

5 Things Every Woman in Your Church Needs to Grow Spiritually

Women's ministry is vital to the health of every church. Many churches are filled with women attendees, and we must minister to them wherever they are in life.

Years ago, the teaching of women's ministry was about being a good wife, a good mother and keeping life in balance. Today, however, we are dealing with the career woman, the single mother, the older single woman and women with addictions stemming from a troubled or fatherless childhood. There are so many needs that the church does not yet know how to address them all.

Decades ago, ministries were started to reach the addict or individuals who were struggling, and these ministries have been extremely effective. However, the church as a whole today needs to be prepared to help these individuals with various issues.

That said, churches should keep these five things in mind with their women's ministries:

1. Don't judge. I understand that we may encounter women who have gone through the most horrific situations. But it is not our place to judge a woman that walks through our church doors who is emotionally beaten up. It is not our place to judge something we know nothing about.

2. Love unconditionally. We must exercise a "1 Corinthians 13" kind of love and apply it to every person who walks through the door. The Bible says that love covers a multitude of sin, and it does. Whether we agree with or dislike how a woman is living, it is our responsibility to minister truth to them

through the Word of God and have faith that they will allow God to change their life.

3. Prepare your women's leadership team to minister. This is a must! Your women's leadership team must have the heart of God in reaching the broken woman. Women need other women to talk to, to encourage them and pray with them. Put in them a willingness to sacrifice and give of themselves, and not be an idol for other women to worship.

4. Research a list of ministries/agencies that help women in situations your church is not equipped to help with. I know that not every ministry is equipped to deal with certain needs and struggles, such as homelessness, addictions or financial problems. However, there are wonderful agencies and ministries that can help. Research and see what is out there to help women or families in need. As a church, find ways to bring specialists in or train your people to do Bible studies for the single mother, addiction recovery, etc.

5. Teach women the Word of God, empower them and help them find their God-given purpose. After you've accepted and made women feel safe in your church, teach them the Word of God. Teach them how to get back on their feet, to forgive and walk in God's love. Give them hope that God has a wonderful plan and purpose for them and that we serve a God of a second chance! All of us need to hear this in different seasons of our life.

These five keys are essential to ministering to today's woman. Pride, vanity and insecurity have no place in women's ministry. Women do not need to come to a church where the women in leadership are drawing women to themselves or make women feel insecure through their cliques. As women of God, we must draw women to Jesus and teach them through the Word how to receive deliverance and healing so they can live victoriously.

As a pastor's wife, I always try to find opportunities to help women where they are. I have also made it a point to impart the same heart into our key women in leadership.

Through the years, I have encountered many different types of women. I met one woman that was in prostitution and this changed my life. We would sit and talk. I just let her share her heart on how she didn't want to live in this lifestyle and didn't know how to get out. We ministered to her week after week and we presented Jesus to her.

Another woman was bound in drug addiction through no fault of her own due to her upbringing. I felt led to buy her some books on addiction and a book of stories of godly women in the Bible to inspire her in her journey. Our church also provides a once-a-year addiction recovery class. These are all tools to help individuals dealing with special situations and challenges in their life. My heart is so moved with compassion to sit with these women. We must teach them!

"Likewise, older women should be reverent in behavior, and not be false accusers, not be enslaved to much wine, but teachers of good things, that they may teach the young women to love their husbands, to love their children, and to be self-controlled, pure, homemakers, good, obedient to their own husbands, that the word of God may not be dishonored" (Titus 2:3-5, MEV).

Whether it's a broken heart or a woman that struggles keeping balance in everyday life, we have to be there for her in our churches. Church cannot be a place for fashion shows, gossip, court and cliques—it must be a place where women of God lead other women to a place that is safe, a place where they can connect with Jesus and a place where they can experience personal revival.

I pray you are encouraged today to reach out to women. I encourage you to get a copy of *In Between Chapters*, a great

resource to help you in whatever season you are in. This is a story of the journey I had as a pastor's wife and a woman in ministry having to trust God in the different seasons of my life. You can purchase it at . {eoa}

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