

42 Ways to Do Your Husband Good in the Ministry

There's one earthly helper who our husbands are given by God who is the closest and far more influential and more pervasive helper than any of the other helpers our husbands will ever have. So much so, that a whole section is dedicated just to this one person. Any guesses who? This person is YOU! As we see in Proverbs 31, a godly wife fears the Lord and longs to do her husband good all her days. Her life is linked to his and she is thinking about how to bless him in all that the Lord calls him to do, both in the home and at work. As pastors' wives, doing good to our husbands includes using our lives to support them in the ministry.

What makes you so important to your husband equipping and caring for God's people in your local church? Because not only are you his helper that helps get him in the church doors and into the pulpit, but you are the one who God has chosen as his life partner. You, unlike anyone else, will be there to share the joys and the pains of ministry and cheer him on. And as you go through life together, God will be teaching your husband how to care better for others, how to bring the hope of God's truth to tragedies, how to find wisdom for difficult decisions, how to find grace to forgive and strength to carry on with each other through God's grace.

And God will use you, together with him, to be a humble model of what it means for a man and woman to seek God and serve Him all the days of their lives in a godly way. And God will use all of these things that he's learned in the training ground of your family to love and care for others. I hope this section will be like a time lapse video of the blessings you can bring (and probably already do bring) to your husband's life but you might have been so busy living it, that you failed to see just how very instrumental God has made you in your husband's calling to love and equip the local church of believers.

1. By asking how you can help him

Learn to ask what would be helpful when a situation arises. You may think you know, and maybe you do. But I've been surprised how many times, how my husband really needed help is different from what I thought he needed. Not only does it help me in that moment to realize he can give me some information that will help me to do a better job of helping him, but it grows my understanding of him as our experience through the situation grows time after time after time. This makes me a better support to him and helps him do a better job of caring for God's people and for our family at the same time.

2. By encouraging him

I've found encouraging my husband to be one of the most important ways I help him persevere in the ministry. There are few people as close to him as I am. I'm his best friend and I see him in ways in situations nobody else sees him. And even when a situation seems one way on the surface, I've gotten pretty good over the years to understand what's going on inside.

Some great times to encourage your husband:

- As he tries to lead your family and the church well
- When members are wrongly critical of him
- When he has yet another friend move away and is sad
- and really, just about any other good thing you see him doing or attempting to do.

That's right. ATTEMPTING to do. Don't wait to encourage your husband until he's got something 100% right! Encouragement is great at any point in the process.

Just think about a piano teacher with a new student. Do they wait and encourage that new student with

ust think about a piano teacher with a new student. Do they wait and encourage that new student with the new student sounds like they could be a concert pianist? No! They encourage with the attempts where that student is this day even if it's just playing Twinkle, Twinkle Little Star. So with your husband, you can almost always find a way to encourage him if you take that sort of you to what he's doing. I guess it's another version of gratitude only coming across verbally.

And I'm not talking about false praise (I guess flattery would be the word). I'm talking about true encouragement. My husband says over and over again that one of the best things I can do is encourage him with the ways that I see the Lord using him.

Don't let encouragement be that gift some other wife has but it's not your gift. Encouragement is the gift we all need to have. And if you feel like you are short on encouragement, ask God to help you and start writing things down during the day to help yourself to see more of the things you could or you could encourage your husband about. At one point, the group of pastors' wives here at CHBC actually took calendars and wrote down something on every day that they appreciated about their husbands, then gave them the calendars at the end of the year. The husbands were so encouraged. But you don't have to wait till end of year you could do it at the end of the month but just do it for 12 months or whatever. It's just an idea. Make it your own!

3. By praying for his ministry

"Obey your leaders and submit to them, for they are keeping watch over your souls, as those who will have to give an account." –Hebrews 13:17

Did you know that God will call our husbands to account for how they have shepherded the members of their local church? Whoa! Being a pastor is a big deal.

From 1 Timothy, we know that they are called to the huge task of:

- **Nourishing** the church so that it might be transformed into the likeness of Christ.
- **Furnishing** an example for God's people.
- And **Flourishing** his family while he's doing all this.

This is a task far bigger than they can do! But it's not bigger than God can do. Our husbands need our prayers daily! God can give them what they need to do what He is calling them to do, but He loves to be asked. And who better than us to ask Him, as ones who know our husbands so well?

4. By being a friend

We help our husbands persevere in the ministry simply being their friend -- someone who enjoys and appreciates them. Someone to understand them. Especially in times of hard and church and they feel misunderstood or even had appreciated, being a friend to that A listening ear and a compassionate heart is so helpful to them.

5. By being his wife and tending to your relationship with one another

They sound like a no brainer but it's amazing how life gets busy and we tend to assume our relationship with each other. I'd like to say there's places where we visit in places where we live. In other words, we might do things for a short period of time, but if we do them as a pattern over the long haul, it's going to cause serious Issues.

Coasting in our relationship as husband and wife is one of these. Whether it's coasting in having times of intimacy in the bedroom or letting go of another date night for something more urgent that comes

up, or just giving up on a struggle that you or your husband has in your marriage that you're just tired of working on.

Another incipient problem to watch for is the tendency to become divergent in your lives. In other words, he does his stuff and you do yours. You live together, but your lives have become separate in many ways, including your hearts. Busy ministry life often leads to a divide-and-conquer diversity, but keep coming back together in your affections and in your schedule.

6. By being someone through whom he learns about shepherding women well

You are one of the best people he can learn from about women. You are not him. You are one of the best people he can regularly learn from about how to deal with people other than himself. You are someone who's there for him in the long haul, so if he's got lessons to learn that take a lot of practice, you can be that person that he can learn from over and again.

7. By growing in giving and receiving correction well: humility

There will be times when we need to change and we don't see it ourselves. And there will be times when our husbands need to change and they will not see it themselves. We can help each other by winsomely giving and taking correction. And in doing so, we help each other grow in receiving correction from church members. Pray for a growth in humility that our husband's and our own desire to better serve God outweighs the sting of correction.

Abigail, in 1 Samuel 25, is a great example of a woman who was used by God as a restraining grace on one occasion in David's life. She very humbly but winsomely pointed out reasons why he would later regret taking revenge upon her foolish husband, Nabal, for his insults. David heard her advice and praised God for using her to steer him away from the heat of the moment:

"David said to Abigail, "Praise be to the LORD, the God of Israel, who has sent you today to meet me. May you be blessed for your good judgment and for keeping me from bloodshed this day and from avenging myself with my own hands. Otherwise, as surely as the LORD, the God of Israel, lives, who has kept me from harming you, if you had not come quickly to meet me, not one male belonging to Nabal would have been left alive by daybreak." (1 Samuel 25:32-34)

While we thankfully may never be in the position of preventing our husbands from murdering each other, there will nonetheless be times when the LORD may very well use our words to avert other problems our husbands tackle as pastors.

8. By growing in godliness, ourselves

We need God to equip us and feed us from His Word just like our husbands do, if we are to be who God wants us to be and able to serve who God wants us to serve. We can help our husbands love God's people through having regular quiet times and growing in our relationship with the Lord. This makes us better able to care for all the people God wants us to care for, our families our husbands are friends maybe coworkers, as well as grow to be a better model to God's people, and to be better prepared to respond to them in love and in truth and serve them at church.

9. By helping our husbands grow in godliness by sharing how God is growing us

It will only be by God's power and grace that our husbands persevere in equipping and loving God's people as God wants him to. Helping him grow closer to God will equip him to love us better and serve the church better.

One way we encourage their growth is by sharing about ours. We can sharing the way God is growing us in our lives, through His Word or something from a devotional book we're reading.

10. By his caring for you in your sufferings

Your husband is learning along with you as you go through life. And in this "school" of caring well for you through times of suffer, he learns how to care and comfort God's people in your church.

It gives him more compassion it gives him more wisdom. And it flows out into how he treats the Saints, and how he views God's Word and God, and into his servants and how he presents things, and how he longs for heaven. There has been very little like our partnership in suffering that has tenderized my husband's heart in amazing ways. God wastes nothing!

11. By being interested in what he's learning, or what he did in his ministry day

Asking him to share about what he did or what he's learning not only encourages him that you care, but joins you two together in ministry. And you never know how your perspective on what he's learning or did may bring fresh insights that help him to care better for the members of your church.

12. By enabling his friendships with other men

Your husband's friendship with other men can refresh him and build him up. Whether it's simply enjoying something together or sharing struggles and asking for prayer, these relationships provide a great partnership with you in building up your husband. On top of this, I've found that while there are many things my husband will hear me say and humbly accepts, there are some things that it's easier to hear from another guy. Yet another reason to help him have time for friends.

13. By not hiding his pattern of sin but helping him get help

We all struggle with sin and temptation, including even the most godly man. Ideally, the basic pattern with these struggles is repenting and fighting against sin, not allowing it to be the ruling pattern of your life.

As those closest to our husbands, there may be times when we see a sin struggle that others don't see. Hopefully, our husbands will confess their struggle and get help. But if for some reason that doesn't happen, we should love our husbands and protect their ability to be a pastor by helping them get the help they need. Or, protect the members of our church, if their sin struggle disqualifies them from being a pastor and needs to be addressed by the elders.

What a terrible position for a wife to be in! And if you find yourself in this position, certainly pray and ask God to show you how. But also ask God to give you strength to do what is not just the lighting in the seats but it's also loving your husband and caring for his soul more than you care for him being in a particular calling.

14. By submitting to their leadership in the home

We help our husbands by living under their leadership and trying the best of our ability to carry it out, when they aren't there. This is especially true as you nurture and discipline the kids, as he would want you to. Don't forget what an important helper you are as you do this! You might feel like you had a worthless day by collecting your little toddler from pulling books out of a bookshelf that you've told him to stop doing and corrected him on a million times already. It may feel like a very small task. But the truth is, by you going back and helping him learn to turn from that behavior (yet again), that's a part of you carrying through with disciplining your child in a way that not only will make their life flourish but also fulfills your husband's leadership in the home in a way that shows he manages his family well, as 1 Timothy 3 says that they should.

15. By helping them make a good connection with the kids

This has been such an important way I've helped Mark. Sometimes it has been filling him in on events in the kids' day to rejoice in, to correct, or to provide other leadership. Other times, it is helping him coordinate schedules to make sure he's on hand for an important up-coming event, or to take a child out on a "date night." These connections help keep the kids and your husband close and inform his wise leadership in the home.

16. By keeping them in the basics

I guess you could say Mark and I have a pretty 1950s Leave-It-to-Beaver style family situation. I'm the one who takes care of the basics of life for the family, such as the laundry and cooking. He's the one who makes the money to provide for all these needs. To any extent that you helped make those basics of life happen, you help get him ready to be standing in that pulpit or over at that church encouraging and equipping God's people.

Doing the laundry and the cooking puts him in the pulpit with clean clothes and a full belly. Don't underestimate these seemingly mundane tasks! The Lord even uses them to help our pastor/husbands.

17. By facilitating hospitality

Hospitality is where church meets pastor and family at home. Sometimes, we have people over but my husband gets take-out food. But usually, hospitality involves me doing a lot of the prep to welcome people into the home, both with food and any extra cleaning. Yet another way we help our husbands in the ministry by providing a warm atmosphere to others.

But prep is just the beginning of how we help our husbands through hospitality. As we spend time with our guests, they get to see another side of the pastor's family. And unlike an office visit, it's not just Mark interacting with people, but both of us. That lends a very different feel and provides for very different conversation. So helpful for our guests and so helpful for my husband who wants to know them better so he can pastor them better.

18. By beckoning him away from ministry

It is a big burden to care for all the people in your church! It's something that occupies your husband's mind and his heart and so many hours of his day. If your husband is like mine, he spends hours every day NOT listening to members' happiest stories and words of encouragement, but usually their deepest struggles and even complaints. They love their sheep, but many times, they come home TIRED! A smiling face, a nice-smelling meal, a listening ear, a willingness to give him a few extra alone minutes to go for a run or otherwise collect him before helping with the family is a huge gift to him. And, by refreshing your husband at the end of THIS day, you help make it possible for him to have what he needs to go back for another one tomorrow.

Part of beckoning away from work, though, will be scheming about his schedule. If every slot is filled on his calendar, it's hard to find time to be refreshed. Or, if he regularly uses his day-off for ministry overflow in ways that are taxing. I find I help my husband by being a schedule sleuth and helping him coordinate evening ministry obligations and our family needs in ways that also help protect time for him to be refreshed.

Some men even need help taking a break from work when they are on vacation. Some pastors' wives have told me that their husbands actually get a burner phone on vacation instead of their regular phone. They only give out the number to essential family, friends, and a staff person who can contact them in case of emergency.

19. By keeping margins and making him a priority in your schedule

Be a schedule sleuth with you/your family's schedule, too! Try to have regular time when you are all available. This can be a tough one for families with school age kids when everyone gets busy with homework and after-school activities. And, it can be a problem if we regularly use our husbands' home time as tag-team time rather than family time. Or, when you go so hard during the day that you are too exhausted to hang out with him. When you build margin into your schedule, you build space for your family to flourish.

20. By sending him out early before you, letting him stay after you at church on Sundays

It may not look like much on the clock, but when you send your husband out early on Sundays to greet people or get settled before he preaches, it is a huge help to him in the ministry. Sunday mornings are crunch time for many families, so losing your husband right when you are trying to get everyone out the door can be so hard. But what a difference it can make for him!

The same is true for the after-worship-service time. You and the kids (and maybe even Sunday dinner guests) head on home to leave him time for more conversations with church members or visitors. Again, he may only be 30 minutes behind you, but these after-church times can be a lot to juggle on your own. Yet, we've found it can be some of Mark's richest conversation times. And YOU helped make that happen with your sacrifice!

21. By "helping" him with his sermons

Don't worry. I'm not talking about writing sermons for him. But when he asks for your insight on his passage, you can bring a whole different perspective to what he says or how he says it. You can also help him with his sermon simply by making his preaching passage a regular part of your devotions during the week leading up to his preaching. You can be praying it for yourself, the congregation, and for him. Not only will the Lord be faithful in answering your prayers, but you encourage your husband that you are thinking about what he's preaching.

22. By sitting alone in the pew... with kids!

We help our husbands in pastoring by being willing to sit in the pew alone as they lead the worship service. This is especially true when our kids are little and it feels much more like World War II than a worship service. But if you were not willing to sit there and wrestle with your kids and train them and how to be in a worship service on your own, your husband couldn't be upfront bringing God's Word and encouraging all God's people.

23. By simply being a church member committed to everyone else in your church just like everyone else

Your regular commitment as an involved church member may not sound like anything special, but it is! First of all, simply because you are contributing to the life of the church. But also, because you are another set of hands, ears, and mouth, who knows your husband well and can help encourage the members in ways that help him love them. We've found my de-briefing conversations with him about different members' situations has led to better care of them. This is especially true of conversations with women, who my husband would not know as well, since at our church, pastors typically avoid regular, on-going counselling with women on their own.

24. We can help them as we use the special influence we have as pastors' wives for the good of the congregation.

Though we are no more important than any other member of the church, nonetheless many times the things we say and how we say them, as pastors' wives, have a greater influence upon others in the

church. This is a great privilege that must be seen for what it is and carefully protected with prayer and God's Word.

I often don't think of myself as anyone of special importance. I'm just plain ole Connie from Colorado. I forget that others might see my words or actions as more significant just because I am the pastor's wife. I have learned that while I want to be on guard against considering myself as something special, I want to make the most of opportunities to use the influence I do have to encourage others. So, I try to pray before going over to church and speaking to people, that God's Holy Spirit would give me words that glorify Him and encourage those I am speaking with. I try to think about what I've learned in my quiet times and be ready, if appropriate to share truths I've learned. I try to make be careful to speak of my weaknesses and of God's strength that has empowered me to accomplish whatever He has allowed me to do.

25. By being a woman

This may sound funny, but we can help our husbands by simply being a woman! There is an old book called *Men are from Mars, Women Are from Venus* and the premise was that there's some basic differences in men and women and how they think through things. And while that might not 100% be the case, I've certainly seen it be true enough.

By me being a woman, I can help my husband understand the women members in our church. We've had many a conversation about how to re-word conversations or re-work actions to be more helpful to women he's pastoring.

26. By being a translator or transmitter

Springboarding off of the last point, I find that God often uses my as a translator or transmitter for my husband, especially with the women and children in our church. I'm just going to call a spade, a spade: there are times when husband is understood better by the men. Partly, because he is a guy. And partly, because guys are who he is in discipling relationships with, giving him more time for deeper conversations. As a woman, I'm the one in our family who can have those deeper, more regular conversations with other women, and frequently that spills over to their kids, too.

Sometimes they bring their questions or their concerns to me about something they've heard or they think they've heard. Sometimes, I encourage them to talk to Mark or another elder. But many times, it's simply a matter of clarifying something they misunderstood. God uses these conversations to build unity and often fosters a greater understand and sense of love between those women and kids and my husband and the elders.

27. By helping him find balance in caring for God's people and for your family

There are always more needs to be met in the family and at church than any pastor can meet! Balance has been one of the most consistent difficulties the Devers have faced in ministry. We help our husbands care well for church and for their families as we speak honestly and plan carefully about the needs of his family. This lets him make better decisions that shape his ministry what's and when's, in order to tend well to his family.

28. By realizing that a great man isn't a perfect man

Elizabeth Elliott used to tell women to look for an 80/20 man in a husband. That meaning, you might LIKE to have a husband who gets things 100% right, but the truth is, 80% right is about as good as it gets. (And guess what: the same is true for YOU!)

We are all learners our whole life. And even when we understand we should do something, that doesn't mean we are yet great at doing it. You help your husband by appreciating the good things he does at church and in your family, and encouraging him in areas that he struggles in and is trying to improve. And, by being gracious, remembering that while he may not be a 100% perfect pastor/man, he's probably an 80/20. Someone who's 100% great but if you can get someone who's 80% great and 20% you got yourself a good man.

29. By helping them provide counsel to others

Our husbands learn so much from living life with us, and in turn, this helps them as they counsel others. Where does a man grow in being a godly husband and father? You guessed it: through his own family! Where will he learn more about women and how to counsel them or their husbands for their good? Same answer: his own family. Where will he feel life's heartaches so he can comfort others better? Once again, the family. The family is one of the best training grounds a man has for being a pastor.

30. By expecting him to be a sinner

Like everyone else we know, our husbands are sinners. We help them by understanding that they have sin struggles; by forgiving them when they sin against us and by praying for them/ encouraging them to repent and fight sin.

31. By not expecting him not to be a mind reader

Sometimes we think that because our husbands know us so well that they should automatically know how we feel or what we need. After 40+ years of marriage, Mark has gotten quite good at that. What a gift! But when we EXPECT that our husbands "should have known better" without clear communication is unfair and discouraging. Help your husband care well for you and your family (and others in your church), through clear communication rather than mind-reading.

32. By expecting him to be a learner

For all that we might be good at already, there's also something that's new to us that we're learning. If we expect someone to be in the learning process, we are usually gentler and more patient with them. Help your husband by remembering that he is always a learner. Find ways to encourage them by pointing out what they are doing well or doing better. This not only helps them, but it makes us more graciously absorb their fumbles.

33. By being careful with our words to him

Men can counsel each other by joking and cutting each other down, but women should not do that whether it's their husbands or other men. Men see women's jabs differently than men's Jack. It's their love language, but it's not our love language to them. Men need our encouragement.

34. By being slow to disregard our husband's counsel

Be slow to disregard your husband's counsel. I am not saying your husband get it all right. My husband doesn't; (and, neither do I). But I DO know that God has woven his leadership decisions into our lives. Be easy for him to lead. Appreciate him and who God has made him to be. And remember: even if you disagree with his counsel, and even if it turns out not to be the best counsel, there is usually nothing but the best intentions in it.

But don't be a silent partner, either. He will lead better with your humble, winsome input. Pray for him and encourage him. Ask God to provide him with godly advisers. Chances are, someone has already gone through what decision he's thinking about for your family.

As a pastor, your husband is to care well for his family and they are to follow his lead. You help him by submitting to his leadership and helping the children do so, also. And P.S., I've yet to see the Lord fail to redeem even what turned out to be not the best decision that Mark made for our family! The God who leads behind your leader IS perfect and oh, so kind to us!

35. By being understanding when they need flexibility in their schedules

Expect for pastoral needs to break in unexpectedly into even your best laid plan. You can help your husband by being gracious when these emergencies arise. Plan well but hold those plans loosely!

He might need an extra 15 minutes for a pastoral phone call during usual family time or having to cancel a long-anticipated date night. The ministry is a calling filled with interruptions. If we expect these interruptions to come and see them as God's plans that we didn't know about rather than disruptions of how life should have been, it can help us to re-coop a good attitude more quickly.

Chances are, our husbands are as disappointed as we are with the change of plans. We help ourselves and them by seeing these occurrences from the standpoint of God's sovereignty rather than thoughtlessness or lack of care on the part of our husbands or church members. (That being said, when the disruptions become a pattern that regularly trumps plans that are important to the life of our family, then you need to have a serious conversation together about it. There may be changes that can be made to help avoid this.)

36. Remember that your husband means well, even if he doesn't do well

9.9 times out of 10, even when my husband does something stupid or says something stupid to me or someone else, it's not out of malice, it's out of oops. Similar to the idea that everyone is always a learner about something is the idea that everyone is good at some things and not so good at others. Expect yourself and your husband not to be good at some things that are even quite important to you, your family and the church. Instead of chiding him, help him scheme how to avoid some of the "oops" that is bound to come.

When our kids were small, my husband would get so busy working that he would frequently forget to ask how he could help me as I tried to get dinner ready and still keep our active kids alive. We finally learned to have him write in on his schedule: "Ask Connie how I can help" at 5 pm each day (when possible). This was wonderful! I received the help I needed, and he received the prompt he needed to give it. Our kids are long grown, but do you know, he still pops in around 5 and asks if there's any help I need. Go schedules! This very simple "fix" helped my husband help me and flourish our family in a little way that has had a big impact.

37. By cultivating an attitude of gratitude

An attitude of gratitude right there next to disappointment and flexibility is the need for gratitude.

Oh, how we love to make our plans. And they're usually such good plans and so well thought out. But many times, our plans don't materialize as we hoped due to ministry needs.

Perhaps our husband was delayed for the date we had planned because of a crisis. I find that looking for things I can be grateful for, it helps me not be so disappointed at what didn't happen. I can be grateful that my husband wanted to make plans with me. I can be grateful that chances are they'll be a better time where we can get together. I can be grateful that I want to be with my husband. I can be grateful that he's skilled enough to help that couple.

Don't get me wrong: I'm not saying don't be sad that you missed the date. I'm not saying don't work on changing a regular pattern of crises that cause you to keep cancelling dates. But I am saying to try to see the good and to be thankful for it with what you have to do. There's an old saying that says, If life gives

you lemons, make lemonade.” With our God who is so good and so big, and our husbands who love us and desire to care for us as well, there’s so much to be grateful for! And they are so helped by our cheerful attitude!

38. By being happy that he is a pastor who loves God’s people

Being a pastor is not an easy job. It can be hard on your husband, hard on you, and hard on the kids. Your husband can be trying his best and actually be doing quite well, but there is still someone complaining about something. And that’s just the beginning of what makes the pastoral ministry so hard!

Which is why you help your husband so much when you continue to voice your love for God’s people and a love for your husband being a pastor. Pray that God will give you this kind of love for His people! It helps your husband persevere through even the hardest ministry days.

39. By expecting him to be distracted

There are certain times when my husband comes in the door and he looks like he is all there, but his brain is somewhere else. Whether it’s the sermon he is in the middle of, the hard conversation he just had with someone, the members’ meeting coming in a few hours, or something else, Mark is not yet engaging with me or the family. This used to frustrate me a lot, especially because the times when he is distracted are usually times when he is very busy and we have only a little window of time to enjoy him before he’s back to work.

But as I noticed that his distraction came at predictable times, I learned to expect it, plan for it, and be kind to him. Sometimes, it’s just giving him an extra 30 minutes between office and home time to unwind. Other times, it is simply not planning anything before certain distracting events. The way my husband is built, Saturday nights before he preaches are NOT good times to have someone over for dinner or to go out on a date. His mind will not be there. Instead, our best night out is Monday night, after he’s enjoyed a day off. He is much fresher and ready to engage.

Be a detective of your own husband and figure out his distracted times. Work together to both care for family needs and be sensitive to his distractibility. This helps you and him delight in the saints by not holding against them the fact that they are the source of your husband’s distraction.

40. By looking to God to provide all things, even more than you look to your husband... in your family.

God intends to use your husband to provide many things for you, but remember that God is your ultimate provider. You and your husband can go together to Him for what you need. There are many times when we can only find in God what we should never expect to find in our husbands.

Reflecting on this also helps me to rightly rely first on the Lord, rather than on my husband. I know my husband is not Superman, if for no other reason than I don’t think he has ever owned any spandex, and certainly not in red and blue with a matching cape! But sometimes, my expectations of what he can do for me/our family, look like I think he is “faster than a speeding bullet, more powerful than a locomotive, and “able of leaping tall buildings in a single bound.”

On my list of expected superhuman feats for my husband have been things like: converting our children, never making mistakes; making everyone in the congregation happy; be in all places at all time; write sermons without hours of study; protect me from all hurtful remarks or actions of others; fill all of the needs and wants of my heart; or at very least, reading my mind. A healthy admiration of our husband’s abilities is one thing, but superhuman expectations are another! They are sinners like us! They need God’s grace to do all that God requires them to do. They are God’s good gift to the church. They are God’s

good gift to us and our children. But they are not a replacement for God!

I have found that taking time to remember God's truth satisfies my heart upon God rather than trying to squeeze God-sized comfort from my human-sized husband. It also helps me look to God as the one who works salvation and sanctification in His church by His Holy Spirit and His Word, rather than on the works of my husband. This puts me in a position of contentment in God that allows me to love, encourage and be grateful for my husband, rather than find him lacking most of the time.

It is so helpful to your husband to know that your confidence is in the Lord, even more than in him. And, it can remind you that what your husband needs to provide for your family will be done in the strength of the Lord gives him. It encourages him that you see him as God's good gift to you, but not your Savior. This helps your expectations of him bearable so he can continue to pastor the church and care well for you. There will always be ways he and you both can do a better job to make a better marriage-shaped ministry fit. But your hope is in the Lord, not just in each other's innate ability.

41. Look to your God to provide all things, even more than you look to your husband... in your church

There are many times when we may be tempted to push our husbands to fix this church situation or to do more with that troubled member. We may be impatient for changes in our church and expect our husbands to be the ones to change it and change it now.

While we certainly want to encourage our husbands to say or do the difficult things that need to be done in love, we need to be careful that we are not really pushing for them to rush imprudently into change because we are impatient with God's timing. Like David, we need to be praying about these situations, both for God to work out changes in His perfect timing and by whatever means He chooses—using our husbands or not, as the case may be.

Most pastors deal with feelings of impatience to see certain situations or people would change. Sometimes this may tempt them to say or do things rashly in an attempt to affect a change now! Sometimes God may make this attitude a bit clearer to us than it is to them. God very well may desire to use a gentle, winsome, humble word from us to help them to turn away from acting rashly and to turn back and depend upon God and His timing. Carolyn Mahaney's talk called "Watch Your Man," available online is a great resource for learning how to do this.

Our husbands and we are far from the only ones facing the temptation to hurry along a particular outcome to a long-standing problem. There will likely be many times when we will need offer the same kind of gentle, humble winsome reminder to others in our church. We can pray with them for change in the situation but point them back to trusting God's timing and leading in changing the situation.

42. By saying when enough is enough

Sometimes there comes a time when ministry is not a good fit no matter how hard you try. The family is just not flourishing while the church is being nourished. Or, you see your husband so weighed down with the burdens of ministry that you aren't sure he should go on.

This may not seem like helping your husband in the ministry, but it is. Why? Because in the end, he wants the right person to pastor your church. And he wants to fulfill God's call to care well for his family. You help him by humbly sharing your concerns with him, so he can lead your family in making a good decision, even if it means he winds up stepping down from the ministry.

The Summary and the Springboard for More

The Proverbs 31 “bookends” are a great summary of what God calls every godly wife to be: a woman who “longs to do her husband good, not harm (v.11), and who ‘fears the Lord.” (v.30). These 42 ways I’ve just shared with you are applications of these bookends for pastors’ wives. But really, they are just a springboard of what you may come up with to do good to your pastor/husband.

In Genesis 2, God says the “two shall be one.” May what I’ve shared help you see why on that day when your husband will receive his reward from the Chief Shepherd (1 Peter 5:4), that reward will have your name on it, too!