



Freedom newsletter

focus

August—September 2006

“To open their eyes, and to turn them from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan unto God...”

—Acts 26:18

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How Husbands Can Protect Their Wives

Within the heart of every woman is an innate need for spiritual, physical, and emotional security. It is God’s intent that this need be met first and foremost in Himself as wives trust Him with their fears, worries, and concerns. Furthermore, God has ordained the husband to be her protector (Ephesians 5:23).



Remove the Hindrances

Many husbands struggle to provide the protection and security that their wives need because of personal, unresolved root issues. Consequently, they give Satan the advantage to attack their wives with fear, worry, and anxiety. In turn, many wives attempt to protect themselves and those they love by unwisely taking charge of their environment and their family. Restoring marriage harmony requires that the husband address the root issues underlying his own failure to protect his wife.

The most common root issues that hinder men from being protectors include a weak identity in Christ, pride, immorality, and temporal values. A weak identity in Christ reveals itself in performance driven acceptance and insecurity. Pride goes beyond boastful arrogance to include self-pity and negative thinking that paralyzes responsible action. Husbands also undermine their ability to provide protection when they make allowances for moral defeat in their eyes, thoughts, and actions. Temporal values is a root issue when positions and possessions take priority over people. Resolving these root issues will enable husbands to be the protectors God intended them to be.

Know What Makes a Wife Feel Secure

Wives feel protected and secure

when husbands understand and take the initiative to meet the following five needs.

- She needs to be loved and cherished (Ephesians 5:25). She wants to be *the* love of her husband’s heart.
- She needs to be understood at an emotional level (1 Peter 3:7). Understanding at this level is more than understanding the facts of a situation. It is understanding how she feels about those facts.
- She needs her husband to be truthful about his opinions, goals, plans, and desires (Ephesians 4:15, 25). It is hard for the wife to function as a helpmeet when she has no understanding of the direction her husband is going.
- She needs to be taken care of financially. She wants to be assured that the bills are paid promptly and that resources are available to meet unexpected needs as they arise.
- She needs her husband to be the spiritual leader of the family. She wants to know that her husband is actively seeking God’s direction and providing loving leadership accordingly.

Walk in Spirit-Dependence

It is necessary that husbands approach their responsibility of providing security and protection for their wives with humility and Spirit-dependence. White-knuckling this responsibility and regarding it as duty rather than delight will be just as hurtful to a wife as abdicating the responsibility altogether. Most importantly, a husband’s priority as a loving leader and protector is *not* to please his wife, but to please the Lord. And when he pleases the Lord, he cannot help but please his wife. For this reason, husbands must make their relationship with Christ of utmost priority.

By Rev. Jeff Pokone

ICBC Praise Banquet

On **Friday, October 20th**, ICBC will be having its annual Fall Praise Banquet, located at the Indianapolis Training Center. We invite you to join us as we celebrate ten years of ministry to hurting people. God has richly blessed this ministry through your prayerful and financial support. Without you, this ministry would not be possible. Please make plans to attend!

The Banquet will feature a presentation of the ministry by Rev. Jeff Pokone, firsthand testimonies from freed counselees, a message by Rev. Keith Magill, and delicious food!

Time:

Friday, October 20, 7:00 PM

Cost:

\$10/person

Location:

Indianapolis Training Center
2820 N. Meridian
Indianapolis, IN 46208

Registration Deadline:

Wednesday, October 18

Please RSVP

317.585.1845

office@icbcindiana.org

Note: For your convenience, a children’s program will be provided for children ages 4-12. Dinner will not be included.

God's Gift of Woundedness

When I was a child, there was a stained-glass window depicting the Good Shepherd in a pastoral setting with His sheep. Within His arms was a lamb. I longed greatly to be that lamb, and yet I did not know how to get there. When I was eight years old, a relative gave me a copy of the book, *Pictorial Pilgrim's Progress*. I did not know why at the time, but I was drawn to the character, Christian, and the man behind him, John Bunyan, and the Lord Jesus Christ within him. I knew nothing of a shepherd's practice to wound a straying sheep and then carry the lamb on his shoulders to encourage a close bond. After many years, I now see and acknowledge God's gift of woundedness to me, and I thank Him for it.

The following verses reinforce this truth, God both wounds and heals. He reproves and comforts His children:

- *"For He inflicts pain, and gives relief; He wounds, and His hands also heal"* (Job 5:18).
- *"I have wounded, and it is I who heal"* (Deuteronomy 32:39).
- *"Make me to hear joy and gladness, let the bones which Thou hast broken rejoice"* (Psalm 51:8).
- *"The LORD binds up the fracture of His people and heals the bruise He has inflicted"* (Isaiah 30:26).
- *"...He has torn us, and He will heal us; He has wounded us, but He will bandage us. He will revive us after two days: He will raise us up on the third day that we may live before Him. So let us know, let us press on to know the LORD. His going forth is as certain as the dawn; and He will come to us like the rain, like the spring rain watering the earth"* (Hosea 6:1-3).

The greatest affliction that we as Christians face is not from any outside source, but rather our own sin. Peter "wept bitterly." We must judge ourselves rightly, and as we look into the perfect mirror of God's Word, we will, for judgment begins with the household of God. This is the true meaning of being "the salt of the earth," for salt has to do with judgment.

Consider Lot's wife who was turned into a pillar of salt, or the Edomites who were judged in the Valley of Salt. This is why Paul writes, *"Let your speech always be with grace, seasoned, as it were, with salt, so that you may know how you should respond to each person"* (Colossians 4:6). How do we judge ourselves rightly? Not by ourselves, but with a simple prayer, *"Search me, O God, and know my heart; try me and know my anxious thoughts..."* (Psalm 139:23-24).

Psalm 109 gives a good definition of woundedness, *"For I am afflicted and needy, and my heart is wounded within me."* The psalmist goes on to say that the afflicted and needy man is despondent in heart. In my late 30's that was very evident in my life. I was in great despair, especially regarding my own sin. However, I did not know or acknowledge my affliction, needs, or wounds. Several Christian men helped me see how I had covered up my wounds from other people. God has now given me great freedom in my body, soul, and spirit, and the means to that freedom was and continues to be through His living and active Word. This deliverance came not from my futile attempts to keep His Law, but through seeing "Christ crucified" for me. It was also only at the Cross that I found the

freedom to forgive the people who hurt me. Just as Christian's burdens fell away at the Cross, so mine do as well.

In Psalm 119, the psalmist David makes keen observations regarding the beauty of his affliction in relationship to God's holy Word.

- *"Before I was afflicted, I went astray, but now I keep Thy Word."*
- *"It is good for me that I was afflicted, that I may learn Thy statutes."*
- *"I know, O LORD, that Thy judgments are righteous, and that in faithfulness Thou hast afflicted me."*
- *"I am exceedingly afflicted, revive me, O LORD, according to Thy Word."*

One of the men who assisted me, spoke of "spiritual warfare" that was being waged, and he wanted me to see God's deliverance from my real, but unseen enemies. He took me to Psalm 18. Suddenly, while reading, I was in great shock. The words seemed to leap from the page. *"He rescued me, because He delighted in me."* Could God possibly delight in me? Later, God reinforced the idea from Psalm 149: *"For the LORD takes pleasure in His people; He will beautify the afflicted ones with salvation."* God's grace became very evident to me when I suddenly realized that there was an abhorrent idol still in my heart. Alarmed as to how this could be when He had given me a new heart, I suddenly heard the thought in my head: "Child, I did not take away your whole heart; I circumcised your heart." I then remembered the circumcision made without hands by Christ and His Holy Spirit (Colossians 2:11). I now know that God has grafted into the heart of each of His children a heart fashioned after the likeness of His dear Son (Colossians 3:12). In Ezekiel 36:25-27, we read, *"Then will I sprinkle clean water upon you, and ye shall be clean: from all your filthiness, and from all your idols, will I cleanse you. A new heart also will I give you, and a new spirit will I put within you: and I will take away the stony heart out of your flesh, and I will give you an heart of flesh. And I will put My spirit within you, and cause you to walk in My statutes, and ye shall keep My judgments, and do them."*

I once was sitting, dejected in the lonely wilderness of my heart. *"Why are you in despair, O my soul?"* (Psalm 43). *"Sing to God, sing praises to His name; lift up a song for Him Who rides through the deserts, Whose name is the LORD, and exult before Him"* (Psalm 68). Where are the deserts, the dry and thirsty land where there is no water? Jesus planted a garden in my heart (Song of Solomon 4), and there He placed the fountain of His Holy Spirit (John 7). The garden is growing out into the wilderness (the process of sanctification), and is overcoming the idols, strongholds, and empty cisterns that hold no water. *"But we have this treasure in earthen vessels, so that the surpassing greatness of the power will be of God and not from ourselves"* (2 Corinthians 4). *"The good man out of the good treasure of his heart brings forth what is good"* (Luke 6:45). *"Every good tree bears good fruit"* (Matthew 7:17).

Enjoy being carried on His shoulders and in His arms, and then walk by His side forever.

By an ICBC Counselee