

MARRIAGE & MINISTRY

Apostolic Christian Counseling & Family Services
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Tonight's Objectives

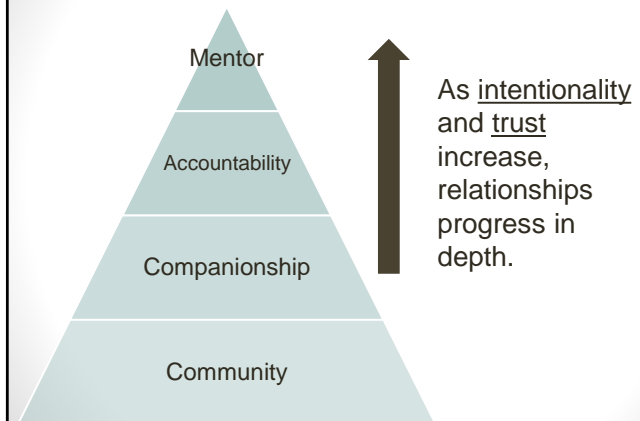
- Remind ourselves of the opportunities, tensions, and headwinds of being an Elder's Wife.
- Consider how we can encourage our husbands in their role.
- Inspire and encourage each other as we discuss together.

Theme Verse

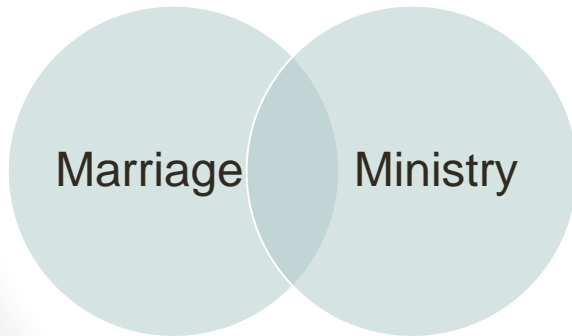
*For God hath not given us the spirit
of fear; **but of power, and of love,
and of a sound mind.***

2 Timothy 1:7

The Opportunity of Relationships

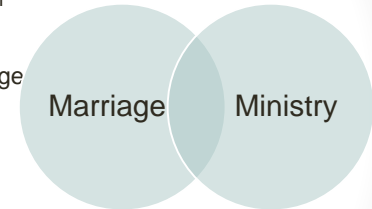


The Marriage/Ministry Relationship



Power

- Opportunities:
 - Advocate for others
 - Listen and be 'present' with others
 - Know your tendencies
 - Advocate for your marriage
 - Be a supporter for your husband
 - Build up your marriage
- Headwinds:
 - Public Role vs Private Role
 - Balancing multiple roles
 - Feeling I am always "on duty"
 - Grief from 'losses' that come from the eldership



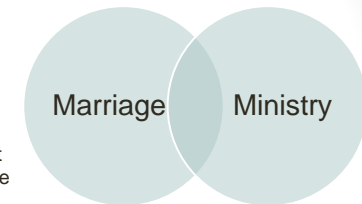
Question:
Where do you see opportunity with your elder wife position?

Share Out

- Where do you see opportunity with your elder wife position?
 - We can help our husband appreciate and understand other points of view (women's perspective, certain personality types, etc.)
 - We can be a good listener for him
 - We are included in certain circles but also excluded in certain circles – realize the opportunity this brings
 - We can be a leader in empowering and delegating the gifting of our congregation
 - We can help with premarital counseling and female converts
 - We can help with mentoring non-AC converts and showing them aspects of the church

Love

- Opportunities:
 - Emotional intimacy
 - Safety needed for sharing
 - Know your spouse
 - Validating pain and emotions
 - Hear your husband's heart without trying to fix or judge the problems
- Headwinds:
 - Navigating confidentiality
 - Public vs. private
 - The difficulty of feedback



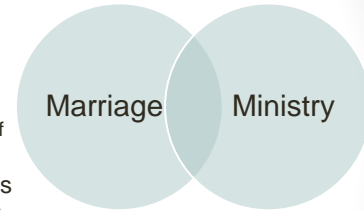
Question:
What have you found helps to build up your marriage?

Share Out

- What have you found helps build up your marriage?
 - Time away without the cell phone (especially after the Elder Conference)
 - Words of affirmation (especially after sermons, committees, etc.)
 - Being our husband's cheerleader
 - Clearly communicating with him
 - Prayer
 - Giving him time to process suggestions

Sound Mind

- Opportunities:
 - Ground in Reality
 - How clearly do you see the situation?
 - Realize God's faithfulness
 - Remember your Purpose
 - Consider the opportunities of ministry
 - Lean on your Relationships
 - Advocate for your family and yourself
- Headwinds:
 - Tendency toward catastrophizing or minimizing
 - Stories we tell ourselves



Question:

What have you found that settles you in difficult times?

Share Out

- What settles you in difficult times?
 - Time to yourself for devotions, reading a book, sleeping, etc.
 - Prayer
 - Fellowship, especially with the Elder Wives group
 - Having someone to whom I can share my heart
 - Self-talk of the Holy Spirit – Reminding us of His promises
 - Exercise and walking (especially in nature)
 - Music
 - Remembering God's faithfulness
 - Thankfulness and finding the good things in the midst of the hard times
 - Remembering to take the long picture view – this is only a point in time situation

Questions to Discuss

Group Discussion:

- Share some tangible ways we as a group of Elders' Wives can encourage and hold each other accountable.
- In what ways are you most encouraged? What have you learned is the best way to encourage your husband?

Personal Reflection:

- What is one thing you plan to do build up the Elder Wives' group?
 - "I pray for my husband by _____."
 - "I communicate with my husband by _____."
 - "I share emotions with my husband by _____."

Share Out

- How do we encourage each other/our husbands?
 - Being open and vulnerable with each other
 - Realizing we are not alone, be willing to share together
 - Following up conversations with notecards or texts
 - Sharing of our experience with others
 - Prioritizing family and protecting time for our marriage, allowing time for us to be a couple and a family
 - Sharing words of affirmation
 - Allowing “recovery time” after events, knowing what type of “recovery” is needed
 - Remembering we are a team and taking a team approach to ministry
 - Communicating that “it’s not about you” to your husband if you are having a bad day...it helps him to not feel responsible
 - Soliciting input from each other