

# A New Call

BY MICHELE BUCKINGHAM

Someone once asked me if it was a burden to follow in the footsteps of my father-in-law, the late Jamie Buckingham.

"No," I answered, "I've never considered it a burden. It's always been a blessing."

Nearly ten years ago, God sovereignly placed me, a writer by training and profession, into the Buckingham family, where I had seven years to work closely with Jamie. My calling over those years was clear: "Minister to Me by ministering to My servant, Jamie."

I did that with a willing heart, recognizing that Christian writers all over the country would have given their eyeteeth for the opportunity to work side by side with one of the kingdom's greatest authors and teachers.

During the 18 months of Jamie's fight with cancer, I was able to reduce his burden by keeping his beloved *Ministries Today* on track. When he died—and we thought until the end he would surely live—I was asked to continue on as the magazine's managing editor.

At that point I had to go back to the Lord: *What is my calling now, God?* I had to know that *Ministries Today*, which had been part of God's call on Jamie's life, was now my own call, as well. I did not want to keep going out of sentimentality or a sense of duty, but because God said, "This is for you."

After extended prayer, I sensed that "green light." And over the last two-and-a-half years, I have greatly enjoyed my job as managing editor of *Ministries Today*.

But I've heard a new call.

**Following in Jamie Buckingham's footsteps has been a blessing, not a burden.**

Michele Buckingham has been an editor for *Ministries Today* for nearly five years. She has been the managing editor since February 1992.


While praying late last year for pastor Jack Hayford—who originally came on board as an "interim editorial advisor" but who is firm in his long-term commitment to the magazine—I heard a clear word: "Michele, you are the interim person."

By late February I was certain enough of God's direction that I shared with Stephen and Joy Strang my wish to resign my position. They graciously listened to my heart and offered me the opportunity to continue to work on their editorial team, but on a more limited basis.

This change will allow me to focus more attention on my family—my husband, Bruce, and two children, Scott, 7, and Kimberly, 5. I think they need more "mommy" than they're getting right now. It will also allow me to pursue other avenues of writing, editing and ministry as God directs.

As I leave, so does my associate editor, Barbie Eslin. Barbie is a dear, selfless, gifted friend who willingly gave up a more lucrative job to help me manage the influx of mail, telephone calls and other editorial demands. I couldn't have succeeded without her.

I'm excited about the future for me, for this magazine and for the body of Christ at large. Jim Buchan, a gifted pastor, attorney and author with a heart for "pastoring pastors," has accepted the offer to replace me, beginning with the September/October issue. Read more about him in the "Editorial Perspective" by Stephen Strang on page 78.

May God richly bless you in your ministry to Him. 

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