

# Dear God, from Dear Abby

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Perhaps you are familiar with the Dear Abby column that used to grace most magazine and local news publications. This column served as a third party impartial voice to help settle questions which could not successfully be answered or comfortably posed in our own social circles. Dear Abby is a symbol of wisdom – the final word of reason that settles the dispute. Even if we did not personally present a situation for advisement, we were able to benefit from the advice inspired by others as though, in her wisdom, she knew it might one day come in handy. I was among the Christians who did not embrace the Dear Abby concept, until I discovered that God has his own corps of servant advisors who partner with Him to strengthen the community of believers.

I once preached a message entitled, “Dear Abby’s Advice to a Would-Be King.” In it, I talked about how a woman named Abigail gave advice that saved David from jeopardizing his destiny and helped him survive a close encounter with a fool (Nabal). Even David himself had to acknowledge the value of this voice of reason with poignant words of appreciation:

*Blessed be the Lord God of Israel, which sent you this day to meet me: And blessed by thy advice, and blessed be thou, which has kept me this day from coming to shed blood, and from avenging myself with mine own hand.* 1 Samuel 25:32,33

But, I wonder... ***Upon whom does Dear Abby call for answers and advice?*** I write today’s Divine Dosage to encourage those who serve as a voice of sound reasoning for others; and to remind you that every good *Dear Abby* gains strength from our great Dear God! If you, who have helped others, find yourself in a predicament, there is a strong probability that Satan will tempt you to accuse God of being unfair. And yes, it is very possible for you to bear well the cares of others, yet crumble under the weight of your own. But Scripture offers a solution in the words of Peter who advocates, “*Casting all your care upon [God]; for he careth for you.* (1 Peter 5:7)”

Of course, this begs the question of whether Dear Abby is trying to play God by giving advice instead of directing people to God in prayer. I understand the matter from both sides and feel that – *like David benefited from Abigail* – we can all benefit from having someone who can help us remember that our life's purpose is too valuable to forfeit in the heat of our most pressing challenges. While I know prayer is always the best answer, there are times when my mind is not right for prayer; when distorted thinking would make my prayers ineffective. For this cause, I am grateful for the bold servant who shows me my folly and points me in the Christian way. I am also happy to serve as someone else's *Dear Abby* when the Spirit of God inspires me to strengthen my brother or sister.

Now I have found, like many others who share this ministry, that it is easier to help others than it is to help myself. Telling someone who is hurting to *hold on to God* is still the right advice even if I cannot feel their exact pain. Perhaps there is a sense of providence in not requiring that a minister feel the same pain as the one who needs the medicine of sound advice. If we did, our advice - being likewise clouded by pain - might not be so sound. For the same reason, we usually cannot help ourselves and must call on God.

In this ministry, you inherit weights from those you serve while having, sometimes, more than a fair share of your own. You must have a means to discard all those concerns quickly and efficiently to ensure that serving others does not destroy you or devastate those in your immediate family who need you also. Maybe, you should engage the spiritual discipline of journaling: transfer to God in your spiritual blog the cares that have been cast onto you. Perhaps you could call it, **"Dear God, from Dear Abby."** And, here is an idea for your first post:

Dear God,

I deeply appreciate your grace and incredible favor that opens  
the door for me to serve you and ensures recurring testimonies of

ministry triumph. I know that you are the source of all my help and strength. That's why I keep coming back to this place to be restored.

Give me strength to give myself in service to others without becoming an easy target for Satan. Give me wisdom to reserve a generous portion of myself for those assigned to my immediate care through the institute of family. For spiritual restoration, give me access to the secret place of the Most High; a sanctuary where hunting is illegal and predators are controlled. There I will fellowship with you and grow in your wisdom until you release me to my next temporary assignment in the service of others. And, with enough strength in reserve to fight off the enemy while crawling back into your presence after a successful mission, I will perpetuate a promise to serve the God who is my reason for being.

In reverence, I will tell those who look to me that you are the true source of their deliverance. I will testify of how you order my steps and catch me whenever I slip on the ice of deception. For sure, those who come to me will be pointed to you through my advice and the answers you empower me to give. In this way, may it ever be known that I am your Christian ambassador.

Dear Abby