

# *What is a Pastor's Wife?*

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## **Helpful Resources:**

1. Dever, Connie. "The Pastor's Wife: A Position or Juxtaposition." [www.9marks.org](http://www.9marks.org)
2. Jones, Beneth Peters and Bobbie Yearick. *With Heart and Hand: A Manual for Women in God's Service*. Greenville, SC: Bob Jones University Press, 1992.
3. MacDonald, Gail. *High Call High Privilege: A Pastor's Wife Speaks to Every Woman in a Place of Responsibility*. Peabody, MA: Hendrickson Publishers, Inc., 1998.
4. Miller, Pastor Dan. "The Job Description of the Pastor's Wife." This is an article adapted from a lecture by Pastor Dan Miller delivered at the Foundations Conference of Central Baptist Theological Seminary in October 2003.  
[http://www.edenbaptist.org/article\\_specialtopic1.html](http://www.edenbaptist.org/article_specialtopic1.html)
5. Somerville, Mary. *One with a Shepherd: The Tears and Triumphs of a Ministry Marriage*. Woodlands, TX: Kress Christian Publications, 2005.

## **Intro:**

### **What does the Bible say?**

- Many things are mentioned about a pastor
- Many things are mentioned about a wife
- Nothing is directly mentioned about a pastor's wife

## **I. You are a pastor's WIFE.**

### **A. Why did God make a wife for Adam?**

1. He was \_\_\_\_\_ without one
2. He needed a \_\_\_\_\_ because he was alone
3. He needed \_\_\_\_\_

### **B. Why was Eve created?**

To fulfill God's will for a wife: help your husband, complete Him, be a partner with him.

## **II. You are a PASTOR'S wife**

### **A. What is a Pastor?**

1. His \_\_\_\_\_
  - Leader, Preacher, Teacher, Counselor, Overseer of the church of God
  - Bears the burden of his account to the Lord for the spiritual welfare of his flock

2. His \_\_\_\_\_

The pastor's work is "a work that distinguishes him from other men in the assembly."

Does God similarly distinguish the role of the pastor's wife from the function of other women in the assembly?

**B. Her role in the \_\_\_\_\_**

1. Your husband may have the opportunity educate the body about your role.

See Dever's article and Miller's article

2. Not a \_\_\_\_\_ in the church

a. A member of the flock

b. Not the assistant pastor to the women, director of women's ministries, teacher of women, the shepherdess, the first lady, or vice president

3. Not \_\_\_\_\_ by the church body

4. Focus on \_\_\_\_\_ expectations for your life, not man's

a. 1 Corinthians 4:4b-5

b. 2 Corinthians 5:10

c. Romans 14:12

d. Colossians 3:23

5. Your ministry responsibilities within the assembly are of the \_\_\_\_\_ nature as those of every other woman in the church.

a. Titus 2:3-5: Instructions about women in the church

b. A young pastor's wife should consider herself a \_\_\_\_\_ of the older women in the church, just as every other younger woman should.

c. Miller Quote

d. Follow your husband's leadership as your pastor  
Hebrews 13:7

6. Use your \_\_\_\_\_ (Romans 12:3-8, 1 Corinthians 12)
- a. Diligently pour out your life in service to God as the Spirit has equipped you to do.
  - b. Serve in accordance with God's gifts, rather than in accordance with human expectations.
  - c. Miller: "If she is gifted in behind-the-scenes ministry, she should be released to pursue such endeavors without guilt. If she is not a teacher, not a leader, not a bold recruiter, it is a mistake to force her into such functions simply because she is the pastor's wife."
  - d. Do not feel pressure to do what the previous pastor's wife may have done.
  - e. Allow others to fill the gaps with their own gifts.
  - f. God's strength and grace can enable you to shoulder much responsibility, but do not succumb to pressure to habitually perform duties that you are ill-equipped to handle.
  - g. If on occasion something needs done that you can do without neglecting your family, but it is not within your giftedness, do it to the glory of God!
  - h. Isaiah 40:31—God will give you strength
7. Be an \_\_\_\_\_
- a. 1 Peter 5 exhorts pastors to "be examples to the flock."
  - b. Somerville: "As we follow Christ and serve alongside our husbands we set the example for the women in our flock. Whether or not we like it, we are their models."
  - c. This example may be in how you arrange your priorities—staying home rather than overdoing it outside the home.
8. Consider your \_\_\_\_\_ in life
- a. Do you have small children, school children, no children?
  - b. Is your husband in school, an assistant pastor, youth pastor, church planter, missions pastor, or senior pastor?
  - c. Are you young? Be a learner
  - d. Are you older? Be a mentor
9. Learn to say "no" (use the authority of your husband)
10. \_\_\_\_\_ YOUR HUSBAND!
- a. How can I best be your helper in this church?
  - b. You may have unique opportunities because you are helping him.

- c. Remember what Connie Dever recalls her husband telling their church?

“That is, he wanted me to be closely connected to my God, my husband, my family, and the other members of the church in a way that fulfills the biblical roles for all wives, mothers, and church members, and yet which also makes the most of the special opportunities that I have to complement my husband's ministry.”

\*\*\*This is why in SWI 201 and 202 we are going to study topics such as making hospital visits, handling funerals, counseling, weddings and showers, public speaking, discipleship, children's, single's, and senior's ministries.

### C. Her Role in the \_\_\_\_\_

#### 1. Titus 2

- a. Love your \_\_\_\_\_

- Work to build a strong oneness in your marriage
- Arrange your plans and priorities under his
- Make his success your calling
- Model respect to him in your home
- Martin Luther: “Let the wife make her husband glad to come home and let him make her sorry to see him leave.”

- b. Love your \_\_\_\_\_

Somerville: “As pastors' wives, our mothering comes under greater scrutiny, because if our children are not faithful and submissive, our husbands could be disqualified from ministry.” (1 Timothy 3:4,5; Titus 1:6)

- We should encourage our children to obey because that is what God expects of them, not others.
- We should not single them out for special behavior because they are pastor's kids.
- Do not turn over their spiritual training to SS teachers or others
- Have a regular time of Bible reading and prayer in your family—help your husband
- Be willing to joyfully pick up the slack when your husband is busy
- Sincere example and demonstration are often the most powerful tools—not perfect parents, but willing to admit our mistakes
- Build up your children with encouragement
- Teach them to read God's Word and how to pray
- Handle public discipline issues with wisdom—don't overreact because people are watching. Concern yourself with your child, not your pride or embarrassment.
- Involve them in your service together

- c. Be a \_\_\_\_\_ at home

2. Help him uphold his \_\_\_\_\_ 1 Timothy 3:2-5

- a. above reproach
- b. the husband of one wife
- c. temperate
- d. prudent
- e. respectable
- f. hospitable
- g. able to teach
- h. not addicted to wine or pugnacious
- i. gentle
- j. peaceable
- k. free from the love of money—Be content
- l. one who manages his own household well
- m. keeping his children under control with all dignity

3. \_\_\_\_\_ his load

- Pastoral Care
- Home maintenance
- Don't burden him down

4. Do not \_\_\_\_\_ him  
Example of Susannah Spurgeon

5. \_\_\_\_\_ him (Eccl. 4:9-10)

Pastor Miller writes, "God only knows how many days a few well-chosen words of encouragement from her lips are all that stands between her husband's perseverance in the pastorate and his permanent resignation from the ministry."

- a. Use Scripture to encourage and to give him wise counsel
- b. In various difficult circumstances (Matthew 5:11-12)
- c. Your husband may not voice criticisms to you—it is for your good.
- d. Respond biblically
  - Keep loving the one who has offended (1 Cor. 13:5)
  - Overcome evil with good (Rom. 12:14, 17, 18, 21)
  - Forgive and cover it (Matt. 6:14-15)
  - In everything give thanks (1 Thess. 5:18)
- e. Don't take him for granted
- f. Praise him
- g. Listen to him

6. Pray for him for \_\_\_\_\_ (James 1)

**III. YOU are a Pastor's Wife**

Are you up for the task? Be reminded to take heed to your personal life:

- A. Abide in Christ, for apart from Him, you can do nothing (John 15)
- B. Work hard at spiritual growth—don't ride on your husband's coattails
- C. Pray without ceasing—you are in a spiritual battle
- D. Get your wisdom from God who gives in abundance (James 1)
- E. Persevere THROUGH your trials.
- F. Character Qualities and Dispositions to cultivate
  - 1. Contentment  
The grass isn't always greener on the other side
  - 2. Love and Forbearance
  - 3. Forgiveness
  - 4. Give the Benefit of the Doubt
  - 5. Patience
  - 6. Trust, not worry or anxiety
  - 7. Realistic Expectations
  - 8. Don't be defensive
  - 9. Friendship with other ministry wives
  - 10. Compassion
  - 11. Friendliness
  - 12. Battle loneliness by making God your joy, delighting in His promises, being satisfied in Him alone, going to Him in prayer, focusing on others, and treasuring your husband's friendship (Somerville 84-94)
  - 13. Be flexible
  - 14. Guard your tongue—keep confidentiality
  - 15. A sense of humor

**CONCLUDING THOUGHTS:**