

The Pastor's Wife

“She will do him good and not evil all the days of her life”. Proverbs 31:12

Many years ago, as we sat in our home, the phone rang. It was a local Baptist church that wanted to know if I would be willing to be their pastor if God would so direct. As I shared this with my wife, she panicked. The thought of being a pastor's wife terrified her. She could no longer be her self. She would have to fit the mold that so many congregations have forced the pastor's wife into. “I don't qualify, I don't fit the description, I haven't experienced a calling to be a pastor's wife.” was her response. She continued on, “You are definitely called to be a pastor but I don't fit the mold as a pastor's wife.”

Why did my wife feel that way? Sadly enough, the answer is all too clear. People, for whatever reason, have expectations of the pastor's wife that are formed from secular opinions and a super spiritual bias. For some reason, they feel that the wife needs to have the same call as the pastor, same qualifications, and special gifts that qualify a woman as a pastor's wife.

In my study of the Scriptures, I realized that there is no mention of a pastor's wife in terms of special calling, qualifications or description. The focus was upon the pastor, not his wife. Therefore, I came to the conclusion that many other pastors have come to; the pastor's wife is to be his wife and the mother of his children.

For that matter, the pastor's wife is to be no different than any other wife in the Scriptures. She falls under the same rules and regulations governing the wife's function. She is to care for her husband and children, managing the home to the best of her ability. Her total responsibility is to her family first. This is her service to God. When her children become more independent, she may take on ministries in the church that fit her spiritual gifts and talents. **1 Timothy 2:9-15 (KJV)** *In like manner also, that women adorn themselves in modest apparel, with shamefacedness and sobriety; not with broided hair, or gold, or pearls, or costly array; But (which becometh women professing godliness) with good works. Let the woman learn in silence with all subjection. But I suffer not a woman to teach, nor to usurp authority over the man, but to be in silence. For Adam was first formed, then Eve. And Adam was not deceived, but the woman being deceived was in the transgression. Notwithstanding she shall be saved in childbearing, if they continue in faith and charity and holiness with sobriety.*

There is, however, no gift of “Pastor's Wife”. Playing the piano, leading choir, teaching Sunday School, Ladies Bible Study, secretary, the greeter of all new people or “Mrs. Pastor” at social events should not be in her job description. She should be free to be the wife of her husband and function within the body of Christ as she is gifted.

One of the main reasons that the pastor's children may seem unruly is because the pastor's wife is too busy being "Mrs. Pastor" before the congregation rather than being a mother and wife before her husband. Often she falls into this trap by being pressured by the congregation or by her own pride, that the pastor's wife is a special calling just like the pastorate. When this happens, she becomes the women's pastor or second in command. If this continues, she will begin to make decisions without her husband's knowledge that affects the life of the congregation. She may even begin to direct and manage her husband's affairs concerning ministry. Just think what happened in Genesis 3:1-7

When I look at the end of a woman's life, what seems to matter to God is found in **1 Timothy 5:9-10 (KJV)** "***Let not a widow be taken into the number under threescore years old, having been the wife of one man, Well reported of for good works; if she have brought up children, if she have lodged strangers, if she have washed the saints' feet, if she have relieved the afflicted, if she have diligently followed every good work***". Also her character is found in **Proverbs 31:10-31**.

If you want to help your pastor in his ministry, let his wife be who she is in the Lord so that she can minister to his needs in a way that you can't and for that matter, shouldn't. Give her room to serve the Lord in the capacity that she is gifted in and comfortable with. Realize that the call to the pastorate involves her only as a wife and mother, not someone to co-superintend the flock with her pastor husband. Encourage her when she is overwhelmed with the awesome responsibility of coming along side her husband in difficult times. Show compassion when she is hurting. Come along side when she is in need to ease her burden and you will be blessed. Learn to love her for who she is and you will have a close friend.

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