

KAY WARREN

# Sacred Privilege

YOUR LIFE AND MINISTRY  
AS A PASTOR'S WIFE

# YOURS IS A ROLE UNLIKE ANY OTHER

Kay Warren, cofounder of Saddleback Church, shares the struggles and joys of ministry in her new book *Sacred Privilege: Your Life and Ministry As a Pastor's Wife*, released May 2017. With deeply personal stories and wisdom gleaned from decades of experience, Warren writes to women who understand first-hand the complex dynamics inherent to any in ministry. *Sacred Privilege* features a foreword by Rick Warren, pastor of Saddleback Church, and Kay's partner in life and ministry.

Kay Warren understands every facet of being related to the pastor. She was a pastor's daughter, is a pastor's wife, has a daughter who is a pastor's wife, and has a son who ministers to pastors. Because Saddleback Church began in her living room with seven people, she knows what it's like to be a part of a small, developing church as well as a large, thriving church. *Sacred Privilege* is not only a peek behind the curtain of one of America's best known churches, but also provides much-needed encouragement that pastors' wives all over the country desire.

In *Sacred Privilege*, Kay confirms that being a pastor's wife does not mean being perfect. More vulnerable than ever, Warren reveals the brokenness that resulted from childhood molestation — the allure of pornography, intense marital conflict and temptation, as well as depression and a distorted view of her worth. Losing a child to suicide could easily have been the catalyst for leaving ministry, but Kay's resilient faith and confidence in God's redemptive plan for her life has kept her feet firmly planted. The road has not been easy, but she has learned much along the way and can now confidently say that being a pastor's wife is truly a "sacred privilege."

# SUGGESTED PREPARATION

**BEGIN WITH PRAYER.** Prayer is your most powerful tool — make it a point to pray before you form a group, before each meeting begins, and during the week for each group participant.

**DEVELOP RELATIONSHIPS.** Remember to show love to your group members. A suggestion is to contact each woman throughout the study to encourage and love her. You can do this via phone, social media, email, or in person.

**LEAD WITH A HUMBLE AND CARING ATTITUDE.** Ensure that each group member has a copy of *Sacred Privilege* and ask each group member to read the Preface before the first meeting. When someone answers a question, make an encouraging or affirming comment. Refrain from using your time as “group therapy” and instead focus on allowing each individual to discover her own personal experience insights. Finally, expect that everyone in the group will be significantly impacted by their experience through this study of *Sacred Privilege*.

## GROUP GUIDELINES

**CONFIDENTIALITY.** Confidentiality is the most important guideline. Under no circumstance should shared personal information be mentioned or discussed outside the group.

**GROUP MEMBER RESPONSIBILITIES.** Encourage all members to read the designated chapter(s) each week.

**GROUP DYNAMICS** Since group discussion time will last around two hours, consider a group size of eight to ten group members and allow time for each member to offer something that she would like to discuss from the reading. Your challenge will be to prevent any individual from dominating the discussion and ensure that everyone is included. Finally, keep advice general — refrain from giving advice to specific individuals.

# Discussion Group Questions

## Preface

1. In the opening paragraph, Kay talks about her four seasons of ministry. Which one do you identify with the most?
2. Describe your approach to ministry. Do you view it as a duty, burden, obligation, privilege, etc.?

## Chapter One THE STORY OF A CHURCH GIRL

1. What are some of the defining moments of your story?
2. Who or what has shaped you and your perspective on ministry? What are the good things; what are the difficult things?
3. How has your story impacted the way you view your role as a pastor's wife?

## Chapter Two SHARING THE DREAM

1. Looking back over your life, who have been the dream builders for you? In what ways are you a dream builder?
2. On page 38, Kay talks about different models of ministry couples. Which model do you identify with the most?
3. What is one step you can take today to become a stronger team — or as Kay describes it “one flesh” — with your husband emotionally, spiritually, and physically?

On page 41, Kay suggests two questions to ask your husband this week:

1. What are the two most influential books you've read in the past six months?
2. Is there a sermon podcast that really touched your heart recently?

## Chapter Three ACCEPTING WHO YOU ARE

1. What are some of the hard things for you to accept about yourself?
2. In what ways could God take what you see as weakness and use it as strength?
3. How do you think you are doing in the areas of being ordinary, capable, and secure? In what area do you need more confidence? How can your group pray for you?

## Chapter Four ADAPTING TO CHANGE

1. What is your SHAPE? How do you hope God will use your SHAPE in ministry?
  - S – spiritual gifts
  - H – heart
  - A – abilities
  - P – personality
  - E – experiences
2. Whose voice are you listening to? How do you distinguish between God's voice and the expectations of others?
3. Is your prayer life sufficient to cover new ministry responsibilities? What are the deciding factors you use to prayerfully determine your next steps?

## Chapter Five HELPING YOUR CHILDREN SURVIVE AND THRIVE

1. In what ways do you model God's love to your children? How do encourage them to know they can run *to* God, not *from* him?
2. What does it look like for you to walk alongside your children as they grow through different stages in life? Kay refers to these stages as socially, sexually, and spiritually. Which stage has been most challenging to you?
3. What does it look like to let your children go? Take some time today to pray for each other as you let your children go be who God created them to be at their current stage.

## Chapter Six SHARING YOUR LIFE

1. What gets in the way of you sharing your life freely with others? Is it living from “the pedestal”? Who do you think placed you on the pedestal — yourself or other people?
2. On page 125, Kay asks, “Has it ever occurred to you that you are not living your life just for you?” How would you answer that question? How has your life been an example to those around you?
3. Kay talks about the four types of friendships: social, ministry/support group, church small group, and soul mates. Do you have people in your life — representing these four types — who know you for who you really are?
4. What are some steps you can take to increase your willingness to risk sharing openly with others?

## Chapter Seven TAKING CARE OF YOURSELF

1. Kay says, “control the Controllables and leave the uncontrollables to God.” How well do you live this out?
2. What does it look like for you to nourish your inner life? What does Sabbath look like to you?
3. What kind of routine is rejuvenating for you? How does this contribute to your overall well-being?
4. What changes can you make physically, emotionally, spiritually, relationally, and mentally to build into your resilience?

## Chapter Eight VALUING SEASONS AND MOMENTS

1. What are the limitations you are facing in this season of life? What are the opportunities you have in this season?
2. What does the phrase “unforced rhythms of grace” mean to you? What are some practical ways you could live this out right now?
3. How do you practice flexibility in the midst of the everyday grind? How do you stay present and “enjoy the moments” in your current season?

## Chapter Nine PROTECTING YOUR PRIVATE LIFE

1. Is there a gap between the way you present yourself in public and the way you actually are in private?
2. In seeking to have a private life, are there aspects of your life that are — in reality — private sin? If so, is there a friend, mentor, fellow pastor's wife, or Celebrate Recovery group where you could turn for accountability?
3. What are ways you can seek to live with integrity? What specific changes do you need to make in order to narrow the gap between your private life and public life?

## Chapter Ten DEALING WITH CRITICISM

1. Whose are the loudest voices in your life? Are they inside or outside the church, or both?
2. Who do you need to radically forgive? What is one step you can take this week to forgive someone who's criticized, hurt, or wounded you or your family?
3. How do you keep "pressing in and pressing on" with the sacred privilege of being a pastor's wife? *Ask God to show you where to receive and embrace criticism, painful though it may be, and then give you the strength to make changes. (pg. 216)*

## Chapter Eleven ADOPTING AN ETERNAL PERSPECTIVE

1. *What motivates you to get out of bed each morning? What is your ultimate purpose in living every day? (pg. 220)*
2. What do you need to let go of in order to fully live out your life purpose?
3. In what areas of your life do you want to see more of God's point of view?
3. How can you implement the W.I.T.T.Y. principle in your life?

## Chapter Twelve FINISHING WELL

1. How would you answer Kay's questions on page 237, "Where am I trying to go? What am I trying to accomplish?"
2. What are the distractions that are keeping you from running your best race?
3. What keeps you going when you can't see the finish line?
4. What would change in your life if you ran your ministry race for Jesus and Jesus alone? What specific step can you take this week to run this race and finish well?

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These Discussion Group Questions are a courtesy of Kay Warren, author of *Sacred Privilege: Your Life and Ministry as a Pastor's Wife*. Please visit Kay's website at [www.KayWarren.com](http://www.KayWarren.com). She is also on Facebook (KayWarrensPage) and Twitter (KayWarren1).