

Ministry wives find connection, encouragement at annual conference

*By Megan Young
Associate Editor*

As the 188th Annual Meeting of the Mississippi Baptist Convention prepared to convene, ministry wives from across the state gathered Oct. 28 for fellowship and encouragement during the Mississippi Baptist Convention Board's (MBCB) Ministry Wives Conference.

Heather Johnson, a pastor's wife and assistant director and instructor for Thrive, the Ministry Wives Certificate Program at New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary and Leavell College, led 76 women in a two-part study exhorting them to be full of joy and filled with peace as they serve faithfully in the church.



(Photo credit: Bart Lambright)

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“There is a commonness to the calling of ministry that helps ministry wives to connect with each other even if you don’t know each other, even if you’ve never met,” said Johnson. “I like to describe our lives as ministry wives in this way: We are women who live our lives on the fringes of other people’s lives in all the seasons of their lives while trying to live our own lives while the Lord uses our husbands to pour into others’ lives. What a gift and a privilege. What a burden and a joy.”

Johnson began her first session by focusing on the impact a

minister's calling has not only on his life, but on that of his wife and family as well. Referencing the Lord's calling of Abram in Genesis 12:1-5, she highlighted the faith it took for his entire family to leave everything familiar and step out into the unknown.

"There is a whole family that is making this move, that is going with him," said Johnson. "We just don't know how this thing is going to play out. Not year by year, not decade by decade, not season by season, but we have to learn to trust God with it all, especially in the unknown because He knows. So if we want to live lives full of joy and filled with peace, we need to trust God with the unknown."

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“Paul is telling them that God is faithful,” said Johnson. “If you’re going to have joy and peace in the uncertainty of ministry and the ups and downs, the highs and lows, it’s good to know that God is faithful.”

Joining together for a time of Bible study and fellowship every year during the conference, ministry wives are able to witness the faithfulness of God in each other’s lives and encourage one another in their service to Lord.

“This is my fourth Ministry Wives Conference,” said Elizabeth Parker, wife of MBCB executive director-treasurer Shawn Parker. “At every conference, I have been so encouraged by the speakers who shared their experience and wisdom with us. And at every conference I have enjoyed connecting with ministry wives from all across our state – that’s been the bigger blessing. I’m thankful the MBCB Leadership department gives us this time and space to be together.”



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