The Pastor's Wife as a Helpmeet

No profession in the world requires the involvement of the wife more than that of a pastor. The degree of involvement may vary with different situations, people or churches, but nonetheless, the pastor's wife is looked upon as one with her husband in his ministry to the church. There are certain expectations connected with the title "pastor's wife". Learning how to handle these expectations, ignoring the unnecessary, placing others in the right perspective and right priority, will enhance your life and the ministry of your husband. It is knowing what God expects of you which will make your role as pastor's wife and helpmeet to your husband most challenging and fulfilling. The function of the pastor's wife as a helpmeet to her husband is vital to the success of both the pastor and the pastorate. God has made each of us unique individuals, so every marriage, every family, and every pastorate is unique in itself.

Eve was created to be the helpmeet to Adam (GEN 2:18). This is the purpose for the creation of woman. This is the privilege God gives to every wife. This is the primary function of the wife. All teachings connected with marriage centre around this. All other activities or roles of the woman result from the effectiveness of being the helpmeet God so ordained.

Personally, I feel there is no higher calling, no greater task than this. In working towards excelling as the helpmeet God wants me to be to my pastor-husband, I am also liberated to fulfil the potentials of being a woman of God.

Today's woman is trying to stretch herself into a number of roles at the same time. She wants her own identity, she wants a career, she wants accomplishments to show, and so on. Many pastors' wives fall into this trap of activities. So, like a typical pastor's wife, I had my hand in more activities in the church than is really necessary.

Early one morning, the beginning of yet another hectic day, God spoke to me about my lifestyle. I was too busy for His liking. He reminded me that He is not a slave driver. I began to release one responsibility after another. I realised that I could be replaced in all my activities, responsibilities and roles in the church, but no one could fill my place as wife to my husband, Prince, or as mother to our children, Pammie and Jimmy. Now all my ministries in the church flow from being the helpmeet God intended me to be. I am still busy. I am still involved in the church, but whatever I do is the result of being the pastor's helpmeet.

Here are some practical areas that are basic essentials to a good marriage and successful ministry.

I. TO BE HIS HELPMEET IS TO BE SUBMISSIVE

Ephesians 5:22: "Wife, be in subjection to your own husband" applies to all wives. The children, as well as the church must see the wife submitting to her husband, for this attitude will carry over to the church. A pastor-husband who has his wife's respect for his God-given authority and leadership, will have the confidence to lead his family and the church. Should the wife have any position or ministry in the church, it will be as a result of her submission to her husband's leadership.
II. TO BE A HELPMEET IS TO BE HIS FAITHFUL SUPPORTER

Every pastor has goals and ideals. A pastor should always be sure of positive vote from his wife. He should know he is never alone in success or failure. The pastor's wife is always under observation. Her support for her husband's ministry will be a positive contribution towards the building of the congregation's confidence in the leadership of the pastor.

III. TO BE A HELPMEET IS TO SHARE HIS VISION

Every man has visions and cherished dreams. Very often he may not be able to share this with anyone, not even his congregation, as the timing may not be right. However, if he has an understanding wife and has spiritual perception, he is able to share his visions and dreams first with his wife, and then together they can pray and work towards reaching their goals. To share his vision is to grow with him in the ministry. It is the wife's responsibility to train herself to enlarge her vision, expanding herself concurrently with the growth of the church and the growth of her husband's ministry. With growth comes changes, so be willing to accommodate changes. Be flexible and be willing to explore new avenues of ministry.

IV. TO BE HIS HELPMEET IS TO COMMUNICATE TO YOUR PASTOR-HUSBAND

The pastor's wife is the only church member who has stayed with him from the very beginning. She heard his first sermon and possibly may be there when he preaches his last. Her opinion and criticism are of great value, and any wise husband will take heed to his wife's constructive comments.

V. TO BE A HELPMEET IS TO AVAIL YOURSELF TO HIM ALWAYS

He is a V.I.P. (very important person) on your list and the wife must schedule her programs according to her husband's schedule. Being the wife of a very busy pastor, I have learned that whenever my husband finds extra time for family activities and get-togethers, I make sure that I am available, except if it coincides with some very important previous engagement that cannot be rescheduled. I have found that it is worth every effort you have to make.

VI. TO BE A HELPMEET IS TO MAKE SURE HE HAS A COMFORTABLE HOME

Comfortable means to your husband's enjoyment. It is a place he looks forward to coming back to at the end of a tiring day, or a long trip. The atmosphere is clean and restful. There is open communication between family members. There is laughter and play, as well as prayer and praise.

VII. TO BE A HELPMEET IS TO ACCEPT HIM AS HE IS

Allow your husband to expand, to change as God leads him, be patient with his habits and faults. Be his friend, his companion, his confidante, his lover and his greatest admirer. Be there when he needs you, and at the same time allow for lots of space and room for him to be himself.

VIII. TO BE A HELPMEET IS TO BE HIS PRAYER PARTNER

This is the last point, but certainly not least in importance. What great assurance a pastor has when he has a wife who knows how to pray and get a hold of God. She prays for him and his ministry. She prays for the children, she prays through a problem or a crisis. She draws her strength not from his love alone, but from God. Her life and dedication to her husband and his ministry is established in God and her faithfulness is first to God. This is pleasing to the Heavenly Father. In so doing, it will definitely please the husband as well.

In giving, you will always receive. This is God's law of sowing and reaping, and it works in marriage as well. As a helpmeet gives of herself, she receives love and honour in great measure.

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Source: 'Church Growth'

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