

Ministers' Wives: 3 Keys to a Healthy Ministry Mindset

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When I read Matthew 10:16, I just can't help but think that it was written to the minister's wife. "I am sending you like lambs into a pack of wolves. So be as wise as snakes and as innocent as doves." (CEV) I know Matthew did not specifically have us in mind as he wrote those words, but it really does verbalize the thoughts of many minister's wives as they drive to church each Sunday morning!

Too often, the only people we can think about are the ones at church who complain, always have a suggestion for our ministry, or just get under our skin. My mind focuses on the woman who follows me into the bathroom and waits outside the stall to tell me something! No, these are not "wolves," but we can feel like a single, surrounded lamb in a "pack of people" as well, can't we?

Perhaps our problem is our own mindset. Jesus was sending his disciples into the world to minister. If your church is anything like mine, it is the world; it needs ministry; and we need the Master's ability to be both wise and innocent as we serve. Matthew's words are meant for us! It's much easier to be the wife of a minister than it is to live and act like a minister's wife. So what are we to do?

We must develop and grow a healthy ministry mindset. A healthy ministry mindset calls for ...

1. Wisdom, not weakness. Women with wisdom are clear and patient thinkers. Discernment and reasoning are needed to understand a person and a situation where your ministry is needed. Be slow to speak and slow to react. It's amazing how much you learn from a person by truly listening and watching them.

In a tense situation, remember these priceless words: "Let me think on this for a while and get back to you." You're not showing weakness when you step back and consider. That's wisdom!

2. Innocence, not insolence. A mindset of innocence is not a lack of information, but being well informed and using that information with God's grace and mercy. It is being inoffensive, gentle and loving. For me, it may simply be choosing not to say anything rather than the wrong thing with the wrong attitude.

The next time a person "interrupts" your life with something that needs attention, be harmless as a dove and allow the wisdom of the Lord, rather than your own desires, to direct your words and actions.

3. Humor, not hysterics. How dull my life would be if I couldn't laugh! Jesus had a sense of humor, and He was a joy to be around. People's lives are full of tragedy and deceit, so we need to add cheer and joy into of situations and bring their lives into His focus. And as I stand in that bathroom stall, seeing those wide, black, low heels of the lady I mentioned before who's waiting on the other side of that stall door, I have to laugh. No need to let people upset us. God is in control and he can handle all things and all people. Look for humor, and let Him do the hard part.