

'Sports Illustrated' Swimsuit Cover Model: My Pastor Follows Me on Instagram

World famous supermodel Ashley Graham says her pastor follows her on Instagram, where she posts revealing photos of herself in swimsuits and lingerie.

"When I'm shooting lingerie or *Sports Illustrated*, I'm aware that my pastor follows me on Instagram. You should be the same person from the moment you wake up to when you go to bed," Graham told *Elle UK*.

Graham, who was the first plus-size model to grace the cover of *Sports Illustrated: Swimsuit Edition*, revealed in a recent interview that she grew up in a Christian background.

"When I moved to New York, I got away from God. Then I realized that living here, you need something to keep you grounded or you'll go crazy," Graham says in the interview.

"I think that faith is definitely something that got me through the hard times in fashion. It got me through the hard times with body confidence, and the terrible decisions that I had made. My faith is something that brought me back to finding truth and value in who I am," she says in another interview.

Graham and her husband, Justin Ervin, met at church in 2009, and they chose to abstain from sex until they were married.

In an excerpt from her book posted to *Glamour*, Graham writes:

Eventually I joined a church. I didn't go there to find a boyfriend; I truly wasn't looking for anyone other than the person I wanted to be. One Sunday my volunteer position was to stand in the elevator welcoming people, passing out candy

and pushing the button to the eighth floor. When two tall men walked in, I didn't bat an eye. One nudged the other and said, "If you don't talk to her, I will." His friend left the elevator, but he stayed on.

I shrugged. This guy wasn't my type. With his short hair, ill-fitting, baggy Old Navy jeans, white Hanes T-shirt, and Converse sneakers, he exuded a major nerd factor. But there was something sweet about Justin, and I was at church, so I had to be polite. He rode up and down with me a few times, and he seemed to be looking into my soul when we talked. He was smart and funny and had traveled the world. So I agreed to go out for coffee. ...

My romance with Justin was innocent and sweet. He cooked for me. We went rollerblading and biking; we did karaoke, went to the movies, took an improv class together. Because we weren't sleeping together—for Justin, abstinence was a firm commitment to his faith—we never tempted ourselves by going over to each other's apartments late at night. But we'd go to late movies or take walks through the city together. We had a spot on 14th Street and Seventh Avenue where we loved to sit and chat.