

# 5 TRUTHS TO ENCOURAGE THE PASTOR'S WIFE FACING DIVORCE



**ROZ BAZILE**

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## DEDICATION

To the Pastor's Wife who felt the need to read this book.

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## ABOUT THE AUTHOR



**R**oz Bazile knows the blessings and burdens of being a pastor's wife. As the former wife of a pastor for 19 years, she understands the challenges of balancing ministry with career and family, the loneliness of being married to a man who is also married to the church, and the secrets of trying to hold it all together for the sake of the family and ministry.

During a devastating divorce process that started in 2007 and was finalized in 2008, Roz searched diligently for support and resources that addressed the unique challenges of a divorcing pastor's wife. She found none. So with no map before her and with God as her guide, she navigated her way through the awkward and humbling process of disconnecting from the Pastor's Wife role and rediscovering herself and her purpose.

Roz learned many valuable lessons during her transitional phase which she vowed to share with other former pastor's wives. She now offers coaching and support for them and other women who are in the process of rebuilding their lives in the areas of their spiritual and natural relationships, finances, businesses, and careers.

Roz is a life coach, mentor, entrepreneur, and the proud mother of two adult children, Danielle and Eric. She is a native of Houston, Texas and loves great food, learning, vacationing with family and most of all talking and laughing with family and friends.

## INTRODUCTION



**W**hen I set out to write this e-book it was in response to a challenge by business coach Michele Scism at [www.DecisiveMinds.com](http://www.DecisiveMinds.com). I knew I would write this especially for you so I wanted it to be beneficial for wherever you are in your journey. After reflecting over my own journey of being a divorced pastor's wife, I identified a few key topics that I wrestled with during that time which had I known, would have helped me to understand a few things about myself and what to expect.

While you are experiencing separation or divorce there are a lot of thoughts spinning around in your head. If you have children then it is even more difficult to control the chatter in your mind. I remember feeling like my whole world had crumbled beneath me. Some days I did not even know why I got out of bed but I did anyway in the hope that tomorrow would be a better day.

I have been asked by several people if divorce for a pastor's wife is any different from anybody else who gets a divorce. The answer is yes, it is. There is the lack of support from the church, rejection from other pastoral couples, the adjustment from being in a highly visible and quite often coveted position, and the struggle to submit to another pastor eventually. There are of course emotions and situations that are common to anyone getting a divorce but these are a few of the very unique challenges that the now former First Lady finds herself struggling with that others cannot relate to unless they have walked in her shoes.

So as you read this book my hope is you will find comfort in knowing that someone truly does understand. At the end of each chapter are "Truths" to reaffirm about yourself. I suggest you study each topic, let the words of encouragement absorb into your thoughts and penetrate your very being so you might find strength and hope for a brighter day which is sure to come.

## TRUTH: YOU ARE NOT ALONE

*"I will not leave you as orphans: I will come to you."*

*John 14:18*



**I**t is not uncommon for a pastor's wife to feel a deep sense of loneliness. Some church members who seemed so friendly, loving and loyal when you and your husband first began serving in the pastoral role have seemingly become like arch enemies. There is a looming distrust of anyone who tries to get too close. Friends are few and you closely guard your circle to protect yourself and your family. But over time you were able to identify the loyal supporters.

When you and your husband were the target of certain unforgiving behaviors and criticisms you were a united front. Maybe you defended one another as you guarded your marriage. The loyal supporters were there to encourage you. Eventually you turned to other pastoral couples for friendship and support. Over the years it is likely that you were part of one of the many ministries and support groups available for pastors' wives to help deal with such challenges and more. There was always a special class for pastors' wives at church conferences. There are even entire conferences and workshops designed exclusively for pastors' wives.

But now that the marriage is ending or ended what do you do? Who do you turn to? Where do you go for support? The classes and conferences designed for pastors' wives find you ineligible to attend. The loyal members and pastoral couples that once supported you and your husband are now challenged to choose sides. They choose him. After all, he is still *the pastor*.

As lonely as you may feel right now it is important to know you are not alone. Do not believe the negative chatter in your head trying to convince you no one cares nor understands. It is a lie designed to keep you in the deep crevices of the dark dungeon-like prison in your mind. The truth is you are not alone....ever. God is with you no matter how low you feel your life seems right now and He will carry you to the next peak of your mountaintop experience.

Because we are human we oftentimes prefer to experience God in flesh. During this difficult time it will be important for you to talk, process what just happened in a healthy way, and plan for your future. So as soon as possible connect with someone you trust and at least with a divorce

support group, counselor, or life coach to support you on your journey to rebuilding your life.

**MY TRUTH:** I am not alone. God is with me no matter how I feel. I will reach out to God's ambassadors disguised as support groups, friends, counselors, and life coaches who will encourage and support me when I need it. I thank God that I am surrounded by people who love me and are concerned about my well-being. I am not alone.

## TRUTH: YOU ARE STILL CALLED

*"He has saved us and called us to a holy life-not because of anything we have done but because of his own purpose and grace."*

*2 Timothy 1:9a*



**I**f you attended any pastors' wives workshops or conferences one recurring message that resonates throughout the program is the pastor's wife is called. There is the implication that if you are married to a pastor then you are "called" to this position of First Lady by default. While there are some pastors' wives who struggle with the word "called" and ultimately the position itself, the fact remains that you are placed in this position of authority and like it or not there are expectations both spoken and implied.

Internally, silently you might be wondering whether or not you are still called since you are no longer married to a pastor. It is a legitimate question. When I was in the throes of my divorce I can remember asking myself and God whether or not I was still called. Now this may seem like a strange question to a person who does not serve in a pastoral role but the inquiry was valid under the circumstances. I struggled with identity and value as a woman who was rejected by her husband, the church, and other pastoral couples.

When most if not all of your married life to your pastor-husband you received encouragement based on God calling you to this role then it's valid to wonder whether or not you are still "called" now that you are no longer in that role. And if so, then what are you now called to? I even questioned whether or not I was called in the first place since I was now no longer "called to be the First Lady." My question...if I was in fact called by God to this role then how could it end? Was I not "worthy of my calling"? (Read Ephesians 4:1-6)

Let me reassure you that you are still called. The fact that you are no longer married to a pastor does not mean God is through with you. In fact, you were called when you gave your life to Christ and your calling is much bigger than any title. Your true calling transcends positions, titles, locations, and yes, marital status. How you live out your calling might look different at different times but you are *called* nonetheless.

It will be up to you to inquire of God as to how and where you will now carry out your calling. After all, you are still a minister of Christ and have

been given the ministry of reconciliation, even to your ex-husband. (Read 2 Corinthians 5:18) Depending on your situation you might be thinking, "There is no way I'm going to reconcile with him!" Let me explain. Reconciliation is simply having an amicable relationship going forward. You do not have to remarry him. If you have under aged children involved then reconciliation will definitely help them get through this already difficult time without all the extra drama. Your calling did not change and God has the same expectation for you to fulfill your calling in spite of life's circumstances because He not only called you but equipped you. That's good news!

**MY TRUTH:** I am called by God. I am still able and willing to live out that calling with the help of God. I thank God that I know my calling and election are sure. I am grateful to be called for such a time as this. I am called.

## TRUTH: YOU ARE HUMAN

*"I praise you because I am fearfully and wonderfully made;"*  
Psalm 139:14a



**I**n your role as First Lady maybe you led one or two ministries depending on the size of the congregation. If you have children maybe you volunteered your time in the children's and youth programs. You may have served in the church by mentoring and counseling other younger women. If you have creative gifts there was almost no end to the possible ways you may have served in the ministry and supported your pastor-husband.

If you have a business or career that takes a lot of your time you may have supported through your attendance at worship service or occasionally a mid-week service if time allowed. Whatever your involvement you likely gave of yourself in some way or another. Congregants looked to you for signs of strength and support. Even during some of the more difficult times in your marriage you likely showed up, fully dressed with your masked smile to hide your pain or frustrations.

Wearing the smiling mask may have been part of your wardrobe before but you now have permission to take it off. As a matter of fact I'm telling you to remove it and discard it forever. You are human. Humans cry when they hurt and sometimes for a long time depending on the depth of the pain. You do not need to hide your emotions or pretend like the divorce has no effect on you because it does. It doesn't matter if you're at the beginning of the divorce process or about to go before the judge for the final decree, divorce hurts and it is okay for you to ask for and seek help.

Your call for help does not mean you are a weak woman. It simply means you are human. You may feel like you are in a place of brokenness and even confusion. That is normal and actually a good place to be for God to do His best work in you and through you. (Read 2 Corinthians 12:10) While humans have limitations, God doesn't and He will supply all of your needs, including your need to be made whole again.

**MY TRUTH:** I am human. I am made in the image of a perfect God. My emotions are a sign that I am alive. I thank God for the experience of sadness that I might truly know and appreciate joy. I am human.

## TRUTH: YOU CAN STILL TRUST GOD

*"Trust in the Lord with all your heart and lean not on your own understanding."  
Proverbs 3:5*



**C**ongratulations on reading about "trusting God"! Depending on where you are in your journey this topic may be difficult for you to even think about. Your pain may be so fresh you cannot even pray to God right now. "If God loves me, then why would he let this happen?" you might be thinking. "Why would he let me and my children suffer like this after all I've done to support my husband and the church? Where was God when my husband was with the other woman? How could God be so selfish to let my husband neglect me for the sake of ministry?"

These are just a few of the thoughts that might creep into your mind or are in your subconscious. If you don't feel like going to church it's understandable since the church may represent the source of your pain. It is the church that is the nucleus of everything we connect with God...our marriage, our ministry and now our mess.

I do realize some former First Ladies have left their husbands for another man or their husbands left them because of her gambling or drug addiction. My point is it doesn't matter why you are no longer married to a pastor, you can still trust God. God will never leave you nor forsake you. If you want to heal and move on to a life full of love and purpose you must learn to trust God. God doesn't need to be forgiven, only trusted.

Trust God with your life. Trust God with your pain. Trust God with your heart. Trust God with your future. Whatever has happened up to this point and everything going forward you can release in the hands of God who can handle it all and make it all work out for your good. (Read Romans 8:28) I did not say divorce was good because it's not. God just has a way of turning the most tragic of events in our lives around for our good. He will fulfill every promise. (Read Numbers 23:19) Trust him. You'll be glad you did.

**MY TRUTH:** I trust God. God knows me and wants the best for me even when I do not understand. I put my hands in God's hands. Even if I go through the valley of the shadow of death I fear no evil because I...trust...God!

## TRUTH: YOU ARE STILL THE LADY

*"The elder, to the lady chosen by God and to her children, whom I love in the truth..."*

*1 John 1:1a*



**A** person's title tells the world a little bit about who they are, at least on the surface. Some titles give people certain authority like a CEO, judge, or general in the army. Other titles carry tremendous respect like the Pope. Think about the title of President of the United States of America.

The world we live in today puts a lot of weight or value on titles. You don't have to live long to realize that the world uses titles to also place value on individuals based on their title or lack thereof. Unfortunately this spills over into the church as well. However, it's important to note that this is man's doing, not God's. (Read Romans 2:11)

In some churches today, it is common to refer to the pastor's wife as the First Lady. You may have become accustomed to the title of First Lady but now find it a little awkward now that the title is gone as a result of your divorce. Where ever you attend church now you might be addressed as 'Sister Jones' as opposed to 'Lady Jones'. If you find this not only awkward but somewhat humiliating, you need to understand and accept that your worth is not in the title.

As the First Lady you probably received special gifts, had special seating and even designated parking. You were invited to events exclusively for First Ladies. You had access to certain people in authority you would not otherwise have access to. But now all of that is gone. You may not feel so special anymore. Where people once escorted you to the front or the best seat you now have to press your way through the crowd just like everybody else. This different experience can be very humbling and make you wrestle with your own self-worth.

Be encouraged and know that the world may take away your title but they cannot take away your worth. Your worth is inherent in your being. Your worth is in the perfect creation that you are. It is in the knowledge of who you are as a human being formed in the image of a loving God. (Read Proverbs 139:14) You may no longer be 'The First Lady' but, you are 'Still The Lady', chosen by God.

**MY TRUTH:** I am *Still the Lady*. A title does not validate me nor do circumstances define me. I am a lady because I am the daughter of the Most High God. I am fearfully and wonderfully made by God. I was from the beginning and still am chosen by God. I am *Still the Lady*.

## CONCLUSION

*“For with God nothing will be impossible.”*

*Luke 1:37*



**N**o matter how you got to the point of reading this book, remember that you are not alone, you are called, you are human, you can still trust God, and you are *Still The Lady*. The transition from being a pastor's wife can be very lonely at times and just when you think you've moved on something will happen that will trigger feelings of bitterness, insecurity, and fear. It's a process. Healing takes time. It may take six months to a year for you or it may take two to three years depending on the work you are willing to do.

Do not try to measure your progress against others who are divorced where it seems like they are doing just fine. Remember the mask? Well, they might still be wearing theirs. Your goal is for you to be totally free of the mental bondage that the divorce put you in in the first place. Your goal is to begin to rebuild your life without shame or regrets. Your goal is to move forward and to boldly create the life that you want on your terms.

At times you might feel like the pain will never end. From someone who knows exactly how that feels, I can assure you that God is faithful and he will wipe every tear away just as he said. (Read Revelation 21:4) God hates divorce and so do I. I am not happy that I got a divorce. But having been through it as a former First Lady, I can honestly say that my latter is greater. I managed to find happiness and peace in spite of the divorce. And just as it was possible for me, it is possible for you too.

For support and additional resources go to [www.StillTheLady.com](http://www.StillTheLady.com).