

Tell About a Woman named Jo.

We are embarking on our quest to appoint more elders at the New Road Church of Christ. Over the next few sermons, we will focus on the need information which will refresh our minds to be better prepared to do this.

To start this series, I am so excited to tell you about a woman named Jo. This morning, her husband is being appointed an elder in their local congregation. She has wanted to an elder's wife since as far back as she can remember.

Jo's Life.

Jo's Family

- Jo was born into a sixth-generation family of the churches of Christ.
- Jo's maternal grandfather was a faithful elder in the church many years prior.
- Her grandfather was a deacon in the church for many years;.
- Over a half-dozen of Jo's paternal ancestors were preachers of the gospel of Jesus Christ.

Jo's Childhood

- Her parents took the mission of Christ seriously and sought to involve her at all levels of faith while growing up.
- The first time Jo entered a church building at less than a month old, her daddy was preaching the sermon. She slept through it.
- Jo was in Bible classes from the ripe old age of three months. She was so excited to hear all the wonderful songs about the bible. By the time she was 6 months old, she was already attempting to sing in the worship services.
- She loved her junior high youth group so much, that most of her friends from the secular world ended up participating. Nobody invited more of their friends to the youth group than Jo. Her Bible class teacher heavily influence her to really want to apply the bible to her life And that she did.
- By the time she was ten years old, her congregation started a leadership training program for both the boys and girls. It was then she began her formal vision of being an elder's wife someday.
- From ten years old, her parents had her participate in Bible camps. This became a large part of her life. She still is in contact with many of her friends, more than a half-century later.
- Her parents always regularly took Jo to nursing homes, hospital rooms and to shut-ins. Jo used to love to make hand-crafted cards of encouragement for the elderly of the church.
- One of the great highlights for Jo's parents was the day, so many decades ago, when a woman of the church, lost her husband. Jo took it upon herself, being only twelve at the time, and baked two dozen cookies for the widow. She asked her mom to drive her over so that she could hold the hand of the widow and pray for her comfort. Like Mary, the mother of Jesus, her mother treasured this in her heart.
- She was heavily involved in the high school youth group, accumulating life-long peers. Many of her girlfriends from the youth group are married to faithful church leaders today.

Jo's Adult Years

- Jo learned the importance of a Christian education at a very young age. She went to a brotherhood college, furthered her faith, met the man who she would marry, and forged dozens of more wonderful life-long relationships.
- Her parents were naturally nervous when Jo brought her future husband home to meet the church family. More than forty years ago, she introduced the young man to the many influential people of her life. They gave her a thumbs up. They married shortly after graduation.
- Jo soon became a stay at home mom over the next few years. Ironically she raised their children in the same church family over the next two decades.
- Jo's children were raised up in the spirit and admonition of the Lord, just like she was. Some were able to have the same teachers and go to the same camps that she did. She grew tremendously in her faith and marriage.
- Jo was so proud of her husband when he became a deacon about 15 years into the marriage. She would help him visit people, incorporate them more deeply into the church family and be the best wife she could be. Her parents now are with their own grandchildren in the same congregation today.

Time Machine

I am so sorrow and need to apologize to for thinking too far in advance. I know that we are supposed to have lessons on the eldership, but I thought a little too far in the future. Let us go into the time machine and fix this.

The wonderful, godly woman named Jo for whom I speak of is really from the future Her full name is Riley Jo Ramsey. She will not become an elder's wife for another 62 years. I just wanted you to see that the greatest eldership challenge we have today is not for today, but for the future.

- Riley's family legacy of faith included godly grandparents, including Buddy and Tracy Freeman. Your investment of spiritual time in Riley helped her greatly. Though you have been gone for decades, your passion lives on in her.
- To her parents, Judd and Paige, thank you for taking this mission seriously. Your invested time built a deep passion for Riley Jo to become a good woman of God had provided an elder a good wife.
- She knows more the songs of the church today than anyone else in the church. But it all started when she tried to sing "Jesus Loves Me" in Glenda Wilcoxes class more than 60 years. Even though Glenda has been gone for quite some time, her passion resides in Riley Jo's heart the day she became an elder's wife.
- Judd, even though you are retired, Riley Jo will never forget the days she spent time on the mission field with you. Your compassion and love for the word of God was never so evident to Riley than 50 years ago. It made a lasting impression of her and caused her to step up her service in Christ.
- Paige, all the time you spent with Riley Jo has paid off. You never felt so blessed as the day she held the hand of a widow woman and prayed at age twelve. The widow Wanda Miller so appreciated your investment in her.

- Some of the friend's she had in the youth group a half-century ago are still worshipping with her. Friends like Ashland LaStrap, Elena LaStrap and Macy Dean are still good friends in the faith.
- Many of her friends she used to invite to church are now members of New Road. Though her favorite teacher from Junior High is gone now, John Rose had an impact in her life.
- The people who always went out of their way to greet young Riley Jo, made an impact in her life. Even though Rosemary Clemens, Jan Baldwin and Mary Lewis have been gone for decades, their passion of encouragement is in the heart of Riley Jo. She now does the same for the other kids in the congregation.
- Those wonderful times of Bible camp were orchestrated by men like Barry Chenault and Jordan Peitzmeyer.
- Even though Justin Dean is long gone, his leadership skills with the youth group are long remembered and passed down to Riley Jo.
- There were so many of you at her wedding in the church building, but now you are gone. Buddy Shaw, Buddy Graves, Jeff Baldwin, Tommy and Charlene Parker just to name a few. She was so happy to share her wedding with you. It meant the world to her and she tried even harder to be a good wife.
- Jo's children are all active in the church family in their communities. Her parents' prayers for Jo's future did not go unanswered.
- She is so grateful that the congregation decided to have Lads to Leaders. That investment which you made helped prepare her for becoming an elder's wife. Even though most of the people who made that decision are gone now, your wisdom has empowered the eldership in 2069. Thank you! Thank you! Thank you! Well done you good and faithful servants.

The elders wanted me to help prepare you to build the eldership at New Road Church of Christ. They did not say how far we should plan, therefore let us aim big so that we achieve great goals. The most important eldership is not for today, but for tomorrow. If we all worked on the eldership of tomorrow, today will be much more easily attained.