for college as soon as possible, working through high school and college. Children will value their education if they help fund it. Equip children to handle the financial stresses of college and independence by setting them on the right course.

Matching. Teach them the value of saving from a young age by matching their savings to encourage the habit. Show them the benefits of compounding.

Allowance. Do not underestimate an age-appropriate allowance as a learning opportunity. Communicate what the allowance is intended to cover. Do not rescue them when they overspend; let them learn from mistakes now when the risks are not high.

Practical budgeting. Have them sit down with you when you pay bills and balance the checkbook to learn the value of a dollar and

the importance of budgeting. Ask them what they would like to purchase or accomplish in life, and create quantifiable goals.

Model discipline. Model discipline in your purchasing and financial decisions. Teach the danger of impulse spending and the proper use of debt. Warn them of the strategies of credit card companies and the temptation of easy credit. Share with them the mistakes you made and how it impacted your life.

- *Reduced tuition*. Take advantage of college institutions, such as Central Bible College and Evangel University, who give percentage tuition discounts to students whose parents are active ministers or employed by an Assemblies of God institution under certain qualifications.
- Government grants. Depending on your income, your child may qualify for government grants that do not require repayment. For more information, visit http://studentaid. ed.gov/PORTALSWebApp/students/ english/grants.jsp and http://www. students.gov/STUGOVWebApp/Public.
- Private scholarships. Have your student start early and meet with a guidance counselor. Financial need is not the basis for all scholarships. Scholarships abound in public and private sectors, not only for high academic and athletic achievers, but also for those with particular physical attributes or ethnicities, to name a few. Do not forget essay and other contests. Corporations sponsor many of these scholarships. Search the Internet and visit Web sites, such as http://www.fastweb. com and http://www.scholarships. com. Look for scholarships in targeted schools and majors, but apply for as many as possible.

Help your student get organized. Make a spreadsheet with the scholarship, requirements, and deadline. Keep your student on track and assist where needed. While it is best to start early, it is never too late. For students with a full ride, additional scholarships **3. What about 529 Plans?** A 529 plan is a special tax-advantaged investment vehicle that receives contributions to pay the eligible future higher education expenses of a beneficiary (child or other family member). This qualified tuition plan provides special tax benefits — its

With all the tax-advantaged strategies for maximizing retirement contribution dollars, most experts recommend making saving for retirement a priority over a college education fund.

could cover other expenses, such as transportation, books, computers, and studying abroad.

• *Loans.* For those still needing assistance, loans are readily available. Start with federally sponsored loans. These typically have the lowest rates and best terms. Shop around. A college education is not a debt; it is an asset worth investing in that will have a great financial payoff and lifelong benefits.

2. Am I saving enough for retirement? With all the taxadvantaged strategies for maximizing retirement contribution dollars, most experts recommend making saving for retirement a priority over a college education fund. Borrowing against retirement for tuition is always a possibility, but retirees cannot borrow against a child's education for living expenses. For those who know how much they will need for retirement, who are maximizing contributions, who are meeting savings and investment goals, and who have extra cash, it might make sense to open a taxadvantaged college savings account.

earnings are not subject to federal taxes and often state taxes. Withdrawals for ineligible college expenses usually are subject to income tax and an additional 10 percent federal tax penalty on earnings.

There are two types of plans, with varying fees and administrative expenses: (1) a prepaid plan that purchases tuition credits at today's rates as a hedge against inflation; and (2) a savings plan that benefits from investment earnings. Funds held in 529 plans are parental assets for the purposes of financial aid and need-based programs. For more information, visit http://www.sec.gov/ investor/pubs/intro529.htm.

Stressor: Rising Healthcare Costs

Strategy: Maximize Health, Minimize Expenses

By caring for their Holy Spirit temple, ministers can have not only a better quality of life and longevity, but also a financial boost, too:

1. Lower medical insurance premiums.

2. Reduced out-of-pocket medical expenses.

3. Lower life insurance premiums. (As little as 15 pounds can push you from a standard rate to a preferred rate.)

Good money management is necessary not only to alleviate stress, but also to respond to God-given expectations. In Matthew 25:14-30, the master gave three servants talents to manage. Two servants immediately put their master's money to work while another buried his money in fear. One servant achieved a 100 percent return. He recognized his limitations, solicited expert help, and then heeded advice. The master, on his return, did not compare the servant with five talents to the servant with two talents. The amount of resources did not change the responsibility. Two met his expectations by putting their master's money to work and multiplying it. The master chastised the servant with one talent and no return, who let fear keep him from taking action.

Financial stewardship is important not just for less stressful and more fulfilling lives, but also so we can impact accounts in heavenly places. As we multiply what God has given us, God will bless us so we can lay up treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust destroys. When I finally meet our Heavenly Father face to face, and the stresses of this life are over, I want to hear, "Well done, thou good and faithful servant!" @



GERRY HINDY, president/CEO, Assemblies of God Financial Solutions, Springfield, Missouri.

To comment on this article go to *Enrichment* journal forum at http://forums.ag.org/enrichmentjournal. **online** www.enrichmentjournal.ag.org



Check out Enrichment journal's Web site for these and other great ministry resources.



inistry couples often do not know where to turn when facing difficult experiences in ministry. These ministry challenges often put stress on a minister's marriage. Don Lichi, clinical psychologist at EMERGE Ministries, and M. Wayne Benson, president, EMERGE ministries, interview two ministry couples who have experienced difficulties in ministry. What does it take to come through these difficulties with your marriage still intact? Listen as these ministry couples share their hearts and their victories.



When Two Become One — Understanding God's Plan for Marriage

BY WELLINGTON BOONE

Most couples enter marriage believing that his or her spouse is to meet his or her needs. But what is God's plan for marriage? God's plan is for couples to fulfill His will for their lives together. Our calling in marriage is to model Christ's love for the church. This involves devotion and love on the part of the husband. And God's plan is fulfilled as they serve each other.

What Are They Really Saying?

BY CLYDE W. HARVEY

Harvey, pastor of New Life Community Church in Charles City, Iowa, has heard his share of questions regarding his personal ministry



and church life in general. The pastor who jumps to conclusions regarding a question's meaning or motivation, Harvey cautions, will move away from rather than toward a solution. Basic human needs — security, economic well-being, a sense of belonging, personal recognition and control over one's life — are ministry opportunities at the root of questions that might appear confrontational.



AUDIO DISCUSSION

Character Formation in Children: Reversing the Effects of the 'Sin of the Fathers'

BY DONALD A. LICHI

"Because God has created each of us with an individual will, no parent is entirely responsible for how his or her

child turns out," notes Lichi, a psychologist at EMERGE Ministries. But a parent's impact on a child is significant, and parental commitment to godly living powerfully shapes a child's decisions for life and eternity. As parents pursue practical sanctification in each area of life (physical, intellectual, emotional, social and spiritual) godly character is passed on to the next generation.

Why Does God Baptize His People in the Holy Spirit?

BY DONALD A. JOHNS

How does the baptism in the Holy Spirit relate to the prophetic ministry of the Old Testament



prophets? The most significant role of the Old Testament prophet was to deliver

messages from God to His people. This task has not changed. God has a message to communicate to the world: He has provided salvation through Jesus Christ. The world today needs to hear this message. But it will only hear it if every believer functions as a prophet by delivering God's message. Being baptized in God's Spirit and living a life filled with the Spirit is God's provision for this task.

Prodigal in the Parsonage What do you do when One of the most excruciating experiences a ministry couple your child can face is when their son or daughter turns from turns from his or her faith. Many ministry parents wonder if the faith? they should remain in ministry. Some suffer through the embarrassment of their child's behaviors. Others hold their pain inside and do not share it with others. Hear the audio discussion of four ministry couples as they talk about their journeys with their prodigal child and how God has walked with them though this painful experience.

All photos: iStockphot

Theological Enrichment / W.E. NUNNALLY

SINDING BOOSING

A Biblical Perspective on a Popular Modern Practice

Introduction

his article discusses the popular Pentecostal/ charismatic practice of *binding and loosing* certain attitudes or dispositions, demonic spirits, and sometimes, even angels.

Despite the widespread use of these terms and the approach to dealing with the supernatural that they represent, the official AG Web site has no authoritative statement on this matter. But teachings such as this do provide opportunities for pastors and their people to exercise discernment and sound hermeneutical practices to determine the correct interpretation of the passages used to teach the practice of *binding and loosing*.

We need to address the issue of *binding and loosing* for several reasons. First, this widespread practice reflects the need for solid biblical interpretation. People often assume the biblical support for this issue rather than carefully searching Scripture. The Pentecostal Movement has always espoused the belief that Scripture alone is the foundation for all matters of "faith and practice."¹ Therefore, those who take the Bible seriously must discipline themselves to

hold all of their *beliefs* and *practices* to the scrutiny of Scripture.

Second, we need to see popular theological issues as ways to engage Scripture and develop our abilities in biblical interpretation and application. We cannot be lax in the spiritual discipline of regular Bible study. Third, God calls us to desire to know and delight to do His will (Romans 12:1; Ephesians 5:10,17; Colossians 1:9,10). The Word of God must pervade every thought, word, and action of those who wish to please God and know and do His will.

A final reason for serious consideration of this issue is concern for the spiritual health of individual Christians and the body of Christ. Teachings that do not have solid, biblical support often wrongly influence believers and lead to false doctrines and practices that do harm to the spiritual health of believers and the church. With these thoughts in mind, let me examine this popular teaching.

Statement of the Problem

In terms of frequency, the modern use of the terms *binding and loosing* is completely out of sync with the frequency of usage in the New Testament. Most Christians are surprised to learn that the verbs *bind* and *loose* only appear together twice (Matthew 16:19; 18:18). Because the same Greek word for *bind* used in these verses (*deo*) also appears in Matthew 12:29 (see also Mark 3:27), many Pentecostals and charismatics have concluded that all three passages refer to the believer's authority to *bind* rebellious and demonic spirits. What appears to be a simple, straightforward conclusion, however, is fraught with contextual, theological, and practical difficulties.

Description of the Difficulties

Despite the popular interpretation that Jesus' words, "Or how can anyone enter the strong man's house and carry off his property, unless he first binds the strong man?" (Matthew 12:29, NASB, emphasis added, compare Mark 3:27²) prescribe a sequence for exorcism, evidence elsewhere in the New Testament makes this unlikely. For example, even though the Gospel writers recorded multiple confrontations between Jesus and demonic spirits, there is no instance in the written record in which He bound a demon before He cast it out. Furthermore, such action in relationship to binding demons is not found in the Book of Acts, the Epistles, or the Book of Revelation. In comparison to the elaborate exorcistic formulas of contemporary

Jews and pagans, the words and actions of Jesus and His earliest followers are terse and to the point, "Come out!"

If Jesus was anything, He was consistent. If His first-century followers were anything, they were obedient to His teachings. If Jesus had intended to provide a description for the proper sequence of events for a successful exorcism in Matthew 12:29, He would have followed His own formula when exorcising demons. His New Testament disciples would have followed it as well.

Following the interpretative principles of *Scripture interprets Scripture* and *examining Scripture as a whole* requires that we understand Matthew 12:29 and Mark 3:27 not as a command, but rather as an analogy (an illustrative technique Jesus used regularly in all four Gospels). Satan is not a man, but similar to a rich man who must be subdued before a thief can rob his home. Satan must be disarmed before the kingdom of God can advance (cf. Matthew 12:28).

Second, the context of Matthew 16:19 and 18:18 has nothing to do with exorcism. In chapter 16, Jesus was talking about building the church (verse 18). The *keys* He gave were for *unlocking* the *kingdom of heaven* (verse 19), *not* for the *locking* (or *binding*) of the *dominion of darkness*.

In Matthew 18, *binding and loosing* does not take place in a context of exorcism, but in administering church discipline. The leaders of the church have the responsibility to determine who is allowed to remain within the new covenant community and under what conditions. If this is the case in Matthew 18 and the language ("binding and loosing") is *identical* to the language of Matthew 16, the contexts of these two passages are likely related.

In discussing the relationship between these two passages, it is important to consider the hermeneutical principle "*Scripture interprets Scripture.*" This principle requires that the unclear or disputed passage be interpreted on In terms of frequency, the modern use of the terms binding and loosing is completely out of sync with the frequency of usage in the New Testament.





W.E. NUNNALLY, Ph.D., professor of Early Judaism and Christian Origins, Evangel University, Springfield, Missouri



Nowhere in Scripture does God give believers the task of binding Satan or demons. Instead, God and His angelic intermediaries alone handle this activity. the basis of the clear passage. In this instance, Matthew 18:18 functions as the *clear* and undisputed passage.

Third, when people incorrectly interpret and apply Matthew 16 and 18, theological and practical problems inevitably arise. For example, nowhere in Scripture (as in Jewish and Christian literature outside the Bible) does God give believers the task of *binding* Satan or demons. Instead, God and His angelic intermediaries alone handle this activity (Revelation 20:1,2).

In recent times, the interpretation of *loosing* has sometimes made reference to a believer's prerogative to allow demonic forces to exercise a certain amount of freedom. More often, however, loosing is applied to releasing a spirit of revival or intercession. In extreme instances, the spirit of Elijah or some other biblical figure is "loosed." With respect to the first three interpretations, it is more appropriate to attribute such initiatives to the work of the Holy Spirit rather than to the dictates of man. Regarding the last interpretation, the language and the concept it represents border on necromancy (interaction involving the dead) and are spiritually unhealthy and biblically inappropriate (compare Leviticus 19:26 and Deuteronomy 18:10,11). Interaction involving departed saints is within the purview of God alone.

Fourth, in many circles it has been in vogue to practice the *binding* of certain attitudes or personal attributes that are labeled spirits. Thus, parents are often encouraged to bind the spirit of rebellion in their unruly children. Similarly, we often hear well-meaning people bind the spirit of unbelief over persons or groups. As spiritual as this language sounds, it belies an unbiblical frame of reference. God created people as free moral agents.3 He gives us the capacity and responsibility to choose. God will not answer a prayer that requires Him to violate this aspect of human nature that He intentionally created. When we pray like this, we place ourselves outside the Scriptures that are to function as our only rule for faith and practice. Once departure from the parameters of Scripture occurs, further departures become more likely, such as the belief and practice of commanding angels that some have embraced.

What Is the Proper Interpretation and Application?

Now that we have discussed what Matthew

16:19 and 18:18 *do not* mean, we need to discuss what they *do* mean.

First, to understand the *binding* and *loosing* terminology in Matthew 16:19, we must begin with Matthew 18:18. When the principle of *immediate literary context* is employed, the meaning of this passage becomes clear because it contains numerous contextual indicators. The elements of a "brother [who] sins" (verse 15), "reprove him" (verse 15), "witnesses" (verse 16), "church" (verse 17), and excommunication ("let him be to you as a Gentile and a tax-gatherer," (verse 17, NASB) leave no doubt that the passage is not about exorcism, but excommunication. In this context, verse 18 occurs: "Whatever you shall bind on earth shall be bound in heaven; and whatever you loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven" (NASB).

When Matthew 18:15–20 is taken as a whole, Jesus was authorizing church leaders to follow a specific process to preserve the purity and witness of the church. They are deputized to protect the reputation of God and His church, and, if need be, dismiss members who blatantly persist in sinful lifestyles. Their decisions are authoritative (binding) and final.

Lest we take the traditional translation of these words to the extreme, we need to note that this text does not grant unbridled human influence



on the decrees of God. Authoritative Greek reference grammars note that we need to render verse 18: "Whatever you shall bind on earth shall have [already] been bound in heaven; and whatever you loose on earth shall have [already] been loosed in heaven." Christian leaders are to *reflect* the will of God in their decisionmaking, not *generate* it. As with many other Scripture passages, this one teaches us as His servants to do *His will* rather than requiring that He do *our will* (Matthew 6:10; 7:21; 26:39; Romans 12:1; Ephesians 5:10,17; Colossians 1:9,10).

The final two verses of this passage provide further evidence of the judicial (versus exorcistic) nature of the passage, "Again I say to you, that if two of you agree on earth about anything that they may ask, it shall be done for them by My Father who is in heaven. For where two or three have gathered together in My name, there I am in their midst" (Matthew 18:19,20, NASB).

Usually these verses have been used to guarantee answers to prayer requests offered by two or three believers "who are in agreement" with one another. But the words, "Again I say," clearly fuse this teaching with the previous instruction. In other words, Jesus was reiterating the same truth He communicated in verse 18. The "agree...about anything that they may ask" (verse 19) has limits defined by the context in



which the phrase occurs. Because the broader context concerns church discipline, it is likely that Jesus meant that God is willing to answer prayers for strength, wisdom, insight, courage, and impartiality for the confronters/discipliners and for conviction, contriteness, responsiveness, repentance, and forgiveness for the sinner.

The guarantee of God's presence among the "two or three...gathered together in [His] name" (verse 20) fits perfectly in the judicial/disciplinary context. The "two or three" mentioned are not arbitrary numbers. They refer to the "witnesses" whom the judge could call forward to establish the sinful words or deeds of the accused by their eyewitness testimony (see Deuteronomy 17:6,7; 19:15–21; 1 Timothy 5:19). The two or three Jesus mentions in Matthew 18:20 no doubt refer to the witnesses in verse 16.

These words carry a promise and a warning. The promise is God's guarantee that no leaders or witnesses will have to go through this difficult experience alone or in their own strength. They will experience God's presence, authorization, and empowerment despite the strain of the situation. The warning, however, is seen in the fact none less than God oversees the process. His earthly representatives must remember His personal holiness, righteousness, justice, and impartiality when they pass judgment. Their decisions *must* reflect the heavenly decree.⁴

Encouragement and challenge such as this was common in the early centuries. We can see this in a passage from rabbinic literature that provides further biblical foundation: "The judges should know whom they judge, and in Whose presence they judge, and Who it is Who judges with them. And the witnesses should know about whom they give testimony, and in the presence of Whom they give testimony, and with Whom they give testimony, and Who it is Who is a witness with them, since it is said, Then both the men who have the dispute shall stand before the Lord' [Deuteronomy 19:17, NASB], and it is said, 'God takes His stand in His own congregation; He judges in the midst of the rulers' [Psalm 82:1, NASB].5

Second, after we establish that the *binding and loosing* Jesus commanded in Matthew 18:18 concerns church discipline, we can move to 16:19. The context is less obvious, but the unusual yet overlapping language supplies ample reason to suspect that the context is similar to that of 18:18. The fact the verbs *bind* Once departure from the parameters of Scripture occurs, further departures become more likely, such as the practice of commanding angels that some have embraced.



In rabbinic literature, the terms bind and loose refer to the authority those in leadership have to forbid (bind) and permit (loose) certain practices or behaviors. and *loose* appear in both passages and nowhere else in Scripture suggests that the contexts are related. Other criteria will need to be satisfied, however, before we can reach a conclusion.

When we look at the *immediate literary context*, indicators (though possibly less obvious) suggest similarity of context with Matthew 18. For example, in 16:18, Jesus speaks of "build[ing His] ... church." Verse 19 introduces the metaphor of the "keys of the kingdom of heaven." Because of the genitival clarifying phrase "of the kingdom of heaven," the keys must refer to authority to determine admittance and nonadmittance into the fellowship of the church. It is at this point in the verse that the phrase in question appears, "and whatever you shall bind on earth shall be bound in heaven, and whatever you shall loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven" (16:19).

The grammatical construction here is the same as that in 18:18. Therefore, as in 18:18, we can more accurately translate it, "whatever you shall bind on earth shall have [already] been bound in heaven; and whatever you loose on earth shall have [already] been loosed in heaven." In this text, Jesus commanded church leadership to reflect the will of God and not their own with respect to whom they should receive as a member "in good standing" of new covenant community.



Third, in addition to the fact 16:19 and 18:18 share the same terminology and context, literature relevant to this discussion found outside the Bible supports interpreting these texts in the manner suggested above. The verbal couplet *to bind* and *to loose* occurs so often in rabbinic literature that it appears Jesus was employing terminology His culture would easily understand. Here are three examples:

• "During the war of Vespasian, [earlier Rabbis] *bound* the garlands of the bridegrooms and the [playing of] bells. During the war of Quietus, they *bound* the garlands of the brides and that a man should teach his son Greek. In the last war [the Bar Kochba Revolt], they *bound* the bride to ride in a litter within her village. But our Rabbis *loosed* the bride to ride in a litter within her village."⁶

• "If a man made a vow to abstain from milk, he is *loosed* [with respect to] whey. Rabbi Yosi *binds* it. ...If a man made a vow to abstain from meat, he is *loosed* [with respect to] broth [in which it was cooked]...[but] Rabbi Judah *binds* it. ...If a man made a vow to abstain from wine, he is *loosed* [with respect to] a cooked dish that has the taste of wine."⁷

• "If a man vowed to abstain from vegetables, he is *loosed* [with respect to] gourds, but Rabbi Akiva *binds* them."⁸

These passages from rabbinic literature confirm that the terms *bind* and *loose*, when occurring together, refer to the authority those in leadership have to *forbid* (*bind*) and *permit* (*loose*) certain practices or behaviors. Furthermore, these passages do not concern *binding* or *loosing* demonic spirits, angelic spirits, or even people's attitudes.

What, then, is the *difference* between 16:19 and 18:18? Based on the contextual data already discussed, it appears that chapter 16 refers to the authority of church leadership to forbid or permit *entry* into the covenant community. Chapter 18, on the other hand, refers to the authority of the leadership to forbid or permit *continued membership* in the covenant community. While this may sound heavyhanded and judgmental to some, pastoral staffs and boards of deacons/elders function today in that way when churches are functioning in healthy, biblical patterns.⁹

A fourth step by which to ensure proper interpretation is to compare one's conclusions with a broad spectrum of scholarship on the passage in question. This step should not be dismissed lightly as bowing to the interpretations of the majority. Rather, serious students of the Bible must employ this step as an additional safety net or as a system of checks and balances. This step is much like scientists repeating an experiment and obtaining the same results. In this instance, it is significant that an overwhelming consensus of scholars, liberal and conservative, Catholic and Protestant, Christian and Jewish, have embraced the basic interpretation given above.¹⁰

Conclusions

We can reach several helpful and practical conclusions from a careful study of *binding and loosing*. First, the Scriptures are instructive, encouraging, and liberating when they are properly understood and applied. The opposite can also be true. When we unintentionally misconstrue or intentionally twist the Scriptures, well-meaning people are often hurt and sometimes even brought into fear or spiritual bondage (see also Matthew 23:2–4; Acts 20:29,30; 1 Timothy 4:1; 2 Timothy 2:2–18; Titus 1:9–11; 2 Peter 2:1; 3:16,17; Jude 10,11, etc.).

Second, the time-tested hermeneutical principles of *immediate literary context, grammatical context, Scripture interprets Scripture, the whole of Scripture,* and the safety net of a *community of reputable scholars* are good tools for biblical interpretation. None of these approaches is beyond the reach of most people. When we faithfully employ these principles, they enable us to come closer to the intended meaning of Scripture.

Third, the proper interpretation and application of these passages help us focus on the straightforward approach of Jesus and apostolic Christianity whose only charge to demonic forces was, "Come out!" It is important for today's church to rediscover that demons do not respond to our elaborate tactics, pronouncements, confessions, and rebukes. We most successfully impact our world when we do what Scripture calls us to do and trust God to do what we cannot do: set people free.

Fourth, when we understand these Scriptures, they support what pastors and boards have been doing for hundreds of years. If the Bible is *our only rule for faith and practice*, we need to have solid biblical warrant for practices such as vetting applicants for church membership and administering church discipline. What a blessing it is to have the teachings of Jesus guide our thoughts and actions rather than tradition, personal preferences, and popular practices. Ø

NOTES

- 1. Preamble to the *Statement of Fundamental Truths*. Visit http:// www.ag.org/top/beliefs/Statement_of_Fundamental_Truths/ sft_full.cfm.
- 2. Scripture quotations taken from the New American Standard Bible®, Copyright © 1960, 1962, 1963, 1968, 1971, 1972, 1973, 1975, 1977, 1995 by The Lockman Foundation. Used by permission (http://www.Lockman.org).
- See my articles "The Sins of Generational Curse," *Enrichment* 12, no.4 (2007): 114;"Defective Views of Salvation," *Enrichment* 13, no.3 (2008): 128; and "Eternal Security," *Enrichment* 13, no. 4 (2008): 122.
- 4. See the discussion on the proper translation and interpretation of verse 18 above. Also, see my article "Judging without being Judgmental," *Enrichment* 2, no. 4 (1997): 92,or online at http://enrichmentjournal.ag.org/199704/092_judging.cfm.
- 5. Tosefta Sanhedrin 1:9.
- 6. Mishnah Sotah 9:14, emphasis added.
- 7. Mishnah Nedarim 6:5–7, emphasis added.
- 8. Ibid., 7:1, emphasis added.
- 9. Again, see "Judging without being Judgmental."
- For a survey of positions and a working bibliography on the subject, see W.D. Davies and Dale C. Allison, Jr., A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Gospel According to Saint Matthew (Edinburgh: T & T Clark, 1991) 2:636–641; Donald A. Hagner, Matthew 14–28 (Dallas: Word, 1995), 472,473; Craig S. Keener, A Commentary on the Gospel of Matthew (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1999), 429,430,454.

When we faithfully employ time-tested hermeneutical principles, they enable us to come closer to the intended meaning of Scripture.

The Greatest Challenges of Pastoral Care / LARRY E. HAZELBAKER

What Pastors Can Do To Help Couples Affected by Adultery

Even though the adulterer is repentant, it is impossible to undo the act of adultery.

iStockphot



• he Word of God is replete with examples of sexual misconduct and is clear about the price people pay for such sin (Proverbs 6:27–29; 7:1–23). What lies at the end of

the road of an affair? An adulterous relationship usually results in a loss of family, reputation, job, self-respect/dignity, trust, and a relationship with God. Furthermore, a spouse will always question the loyalty and commitment of the spouse who had the affair: *If he is capable of cheating, will he cheat on me again?*

At the beginning of an affair the relationship between these two people seems subtle, nonthreatening, honest, and harmless; but the ties between them only grow and become stronger. The lure is enticing and, in most cases, irresistible. Once a person decides to bite, he is hooked. (*See sidebar Four Stages of the Start of the Affair.*)

Affairs usually do not just happen. According to Andy Stanley, a person crosses the line of



LARRY E. HAZELBAKER, PH.D., is an ordained Assemblies of God minister, professor of psychology, and chairperson of the behavioral and social sciences department at Southeastern University, Lakeland, Florida. He is also founder and president of Harbor Institute, Inc., a nonprofit organization that ministers to ministers and their families.

adultery once he makes a series of small, unwise choices. There is also a psychological factor. Alfred Adler's theory (brand) of psychology says that people have a natural tendency to possess feelings of inferiority. His theory proposes that all people suffer from these feelings and constantly strive to overcome them.

In my experience as a counselor, I have found that feelings of inferiority are often the reason behind sexual misconduct. A person tends to gravitate toward whatever gives him a sense of self-worth.

Most people I have counseled who had an affair did not *intend* for it to happen. But from my 30 years of ministry and counseling experience, I have discovered that most people have an affair because of one of two reasons. First, a spouse is not happy in the marriage. Neglect in a relationship tends to cause an environment in which an affair can begin. Second, people tend to move toward others who validate them. Sex is a strong source of validation.

So what are pastors to do when a member of their congregation commits adultery?

What are the guidelines for counseling those who are having an affair?

People in an affair have different reasons for coming to see their pastor. First, someone learns of the affair. I am always surprised when people are surprised that someone caught them in their affair. Why would anyone who engages in an inappropriate relationship with another person believe he could do so without ever getting caught? At some point the affair will end — usually when one of the partners in the affair breaks it off. The person who breaks it off invariably tells someone. Be sure your sins will find you out.

Second, one of the individuals feels guilty and begins to pursue absolution. He usually ends up at the pastor's door. Regardless of how or when the person comes, the pastor's role is to first lead the person to repentance, then deal with the outcome of the affair. This is never a pleasant undertaking. In fact, sometimes it can be dangerous. If a pastor discerns that the offended spouse is violent, he may need to call reinforcements, or even the authorities.

Once the couple (the adulterer or adulteress and the offended spouse) turns to the pastor for help, the pastor will need to deal with the couple as a whole. Some of my colleagues differ from me on the issue of transparency, but I am adamant about transparency. To say what one doesn't know won't hurt him is wrong. The Word of God says, "The truth will set you free" (John 8:32). Discussing the affair openly will not be pleasant, but the process can set one free.

What is the counseling approach when the guilty spouse is repentant?

Whether the offended spouse is able to forgive and move on depends on the person. Christians often believe they need to forgive and forget. This is not always easy, nor should it be. Jesus offered the ability to forgive, forget, and move on when He granted the victim of a protracted affair permission to divorce the adulterer.

Even though the adulterer is repentant, it is impossible to undo the act of adultery. The most a pastor can hope for is to show the couple what they will lose through divorce and encourage reconciliation.

Even if the adulterer is repentant, sometimes

Four Stages of the Start of the Affair¹



Step One: Bonding

This step begins by people simply talking. Talking creates bonds as they share interests, jobs, careers, family, and marital problems. Usually, one does not know he is in this stage. As people talk, this creates more opportunity for connecting to each other's special issues. As they get to know one another better, the conversations become more intimate.

Step Two: Secrecy

This step becomes evident when each person stops telling other people about their special relationship (bond). Their secrecy increases their bond. The couple has confidence in each other; therefore, they only discuss things peculiar to their lives. No one else will understand, so they begin to meet in secret to discuss their special interests.

Step Three: Dating

Once the secrecy begins, meeting each other in inappropriate places begins — coffee shops, bookstores. At first, openness seems to be the best policy because after all, it's just coffee. Creating reasons why they need to meet is also part of this step. They will invent issues and/or problems that *require* them to see each other.

Step Four: Intimacy

The relationship moves from a friendship to an affair. Usually, the couple believes intimacy/sex will bring total relational closure. Seldom does one go this far into an affair without it ending with this act. Paradoxically, this act at some point causes the people to recognize that the relationship has gone too far, but it is too late.

LARRY E. HAZELBAKER, Ph.D., Lakeland, Florida

NOTE

 Melody Roberts, "The Start of the Affair — Four Stages," Ezine Articles, http://ezinearticles.com/?The-Start-of-the-Affair---Four-Stages&id=573596 (accessed April 28, 2008).

the affair is enough to send the marriage into bankruptcy. If both the offender and the victim are willing to salvage the marriage, the pastor must decide whether he can commit to a long-term counseling process.

If the pastor commits to providing long-term counseling, he needs to understand that emotions are incredibly high during this process and often border on mental illness. During this time, a pastor might suggest a time of separation. If the adulterer and the victim continue to reside in the same house, they will constantly be reminded of the transgression. The environment will be unhealthy and conflict will grow. Pastors often become frustrated when people do not process quickly enough. They may push the offended and offender to come together too soon. Depending on the extent of any mental instability on the part of either spouse, the pastor might recommend that they ask their physician for medication to ease their anxiety. Their separation and possibly medication can help them achieve some sense of mental stability.

As long as people stay in an environment that produces anxiety, they will have limited ability to rationally deal with the important issues that need to be discussed. This is similar to trying to counsel an alcoholic while he is inebriated. It will not work. Each person must be rational if a pastor is to counsel the couple through to reconciliation. Each spouse must be able to think clearly.

In pastoral counseling there are several different approaches to helping mend relationships if the offender is repentant and the offended is willing. One approach suggests the offender reveal every piece of information regarding the affair with a counselor present. This helps the victim consume the information slowly and carefully. People also possess a gift of imagination. They often react to imagined events as though they were true. Undisclosed details, no matter how small, can become the source for vivid imaginations in the offended spouse's



According to Reginald Adkins, adultery has at least two major impacts on the children of an adulterous parent.¹ First, it cheats them of their sense of security. Second, it complicates their futures by creating lifelong scares. They tend to

be insecure and always suspicious of those wanting to enter into a committed relationship with them. They experience uncertainty and anxiety. These children are more likely to have higher divorce rates, become teen parents, have difficulty in school, and have behavioral and psychological problems. These children need opportunities to process the uncertainty caused by the adulterous affair. Counseling may be required for children whose parents had an affair. It is terrible to have one's world shattered. An adulterous affair shatters a child's world.

LARRY E. HAZELBAKER, Ph.D., Lakeland, Florida

NOTE

1. Reginald Adkins,"How Adultery Impacts Children," Elemental Truths, http://elementaltruths.blogspot. com/2006/10/how-adultery-impacts-children.html (accessed April 28, 2008). mind. The offended spouse, however, needs to determine when enough is enough. He or she must have opportunity to hear, consume, and react to as much information as needed to begin closure.

The other approach is: "What one doesn't know won't hurt him." As I stated previously, I disagree with this approach. Again, the offended spouse must determine how to best work through the problem.

One major irreversible mistake is to make the offended spouse feel guilty for not being able to forget the incident. We are not God. We can forgive, but I have never met an offended spouse who has completely forgotten the offense. Those who claim they forgive and forget usually redirect their anger or hurt by living in denial and punishing the offender by withholding intimacy and sexual relations.

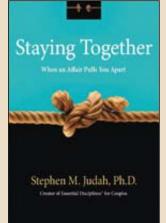
When does the pastor make a referral?

If a pastor does not have the time and energy to devote to a long-term process and be a 24/7 emotional supporter, he needs to refer the couple to a qualified marriage and family therapist. Also, if the problem becomes greater than the pastor's ability to solve, it is time to make a referral. The couple may need to see a counselor who specializes in marital counseling and divorce mediation for the consistent and effective counseling needed for healing to take place.

Pastors often become frustrated when people do not process quickly enough. They may push the offended and offender to come together too soon. We must remember that the primary role of a pastor is to get people saved and teach them to apply God's Word to their lives. To expect a pastor to be all things to all people is unrealistic. The pastor who overextends often finds himself overwhelmed. If he regularly overextends, the possibility for burnout becomes a reality. The American Association of Christian Counselors Web site (http://www.aacc.net) can help a pastor locate a qualified Christian counselor in most areas of the United States. Also, the Office of Ministerial Enrichment at 417-862-2781, ext. 3014, provides a list of qualified counselors throughout the nation.

What is the counseling approach when the guilty spouse is unrepentant?

If the adulterer is unrepentant, the pastor might want to refer the spouse to a counselor. If the pastor has copious amounts of time, he may



Staying Together When an Affair Pulls You Apart **STEPHEN M. JUDAH** (InterVarsity Press, 197 pp., paperback)

Reports of infidelity and divorce are common, and the numbers are staggering — both inside and outside the body of Christ. Many pastors and counseling staff ask: What can we do about this relationally destructive behavior?

Staying Together When an Affair Pulls You Apart presents intricate and detailed insight into the causes of infidelity and options for treatment. Judah offers a thought-provoking perspective of the various reasons for betrayal. The book presents aspects of the diverse perceptions and conditions that often foster unfaithfulness.

Judah shares hopeful assistance for what he calls a "descent into wholeness," providing a comprehensive course of action for restoring relationships. He thoroughly explains *conflict resolution*, where counselors explore problems to generate solutions, in his "mental process of reconciliation" and in his realignment process. He promotes "cultivating the positive" and "creating the possible" as logical progressions for rebuilding relationships.

Overall, the book is a salient resource that provides an intellectual, professional, and biblical approach to infidelity. The author's detail makes it valuable for the professional counselor, pastor, or lay counselor who desires a deep understanding of the complexity of infidelity. As a licensed professional counselor and as a licensed minister, I find Judah's book significantly important for combating the invasive effects of affairs.

---- Reviewed by David L. Culbert, MA, LPC, CSAC, Springfield, Missouri

choose to see the victim regularly (usually one to two times per week) to provide emotional and spiritual help. Those who seek counsel usually find healing.

If the adulterer is a member of your congregation and will not repent and reconcile to his spouse, but continues in the affair, then it is necessary to excommunicate him from the body of Christ.

Pastors can also refer the victim to an attorney who will help with legal issues related to divorce and separation if it is certain the marriage is irreconcilable. As stated before, this is a time when a person's suffering can lead to his forming a type of mental illness. It is hard, if not impossible, to think rationally when one finds his spouse has been unfaithful. A person in crisis tends to make poor choices. Therefore, it is imperative that spiritual counsel and a good Christian attorney are present while the victim is on the road to recovery.

What about church discipline?

A pastor must approach this area gently. Church members involved in lay ministry in the local church must be held to a high standard. If they've committed adultery or other grievous sins, they should not be allowed to participate in ministry until they undergo a process of restoration. A repentant man or woman who commits adultery should not be allowed to continue to sit on a church board or teach a Sunday School class. We would not allow an usher to collect the offering if he were caught stealing. Likewise, we should not fill important ministry positions with people who have strayed outside God-given moral boundaries. Instead, offenders need to demonstrate to the body of Christ that they are in submission to the authority of church leadership and are willing to accept church discipline. It will be up to church leadership to determine if the offender can serve as a greeter, help with church maintenance, or other lesser positions in terms of influence and responsibility.

Finally, relationships are powerful entities. The most powerful relationship is a marriage fortified by a strong spiritual and physical bond. Unfortunately, most marriages have neither. To have great marriages, we must recognize that any weakness in our spirit or our physical relationship can and will be exploited by the enemy of our souls. We need instruction on these areas early in our lives. Sadly, when many realize their need for such instruction, it is often too late. @



To have great marriages, we must recognize that any weakness in our spirit or our physical relationship can and will be exploited by the enemy of our souls.

Managing Your Ministry / TIM McGRAW

Year-end Meetings: Do They Do More Harm Than Good?



Center (Assemblies of God), Madera, California

y wife attended a dinner with a group of pastors' wives. During their conversation the subject of year-end meetings came up. One woman said, "Our church doesn't hold year-end meetings anymore." She continued, "To this day, I still have hurtful memories of ugly church meetings that go back to my childhood."

Another wife quickly added, "We don't hold them either for the same reason."

Later that evening my wife told me she was envious of these women because they no longer face the year-end meeting — a meeting described by one Christian leader as, *the annual ambush*.

During our 24 years of public ministry, my wife and I have endured our share of painful experiences. I doubt we are alone in how we feel about these meetings. In fact, many pastors probably approach the year-end meeting with dread, if not anxiety. Why do pastors feel this way? Perhaps they have been blindsided too many times by what I call the *ugly side of church*. I am talking about:

• The loose cannon whose ill-timed salvo leaves the congregation shell-shocked.

• The wounded board nominee who has lost yet another election.

• The contentious or controversial spirit that robs the membership of the faith to see what God accomplished the previous year.

• The pastors who feel frustrated, even hand-cuffed, by negative patterns that resurface annually.

Does this sound familiar? The apostle Paul chastised the Corinthian believers when he said, "Your meetings do more harm than good" (1 Corinthians 11:17). What a sober indictment. We could easily apply this same observation to today's church concerning the way we conduct our year-end meetings.

Scripture shows that we must conduct every church gathering, regardless of the purpose worship, fellowship, electing officers, or conducting a picnic — with the goal of building up the Body. Paul is emphatic on this point, "Whenever you come together ... let all things be done for edification" (1 Corinthians 14:26, NKJV).¹ In 1 Corinthians 14 (NKJV), Paul uses *edification* four times (verses 3,5,12,26), *edifies* two times (verse 4), and *edified* once (verse 17) to make his point. Thus, the apostle underscores what needs to be the governing principle for church meetings.

No meeting should do more harm than

http://forums.ag.org/

enrichment journal

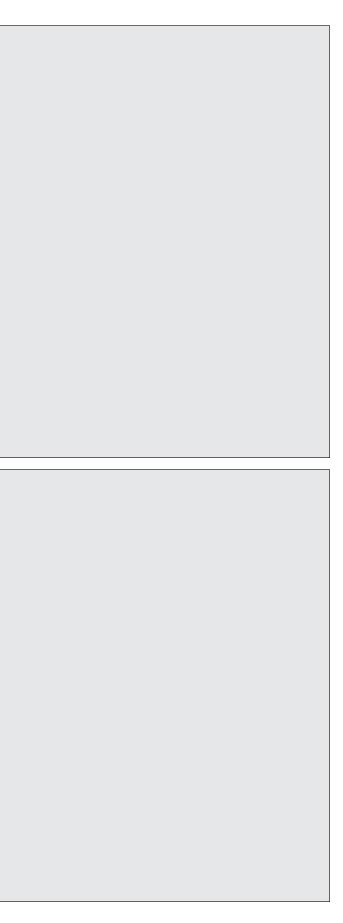
good, including the year-end meeting. Does the annual meeting pass the *edification test?* Do believers leave strengthened or weakened? These questions are worthy of a leader's reflection. Unfortunately, I have seen good-hearted, sacrificing saints leave the sanctuary with egg on their faces. This should not happen. It is time to rethink, even reform, the year-end meeting.

Like many pastors, I attempted to make this meeting positive by calling it a *celebration*. While I approve this name change, I have realized that the church needs something deeper. Many churches have negative memories hammered into their corporate psyche. The church does not easily forget these memories. A pastor cannot offset years of bad experiences through cosmetic change alone.

No one can rectify years of annual ugliness by putting a new poster on an old billboard. Could troubles associated with year-end meetings reveal a deeper, more systemic problem? Could a democratic-assert-my-rights mentality be fundamentally at odds with the humility and submission incumbent on God's people? Are these two approaches incompatible, irreconcilable? I think so. Otherwise, how does one explain the church member who suddenly feels a freedom, indeed, a right to assert himself at the year-end meeting in a way he never would in a church service or any other spiritual gathering? How does one explain the angry tone of a church member who sounds more like the world than like the church? How does one reconcile the *spirit of accusation* (often targeted at leadership) with the ministry of the Holy Spirit? Is this what God wants — even one time a year? I think not.

Most pastors are willing to accept the heat and pressure that comes with the call. These are raw materials for growth and maturity. Most pastors promote healthy discourse. "Iron sharpens iron, so one man sharpens another" (Proverbs 27:17). In fact, good leadership regularly communicates with the congregation, not just once a year at the annual meeting.

Leadership can avoid many problems through healthy communication. Rick Warren says, "People are down on what they are not up on." Pastoral leadership owes the membership regular communication. If pastors are not communicating consistently, they should not be surprised when church members become disgruntled. Because communication is a key to good leadership, pastors need to accept this responsibility.



Pastors whose church polity requires a yearend meeting cannot afford to be naïve. People are at stake. To allow unhealthy patterns to occur year after year at year-end meetings is to risk disillusioning new Christians, discrediting pastoral authority, and disrespecting the church of God (see 1 Corinthians 3:16; 1:10). Unfortunately, this happens more than we would like to admit.

Is there a way out of the malaise? Can yearend meetings honor Christ and edify people? Yes. There is a better way to conduct this

meeting, and many churches are making adjustments. Recently, a denominational official told me, "Our polity is 50 years old, and it needs to be tweaked." What are churches doing to improve year-end meetings and move them in a more edifying direction?

Incorporate the Year-end Meeting into the Worship Service

Many churches see the value of tying the yearend meeting to their worship life. They realize it is wise to make decisions in a warm and worshipful atmosphere. They have learned the hard way that it is difficult to stimulate faith or celebrate in a cold and sterile environment. Unfortunately, the name annual business meeting hardly gets one's blood flowing, and it does nothing for young people. (How many of them are at the meeting?) By integrating the year-end meeting into a worship service, churches have a much richer atmosphere for making important decisions. One caution: Changing the name of the meeting to *celebration* does not guarantee a change of atmosphere. The setting is, by far, more important than the name.

Use Affirmative, Not Elective, Ballots

Winners and losers may be the American way, but in the church, losers means wounded saints. How many board nominees lose an election (maybe for the fourth year in a row), and everyone feels the pain of their rejection? After the meeting is over, saints awkwardly move past these people because they do not know what to say. Then after suffering public embarrassment, nominees walk away, nursing fresh wounds that may take months to heal. Is this God's way? No. This is why many churches are now using affirmative ballots. The affirmation ballot presupposes that the church does a thorough screening process before it presents leaders to the congregation. Then, whatever method the church uses, such

as drawing qualified names from a hat, or checking yes or no on a ballot, the congregation affirms the new leader or leaders.

Screen the Agenda, Disallowing or Restricting the *Open Floor*

This screening is not designed to stifle communication, but to protect the congregation from those who would use the meeting to vent their feelings. One Christian leader describes the open floor of a year-end meeting as an opportunity for sin. What a telling description. Unfortunately, what he says is often true, and many pastors have the scars to prove it. The open floor allows people to make unscreened comments to the membership. At best, this can be awkward; at worst, it can be divisive. The unrest the congregation feels often lingers long after the meeting is over. To address this need, some churches require people to submit an agenda item in writing. Leadership screens the item before they present it to the floor. Screening the agenda is one way to restrain a loose cannon from destroying a meeting. One ugly comment or one accusation can destroy the positive elements of the service. This kind of ugliness disheartens faithful members and disillusions new Christians. If screening the agenda seems restrictive, remember, the stakes are high.

Revise the Constitution and Bylaws

A revision does not mean throwing the baby out with the bathwater. Proverbs warns against moving an ancient boundary stone. Corporate documents serve an important function, but they may need evaluation and adjustment. Bylaws need to serve the present and future needs of the church, not just encapsulate the past. To adjust or tweak the constitution and bylaws is not to commit a sacrilege, act in rebellion, or breach a trust. It is to recognize that yesterday's polity may need updating to serve today's need.

So, I cast my vote. Let's reform our year-end meetings. Let's have meetings that honor Christ, edify believers, and testify of God's Spirit; meetings that build faith, affirm leaders, and cast vision for the future; and, meetings that do good and not harm.

NOTE

1. Scripture quotations marked NKJV are taken from the New King James Version. Copyright © 1982 by Thomas Nelson, Inc. Used by permission. All rights reserved.

Could a democraticassert-my-rights mentality be fundamentally at odds with the humility and submission incumbent on God's people?

Clergy, Church, & Law / RICHARD R. HAMMAR

Church Security: Does Your Church Need a Security Guard?

In deciding if criminal conduct on a land-

owner's premises was foreseeable most courts

• How similar the conduct was to the con-

rences to indicate that the landowner knew or should have known about them.

We must consider these factors together in

determining whether criminal conduct is fore-

necessary to show foreseeability lessens as the

at issue increases. The frequent occurrence of

similarity of the previous crimes to the incident

property crimes in the vicinity is not as indicative

of foreseeability as the less frequent occurrence

of personal crimes on the landowner's property

itself. The court must weigh the evidence using

Can a church be liable for deaths or injuries

caused by an armed assailant as a result of a

failure to employ security guards or police officers? Most churches do not employ such persons.

Does this make them liable for shooting ram-

pages that occur on their premises? No court

decision, but a few courts have addressed this

ers. These cases suggest that a church has no

of "heightened foreseeability of third party

similar incidents or other indications of a

assaults on church property."

question in cases involving other property own-

legal duty to hire security guards except in cases

criminal activity on the premises" due to "prior

reasonably foreseeable risk of violent criminal

Hiring one or more security guards is an

expensive practice that a church can justify only

has addressed this question in a published

all the factors.

seeable. The frequency of previous crimes

• What publicity did the media give the occur-

Steps you can take to manage the risk of violent acts

duct on the property.

Article summary ost churches in America are safe places. While incidents of shootings on church property are shocking, they are rare,

averaging one or two per year. But because of the *open-access* policy of most churches, churches remain easy targets for violent acts. While we cannot prevent such acts, church leaders can take steps to manage the risk.

Just 4 days after a gunman killed eight people in a Nebraska mall in December 2007, another gunman killed two people and injured three others at a Colorado church. Earlier that day the same gunman had killed two people at a Colorado missions training facility. These events shocked the nation and sparked an intense debate within many churches over the need for security guards. This article will review recent incidents of shootings on church property, address several legal issues associated with various security measures, and conclude with an assessment of steps church leaders can take to manage the risk.

Church Liability

Generally, property owners have no duty to protect others from the criminal acts of third parties who are not subject to their control. But there are exceptions. For example, property owners have a duty to use ordinary care to protect *invitees* from criminal acts of third parties if the owner knows or has reason to know of an *unreasonable and foreseeable risk of harm* to invitees. Persons on church property to attend religious services or other scheduled activities generally are considered invitees, whether members or visitors, since they are on the premises by reason of an actual or implicit invitation.



RICHARD R. HAMMAR, J.D., LL.M., CPA, serves as legal counsel to the Assemblies of God, and is editor of the *Church Law and Tax Report* newsletter. He has written more than 50 books on church legal and tax issues, including *Pastor, Church and Law*. This article is excerpted from the March-April 2008 edition of *Church Law and Tax Report* newsletter. A copy of the full article may be obtained by calling 1-800-222-1840. Copyright 2008 by Richard R. Hammar.

America are safe places.While incidents of s on church property us, they are rare, have focused on the following factors: • Whether any criminal conduct previously occurred on or near the property. • How recently and how often similar crimes occurred.



Property owners have a duty to protect invitees from criminal acts if the owner knows of an unreasonable and foreseeable risk of harm to invitees.

> Comment on this article http://forums.ag.org/ enrichment journal

by a high degree of foreseeability that a shooting or other violent criminal act will occur on church property.

If a church decides to hire security guards, can it be liable for deaths and injuries that they cause, or fail to prevent, on the ground that the church was negligent in selecting the guards? To illustrate, assume that an armed assailant on church property shoots a woman despite the fact the church employs a security guard. The woman sues the church, claiming that the church was negligent in selecting its security guard. She points out that the guard was not a police officer, had no law enforcement training, was not licensed, and had only minimal training in handling a firearm. Is it possible that the church is responsible for her injuries under these circumstances? While no court has addressed this question in a published decision involving a church, a few have addressed this issue in other contexts. These cases suggest that a church may be liable on the basis of negligent hiring for injuries caused by, or not prevented by, a security guard if the church failed to exercise reasonable care in investigating the competency of the guard before hiring him. The church, however, can reduce this risk by exercising reasonable care in selecting a security guard. As will be noted later, a church can best demonstrate the exercise of reasonable care by hiring only uniformed, off-duty police officers as security guards.

Churches that hire security guards may be liable for deaths and injuries caused by the negligence of their guards — even if a church did not have a legal duty to hire security guards because criminal acts on church property were not foreseeable. As one court has observed, "We do not hold that business owners owe any duty to the public to provide security services generally. We simply find that where a business owner undertakes to provide security services, he remains liable as though he directly employed the security personnel, regardless of whether they are technically employed by an independent entity." The court noted that "the majority of jurisdictions that have considered this issue have reached the same conclusion [and] have recognized the existence of this specific nondelegable duty, either explicitly or by imposing vicarious liability on a store for the intentional torts of independently contracted security guards regardless of the nature of the employment relationship between the store and the security agency."1

Risk Management

Courts, public figures, and law enforcement officials have all acknowledged that no level of risk management can thwart a dedicated killer from shooting people on church premises. President Bill Clinton, following a 1999 shooting rampage in a Texas church that left 7 dead and 7 more wounded, noted that "there is nothing we can do to assure that this will never happen, but there is a lot more we can do to assure that it will happen more rarely." Even the most stringent precautions will not prevent such incidents. To illustrate, consider a church that uses metal detectors at each entrance, and armed guards. Will these measures prevent shooting incidents from happening? No. They would not stop a dedicated assailant who is sufficiently armed.

If no level of risk management can prevent such incidents from happening, what should churches do? Church leaders need to view risk management as achieving four attainable objectives:

- Reduce the risk that shootings and other criminal assaults will happen on church property.
- Contain the damage if an incident should occur, through an appropriate response.
- Ensure that the church's precautionary measures satisfy the applicable legal duty of care. As noted previously, most courts have ruled that the level of precaution a property owner needs to take is proportional to the foreseeability that a shooting or other violent criminal act will occur on the property. The church needs to exercise the highest level of care when multiple crimes have occurred in recent years on or near church property involving shootings or other assaultive acts, or when a church receives a direct threat that a shooting or assault will occur.
- Ensure that the church's precautionary measures are consistent with its moral values. Most churches place a high value on human life as a result of theological and biblical principles, and may wish to adopt precautionary measures that transcend those of local businesses unconstrained by those principles.

Described below are several precautionary measures.

(1) Security guards

Churches need to consider using security guards in some situations, including the following: (a) A legal duty to employ security guards Most churches do not employ security guards or police officers. Does this make them liable for shooting rampages that occur on their premises?



To deter crime this area is under video surveillance In case of emergency call 911

> No level of risk management can thwart a dedicated killer from shooting people on church premises.

may exist because the risk of shootings or other violent crimes on church property is highly foreseeable based on the following factors described below:

- whether any criminal conduct previously occurred on or near the property;
- how recently and how often similar crimes occurred;
- how similar the previous crimes were to the conduct in question; and,
- what publicity did the media give the previous crimes to indicate that the church knew or should have known about them.
- (b) The church deems the use of one or more security guards necessary to further a church's theological and biblical principles, whether or not legally required.

As noted above, a church that uses security guards may be liable for deaths and injuries caused by the negligence of their guards based on at least two potential grounds: (1) negligent hiring; and (2) a nondelegable duty to exercise reasonable care in the protection of the public when a security guard is employed, whether or not the church had a legal duty to employ a guard. These risks make it imperative for churches that elect to use security guards to select persons of demonstrable competence. Consider the following options:

a. One or more armed, uniformed off-duty police officers during worship services and other events involving multiple persons A church can reduce its risk of liability for injuries caused by, or not prevented by, a security guard by exercising reasonable care in selecting a security guard. A church can best demonstrate the exercise of reasonable care by hiring only uniformed, off-duty police officers as security guards since such persons:

- are thoroughly screened before being hired as police officers;
- receive extensive training in dealing with volatile situations;
- receive extensive training in the use of firearms;
- receive continuing training in the use of firearms and other job-related skills;
- according to some courts, become *on-duty* police officers even while otherwise acting as private security guards when responding to criminal activity, which has the effect of insulating their employer from liability based on negligent hiring or retention for

their actions; and

• serve as a deterrent to crime because of their police uniform.

Churches considering the use of uniformed off-duty police officers need to check with the local police department regarding the recruitment of such persons as security guards, and the number of guards needed.

b. One or more uniformed, private security guards Some churches that decide to employ security guards may opt for uniformed, private security guards who the church directly hires, or who work for a security firm that provides guards to the church pursuant to a contractual agreement. Sometimes these persons are members of the church who have nothing more than a permit to carry a concealed weapon. Churches will find it more difficult to defend against a negligent hiring claim when hiring security guards who are not police officers. But the church can reduce the risk to some degree through various means, including the following:

- conduct a thorough criminal records check on the individual;
- obtain several references, ideally from other institutions where the person has served as a security guard;
- make sure the guard is licensed under state law (if possible); and
- have the person complete a detailed application documenting all prior experience as a security guard or police officer, along with a full description of all prior law enforcement and firearms training, and any licenses or certifications the person currently has as a security guard, police officer, or firearms trainer, under state or federal law.

According to the United States Department of Labor: "Most States require that guards be licensed. To be licensed as a guard, individuals must usually be at least 18 years old, pass a background check, and complete classroom training in such subjects as property rights, emergency procedures, and detention of suspected criminals. Drug testing often is required and may be random and ongoing."

The appropriate government authority must license guards who carry weapons, and some receive further certification as special police officers. This allows them to make limited types of arrests while on duty. Armed guard positions have more stringent background checks and entry requirements than those of unarmed guards.

An increasing number of states are making

Summary of Major Church Shooting Incidents Since 1998									
DATE	PLACE	SHOOTER	VICTIMS	WEAPON	HOW RESOLVED	POSSIBLE MOTIVE	GUNMAN A Church Member?	GUNMAN Made Prior Threats?	SHOOTING OCCURRED DURING CHURCH SERVICES?
December 2007	New Life Church, Colorado Springs, Colorado	24-year-old Matthew Murray	2 dead, 3 wounded	High-powered rifle	Gunman committed suicide when confronted by armed church member	Revenge (expelled from Arvada missions agency)	No	No	Yes
August 2007	First Congregational Church, Neosho, Missouri	52-year-old Eiken Elam Saimon	3 dead, 4 wounded	9mm semi- automatic pistol, and a small caliber handgun	Gunman surrendered to police	Family argument	No	No	Yes
May 2007	First Presbyterian Church, Moscow, Idaho	36-year-old Jason Hamilton	1 dead	AK-47 and M1A assault rifles	Gunman committed suicide when cornered by police	Unknown	No	No	No
July 2006	Jewish Federation of Greater Seattle, Seattle, Washington	30-year-old Naveed Afzal Haq	1 dead, 5 wounded	2 handguns	Gunman surrendered to police	Hate crime	No	No	Yes
May 2006	The Ministry of Jesus Christ Church, Baton Rouge, Louisiana	25-year-old Anthony Bell	5 dead, 2 wounded	Handgun	Arrested in an apartment building away from the church	Family dispute (all victims were relatives of the gunman's estranged wife)	No	No	No
February 2006	Zion Hope Missionary Baptist Church, Detroit, Michigan	22-year-old Kevin Collins	2 dead	Shotgun	Gunman died of self-inflicted wound while fleeing police	Family dispute	No	No	Yes
October 2005	Chabad Weltman Synagogue, Boca Raton, Florida	79-year-old Marc Benayer	1 dead	Handgun	Gunman arrested	Revenge (victim helped gunman's ex-girlfriend obtain a restraining order against him)	No	No	No
August 2005	Assembly of God, Sash, Texas	54-year-old Frederick Leroy Cranshaw	2 dead	9mm semi- automatic pistol and a .38-caliber revolver	Gunman committed suicide when cornered by police several miles from the church	Unknown	No	No	Yes
July 2005	World Changers Church Interna- tional, College Park, Georgia	27-year-old John Givens	None	Handgun	Police killed gunman	Unknown	No	No	No
March 2005	Living Church of God, Brookfield, Wisconsin	44-year-old Terry Ratzmann	7 dead, 4 wounded	9mm semi- automatic pistol	Gunman died of a self-inflicted wound	Depression, alcohol use, upset over a sermon, frustration over inability to find a spouse	Yes	No	Yes
October 2003	Turner Monumental AME Church, Atlanta, Georgia	43-year-old Shelia Chaney Wilson	2 dead	Handgun	Gunman died of a self-inflicted wound	Loss of job; some church members considered the shooter"mentally unstable"	Yes	No	Yes
June 2002	Benedictine Monastery, Conception, Missouri	71-year-old Lloyd Jeffress	2 dead, 2 wounded	AK-47 assault rifle, .22 caliber rifle	Gunman died of a self-inflicted wound	Unknown	No	No	No
March 2002	Our Lady of Peace Catholic Church, Lynbrook, New York	34-year-old Peter Troy	2 dead	.22 caliber semi-automatic rifle	Police arrested gunman at his home	Unknown	No	No	Yes
May 2001	Greater Oak Missionary Baptist Church, Hopkinsville, Kentucky	35-year-old Fredrick Radford	2 dead	Handgun	Police arrested gunman at the church	Domestic dispute (one victim was his estranged wife)	Unknown	Yes	Yes

Church Security: Does Your Church Need a Security Guard? (continued from page 129)



It is imperative for churches that elect to use security guards to select persons of demonstrable competence. ongoing training a legal requirement for retention of licensure. Guards may receive training in protection, public relations, report writing, crisis deterrence, first aid, and specialized training relevant to their particular assignment.

The American Society for Industrial Security International has written voluntary training guidelines. The ASIS intends for these guidelines to provide regulating bodies consistent minimum standards for the quality of security services. These guidelines recommend that security guards receive at least 48 hours of training within the first 100 days of employment. These guidelines also suggest that security guards be required to pass a written or performance examination covering topics such as sharing information with law enforcement, crime prevention, handling evidence, the use of force, court testimony, report writing, interpersonal and communication skills, and emergency response procedures. In addition, they recommend annual retraining and additional firearms training for armed officers.

Security guards with little or no training, and are not licensed under state law, present the greatest risk of liability to a church or other employer as a result of injuries they inflict while responding to a crime or otherwise performing their duties, or injuries they fail to prevent.

c. Using church members legally authorized to carry a concealed weapon as nonuniformed security guards

Such persons generally offer the least risk reduction of any category of security guard if they have little or no law enforcement training, and have no license as security guards under state law. Further, they do not provide the possible deterrence that accompanies a uniform, even if it is the uniform of a private security guard rather than a police officer.

d. Ushers and greeters

While technically not security guards, properly trained ushers and greeters can serve a vital role in alerting the church's crisis response team, or local law enforcement, to suspicious behavior or acts of violence when they occur. Often, such persons may be the first responders. For this reason, it is important for them to carry cell phones.

(2) Technology

Like security guards, crime-fighting technologies need to be implemented as a result of either or both of the following grounds:

- (a) A legal duty to install technological devices may exist because the risk of shootings or other violent crimes on church property is highly foreseeable based on the following factors described below:
 - whether any criminal conduct previously occurred on or near the property;
 - how recently and how often similar crimes occurred;
 - how similar the previous crimes were to the conduct in question; and
 - what publicity did the media give the previous crimes to indicate that the church knew or should have known about them.
- (b) The use of one or more technological devices is deemed necessary to further a church's theological and biblical principles, whether or not legally required.

In evaluating the feasibility of various technologies to prevent or reduce the risk of shootings in public schools, the United States Department of Justice noted that schools must consider the effectiveness, affordability, and acceptability of each technology. To illustrate, many church leaders would regard metal detectors at church entrances as unacceptable, even if they were affordable and effective, because they are incompatible with the concept of *sanctuary* and are at odds with biblical assurances of providence and divine protection. Many smaller churches cannot afford such devices.

Listed below are three different devices often used to prevent or reduce the risk of crime. In each case, church leaders need to consider the device's effectiveness, affordability, and acceptability in evaluating its usefulness.

a. Surveillance Cameras

Surveillance cameras cannot prevent shootings and other violent crimes on church property, but they can act as a deterrent to crime, provide a record of what happened, allow church staff to monitor the entire church campus from a single location, and expedite a call to the police in the event of suspicious behavior.

On the downside: (1) surveillance cameras are expensive, and this disadvantage is compounded when multiple cameras are employed; (2) someone must continually check the monitors, and this removes the person from performing more active surveillance, such as visiting areas where people congregate; (3) selecting the appropriate equipment requires technical knowledge; (4) ongoing maintenance and operational support are required; (5) some individuals will challenge the need for cameras in a church; (6) persons with knowledge of the installed video system's capabilities may not be deterred by them, and possibly could circumvent the system to their advantage or carry out their criminal acts in a different area of the church; and (7) cameras will not deter dedicated assailants, especially if they plan on killing themselves at the end of their crime spree.

b. Metal Detectors

Most church leaders, even in high-crime areas, consider the use of metal detectors at church entrances to be offensive to congregational members and visitors, and fundamentally incompatible with the nature of the church as a sanctuary, making their use unthinkable. As noted above, church leaders need to evaluate risk management technologies in terms of their effectiveness, affordability, and acceptability. Even if metal detectors at church entrances would be an effective deterrent to violent crime, and affordable, most church members consider them unacceptable, especially for those attending churches in low crime areas that have no history of shootings or other violent crimes on or near church property. In summary, the use of metal detectors at church entrances would be an extraordinary measure justified by only a high foreseeability of violent crime. Few churches, even in high crime areas, utilize these devices.

c. Entry Control Technologies

Places of public accommodation can permit or deny access in four principal ways. The first and most common approach is manpower intensive, and the remaining three employ technological devices. These four approaches are:

- A security guard controls entry; ID cards or other means of identification may be checked.
- Electronic devices, such as a card reader, check special ID cards or badges issued to persons with permitted access. Viable card technologies for schools include bar codes or magnetic strips for card-swipe readers (such as those used for most credit cards) or passive or active radio frequency (RF) cards for proximity readers, which can validate a card several inches to several feet



Security guards with little or no training, and who are not licensed under state law, present the greatest risk of liability to a church. Surveillance cameras cannot prevent shootings and other violent crimes on church property, but they can act as a deterrent to crime.



away (depending on the cost of the system).

- Persons with permitted access receive a PIN number that they enter on a keypad to gain admittance.
- A biometric device for feature recognition.

Measures such as the use of metal detectors at church entrances would not stop an armed and dedicated assailant. In addition, they would not be acceptable to most congregations since:

- They would exclude visitors from attending church.
- They would not accommodate members who forget their badge or card, or forget their PIN number. This could happen to any member, but the elderly would be most vulnerable to unintended exclusion.
- Card readers do not read cards that have become demagnetized.
- In the case of keypads and card readers, the system cannot ascertain that only a single authorized person is entering, since unauthorized persons could *tailgate* (follow an authorized person through the checkpoint).
- Unauthorized persons can use stolen cards and badges.
- The cost of a card or badge reader, or keypad system, can be substantial, especially if used at more than one entry.
- Keypads and card readers can malfunction. The prospect of unhappy church members standing outside in the rain, unable to enter their church because of a machine malfunction, is an unpleasant but likely scenario.

Some churches use keypads or card readers during the week to restrict access to church employees.

(3) Signage

Conspicuous signs at church entrances may serve many purposes. The church should not underestimate their value to security. Signs are not too expensive, but the price of not having one can sometimes be substantial. Consider the following:

- Signs that inform persons entering a building that certain security measures are in place can provide a frontline deterrent. An outsider faced with the choice of committing a crime in a church with security warning signs or in one with no signs or other indications of self-defense will often choose the latter.
- A church can reduce its potential liability through the use of signs. An important piece of information that a church can include on a warning sign is whether a person is

monitoring the cameras. Some victims of assaults in public buildings have filed successful lawsuits, claiming that they did nothing to defend themselves because they were under the impression that, because a video camera was aimed directly at them, help would surely arrive soon. This is a common assumption. They did not realize that no one was monitoring the camera. Sample wording for a school sign regarding this particular issue could be: Warning: This facility employs video surveillance equipment for security purposes. This equipment may or may not be monitored at any time.

(4) Other Measures

Unfortunately, recent tragedies in the United States have demonstrated the need for churches to be prepared to respond to shootings and other violent crimes. The United States Department of Justice has prepared the following recommendations for schools to help reduce the risk of violent crime (the word "church" is substituted for "school").²

- Every church needs a well-thought-out, annually updated crisis plan, with regular training for all who might be involved.
- The crisis plan needs to assign who is in charge during different types of emergencies; who is the alternate in charge; who is called first, by whom, from where, and using what; whether the church relocates and how; what type of statement the church needs to make to the press and by whom; and who is in charge when emergency teams (fire, police, and medical) arrive on the scene. These represent a few of the specifications called for.
- In the best of all possible situations, the church will immediately mobilize a predetermined team on the occurrence of a serious situation. Team members will know who to look to for decisions and then proceed automatically in their roles for the particular plan the church chooses to implement.
- Crisis team members need to wear distinctive clothing and remain in locations of high visibility so others can contact them in a crisis.
- Crisis team members need to immediately contact local law enforcement when someone reports a crisis, either on a cell phone or 2-way radio. All crisis team members need to have one or both of these devices with them at all times while on church premises.

- Consider the use of *duress alarms* that anyone can activate to report a crisis. These can activate an audible alarm, or an inaudible alarm that only crisis team members can detect.
- Be sure local law enforcement professionals, your insurance agent, and an attorney review your crisis plan.

Conclusions

Listed below are several conclusions based on the material presented in this article:

- Church shootings, and other violent crimes on church premises, are rare.
- The law imposes on any place of public accommodation, including a church, a duty to protect occupants against foreseeable criminal acts. The level of protection needs to be directly proportional to the degree of foreseeability. Many courts assess foreseeability on the basis of the following factors: (1) whether any criminal conduct previously occurred on or near the property; (2) how recently and how often similar crimes occurred; (3) how similar the previous crimes were to the conduct in question; and (4) what publicity did the media give the previous crimes to indicate that the church knew or should have known about them. If shootings or other violent crimes on church property are highly foreseeable based on these factors, a church has a heightened duty to implement measures to protect occupants from such acts.
- Many church leaders and congregations, guided and informed by their theological values, feel compelled to take steps to protect human life from acts of violence whether or not they have a legal duty to do so.
- In evaluating which measures to implement to discharge a legal or moral duty to protect occupants, church leaders need to consider the affordability, effectiveness, and acceptability of a measure before implementing it.
- Church leaders need to consult with local law enforcement professionals, the church insurance agent, and legal counsel when making decisions regarding which protective measures to implement. These same persons also need to review the church's crisis response plan.
- Contact other churches and other places of public accommodation in your community to learn what measures they have

enacted to protect occupants against shootings and other violent crimes. Examples include schools, malls, libraries, restaurants, stores, sports facilities, theatres, and concert halls. This research will help church leaders ascertain the community standard. This is an important consideration in

- deciding if a property owner was negligent. • Even the most stringent protective measures would have prevented few if any of the 15 shooting incidents on church property summarized in this article. In fact, in some of these cases, the churches had already implemented what seemed to be reasonable precautionary measures. No measures, however, will foil an armed and dedicated assailant, especially if that person plans to take his own life.
- While it is not possible for churches to prevent acts of violence on their premises, it is possible to deter such acts in some cases, and to contain the damage and destruction when an incident erupts. @

NOTES

- 1. Simon v. Safeway, Inc., 2007 WL 4441194 (Ariz. App. 2007).
- 2. Department of Justice, Research Report: The Appropriate and Effective Use of Security Technologies in U.S. Schools.

shootings and other violent crimes inside churches. Criminal acts also may occur in church parking lots. While these may include assaults, shootings, abductions, and rapes, they more often involve vandalism and property offenses. As with criminal acts occurring in church buildings, a church's legal duty to implement risk-reducing measures in the parking lot will be based on the foreseeability that criminal acts will occur there.

Churches have used some or all of the following measures to address this risk:

1. Provide adequate illumination of the parking lot.

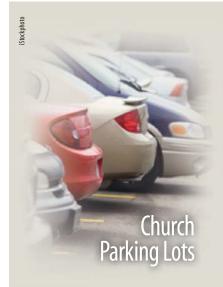
2. Designate persons who will accompany members to their car upon request. Be sure that this option is communicated to the congregation.

3. Install one or more wide-angle video cameras on the church roof to monitor parking areas.

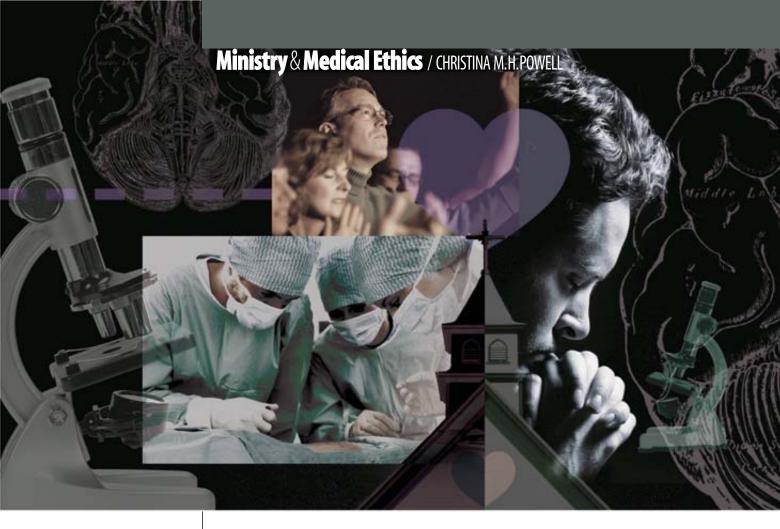
4. Have a uniformed security guard, or off-duty police officer, monitor the parking lot. For more suggestions, church leaders should contact local law enforcement officials and the church's insurance agent.

RICHARD R. HAMMAR, J.D., LL.M., CPA, Springfield, Missouri





his article has addressed



Studies on intercessory prayer can teach us about the nature of the boundary between science and spiritual matters.



Science and Spiritual Matters: Drawing the Appropriate Line

he view that science and spirituality belong to separate and mutually exclusive areas of thought is waning in prominence. Scientists are crossing the line between the natural and the supernatural by designing experiments to study the effectiveness of prayer in medical settings and the effect of church attendance on physical and emotional health. Neuroscientists debate the existence of the soul as they seek to better understand the implications of their research findings. Pastors, while sifting through potential sermon illustrations or seeking an adequate response to a challenging question from a nonbeliever, must determine appropriate boundaries between scientific studies and matters of faith. To better understand the issues involved in drawing an appropriate line between science and spiritual

matters, I will examine the topics of prayer and medicine, church attendance and health, and science and the soul.

Prayer and Medicine

A Harvard Medical School research team conducted a survey on the prevalence of prayer for health concerns in the United States. The survey showed that one-third of adults used prayer for health concerns in 1998, with 69 percent finding prayer *very helpful* for a specific medical condition.¹ In the last decade, researchers have conducted several studies to determine if intercessory prayer helps sick people heal quicker or have a better outcome from a medical procedure. These studies, published in legitimate, peer-reviewed medical journals, suggest that prayer is effective even when the



CHRISTINA M.H. POWELL, PH.D., an ordained minister and medical research scientist, preaches in churches and conferences nationwide. She is a research fellow at Harvard Medical School and Massachusetts General Hospital as well as the founder of Life Impact Ministries.

sick person does not know someone is praying for him.² One study on intercessory prayer demonstrated that women undergoing in vitro fertilization treatments were twice as likely to become pregnant when receiving prayers from strangers.³

While scientific studies that demonstrate the effectiveness of prayer in medical settings sound like confirmations of faith, we must be careful what conclusions we draw. Such studies do, however, point to a spiritual hunger in our society. In finding that intercessory prayer can positively affect a patient's recovery, prayer studies validate the importance of hospital chaplaincy programs and pastoral care. These studies also underscore the need for physicians to respect a patient's faith. Such studies, however, do not prove the existence of God or whether God answers prayer.

James 5:15 says, "The prayer offered in faith will make the sick person well." In Matthew 4:24, we learn that Jesus healed the people brought to Him, including "all who were ill with various diseases, those suffering severe pain, the demon-possessed, those having seizures, and the paralyzed." These biblical accounts tell of restored health through supernatural intervention. Therefore, we might expect prayer for the sick to result in physical healing today. God, however, is not a mechanistic force subject to the rules of experimental design.

The theological problem arising from studies on intercessory prayer is that God's answer may differ from the petitioner's particular request. The sovereignty of God in a given circumstance does not disprove the effectiveness of prayer. We are not to put the Lord our God to the test (Deuteronomy 6:16; Matthew 4:7; Luke 4:12). Should we expect God to participate in a scientific study? Furthermore, patients in the control group not receiving prayers from intercessors involved in the scientific study may be praying themselves or receiving prayers from friends and relatives. God, who cares about people rather than control groups, may choose to answer prayers offered outside the scope of the experiment's design.

Several studies of prayer in medical settings

have included prayers from a variety of world religions and spiritual traditions. If these studies show prayer to be effective in those cases, the results would not confirm our understanding of biblical prayer. First Kings 18:19–39 gives a biblical example of a comparison study between the prayers of Elijah to the God of Israel and the prayers of the prophets of Baal to a false god. This *study* conducted on Mount Carmel is different from the prayer studies of today because God set the conditions of the experiment for the *researchers*, instead of the researchers setting the conditions for God.

What can studies on intercessory prayer teach us about the nature of the boundary between science and spiritual matters? If we believe prayer is more than a placebo, a relaxation response, or a wellspring of positive emotional feelings, and instead view prayer as a petition for supernatural intervention, then we can never describe prayer in full using a scientific theory. Understanding the supernatural is beyond the grasp of science.

Church Attendance and Health

While experiments that test the effectiveness of intercessory prayer may step beyond the appropriate boundaries for scientific research, studies on the relationship between church attendance and health are within the realm of science. Here scientists are not attempting to explain a supernatural phenomenon, but the natural effect spirituality has on physical health.

In surveying the literature on church attendance and health, I was amazed at the number of studies on the topic. While the primary purpose of church attendance is spiritual health, scientific literature establishes that what is good for the soul is also good for the body. Current scientific studies verify the truth taught in Proverbs 4:22 that words of wisdom "are life to those who find them and health to a man's whole body."

Researchers at the University of California at Berkeley and California state health officials conducted a study using data collected over a 31-year period. This study found that those who did not attend church were 21 percent The view that science and spirituality belong to separate and mutually exclusive areas of thought is waning in prominence. more likely to live a shorter life than those who attended church at least once a week.⁴ Even after controlling for potentially confounding variables, such as social connections, smoking, and exercise, trends for categories of diseases emerged. For example, those who did not regularly attend church had a 66 percent greater risk of dying from respiratory diseases and a 99 percent greater risk of dying from digestives diseases than weekly attendees. This study suggests that psychological or spiritual factors are responsible for the longer, healthier lives churchgoers experience. attend church, pray, or study the Bible.⁶ Interestingly, older adults who frequently watch religious TV or listen to religious radio have higher blood pressures. Thus, in this study, lower blood pressure benefits only applied to those heeding the admonition in Hebrews 10:25, "Let us not give up meeting together, as some are in the habit of doing, but let us encourage one another — and all the more as you see the Day approaching."

Another study shows that church attendance not only benefits a person's own physical health, but also the mental and emotional health of a

mother's adolescent children. According to a survey conducted by researchers at the Johns Hopkins University School of Medicine, "Youths whose mothers attended religious services at least once a week had greater overall satisfaction with their lives. more involvement with their families, and better skills at solving health-related problems and felt greater support from friends compared with youths whose mothers had lower levels of participation in religious services."7 Thus, church attendance appears to improve mental health and social functioning as well as physical health.

While the primary purpose of church attendance is spiritual health, scientific literature establishes that what is good for the soul is also good for the body.

The National Center for Health Statistics in Maryland conducted a nationwide study of Americans who were predominantly Christian. This study demonstrated that those attending church at least weekly have a lower risk of death than those who do not attend religious services. This confirms the results of the California study.⁵ In the national study, regular church attendance correlated with behavioral choices resulted in reduced risk of disease. In addition to studies that relate frequency of church attendance to mortality, scientific literature contains studies that examine the relationship between specific measures of health, such as blood pressure and church attendance. For example, Duke University Medical Center in North Carolina conducted one study of adults age 65 years or older. This study found that those who regularly attend church, pray, and study the Bible are 40 percent less likely to have high blood pressure than those who infrequently

All these studies point to a correlation between church attendance and health without fully uncovering the reason for this correlation. Researchers have proposed several possible theories to explain the influence of religion on health. One possibility is that church attendance provides people with improved social support and encouragement to make healthy choices. Another possibility is the positive effect of faith and inner peace on the body's immune system. A final possibility is the positive effect that prayers for healing have on health. All of these factors may be at work.

For the pastor, the results of these studies provide great sermon illustrations when addressing the importance of church attendance from the pulpit. The exact reason for the correlation between church attendance and health is unimportant from a ministry standpoint. A pastor might wonder, *What would it mean if attendance at non-Christian religious*



services brought the same positive benefits? Such a result might point to a social explanation for the positive health benefits as opposed to a spiritual explanation. Since these scientific studies address physical health benefits — not spiritual questions — they do not raise the theological concerns that studies on intercessory prayer do. While scientists are studying the physical implications of maintaining a healthy spiritual life, they have not crossed the line by attempting to study spiritual matters.

Science and the Soul

Scientists may not actively seek to address issues related to spiritual matters, but at times, they stumble on them in their research. Such is the case for many neuroscientists. As research concerning human brain function uncovers biological explanations for aspects of human experience once attributed to the existence of an immortal soul, scientists tread on the domain of theologians. Does this mean Christians must accept a materialistic view of the mind as the only rational explanation in the light of modern research?

The secret to knowing where to draw the appropriate line between science and spiritual matters lies in understanding the nature of scientific inquiry. Science concerns making predictions for the future based on theories constructed from past experiences. For example, according to Sir Isaac Newton's theory of gravitation I can predict that an apple in a tree will fall to the ground, not ascend upward. He constructed this theory based on extensive experience with falling apples and by contemplating the orbits of the planets. In science, a theory is useful only if scientists can subject it to tests that might disprove it. Because Newton's theory proved useful time and time again, it stood the test of time. The time came, however, when physicists found Newton's equations could not completely explain the orbit of Mercury around the sun. Thus, another theory would supersede Newton's theory. Einstein's theory of general relativity explained the exceptions to Newton's theory of gravitation.

While science can explain much about the biological aspects of the human mind, addressing the existence of an immortal soul is beyond the scope of scientific inquiry. Since spiritual matters are not repeatable events, scientists cannot form a falsifiable theory. Science can come only so far in understanding human life. *Supernatural* by definition means *above or*

beyond what is natural. Thus, spiritual matters are above and beyond that which science can fully explain. In Isaiah 55:8,9, we find this concept described in eloquent words, " 'For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways,' declares the Lord. 'As the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways and my thoughts than your thoughts.' "

Conclusion

Armed with a little knowledge and a dose of discernment, a wise pastor can read the latest science news and know where to draw the appropriate line between science and spiritual matters. Tossing aside junk science, perhaps you will find a useful tidbit with which to enliven your Sunday morning's message or a scientific anecdote for a counseling session. Most important, you will avoid using a weak argument from an imperfect scientific study to uphold a strong faith. Biblical Christianity is like a well-constructed, solid chair. A chair that sits firmly does not require an additional wobbly chair leg placed under it to make it sturdier. The wobbly chair leg would only detract from the grace and strength of the chair. Many times this is the case when pastors inadvertently use poor illustrations from the world of science as an apologetic.

As you minister, may the Lord bless you with a cheerful heart that is good medicine (Proverbs 17:22), and may every Sunday bring you the same health benefits your flock experiences as they sit in the pews.

NOTES

- A.M. McCaffrey et al., "Prayer for health concerns: results of a national survey on prevalence and patterns of use," *Arch Intern Med.* 164, No.8 (2004):858–62.
- W.S. Harris et al., "A randomized, controlled trial of the effects of remote, intercessory prayer outcomes in patients admitted to the coronary care unit," *Arch Intern Med*. 159, No. 19 (1999): 2273–2278.
- K.Y. Cha and D.P. Wirth, "Does prayer influence the success of in vitro fertilization-embryo transfer? Report of a masked, randomized trial." J Reprod Med. 46 (2001):781–787.
- 4. D. Oman et al., "Religious attendance and cause of death over 31 years," Int. J. Psychiatry Med. 32, No. 1 (2002):69–89.
- S.R.F. Gillum et al., "Frequency of attendance at religious services and mortality in a U.S. national cohort," *Ann Epidemiol.* 18, No. 2 (2008): 124–129.
- 6.H.G. Koenig et al., "The relationship between religious activities and blood pressure in older adults," *Int. J. Psychiatry Med.* 28, No. 2 (1998): 189–213.
- 7.S.R. Varon and A.W. Riley, "Relationship between maternal church attendance and adolescent mental health and social functioning," *Psychiatr Serv.* 50 (1999):799–805.

The existence of an immortal soul is beyond the scope of scientific inquiry. Science can come only so far in understanding human life.



Q&A for Ministry Wives / GABRIELE RIENAS

My Close Friend at Church Is Avoiding Me

 I became close friends with a woman who attends our church. She has supported and encouraged me. I have been blessed and thankful to have her friendship. She was recently hurt by a decision about a situation — and the way the church handled it — that involved her teenage son. She knows my husband took part in the decisionmaking. I now sense a growing tension between us, and she seems to avoid me. She refuses to talk about it with me and denies that anything is wrong. I am distraught about this. I do not want to lose her friendship.

A • I have compassion for your situation. Your pain is evident and achingly familiar to those of us who have been there. When people in our churches who seemed so warm and engaging gradually or suddenly distance themselves, we feel bewildered and abandoned. Even if we, as the pastor's wife, know the reason for their aloofness, most of the time we had nothing to do with the situation.

I am glad you were able to develop this friendship. You are capable of connecting with people and others consider you approachable and available. You are capable of reaching out to others and bonding with them.

Not long ago pastors' wives were taught to keep their distance and treat all women in the church equally. They were to bond with their families and children for support. They were also discouraged from developing friendships in the church. Thankfully, this is changing. Today, pastors' wives are more open to developing meaningful connections with others in the congregation. Self-disclosure has become more acceptable, although wise selection is still encouraged.

This shift has been positive, but it carries potential difficulties as well. While this should not deter us from pursuing meaningful relationships, we need to do so with care and adapt our expectations to the realities of church relationships. This brings us to the underlying dynamics affecting your situation.

Being a pastor's wife and a person's friend is technically a dual role. This means you wear two hats with your friend. Your friendship hat is your ability to relate to her out of your personality and your connecting skills. You relate as equals. Your relationship is mutual and reciprocal. Your pastor's wife hat is your

Being a pastor's wife and a person's friend is technically

a dual role.





GABRIELE RIENAS, a pastor's wife for 27 years and a professional counselor, lives in Beaverton, Oregon. She speaks at retreats, conferences, and events worldwide. Contact her at 503-705-9230.

connection to your husband, the church, and church decisionmaking. Occasionally, church decisions are not negotiable or do not please everyone.

Sometimes the two hats conflict. In the case of this friendship, your closeness conflicts with the fact church leadership made decisions that are difficult for your friend. She seems to be having a hard time reconciling this. Because of her pain and frustration caused by the situation with her son, she probably blames the entire organization. If she feels your husband had a part in the decision, then you also had a part by association to him. It is similar to being friends with the wife of the judge who rules against your husband in a \$500,000 lawsuit. Tensions probably will arise in the friendship.

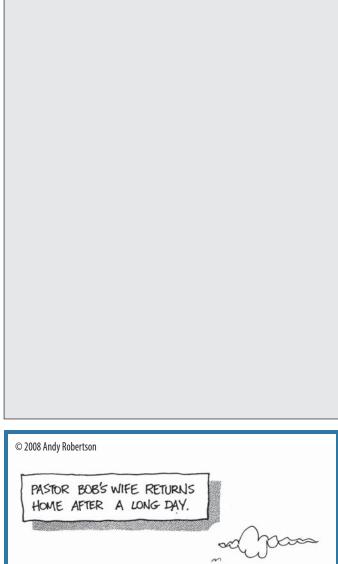
We need to pursue meaningful relationships with care and adapt our expectations to the realities of church relationships. If she were willing to talk with you about it, you might be able to agree to separate your friendship from the church's decisions or agree not to talk about it and concentrate on the strengths of your friendship. While this is not a perfect solution, it might work to maintain your connection.

In this case, she is not willing to talk. Once you have made your best effort to dialogue with her, let it go. You cannot force her to talk. Let her know that you will be available when she is ready. Unfortunately, this narrows your

options. It means a wall of unresolved hurt has now developed between you. She may or may not be ready to repair the relationship at a later date, but this decision is entirely in her hands. You can do little beyond maintaining compassion for the overall situation and grieving the loss for yourself.

Grief is not something we seek, but it is a normal, necessary response to loss. Feeling the pain of loss is the unpleasant part, but grieving also involves forgiveness and letting go. Ask God to help you grow in your compassion for her. Understand that she is a wounded person whose response to pain is impacting you. Give yourself time for God's grace to help you to grow in this awareness.

Do not give up on friendship in the church. Friendships in the church may include possible risks and the potential for pain, but giving up may deprive you of some great blessings through future relationships. Use this difficult experience to grow wiser and more realistic about the realities of church life. In this way it has potential to become an unexpected blessing in your life — in time. @





Original Wisdom / DOUGLAS JACOBSEN



Maria Beulah Woodworth-Etter (1844 - 1924)"A Woman's Place Is in the Pulpit"

orn in 1844, Maria Beulah Woodworth-Etter was in many ways a typical 19th-century American woman. She married a returning Civil War veteran in the mid-1860s. She then spent the next 15 years bearing children and caring for her husband. Her life was also one of sorrow - only one of her six children survived childhood.

Around age 35, Woodworth-Etter's life took a dramatic change as God called her to become a preacher. As with many other women leaders in the history of Christianity, this required a powerful experience — a divine vision of grain ready for harvest and the feeling of being immersed in the

MRS. M. B. WOODWORTH-ETTER

Come bring the sick and afflicted to be healed without money and without price through the name of JESUS

HEA

OTTUMWA

JULY 8 10 30 WEST PARK AVE

Salvation For Soul Healing For Body

Comment on this article http://forums.ag.org/ enrichment journal



DOUGLAS JACOBSEN is distinguished professor of Church History and Theology at Messiah College in Grantham, Pennsylvania. He is the author of *Thinking in the Spirit: Theologies of the Early* Pentecostal Movement (Indiana University Press, 2003), which won the 2004 Pneuma Award from the Society for Pentecostal Studies, and of A Reader in Pentecostal Theology: Voices from the First Generation (Indiana

University Press, 2006) from which this series of articles is adapted. He is also the co-author of an introduction to theology entitled Gracious Christianity: Living the Love We Profess (Baker, 2006).

liquid fire of God — to convince her that she was called to transgress the social norms of her day and begin to preach. Her husband was not thrilled with his wife's transformation, but he eventually relented, and Woodworth-Etter began what would become a four-decadelong career as a traveling evangelist.

During the early years of her ministry, Woodworth-Etter was eclectic in her churchly affiliations. Her most long-lasting connections were with the Church of God, founded by John Winebrenner and headquartered in Findlay, Ohio. But she was also associated at different times with the Friends (Quakers), the Methodists, the United Brethren, and a group called Bible Christians. In some circles, people considered the idea of women preachers controversial. Eventually, the Church of God withdrew her ministerial credentials. After that, she struck out on her own, following God's call unencumbered by ties to any particular group or denomination.

Almost from the start, unusual physical manifestations began to take place at her meetings. God healed people, they cried out with strange words and sounds, and sometimes fell into trances or trance-like states. Woodworth-Etter herself was sometimes caught up in spiritual trances or visions that could last for minutes or hours while the service went on. These events were taking place in the 1880s and 1890s, long before the Pentecostal movement. When they occurred, neither Woodworth-Etter nor those who participated in her meetings knew how to explain these manifestations. They accepted them as the work of God, but did not try to interpret them theologically. Later, Woodworth-Etter would explain these occurrences as precursors of the miraculous signs and wonders that became common after the Azusa Street revival in the larger Pentecostal movement.

Woodworth-Etter's own transformation from holiness preacher to Pentecostal spokesperson is somewhat obscure. Just before the Azusa Street revival erupted in Los Angeles, Woodworth-Etter dropped out of view. For 7 years, starting in 1905, she hardly preached at all. Then, in 1912, she suddenly burst back onto the American religious stage as a new and powerful Pentecostal preacher in a series of meetings cosponsored with Fred Francis Bosworth in Dallas, Texas. After that, Woodworth-Etter was a regular and revered speaker on the Pentecostal circuit until she died in 1924.

The selection reproduced here is classic Woodworth-Etter. It goes to the heart of her own calling as a minister of God. This is taken from her book Signs and Wonders God Has Wrought in the Ministry for Forty Years, published in 1916. This sermon is in defense of the right of women to preach. Her point? Not only that women should be allowed to preach, but that women who have received a prophetic call from God are spiritually required to let their light shine. Others might try to dissuade or discourage them, but women who have been called by God to preach need to heed that call and be faithful in the work that God, and no merely human authority, has given them to do.

"And suddenly there came a sound from heaven as of a rushing mighty wind, and it filled all the house where they were sitting. And there appeared unto them cloven tongues like as of fire, and it sat upon each of them. And they were *all* filled with the Holy Ghost, and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance" (Acts 2:2–4).

There was a wonderful excitement; the people came rushing in great multitudes from the city to see what was the matter. They saw these men and women, with their faces shining with the glory of God, all preaching at once; all anxious to tell what God had done for them and a dying world. Conviction went like daggers to their hearts. And just as it is today, when the power of God is manifest, instead of yielding, they cried out, "Too much excitement," and began to fight against God; they said, "These people are mad, are drunken with new wine," and mocked them.

Peter gets up to defend the cause of Christ.

Transgressing the social norms of her day, Woodworth-Etter began to preach. Unusual physical manifestations were taking place at her meetings — years before the Azusa Street revival.

Salvation For Soul Healing For Body He refers to Joel 2:28,29. "And it shall come to pass in the last days, saith God, I will pour out of my Spirit upon all flesh; and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, and your young men shall see visions, and your old men shall dream dreams, and on my servants and on my handmaidens I will pour out in those days of my Spirit; and they shall prophesy" (Acts 2:17,18; 1 Corinthians 14:22–26; 1 Corinthians 1 through 5).

Paul speaks as if it were very common for women to preach and prophesy. "Every woman that prayeth or prophesieth with her head uncovered dishonoreth her head" (1 Corinthians 11:5). "The same man had four daughters, virgins, which did prophesy" (Acts 21:9; Ephesians 4:11).

Paul worked with the women in the gospel more than any of the apostles. Priscilla and Phebe traveled with Paul preaching and building up the churches (Acts 18:2,18; Romans 16).

He and Phebe had been holding revivals together; now she is called to the city of Rome. Paul cannot go with her, but he is very careful of her reputation, and that she is treated with respect. He writes a letter of recommendation: "I commend unto you Phebe, our sister, which is a servant of the church (which signifies a minister of the church) at Cenchrea, that ye receive her in the Lord as becometh saints and that ye assist her in whatsoever business she hath need of you, for she has been a succourer of many and of myself also" (Romans 16:1).



This shows that she had authority to do business in the churches and that she had been successful in winning souls to Christ. He is not ashamed to say she had encouraged him; he speaks in the highest praise of a number of sisters who had been faithful workers in the work of the Lord, who had risked their lives in the effort to save souls, and not he alone, but all the churches of the Gentiles sent their thanks.

Paul said, "Let your women keep silent in the churches." So saith the law. We are not under law but under grace. "And learn of their husbands at home." What will those do who have no husbands? Do you suppose they will remain in ignorance and be lost? And if some women had to depend on their husbands for knowledge they would die in ignorance.

Paul referred to contentions in the churches. Paul says you had better not marry. How many agree with Paul? How many obey? He is referring to contentions in the churches, that it is a shame to bring up questions and have jangling in the house of God. He writes to the brethren, "I hear that there be divisions among you, and I partly believe it" (1 Corinthians 11:18).

"Help those women which labored with me in the gospel, with Clement also, and with my other fellow laborers whose names are in the book of life" (Philippians 4:3). There were also several women who were prophetesses (Luke 2:36; 2 Kings 22:13–15). Huldah, the prophetess, the wife of Shallum, dwelt in Jerusalem, in the college, and they communed with her, and she said unto them, "Thus saith the Lord God of Israel."

Paul says there is no difference, but that male and female are one in Christ Jesus (Galatians 3:28). Let us take Jesus for our pattern and example and see no man, save Jesus only.

Women were called and commissioned by the angel sent from heaven, and by the Lord Jesus Christ, to preach the gospel (Matthew 28:5–10).

The cowardly disciples had forsaken the Savior and fled. Peter denied the Savior and swore he never knew Him, but many women followed Him and stood by the Cross, and went to the sepulcher and saw the body laid away; the great stone was rolled against the door (Matthew 27:55–61). These women went home sad and broken hearted, but they returned to pay a last tribute to their dear friend. They spent the night in preparing spices to embalm the body of their Lord. They came to the sepulchre as it was coming day. The grave was empty. The Lord was not there. As they stood weeping, two angels stood by them and said: "Fear not ye, for I know that ye seek Jesus, which was crucified. He is not here, for He is risen, as He said. Come, see the place where the Lord lay. And go quickly, and tell His disciples that He is risen from the dead; and, behold, He goeth before you into Galilee; there shall ye see Him; lo, I have told you."

They started at once with joy and rejoicing. They could not walk fast enough; they ran to hunt up the brothers, to tell the good news. As they were going, Jesus met them, and they fell at His feet and worshiped Him. He said: "Be not afraid; go tell my brethren that they go into Galilee and there shall they see me." It was not only the Twelve that were to tell the good news. There were several

hundred brethren; yes, thousands of followers at this time. They never thought of blood-thirsty soldiers who had put their Master to death and were seeking for His friends who would dare to defend Him.

Observe the wonderful mission that Jesus had entrusted to these weak women to preach the first resurrection sermon; to risk their lives in gathering together the followers of Christ, where the wonderful meeting was to be held. But just like many today,

they would not believe. Peter said, "I will not believe your report." Thomas said, "I will not believe except I see the prints in His hands and feet."

In the midst of all these discouragements, they went on with the work and had grand success. Jesus met with and preached to them; they were all made to rejoice. They were called by angels, and the Lord from glory, and sent to preach the gospel. The names of four women were given and there were many others.

God is calling the Marys and the Marthas today all over our land to work in various places in the vineyard of the Lord; God grant that they may respond and say, "Lord, here am I; send me."

My dear sister in Christ, as you hear these words may the Spirit of God come upon you, and make you willing to do the work the Lord has assigned to you. It is high time for women to let their lights shine; to bring out their talents that have been hidden away rusting, and use them for the glory of God, and do with their might what their hands find to do, trusting God for strength, who has said, "I will never leave you."

Oh, the fields are white, for the harvest is great and ripe, and it is ready for the gospel sickle, oh, where are the laborers to gather the golden grain into the Master's garner?

The world is dying, the grave is filling, hell is boasting; it will all be over soon.

God left the glorious work of saving souls in the hands of the church. What is the church composed of? Men, women, and children. We are putting up a building of God; everyone has a part in this building; if we cannot be a pillar or cornerstone, let us be a spike or a nail or a

brick; let us not despise the day of small things. Whatever we do for Jesus, with the right motive, is precious in His sight. God's church is a workshop; no idlers allowed here. There should be bills posted, "To work, to work. Everyone at his post." You and I should say when Satan tempts us, like Nehemiah, "I am doing a great work, so that I cannot come down. I am commissioned by the King of heaven to work for Him." The work is great and the time is short. He offers a great reward. Like the blind man, we will tell what God has

done for us. "Once I was blind, now I can see."

Woodworth-Etter's *Original Wisdom* for Today

Woodworth-Etter was not shy in asserting her own right to preach as well as the rights of other women and even children.

1. Does your congregation give women freedom to preach? If so, how can Woodworth-Etter's message encourage those women? If not, where do you think Woodworth-Etter's argument goes wrong?

2. Who is the most gifted woman minister you know? What wisdom or insights have you gained from her?

3. In what ways do you encourage both women and men to hear and respond to God's call? Do women and men have different kinds of callings from God or does God call women and men to the work of the gospel irrespective of gender?

It is high time for women to let their lights shine; to bring out their talents that have been hidden away rusting, and use them for the glory of God.

- Maria Woodworth-Etter



iUniversity: Empowering Collegians for Christ / HARVEY HERMAN

The Student-Friendly Church



The nature of university ministry does not use a come-and-see approach, but a go-and-serve approach.



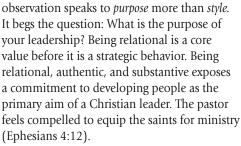
ne thing you can count on regarding Christian university students is they vote with their feet. Organizational loyalty matters little to them. Instead, they attend churches that meet their felt needs. I call churches that attract collegians *studentfriendly churches*. Collegians eagerly attend and highly value the pastors, church members, and the services in these churches. I have been directly involved with three such churches.

Why do collegians pour into these churches? They offer an *open-hand* rather than a *closed-grip* approach to students. The church leadership recognizes that the university is the most strategic mission field (for the extension of the kingdom of God) in their city. They further realize that the best person to reach a student for Christ is another student. So church leadership releases and resources these students to go as Christ's ambassadors into their own mission field.

This may sound like a one-way street. The students attend church on Sunday morning. The people in the church love them, teach them, feed them, transport them, and in many other ways serve them. On the surface it appears the only value the students add to the local church is their zeal expressed in worship services. But on a deeper investigation of these studentfriendly churches, I found they share a common culture and approach to ministry. The following observations highlight the common culture in student-friendly churches.

Churches That Reach Students Have Pastors Who Are Relational, Authentic, and Substantive

At first glance, this observation suggests *style* is crucial to reaching today's student. But this



Students are looking for mentors. They want to have a relationship with their leaders. They desire that candor and informality characterize their relationships. They look for mentors who tell personal success and disappointment stories. This unchurched student generation is hungry for serious Bible study. They desire to encounter a Bible that is profound enough to address the convoluted issues of their world.

Churches That Reach Students Continually Refresh Their Tactics for Developing People Spiritually

As I discipled students 20 years ago, I tried to practice a few principles — to *love the unlovable*, *accept the unacceptable*, *forgive the unforgivable*, and *confront the unconfronted*. The students I work with today, however, react differently to the confronting approach that characterizes a directive style of leadership. The religious pluralism prevalent on the campus shows that confrontation is a judgmental and disrespecting posture. The question to answer now is: How do I challenge the unchallengeable? Now, rather than being direct, one must approach a student more diplomatically.

This illustrates a need to refresh one's tactics for discipling people into the fullness of Christ. As students change so will your strategies.



HARVEY HERMAN, DSL, is Chi Alpha campus ministries northeast area director. Contact him at HarvXA@ gmail.com, or visit http://www.harvsallyherman.net

Churches That Reach Students Are More Resistant to Falling Out of Step With Larger Cultural Shifts

Students ride the crest of the wave. They first test drive new philosophies, theologies, technologies, and creative arts on the university campus. As Christians, we admire them when they press for freedom in the face of totalitarian régimes. We dislike it, though, when they experiment with moral codes. Whether or not we like it, we know collegians will be agents of change. A local church that carefully listens to what students are saying will be able to predict the cultural waves about to crash on their cities. This allows a church to capitalize on new opportunities or prepare for potential threats. It prevents a church from answering questions people are no longer asking.

Churches That Reach Students Are More Diverse

I spoke with a high school student of Polish descent who is disillusioned about attending his state university because, "It has such a low percentage of African-American students." Not only is the millennial generation the most ethnically diverse generation in American history, it is also deeply committed to living in a diverse world characterized by multiple perspectives that foster harmony. They expect their future workplaces and churches to be diverse.

People say, "The most segregated time in America is Sunday morning." This may be true today, but if the millennial generation has anything to do with it, it will not be true in 2020. Students in your church will help your church become more diverse. At the same time, reaching out to other ethnicities will help you reach students.

Churches That Reach Students Demonstrate Effective Evangelism Strategies

This observation relates directly to the first observation. When the core values of church leadership are relational, authentic, and substantive, their strategies for reaching people with the gospel are relational, transparent, and deal with life's dilemmas in a respectful and serious manner. Gone is the one-size-fits-all approach to evangelistic programs. Millennials can smell a *sales pitch* a mile away. On the other hand, they appreciate honest and authentic relationships where nonjudgmental faith discussions naturally occur. I believe if you can reach a millennial with the gospel, you can reach anyone in your city. If you cannot reach a millennial, you will probably only reach people who have had a previous relationship with Christianity.

Churches That Reach Students *Practice Pure Religion*

The first two questions interested students ask at a Chi Alpha information booth are: "Is this a nondenominational ministry?" and "Are you involved in community service projects?" I read in the *Washington Post* that "the percentage of teenagers taking part in community service projects more than doubled from 13.4 percent in 1989 to 28.4 in 2003–05."¹

Students attend churches involved in community service because it gives plausibility to the gospel. Before the gospel is credible it must be plausible. Credibility answers the question: Is the gospel true? Plausibility answers the question: Could the gospel be true?

Many students start so far away from the gospel that you must answer the plausibility question before they can even hear the credibility question. When your church helps hurting people, it speaks to the heart of millennials, and in their mind, restores credibility back to Christianity.

Churches That Reach Students Are Less Conservative With Change Management

The church is an eschatological community. This means the church has a future-focus. It is the responsibility of the pastor to communicate a compelling vision for his church, align his people with that vision, and inspire them to make it happen regardless of the obstacles. Students come retrofit to facilitate change. A church that reaches students will be less likely to get stuck in the past.

Churches That Reach Students Think Missionally

For many pastors, visiting their local college and reaching today's student are outside their comfort zones. It is probably similar to the feeling a new missionary experiences as Students are looking for mentors. They want to have a relationship with their leaders. They desire that candor and informality characterize their relationships.



CHI ALPHA

Chi Alpha is eager to form partnerships with local churches that wish to reach and minister to college students. he acclimates to a new culture and learns a new language.

The more than 3,500 colleges and universities in America have more than 16 million students matriculating through academic programs. I cannot prove it, but I believe almost every college has an Assemblies of God church near it. Chi Alpha has chartered campus groups at 250 of the most prominent schools in the country with more than 15,000 students involved. Chi Alpha is eager to form partnerships with local churches that wish to reach and minister to college students.

The nature of university ministry does not use a *come-and-see* approach, but a *go-andserve* approach. A church that wishes to reach students must be intentional and committed to the process. Chi Alpha pledges to support, through training and coaching, any pastor who sets his heart to reach students for Christ.

Conclusion

Your church may face some changes if you wish to be more effective in reaching collegians. I believe it is well worth the effort. If you can reach a student and he feels welcomed, loved, and fed, then you can reach anyone in your city. If you struggle reaching students, then you will also narrowly define the demographic in your city that you will be able to reach. Why? Because today's secular college students are postmodern, much like the other neverchurched people in your city. Remember, a student-friendly church is missional, relational, authentic, and substantive. As you become a student-friendly church, you will reach both students and the never-churched. @

NOTE

1. Lori Aratani, "Area Teenagers Making a Mark on the World," Washington Post, 19 May 2008, Sec. B1.

Sermon Seeds For additional sermons, visit http://www.enrichmentjournal.ag.org. Look under Resources for Practical Ministry.



A Man on a Mission

JERRY ROBERTS, Phoenix, Arizona

TEXT: JOSHUA 1:1–18

INTRODUCTION

Joshua faced challenges and obstacles as he assumed leadership following the death of Moses. Israel had wandered in the wilderness 40 years, and in 3 days Joshua must lead the nation in a divinely appointed crusade. God spoke to Joshua and provided a step-by-step plan on how to complete this mission. This Old Testament story of conflict and conquest gives insight regarding our mission of world evangelism and how we can fulfill that task.

MESSAGE

1. A comprehensive plan that inspired courage.

- a. Courage for the first step in this plan. "Now therefore arise, cross this Jordan" (Joshua 1:2).
- b. The plan required courage. The Jordan was at flood stage, making the crossing difficult (Joshua 3:15).
- c. Courage for the plan's geographical scope. "Every place on which the sole of your foot treads" (Joshua 1:3).
- d. Courage and a promise."No man will be able to stand before you all the days of your life" (Joshua 1:5).
- e. Courage was not optional. It was commanded. "Be strong and courageous" (Joshua 1:6).

2. A compelling precedent that invited commitment.

- a. This precedent was clearly stated. "Just as I have been with Moses, I will be with you" (Joshua 1:5).
- b. Note how God was with Moses:
 - (1) In his birth (Exodus 2:2).
 - (2) In the bulrushes (Exodus 2:3–9).
 - (3) In the palace (Exodus 2:10).
 - (4) In failure and fear (Exodus 2:11–14).
 - (5) In decisionmaking (Hebrews 11:24–27).
 - (6) In marriage (Exodus 2:21).
 - (7) In a spiritual encounter at the burning bush (Exodus 3:1–9).
 - (8) In his mission to Pharaoh (Exodus 3:10–14).
 - (9) In miracle power (Exodus 4:1–9).
- (10) In an intimate relationship." The Lord knew [Moses] face to face" (Deuteronomy 34:10).

3. A charismatic presence that instilled confidence.

a. Joshua developed confidence in military action against the

Amalekites (Exodus 17:8).

- b. Moses told Joshua they needed divine resources "the staff of God" for the battle (Exodus 17:9).
- c. Now, in possessing Canaan, Joshua was assured, "The Lord your God is with you" (Joshua 1:9).
- d. Confirming what Moses said prophetically, "The Lord your God ... goes with you" (Deuteronomy 31:6).
- e. God's assures us of His presence as we fulfill the Great Commission (Matthew 28:19,20).

4. A communal pursuit that illustrated cooperation.

- a. The Lord told Joshua, you and "all this people" must cross over into Canaan (Joshua 1:2).
- b. Joshua gave orders to his officers to prepare the troops for the military assault (Joshua 1:10,11).
- c. Israel responded with an oath of fidelity to Joshua and the mission (Joshua 1:16).
- d. They referenced their record, "Just as we obeyed Moses ... so we will obey you" (Joshua 1:17).
- e. Cooperation in the extreme, rebellion against Joshua would trigger the death penalty (Joshua 1:18).

5. A conditional promise that included conquest.

- a. The promise and the conquest were tied to the mandate to "be strong and courageous" (Joshua 1:6,7,9).
- b. This promise was also tied to God's Word, and conquest was contingent on a three-fold response.
 - (1) Be obedient."Be careful to do according to all the law which Moses My servant commanded you" (Joshua 1:7).
 - (2) Talk about God's Word."This book of the law shall not depart from your mouth" (Joshua 1:8).
 - (3) Meditate on God's Word. "Meditate on it day and night" (Joshua 1:8).

CONCLUSION

The outcome for Joshua's mission was never in doubt. The Lord said, follow Me"then you will make your way prosperous, and ... have success" (Joshua 1:8). Like Joshua and the nation of Israel, we have a personal call and a collective call to a mission within the framework of God's divine plan. Our mandate is clear, and we can complete our mission through the power of the Holy Spirit.

NOTE

1. Scripture quotations are taken from the New American Standard Bible®, Copyright © 1960, 1962, 1963, 1968, 1971, 1972, 1973, 1975, 1977, 1995 by The Lockman Foundation. Used by permission (www.Lockman.org).

.

.

Don't Forget the Family

D. GREG EBIE, Windham, Ohio

TEXT: Hebrews 10:25

INTRODUCTION

At certain times of the year our family joins with members of our extended family. In God's family we are to regularly join for family time with one another and with our Father.

MESSAGE

Join together to encourage one another because the Day is approaching.

- a. The day of Christ's return, our Blessed Hope, the Rapture (1 Thessalonians 4:16,17).
- b. The Day is close at hand (Romans 13:11;1 Corinthians 15:51,52).

2. Join together to develop relationships.

- a. Encourage others through relationships to look up (1 Thessalonians 4:18).
- b. Encourage others through relationships to never give up (Hebrews 3:13; 1 Thessalonians 5:11).

3. Join together to obey God's command (Hebrews 10:25).

- a. Meet together and develop relationships.
- b. Meet together as a united body of believers.
- c. Meet together with believers anywhere, anytime.

4. Join together to participate in the body of Christ.

- a. S.E.P.A.R.A.T.I.O.N. from the church is caused by:
 Sin Spiritual separation from God.
 Emptiness Spiritual void.
 Pride Spiritual arrogance or superiority.
 Apathy Spiritual numbness or death.
 Regrets Spiritual hurts or failures.
 - Activities Spiritual distractions.
 - Tiredness Spiritual fatigue.
 - Irritation Spiritual lack of focus.
 - Obsolete faith Spiritual distance from God. No forgiveness — Spiritual bitterness or anger.
- b. A.T.T.E.N.D. the church because of:
 - Accountability Spiritual oversight.
 - Testimony Spiritual witness.
 - Team Spirit Spiritual edification.
 - **E**ndurance Spiritual strength.
 - Needs met Spiritual provision.
- **D**emonstration of love Spiritual foundation.

CONCLUSION

Attend church for the right reasons. Encourage others to attend.

The Sad Story of the Sorry Son

DAVID A. MATHENY, Williston, Florida

TEXT: LUKE 15:11-24 (NIV)

INTRODUCTION

This is a story of slipping and sliding about someone who was in the Father's house and lost his privileges and membership in the family.

MESSAGE

1. The share.

- a. The proposal "Father, give me my share of the estate" (verse 12).
- b. The property "So he divided his property between them" (verse 12).
- c. The problem "Set off for a distant country" (verse 13).

2. The squandering.

- a. He lost his values "wild living" (verse 13).
- b. He lost his valuables "After he had spent everything" (verse 14).
- c. He lost his value "No one gave him anything" (verse 16).
- 3. The starvation.
 - a. The severe famine "There was a severe famine" (verse 14).
 - b. The servant to swine (verse 15).
 - c. The sense of emptiness and need (verse 16).
- 4. The senses.
 - a. Hungry "Here I am starving to death" (verse 17).
 - b. Hired men "Father's hired men have food to spare" (verse 17).
 - c. Humility "[Father, make me] one of your hired men" (verse 19).
- 5. The sight.
 - a. Compassion "Father saw him and was filled with compassion" (verse 20).
 - b. Confession "Father, I have sinned" (verse 21).
 - c. Conciliation "I am no longer worthy" (verse 21).

6. The son received.

- a. Forgiveness "For this son of mine ... is alive again" (verse 24).
- b. Feast "Let's have a feast" (verse 23).
- c. Festivities "So they began to celebrate" (verse 24).

CONCLUSION

The lost is reclaimed; the sadness turns to celebration; the prodigal who lost his principles, provender, and pride is returned to a place of honor and love. The Father's arms of love never close.

When You Need To Start Over Again

STEVE EUTSLER, Springfield, Missouri

TEXT: ISAIAH 44:21–23

INTRODUCTION

Have you ever messed up and wished you could start over again? How can we start over again with God?

MESSAGE

- **1. We can start over again by remembering God.** "Remembering these things, O Jacob" (Isaiah 44:21).
 - a. He is our Master (Isaiah 44:21).
 - b. He is our Creator (Isaiah 44:21).
- 2. We can start over again by returning to God. "Return to [Him]" (Isaiah 44:22).
 - a. The foundation for return is grace (Isaiah 44:22).
 - b. The foundation of return is obedience (Isaiah 44:22).
 - c. The motivation for return is gratitude (Isaiah 44:22).
- 3. We can start over again by rejoicing in God. "Sing for joy" (Isaiah 44:23).
 - a. Rejoice in God for His redemption (Isaiah 44:23).
 - b. Rejoice in God for His revelation (Isaiah 44:23).

CONCLUSION

We can start over again with God by remembering Him, returning to Him, and rejoicing in Him.

Book Reviews



I was hoping that they could revel in the fact that the church was going forward even though they were no longer in control. But I was wrong.

— Gordon MacDonald, Who Stole My Church?

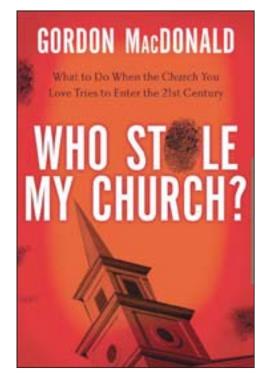


Who Stole My Church?

GORDON MACDONALD (Thomas Nelson, 272 pp., hardcover)

rarely come to the end of a book with tears in my eyes, but this book affected me that way. I have walked through about every issue dealt with in this book — maybe that is why it impacted me emotionally.

Gordon MacDonald, an experienced pastor and stimulating writer, uses the complaint of an old-time parishioner as the title for his book. Many older people are thinking this these days.



MacDonald uses an innovative approach. He creates a mythical New England congregationally governed church with a long and solid history. He poses himself as the pastor in his third year of service. He has been slowly instituting change because he realizes if the church keeps doing things the same way, it will decline and die.

Working with the leadership team, he presents a proposal to the church membership to spend \$150,000 on upgrading sanctuary technology. The congregation stunningly rejects the recommendation.

MacDonald wonders how to respond. The youth and newcomers in the church are discouraged with the old guard who want to keep things the way they have always been.

MacDonald decides to invite 15 of the long-time members who led the charge against the proposal to meet with him. This begins a conversation

over the course of months that deals with the issues churches face today. The chapters follow the course of the weekly meetings and deal especially with the builders and boomers who feel their church is being hijacked by a younger generation. Others are stealing what they have worked so hard to create.

The book reads fast like a novel. I couldn't wait to get to the next page. The book was so perceptive I sent a copy to every district superintendent.

It is critical for the health of the church for pastors to know how to institute change wisely by engaging the generations rather than taking precipitous actions that divide and alienate. MacDonald's book will help ministers and laity in revitalizing an existing church. *Who Stole My Church?* is a must read for every pastor.

— Reviewed by George O.Wood, general superintendent of The General Council of the Assemblies of God, Springfield, Missouri.

A Model for Marriage

JACK O. AND JUDITH K. BALSWICK (InterVarsity Press, 211 pp., paperback)

Being married is one of the most challenging and rewarding things a person will ever do. Together, spouses create and recreate their relationship through each stage of life," state Jack and Judith Balswick.

The Balswicks believe God intends marriage to be the joining of two well-defined persons into a transcendent sacred union. But interpersonal spousal dynamics are complex, and it is hard to balance personal desires with selfgiving love. The authors, however, have discovered that the Trinitarian foundation of the Christian faith provides profound insight for sorting through this challenge. They use this Trinitarian foundation to help couples discover their personal distinctiveness in and through their mutual interdependence.

The Balswicks believe that the dilemma of marriage is the "clash between the primary value of individual self-fulfillment and the marital fulfillment in relationship." But they also believe that God has created spouses to be in a mutually reciprocating relationship as two unique selves in relation to God and to each other.

Throughout this book the authors provide biblical guiding principles that contribute to a deeply fulfilling marriage. Couples in every stage of marriage will find this book can help them keep their marriage vital and relevant according to its God-designed priority.

Pastors will benefit not only from strengthening their own marriage, but also as they help couples in their church strengthen theirs.

- Review adapted from preface.

Tying the Knot Tighter

MARTHA PEACE AND JOHN CROTTS (P&R Publishing, 120 pp., paperback)

Just as the best coaches remind their players to practice the basics of their sport, Christian couples need to be reminded regularly of the basics of a Christian marriage. In a down-to-earth style, Martha Peace and John Crotts provide these reminders through short chapters that couples can read, study, and pray over together.

The authors have broken down 19 areas of marriage, summing up the Bible's teaching and offering a series of penetrating questions to help readers take inventory of themselves and their marriage. Each section ends with two recommended resources for readers who want to dig deeper in a particular area.

Pastors could encourage couples to use this book as a devotional guide, reading a chapter a day and discussing the questions at the end of the chapter. Some chapters might take longer as couples thoughtfully and prayerfully consider these questions. This book could also be used in a marriage retreat. Laypeople could use this as a resource as they mentor other couples.

The desire of the authors is that this book, along with the Bible, will help couples remember and practice the essentials of a Christian marriage.

—Review adapted from back cover and introduction.

Angry Men and the Women Who Love Them

PAUL HEGSTROM (Beacon Hill Press, 152 pp., paperback)

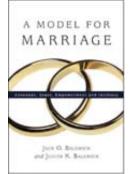
Angry Men and the Women Who Love Them provides a disturbing account of the abuse that occurs at epidemic proportions in our society — *domestic violence*. All people are susceptible regardless of age, gender, or Christian or non-Christian status.

Hegstrom's inspiration and motivation to write this book was the sexual and physical abuse he suffered that left him with emotional, psychological, and spiritual scars. These kinds of experiences have not only impacted his life, but also the lives of many other victims.

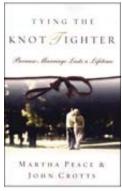
This book is informational. It provides statistics on domestic abuse, its causes and effects, and recommends methods people can incorporate to overcome the problem. Research substantiates the need to provide urgent help for victims who fail to report domestic violence because they fear further retaliation and abuse.

Hegstrom gives a wake-up call to anyone experiencing domestic violence. He encourages those who know victims to immediately report abuse, so the person can receive the help he or she urgently needs. Reporting may save someone's life.

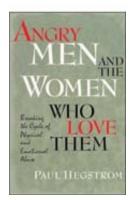
Hegstrom's testimony of his healing from



A Model for Marriage



Tying the Knot Tighter



Angry Men and the Women Who Love Them

traumatic, ongoing abuse, and from the abuser he became, provides victims and perpetrators of domestic abuse incredible hope.

> — Reviewed by Gary Bruegman, MA, CIT, Still Waters Counseling, Springfield, Missouri.

15 Characteristics of Effective Pastors

KEVIN W. MANNOIA and **LARRY WALKENMEYER** (*Regal, 238 pp., hardcover*)

Based on the cover, my initial reaction to 15 Characteristics of Effective Pastors was that it was another book offering a quick fix for pastors desperate to find the secret of how-to-succeed in ministry. Instead, I found that Mannoia and Walkenmeyer had consulted with nine prominent ministers to identify and discuss 15 fundamental traits vocational ministers must embrace to be effective in ministry. Since these characteristics have strong biblical support, they are relevant to all vocational ministers.

The authors' thesis is: "Effective pastoral ministry flows from a complex integration of calling, character, and competence, contextualized for Kingdom growth in the local community." Rather than taking a formulaic approach to ministry in which a+b+c=ministry success, the authors argue that success in ministry is only possible when the minister attends to his inner-life issues. They believe that when the minister's personal foundation is sound, his ministry will flourish.

Grounded in the teaching of Jesus that "the mouth speaks out of that which fills the heart" (Matthew 12:34, NASB¹), the authors remind ministers that ministry success is only possible when the pastor first attends to foundational

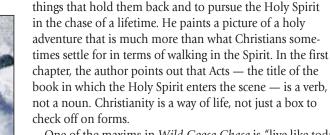
Wild Goose Chase

MARK

Batterson

MARK BATTERSON (Multnomah Books, 174 pp. paperback)

Mark Batterson stays true to his passion: to give readers a new perspective on forging a relationship with God. In *Wild Goose Chase*, Batterson challenges believers to get away from the

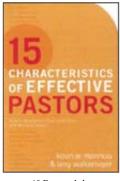


One of the maxims in *Wild Goose Chase* is "live like today is the first day and last day of your life." This statement coincides with the hang-on-here-we-go approach to faith in a living and holy God that Batterson presents.

Without offering a roster of excuses, Batterson explores the limits of our humanity in stark juxtaposition with the total limitlessness of what God can do in and through a willing

servant. He highlights six *cages*, or reasons why believers tend to hold back — including guilt, failure, and fear. Yet, as he uses the concept of cages to emphasize the things that hold believers back, he unceasingly encourages readers to go for it, enjoy the journey, and not be afraid to engage at a no-regrets level with the Creator of the universe.

— Reviewed by Mike McCrary, Young Life and Family Ministries pastor, Central Assembly of God, Springfield, Missouri



15 Characteristics of Effective Pastors



Nothing is more unnerving or disorienting than passionately pursuing God. And the sooner we come to terms with that spiritual reality, the more we will enjoy the journey.

> — Mark Batterson, Wild Goose Chase



issues, such as love for God, personal integrity, servant leadership, and godly character. Regardless of context or calling, reading 15 Characteristics of Effective Pastors will enhance the life and ministry of vocational ministers.

> — Reviewed by Paul L. Curtis, D.Min., Springfield, Missouri.

NOTE

 Scripture quotations taken from the New American Standard Bible[®], Copyright © 1960, 1962, 1963, 1968, 1971, 1972, 1973, 1975, 1977, 1995 by The Lockman Foundation. Used by permission (http://www.Lockman.org).

Preventing Ministry Failure

Michael Todd Wilson and Brad Hoffmann (InterVarsity Press, 265 pp., paperback)

Most people who have served in ministry have watched some of their ministry peers go through deep discouragement, burnout, and even moral failure. *Preventing Ministry Failure* provides a practical wake-up call for anyone preparing for or serving in full-time ministry. People who read this book and work through the exercises will be better equipped for ministry.

The authors provide pastors with tools for self-care, boundary setting, and developing meaningful relationships with ministry peers. They describe the unique challenges of stress and burnout in pastoral work and help pastors identify destructive patterns they might have in their own lives.

By highlighting seven major issues common to ministers, and by showing how to avoid negative pitfalls, the authors help pastors examine their lives and evaluate their emotional lives, their family lives, and their careers. They also bring comfort to pastors who have been forced out of ministry, and encouragement for those who have gone through difficult ministry challenges.

Wilson and Hoffmann give pastors a practical plan they can apply to their lives. Ministers can adopt these *action points* as they work toward healthy and happy marriages and families while serving in ministry for a lifetime.

The Fire Spreads: Holiness and Pentecostalism in the American South

RANDALL J. STEPHENS (Harvard University Press, 393 pp., hardback)

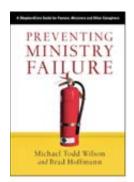
The author, assistant professor of history at Eastern Nazarene College, has provided a comprehensive study of the emergence and development of the Holiness movement in the Southern American states. This, he believes, is the most significant antecedent to the modern Pentecostal revival.

Stephens argues for several points that conflict with popular views. For example, he sees the emergence of Wesleyan perfectionist ideas as originating in the Northern states, not in the South. He demonstrates that the printed page promulgated Holiness ideas in the South; therefore, it is a misconception to perceive this movement as primarily an *oral* religion. Stephens argues for the Holiness movement being primarily an urban movement, not a rural movement.

The vigorous Holiness movement largely prepared the environment for the rapid spread of the Pentecostal message in the South. This movement had already accepted the basic ideas that Pentecostals readily adopted — the premillennial return of Jesus, healing, and a sanctified life. Speaking in tongues as the accompanying biblical sign of Spirit baptism is the only unique contribution of the Pentecostal movement, according to Stephens.

Stephens traces Assemblies of God history as a significant component of the modern Pentecostal movement. His treatment is fair and objective. In fact, careful scholarship is characteristic of this volume. The extensive documentation and bibliographic sources support the detailed accounting of the history of the Holiness movement and the emergence of the Pentecostal movement. This is, without doubt, one of the most significant historical accounts for tracing the origins of the modern Pentecostal revival. The author makes a compelling case for the Holiness movement in the South as the primary seedbed for modern Pentecostalism.

> — Reviewed by William W. Menzies, Ph.D., longtime Assemblies of God educator and missions consultant, Springfield, Missouri.



Preventing Ministry Failure



The Fire Spreads: Holiness and Pentecostalism in the American South

News & Resources



WOMEN NETWORK AND MOBILIZE FOR MINISTRY

here is a place just for women ministers — the Network for Women in Ministry's Web site. The site is a ministry of the Ministerial Enrichment Office and *Enrichment* journal. The site's content, coordinated by a team of women ministers, includes articles, interviews, book reviews, and many other resources to develop, mentor, and resource vocational women ministers and women preparing for ministry.

The site also offers a free biweekly e-newsletter, *Women in Ministry Mobilized*, with articles to inspire and inform women in pastoral and missional ministries. Each issue includes news on what women in all fields of ministry are achieving around the world.

Dr. Beth Grant, chairperson of the Network and lead member of the Web support team, says, "We are committed to growing genuine community among women ministers of all ages in the Assemblies of God. We recognize the site as an important component in nurturing, mentoring, and instilling professional excellence among vocational women ministers."

To receive updates from the Web site, subscribe to the e-newsletter, or learn about upcoming Network events, visit http://womeninministry.ag.org.

AGWM Global AIDS Partnership — Extending a Hand of Compassion

The Global AIDS Partnership provides tools, resources, and training for HIV/AIDS outreach. GAP is an AGWM resource and response team with representatives from around the world serving to assist missionaries and national church partners who are ready to engage in HIV/AIDS ministry.

In 2006, 39.5 million people had HIV, 4.3 million became infected, and 2.9 million people died. HIV has no cure.

This pandemic is especially problematic in Russia, Africa, India, China, and parts of Latin America. In many parts of Africa, people cannot dig graves fast enough for those dying from the disease. Many children are losing both parents. We must reach out in compassion to this segment of society.

GAP is providing easy-to-implement training materials for those wishing to begin an HIV/AIDS ministry, training seminars for missionaries and nationals who are preparing for HIV/AIDS ministry, and medical and technical assistance. The ministry also consults with each AGWM region to assess needs and determine the most appropriate HIV/ AIDS response. Most important, GAP serves as a resource center for HIV/AIDS information and materials, providing complete modules of materials, Bible studies, tracts, and training programs in multiple languages.

For more information, contact GAP director JoAnn Butrin at 417-866-3500, or visit http://www.globalaids partnership.org.



The Global AIDS Partnership provides resources for those ministering to people with HIV/ AIDS. GAP also serves to help ministries network, sharing resources, personnel, and tools.



On June 3, 2008, the Executive Presbytery of the Assemblies of God voted to launch the Church Multiplication

Network, a service organization that will resource, catalyze, and facilitate planting new churches across America. The

Church Multiplication Network will help carry out one of the five core values of the Assemblies of God, "to vigorously plant new churches."

Functioning directly under the Assemblies of God general superintendent as of July 1, 2008, the Church Multiplication Network will be organized around seven support systems that will be housed in regional offices across the country. The systems include: Discovery, Developing, Assessing, Training, Coaching, Funding, and Communications/Marketing.

Each of these systems will support and resource the church planting efforts of districts, parent churches, and individual church planters. One of the primary goals of the Church Multiplication Network is to facilitate planting 500 new churches each year.

To learn more about the Church Multiplication Network, visit http://Church

Multiplication Network.ag.org.

The New Globalreach.org — a 21st-Century Multilingual Discipleship Tool

Globalreach.org is an online resource provided by Global University to help people discover God, live



the Christian life, and serve others. This multilingual discipleship Web site has enhanced evangelism and discipleship tools to better

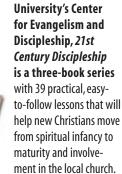
help people reach their friends and neighbors, even if they do not speak their language. Language issues can make discipleship difficult; **globalreach.org** can help.

- Recently, several new features were added:
- Multilingual browsing. You can browse in one language and download materials in another. This option is useful for reaching people who speak a different language from you.
- More languages. In addition to the original discipleship materials in English, Spanish, French, Chinese, and Amharic, Russian, Hindi, Sinhala, and Italian are now available. More

languages options are forthcoming.

- Evangelistic follow-up. Global University is partnering with Network211 to provide follow-up for those who accept Jesus while visiting Global Reach.org.
- Improved video streaming. New methods of streaming are available to match your computer's software. Global University recently celebrated its 2 millionth course distribution since GlobalReach.org came online in 1998. Visit us at http://www.globalreach.org.

New Discipleship Series Available Through Global University



Produced by Global

Joe Szabo, AGWM missionary and director of CED, says, "Many pastors and Christian leaders become frustrated as they try to find Pentecostal-oriented discipleship materials that cover a wide variety of subjects. This series was created to meet the needs of Pentecostal churches and believers who are committed to discipleship."

Pastors and teachers can use this material for small groups, individual study, discipleship classes, or a preaching/ teaching series on discipleship.

A few of the 39 lessons included in the series are:

- The First Steps as a Christian
- Developing and Using Your Faith
- The Baptism in the Holy Spirit
- How To Deal With Temptation
- The Fruit of the Spirit
- Overcoming Anger
- Forgiveness
- Receiving God's Correction
- The Gifts of the Spirit
- Your Money Now That You Are a Christian
- How To Know God's Will

For more information, contact Global University at 1-800-443-1083, or visit http://www.21centurydisciple ship.com.

2009 National Youth Scholarship

Each year Christian Higher Education and the national Youth Department of the General Council of the Assemblies of God sponsor the J. Robert Ashcroft National Youth Scholarship Program. This scholarship provides financial assistance to outstanding high school seniors attending Assemblies of God churches. Scholarship applications must be submitted between Jan. 1 and March 31, 2009.

Each district can nominate up to three district-level winners for the National Youth Scholarship. The NYSP committee then picks three national winners based on four criteria: academic achievement, extracurricular activities, Christian service, and Christian character.

To be eligible to win this scholarship, valid for their first year of college, applicants must be enrolled in one of the 19 endorsed Assemblies of God colleges for the fall semester immediately following their high school graduation.

For more information, contact your district youth director.



National Youth Scholarships are based on academic achievement, extracurricular activities, Christian service, and Christian character.

New AG College Guide Now Available



The ninth edition of the Assemblies of God College Guide, a free resource highlighting the 19 endorsed Assemblies of God colleges, is now available.

This informative, full-color catalog includes current information from each school: tuition costs, majors and minors offered, admission requirements, housing, financial aid resources, ministry opportunities, and extracurricular activities. To request additional information from these schools, return the business-reply postcards stitched in the catalog.

Free copies of this guide are available for your church library and college-bound students when you contact the Christian Higher Education Department at 417-862-2781, ext. 3315, or http://www.colleges.ag.org.

Cook Appointed To Serve Alliance for AG Higher Education

Effective April 1, 2008, G. Robert Cook was appointed executive vice president of The Alliance for Assemblies of God Higher Education.

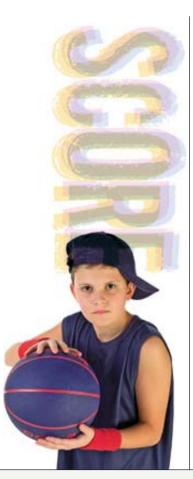
"Cook has a passion for the young people of the Assemblies of God and for advancing the mission of our endorsed postsecondary schools," states General Superintendent George O. Wood. "He brings a lifetime of experience in working with young people, and in church and district leadership."

Cook brings a wealth of educational and pastoral experience to this position. He has a D.Min. in Pentecostal Leadership from Assemblies of God Theological Seminary; served as faculty in church ministries, as interim dean of students, and as director of development at Bethany College; served as youth/Christian education director for the Rocky Mountain District; and for the past 8 years served as superintendent of the Rocky Mountain District.

"His unique gifts and calling will enable the Assemblies of God to better resource our schools and the next generation of our young people," Wood says.



G. Robert Cook



Cook will be working directly with Wood, president of the Alliance, as he gives greater attention to Assemblies of God colleges and universities and seeks to implement the initiatives set forth by the Task Force on Higher Education.Cook will also lead the Christian Higher Education Department.

Christian Education Teachers Certification

The national Christian Education/Sunday School office is launching a new certification process to equip and encourage teachers and to enrich the church's disciple-making ministries. Certification is available for leaders of any Christian education ministry, including Sunday School, small groups, Bible fellowships, and any other teaching ministry of any age group.

To receive this certification, teachers will receive the new *Christian Education Teachers Reference Manual* and must attend a one-day workshop followed by an openbook exam. This certification is the beginning of a lifetime of learning and improving in teaching ministry.

To schedule a Christian Education Teachers Certification seminar for your teachers, or to teach the seminar yourself, contact the Sunday School/Christian Education office at 417-862-2781, ext. 4003, or e-mail: cetraining@ag.org.

SCORE Sports Evangelism

Royal Rangers International strives to establish, strengthen, and serve Royal Ranger ministries around the world. One way is through sports evangelism.

Recently, RRI developed a sports evangelism ministry called SCORE to introduce children and young people to Christ, connect them with the Royal Rangers ministry, and provide resources to nations that want to use sports to evangelize young people. RRI's desire is to see young people SCORE the ultimate goal — eternal life in heaven.

SCORE sports clinics are multiple-day events that provide skills training (individually and with a team), opportunity to use skills learned through competition, and an evangelistic service(s) using a multicolored ball to present the gospel. The local or national Royal Rangers ministry does follow-up and offers discipleship opportunities for those who attend.

Royal Rangers International's goal is to have a SCORE sports clinic on every continent in 2 years and 5 to 10 clinics globally every year. To achieve this, however, they need help. The following are ways you can become involved in this exciting ministry:

- **Donating resources**, such as soccer balls and cleats for use during events and as prizes for participants.
- Donating time to further develop the ministry by improving soccer clinics, gaining more resources, and developing other sports clinics for baseball, basketball, and volleyball.
- **Organizing a SCORE team** and holding a clinic with RRI in another country. For more information, e-mail Matt Kling at mkling@royalrangersinternational.com,

or Royal Rangers International at rri@royalrangersinternational.com.

Christian Education/Sunday School Online Training Events

Christian Education/Sunday School's live, online-

training events for 2009 will be held Mar. 7, June 6, Sept. 5, and Dec. 5 at 1 p.m., CST. These events are seminars that participants attend via their computers. These onlinetraining events include interactivity. People can submit questions during the event and some may be invited to participate in polls. 2009 is the third year the Christian Education/Sunday School Department has offered these events. For more information, visit http://www.sundayschool.ag.org.

Christian Education Teachers Reference Manual



The national Christian Education/Sunday School office has produced a new tool to equip and encourage Christian educators in the church. The Christian Education Teachers Reference Manual

is a resource teachers can continually refer to as they lead Sunday School classes, small groups, Bible studies, and participate in other teaching ministries. It provides information that will bless teachers and better equip them to make disciples. This manual also serves as the text for our new teacher certification process.

Numerous experts in Christian education have contributed to this resource. Subjects include:

- Finding and teaching the truths of the Bible
- The vision and purpose of Christian education
- The importance of discipleship
- Classroom discipline
- Building strong relationships
- Keys for teaching different age groups
- Ministering to men, women, singles, and seniors
- Learning styles and teaching methodologies
- Lesson planning and implementation

The Christian Education Teachers Reference Manual (item #02-0602), available through GPH (1-800-641-4310), is a great resource for the Christian educators in your church. For more information, e-mail: cetraining@ag.org.

Bible Alliance Celebrates a Decade of Perpetuating Pentecost

Today millions of Pentecostal pastors and believers have the *Fire Bible* available to them in their own language.

This one-book Pentecostal library includes Pentecostal



notes and commentary, a concordance, theme articles, maps, and many more study helps. For many

overseas pastors, this is the first study Bible available in their language.

The Fire Bible, formerly The Full Life Study Bible, was the vision of missionary Donald Stamps, who authored the Pentecostal notes. He wanted to provide a Pentecostal study Bible that would help pastors teach sound Pentecostal doctrine in the nation where he served. His vision is now impacting many nations.

Over the past decade, Assemblies of God Bible Alliance has worked with missionaries and national leaders/translation teams on every continent to produce the *Fire Bible* in major languages. The *Fire Bible* is now available in 25 languages, and at least 30 more languages are in development.

A Christian publisher attending the French *Fire Bible* launch in Paris expressed his gratitude:"This Pentecostal study Bible is a precious tool.... In one book pastors and lay workers have the tools they need to understand the work and gifts of the Holy Spirit and to teach others. We believe the French *Fire Bible* will be a precious tool throughout the French-speaking world. This includes not only France but also many African countries and islands."

L. Alton Garrison, president of AG Bible Alliance, says, "We want to especially thank Light for the Lost and the many churches and people who are faithfully believing God with us and helping to make this Bible accessible in many more languages." For more information about the *Fire Bible* and Assemblies of God Bible Alliance, call 1-800-532-0440, or e-mail info@biblealliance.org.

AG Financial Solutions/ Assemblies of God Credit Union Partnership



August 1, 2008, marked the beginning of a strategic partnership between AG Financial Solutions (AGFS) and the Assemblies of God Credit Union (AGCU). AGFS and AGCU will work together to leverage their respective strengths to provide a broad portfolio of products and services to their customers while providing growth opportunities for each organization.

This arrangement will enhance AGFS' breadth of financial product offerings for individuals and ministries and will allow AGCU to offer its products across the nation. In addition, AGFS will provide operational support services for AGCU, such as a customer call center and a 40-member nationwide sales staff.

This strategic partnership has been fully approved by the AGFS and AGCU management and directors and the leadership of the General Council of the Assemblies of God.

With Christ

Elizabeth A. Abbott Branson, Missouri

Margaret Agnello Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

Helen A. Akridge Carlinville, Illinois

Richard D. Alber Village Mills, Texas

Joe Bailey Barnes Huntsville, Texas

Robert L. Bradley Grayling, Michigan

Robert R. Brodrick Ozark, Missouri

Marjorie M. Campion Sun City, Arizona

Cecil F. Carathers Vancouver, Washington

William T. Cates Ellenville, New York

Florence E. Catlett Concord, California

T. Bluford Conwav Saint James, Missouri

E. Roger Cooper Sylcauga, Alabama **Richard J. Crozier** Renfrew, Pennsylvania

John DeNicola Mechanicsburg, Pennsylvania

William D. Deweber Albuquerque, New Mexico

Joseph Dunets Portland, Oregon

Fred V. Ellis Hickory, North Carolina

Laird L. Fain Saint Albans, West Virginia

Grady L. Fannin Meeteetse, Wyoming

Coralie B. Fraley Vidalia, Louisiana

Earl D. French, Jr. Brunswick, Maine

Herman W. Frv Rehoboth Beach, Delaware

Marvin L. Fulks Nixa, Missouri

Donald G. Gibbv Morrilton, Arkansas

Jimmie L. Hinson Carthage, Missouri

> **Paul P. Hopkins** Mabelvale, Arkansas

James C. Girkin

Ron G. Goff

Edmond, Oklahoma

Delbarton, West Virginia

Webb P. Goleman

Grayson, Louisiana

Marian V. Gregg

La Mesa, California

James M. Grider

Saraland, Alabama

Hermon J. Grigsby

Russellville, Arkansas

Vernon L. Guthrie

Galena Park. Texas

Elvera L. Haines

Waco, Texas

Colorado Springs, Colorado

Richard D. Hampton

Merle E. Headding

Lamar. Colorado

El Dorado, Arkansas

Lonnie J. Guess

Las Cruces, New Mexico

Glen R. Gray

Flovd H. Horst Schertz.Texas

Richard W. Howard Parsons, Kansas

Vinton E. Huffey Monrovia, California

Darvle F. Hussev Epworth, Georgia

Royce D. Hutson Wyandotte, Oklahoma

Haden S. Jimerson Gilbertown, Alabama

Margaret M. Johnson York, South Carolina

Allan J. Jones, Jr. Springfield, Missouri

Robert F. Jones Cordova, Tennessee

Rav C. Keck Caldwell, Idaho

Harold R. Kennedy Casper, Wyoming

Salomon G. Lopez Greeley, Colorado

Floyd L. Loy Blue Rock, Ohio

Bobby L. Luker Mexia, Alabama

Daniel Maser Seattle, Washington

Albert J. Mazurek North Charleston, South Carolina

William G. Mizelle **Ringgold**, Virginia

Ernest J. Moen Sun City West, Arizona

Curtis E. Morris Waynesboro, Mississippi

Arden N. Morton Spartanburg, South Carolina

Joe Nelson, Jr. Birmingham, Alabama

Richard D. Nelson Tacoma, Washington

Charles C. Oldenburg Sugar Land, Texas

Clyde C. Oliver Falling Waters, West Virginia

Carl A. Paulson Duluth, Minnesota

Joseph W. Pense Lava Hot Springs, Idaho

Antonio L. Pereira Boca Raton, Florida

Theo R. Phelps Palestine, Texas

Felix R. Posos Hanford, California

Richard L. Potter Cape Coral, Florida

Robert L. Raburn Fort Pierce, Florida

Carlos R. Ramos Fort Worth, Texas

Kermit A. Reneau Houston, Texas

Pablo Reyes Lorain, Ohio

Pablo M. Reves San Benito, Texas

Waldo E. Risner **Raleigh, North Carolina** Mary E. Roberts Macomb. Illinois

Robert S. Robertson Modesto, California

Robert W. Rook Seneca Falls, New York

John P. Rose Fort Smith, Arkansas

Betty L. Savage Springfield, Missouri

Dale E. Smith Bremerton, Washington

Fred Smolchuck Springfield, Missouri

G.Wilton Spence Bonifay, Florida

Steven R. Sperry Moreno Valley, California

Gloria J. Spinola Trenton, New Jersey

James C. Sullivan Okmulgee, Oklahoma

Clair W. Svler Strafford, Missouri

Richard K.Tanon Elk Grove, California

Orville K. Thomas Bastrop, Louisiana

Harold P.Thompson Easley, South Carolina

Charles F. Tolbird West Monroe, Louisiana

Joel B. Torres La Puente, California

Luis A. Torres San Francisco, California

Nina M. Wallace **Chandler**, Texas

John I. Wannenmacher Milwaukee, Wisconsin

Earl E.Waugh Austin.Texas

Glenn A. Weslander Santa Barbara, California

James R. Wilkinson Mableton, Georgia

Ronald E.Williamson Phoenix, Arizona

Bob R. Willis Crossett, Arkansas

158

Advertising Index

Accelerated Christian Education	inside front cover
AG Bible Alliance	156, outside back cover
AG Family Services	123
AG Financial Insurance Solutions	inside back cover
AG Financial Solutions	157
AG U.S. Missions	
AG World Missions	85, 154
Asia Pacific Media Ministries	146
Assemblies of God Credit Union	
Baker Books	
Carpenter Bus Sales	131
Central Bible College	13
Church Life Consultation Cohort	
Discipleship Ministries	101
EMERGE	
Enrichment journal:	
Back issues	147
Enrichment: The First Decade 3 CD Set	159
Tools of the Trade e-newsletter	157
Global AIDS Partnership	61, 154

Global University 125, 154, 155
Gospel Publishing House
HelpLine
Highlands Maternity Home 123
Islam in America: Reaching Muslims 123
James River Assembly's Realife Youth Leaders' Conference
Jeanne Mayo's National Youth Leaders' Conference
Life Publishers 4
MaxPath Coaching 139
Ministerial Enrichment Office 125
Ministers National Tax 147
National Church & Clergy Tax & Accounting Services
National Evangelists Conference
Office of Public Relations 108
Tax Tips Teleconference with Richard R. Hammar
Tommy Barnett's Pastors School
Southeastern University
Welcome to Holsum
Why the Universe Is the Way it Is
The World Missions Summit

In Closing / RICK KNOTH

RICK KNOTH is managing editor, *Enrichment* journal, Springfield, Missouri. Above: Christopher (14), Darla, Colin (17), and Rick. Winning the Battle for Your Marriage and Family

he words *family, parents, marriage,* and *divorce* stir up a mixed bag of feelings and emotions for

most of us. They can come from distant memories of family life as a child and from the present reality of living in the now. For some, the words generate warm feelings — *joy, happiness, peace,* and *security.* For others, the words trigger dysphoric emotions — *pain, heartache,* and *regret.*

Recently my youngest son, Christopher, and I were engaged in a casual father-son conversation about that day's events at his middle school when suddenly the tone of his voice turned serious. In what appeared to be a random comment, he said, "Dad, I can only think of two or three other students in my class whose parents are not divorced."

I paused and then responded, "Where did that come from?"

He replied, "I don't know. I was just thinking about it."

Naturally, his comment was a segue to a more serious conversation about God's plan for marriage. I assured him I was committed to his mother and he need not worry about us getting a divorce. His face relaxed, appearing comforted by my words. The conversation ended, and he left. I thought, *If the majority of my son's classmates come from broken homes, it shouldn't come as a surprise that he wonders if his own parents' marriage will end in the same way*.

Every child has an instinctive longing for security. How unfortunate when children from Christian homes, especially ministers' homes, worry if Mom and Dad's marriage will end in divorce. We expect failed marriages in the world, but in the church and parsonage?

The truth is, children do better in life when

their parents enjoy a good marriage. Our parents' marriage stands as the most powerful influencer of the roles and expectations we bring to our own marriage. Our marriage is a model of what our children will carry into their marriage and a model to those in our church. Good marriages tend to produce other good marriages. Conversely, bad marriages can produce other bad marriages.

My parents were champions of a 55-year-long loving, Christian marriage, ended only by my father's untimely death in 2006. My wife's parents' 57-year marriage is still going strong. Today, my wife and I and our two sons are reaping the blessing of their faithfulness to Christ and to each other.

Many ministry couples are doing well and their marriages and family relationships are thriving. But the sad truth is there is tremendous pain among those who claim to be followers of Christ and those who lead His church. Some of these couples have handcuffed their marriages because of dysfunctional patterns they learned from their parents' marriage. These marriages have been hijacked and held captive to the same negative patterns of behavior. Other marriages are simply dying on the vine. They are low-hanging fruit being picked off by the day-to-day pressures of life and ministry. Gordon McDonald says, "A pastor has gained nothing if he is successful in the church and a failure at home." The devil delights when ministry marriages crumble and our children are lost to worldly pleasures.

So, how can ministry couples win the battle for their marriage and family? Johann Christoph Arnold says it best in his book, *Sex, God, and Marriage,* "In the end, everything in a marriage depends on the commitment of both partners to Jesus and on their willingness to follow His leading. Couples should remember that it was God who joined them together, and only He can keep them together, especially in difficult times."

The EJ staff has prepared this issue on the minister's marriage and family with much thought and prayer. We trust it will be a blessing to you and to those you love. Share this issue with your spouse. Also, a number of articles are well suited for members of your board and other ministry leaders. You can direct them to the articles on the EJ Web site, or better yet, provide them with their own copy. We welcome your comments about the articles in this issue. Join the EJ online forum at http://forums.ag.org/enrichmentjournal/.