



Coptic Orthodox Diocese of the Southern United States

Monthly Message for the Priests Wives

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Positive Thinking Volume 2

Step 2: Communicate Effectively

Effective communication is vital in any relationship. As Father Arsenious explains, "Communication is not just the words that we use, but also the tone of our voice, our body language, and our facial expressions." It is important to communicate in a positive and constructive manner, even during disagreements or conflicts.

Biblical Verse: "*Let* your speech always *be* with grace, seasoned with salt, that you may know how you ought to answer each one." (Colossians 4:6)

Funny Story: A woman once told her husband, "I have a problem with communication. Whenever I try to talk to you, you always interrupt me." Her husband replied, "I'm sorry, honey. Go ahead and finish your sentence."

A priest and his wife were sitting at home, reading the news when the wife turned to her husband and said, "Did you know that there's a new community church opening up down close to our church?" The priest replied, "Yes, I did." His wife looked at him in surprise and asked, "How did you know that?" The priest smiled and said, "I'm the one who's opening it."

Academic definition: One of the main components of positive thinking is optimism, which is the tendency to believe that good things will happen and that one has the ability to cope with and overcome adversity (Scheier & Carver, 1992). Optimism has been found to be associated with greater resilience, greater psychological well-being, and greater life satisfaction (Carver & Scheier, 2014).

Another component of positive thinking is self-efficacy, which is the belief in one's ability to successfully accomplish a task or goal (Bandura, 1997). Self-efficacy has been found to be associated with greater motivation, greater perseverance, and greater achievement (Bandura, 1997).

Biblical application: One biblical story that highlights the importance of effective communication and how it can benefit a priest's wife in dealing with her husband in a positive way is found in the book of 1 Samuel in the Old Testament.

The story is about Hannah, the wife of Elkanah, who was one of two wives. Elkanah's other wife, Peninnah, had children, but Hannah was barren and deeply grieved about it. Despite her sadness, Hannah communicated her pain and her heart's desires effectively to God in prayer, pouring out her soul before Him. She made a vow to God that if He would give her a son, she would dedicate him to serving in the temple.

God heard her prayer and granted her request, and Hannah gave birth to a son whom she named Samuel. She kept her vow and brought Samuel to the temple to serve under the priest Eli. Over time, Samuel became a great prophet and leader in Israel.

In this story, we see that Hannah's effective communication with God not only brought her the desired result but also helped her deal with her husband in a positive way. Elkanah loved Hannah, but he didn't understand the depth of her pain and grief over being childless. Peninnah, on the other hand, taunted and mocked Hannah for her barrenness, which only added to her pain.

But Hannah's effective communication with God helped her find the strength and grace to deal with her difficult circumstances in a positive way. She did not lash out in anger or bitterness towards her husband or Peninnah but instead expressed her pain to God and relied on Him for comfort and strength.

This story teaches us that effective communication can help us deal with difficult circumstances and relationships in a positive way. By expressing our feelings honestly and directly, we can build stronger connections with those around us and find the strength to handle even the most challenging situations with grace and dignity.

Practical application:

The priest's wife plays an important role in supporting her husband's service. Here are a few examples of how she can communicate effectively with her husband to do so:

1. Active Listening: The priest's wife can communicate effectively by actively listening to her husband's concerns and needs. By listening to him, she can understand the challenges he faces in his service and provide him with the support he needs.
2. Encouragement: The priest's wife can encourage her husband by acknowledging his hard work and efforts. She can show him appreciation for his service and provide him with the emotional support he needs to continue serving effectively.
3. Understanding: The priest's wife can communicate effectively by understanding her husband's role in the church and the demands it places on him. She can help him prioritize his responsibilities and ensure that he has the time and resources he needs to fulfill his duties.
4. Flexibility: The priest's wife can communicate effectively by being flexible and adaptable. She can be willing to adjust her schedule and commitments to support her husband's service and accommodate the needs of the church community.
5. Teamwork: The priest's wife can communicate effectively by working as a team with her husband. She can provide him with practical support in his service, such as organizing events or managing administrative tasks. By working together, they can achieve their goals and support each other in their service to the church community.