

ABOVE RUBIES

www.aboverubies.org

Issue: Seventy-Seven

Strengthening Families Across The World

A photograph of two young boys standing in a lush garden. The boy on the left has light brown hair and is wearing a camouflage t-shirt and shorts. The boy on the right is wearing a green camouflage t-shirt, dark shorts, and a baseball cap. He is holding a fishing rod and a large fish. The background is filled with green plants and yellow flowers.

In this Issue:

Marriage Restoration

Finding Contentment

Coping with Teenagers

Blessings of Motherhood

A Simple Life

Let's have a Laugh

Adoption Miracle

From Our Home to Yours



Harry Campbell surprising Autumn Rose, his cousin with a toad. I don't know why she is surprised because the little grandchildren are always catching frogs and toads. I am forever hearing, "Nana, can you lift this up for me?" and I have to lift up a barrel or the trash bin to see if there are some frogs hiding underneath. Vision, pictured below, always has a little frog in his hand.

Colin and I were born and raised in New Zealand, but have lived in the USA for 18 years. It is now home to us. All our children and grandchildren live near us, which is such a blessing. Twenty-eight of our 32 grandchildren were born in America. Currently one of our sons and daughter-in-law and children are living with us for a couple of months while house hunting. This makes 25 grandchildren living here on the land and we see most of them every day. They are definitely our greatest treasures.

We have learned to love the American celebrations. I

couldn't imagine life without celebrating Thanksgiving and Independence Day. We recently enjoyed another exciting 4th July and have now established our own tradition for this day. At lunchtime we go to the home of dear friends nearby where the Independence Day celebration has been held for the community of Primm Springs in the same place since 1923! Our friends have owned the property for 34 of those years and never missed a year of celebration! It takes the form of a Fish Fry

where in the very early days the whole community would come together to catch the fish and prepare them for eating. Now in our modern day we purchase the fish

ready to go! About 100-200 people

attend each year. We start by saying the Pledge of Allegiance, singing the National Anthem and listening to a speech about our nation and those who fought so bravely for it. We then enjoy the Fish Fry, sitting by the beautiful creek in the shade of the trees and eating loaded plates from a huge trailer table of food.

We then return home to prepare for our barbecue and fireworks for the evening. All the family comes, plus many friends. We have running races for the children, a big feed and fireworks. Because we are out in the country and have a huge yard, it is most conducive to letting off the fireworks. The display this year was second to none. Friends brought fireworks that filled the sky with amazing lights. It was awesome.

Evangeline gave birth to her tenth baby on the 16 June—a little baby boy whom they named Saber Truth. She had a beautiful birth. I was working in my office about 6.00 am in the morning when Howard called and said, "Would



Evangeline with Saber Truth.



Vision falls asleep after making his house. Because we use many postal tubs each day, we always have plenty around.



Saber Truth Johnson, about three hours old, playing his first chess game! Uncle Rocky and the Johnson boys celebrated his birth with some games of chess. Currently they are all practicing for the coming chess tournament at the end of the summer with all the cousins on the land. Uncle Rocky is giving \$100.00 for the first prize! However, I think Saber will be a little young to enter this tournament!

you like to see a baby born?" I was at her place in two minutes! She was in the shower when I arrived and obviously already in transition. She came into the lounge, sat down on the sofa and the baby came with a couple of pushes! A perfect birth. God is so good. But it's hard to keep her down. She was out in the garden the next day!

Pearl and Serene are working hard on their new nutrition book. As you well know, it is their passion in life to study health and fitness. They have studied every method and tried many different ways of eating. After years of research and experience, they believe they have found the ultimate way for mothers to not only eat healthy and cook simply, but also to keep slim and beautiful. It is a comprehensive book, not only about nutrition but also feeding your family, the most efficient ways to exercise, balancing your hormones, achieving better moods—and filled with their own tried and proved recipes. It will be ready by next issue of *Above Rubies*.



Nancy and Hannah at her bridal shower. We decorated in purple and white because they are her wedding colors.

It seems that there is something special about each new

group of *Above Rubies* helpers that come to us. We call this group the romantic group! We have two waiting brides and one new courtship starting with a fine young man in our fellowship. Diana from Slovenia, will be going to Australia to be married in October. Last week I put on a Bridal Shower for Hannah who has been with us for the last eight months. She is leaving to get married in Kentucky to Eric Avery on the 12 August. It was such a great night. We started with beautiful desserts, most of them very healthy, but delectable. Everyone brought their favorite recipe and wrote a special message to Hannah for her marriage which we will put in a book for her.

As with every event we put on at our home, we always have a program of talent. Hannah felt so special that she could have Serene and Pearl sing in person, "Thankful" from their album, *Soothe Me*. Three

of our *Above Rubies* helpers, Tiffany, Diana and Mariela sang a fun song as a trio and Meadow also sang. Oh yes, we also had a visit from Smoochy McTwain (our daughter-in-law, Monique who has recently started writing Blue Grass songs) who wrote a special song for Hannah. Between these items we made wedding telegrams for Hannah and Eric (by cutting out words from magazines) and different ones read their marriage message they had brought. I loved the poem my sister, Kate read...

WE TWO make home of any place we go,
WE TWO find joy in any kind of weather;
Or if the earth is clothed in bloom or snow,
If summer days invite or bleak winds blow;
What matter if WE TWO are together?
WE TWO, we make our world our weather!

Serene's encouragement was, "Enjoy all the things you love about your husband. Concentrate, contemplate and compliment him on these things when you are alone and even in front of others. Don't nag or try and change the things that annoy you about him or go over them in your head. Everyone has faults. Instead, remind yourself about his awesomeness and relax into loving your amazing God-sent man who is sent from heaven, but is still human!" Good advice.

Many times we forget the purpose of our parenting, don't we? We plod along from day to day with what has to be done and we don't see the future picture. It is good to come back to the Word of God and be reminded of what we are supposed to be doing.

Psalm 127:4-5 says, "As arrows are in the hand of a mighty man; so are children of the youth. Happy is the man that has his quiver full of them: they shall not be ashamed, but they shall speak with the enemies in the gate."

God talks of our children in the context of war. This life is a battle between the kingdom of God and the kingdom of Satan. We are raising our children to be warriors for God's kingdom, to know how to face the battle and to stand strong for God.

Recently, I noticed something important in this family psalm. We are training our children to **speak!** Did you notice

that? We are to raise children who will speak with the enemies in the gates. In Bible times, the gates of the city were more than an entrance way. They were the busiest place in the city. It was here that the elders sat to rule and direct the affairs of the city. It was here the judges and officers judged the daily matters of the people. It was at the gates the soldiers stood sentinel to guard and protect the city.

And this is where God wants our children to speak—in the important places of the city, the state and the nation. He wants us to raise children who will be able to proclaim His truth in the gates—in the high places where decisions and laws are made. We are living in an era where "Justice is turned back, and righteousness

continued on page 5



Arden holding a green snake he has found. His cousins all want a turn to hold it. The children are always finding new animals and insects—snapping turtles, salamanders and so on.

ABOVE RUBIES

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Above Rubies is a magazine to encourage women in their high calling as wives, mothers and homemakers. Its purpose is to uphold and strengthen family life and to raise the standard of God's truth in the nation. The name has been chosen from Proverbs 31:10 AMP, "A capable, intelligent and virtuous woman, who is he who can find her? She is far more precious than jewels and her value is far ABOVE RUBIES or pearls."

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COVER PHOTO: Proud fisherman, Cousins, Bowen Barrett (10) and

Arden Alison (11) back from one of their many fishing expeditions.

Photography by Tiffany Hepworth.

Tending to my Own Plank!



It was easy for me to look innocent. The problems were so evidently his—his temper and his addictions, compounded by his unsophisticated relational skills. It was obvious to anyone that I was clearly the pathetic victim. With my wealth of education and superior vocabulary, I was able to make any situation look however I needed it to. After all, I was not the one with the problem, I was the heroine! Taking care of the home and the children, and staying in a marriage where he was spiritually "beneath" me caused me to be the object of everyone's pity. After all, I was in such a terrible circumstance, with babies coming to boot! I was the spiritual star of the show! His problems were public for others to see. Mine were hidden and lurking, invisible to all but him.

It took years for me to get over myself, and to see that I was the equal, or perhaps even the worse sinner in our marriage. What a thought! Before I came to that revelation however, I had left my husband with everyone's blessing—church, family and friends. With twelve boxes and four little ones in tow, I left on a train, and was hoping to never return. I hated him and what my life had become.

I had just lost our fifth child in miscarriage, and he was still stuck in his addiction, which of course included a stream of lies and inappropriate behaviour. No sane person would be expected to raise children in such an environment. Oh, how I prayed for the Lord to take his life! All the while though, I was missing my own plank, which completely blinded my eyes.

He was at least trying to get better, doing everything in his power to straighten out and change. All I could do was think what a horrible mistake I had made by marrying him. I felt like the Lord had basically put a gun to my head, as I knew that I had no real grounds for divorce. I was forced to stay in a marriage that I didn't want. I made sure he knew it too, even when I came back home to "try to work on things." I felt like I had nothing at all to work on, as he just needed to grow up, clean up, and change, or else! This attitude of disdain permeated our entire relationship, and made it impossible for him

to ever feel loved or respected.

He was the double hero though, able to overcome his struggles without any support or assistance from his wife. Instead of caving in, as any weaker man may have, my husband overcame everything, against all odds! Even then, he didn't get the respect he deserved from me. I was so bitter for the grief and turmoil he had caused our family. There were years of torture and pain I would not let go of, let alone try to forget! My feminist background battled against my faith, as well as against the teachings I was receiving from *Above Rubies* and other mentors. I was in the right, and I was convinced! Even when he changed, he was still never good enough! He had done too much damage!

When my husband had the audacity to fall into any of his old patterns, even for the briefest of moments, I was quick to slam him down below ground level. My mum called it "going for the jugular" and I felt he deserved it fully. If only I could have seen sooner what I was blessed to eventually learn. I was so busy pointing the finger away from myself, and getting sympathy from well-meaning Christians that I neglected to work on the very necessary parts of myself that were in dire disrepair.

Can you for one minute imagine how difficult it is to work on anything, never mind an addiction, with absolutely no support around you? How about while living in a marriage where your spouse vindicates herself by slamming you down as far as possible? On top of all that, to feel unloved, unwanted, even hated and completely disrespected, in your own home? This is exactly what he faced, without a stitch of sympathy from me. I also had plenty of support from our community!

Only later would I learn, and accept the fact that my husband was actually a gift to me from the hand of God Himself. If only I would have treated him as I should, how much shorter our years of pain may have been! My pride and lack of inner speculation prevented me from working on myself. Meanwhile, my husband diligently and lovingly chiseled away at his areas. I dug in my heels and impatiently and angrily waited, always expecting the worst from him.

When I finally came to understand my role as a female, particularly within a marriage, I began to see my grave sin. Sure, I had been faithful in devotions, as well as in the bedroom. I had borne the children that the Lord saw fit to give, and I had even home-schooled them. I had given up a promising professional career, and learned to bake. However, I had failed miserably as a wife.

I needed to learn and believe that my role as a submissive wife, giving respect and leadership to my husband, was honoring to God. It was irrelevant which man I was married to, my role as a wife was biblically stated and very clear. Oh my, how I had failed, failed, failed! All along I had pridefully forgotten all of my own sin. I needed to help him, support him, love him and let him lead! This was God's will for me! All those years I had assumed that God knew, as did the rest of us, that my husband was incompetent. I realized later that God calls all husbands to lead and to be respected and supported by the help from their wives.

Imagine how much sooner healing may have happened had I quit looking at his sin, and instead focused on my own! Perhaps we could have had the years we now enjoy a decade sooner! What a



Michelle and her hero husband on a romantic family holiday in Mexico. Cam and Michelle are blessed with 10 children—Bryson (18), Jacinda (16), Dalton (15), Brielle (12), Logan (10), Havenne (8), Gideon (7), Jilissa (5), Tressa Leigh (3), Drayden (2) and new baby due in January 2010. Babies gone before—Jewel (1998), Mark (2003), and Jilea and Emmalene (2009).

thought! I let it slip away by my own sin!

Praise God that my dear husband persevered, and we both changed, grew and repented. Today we stand together, strong, and in love, with 10 beautiful children, and a wonderful story to share of overcoming some of life's most difficult challenges. Our story is currently being expanded upon and I hope to have the book completed in 2010.

Don't let the locusts, or your own sin, destroy the years of your marriage. Seek now what can be done to restore the peace and the joy that the Lord wants for your marriage and family. Focus on your own role, and walk in obedience to that, and the blessings will follow. God is trustworthy that makes the promise to you. And believe me; if we could survive, and end up in love, with joy and peace, it is attainable for all!

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From Our Home to Yours continued from page 3

stands afar off; for truth is fallen in the street and equity cannot enter." (Isaiah 59:14-15) In this hour of history, we need to raise children who know more than a few Sunday school stories, but children who understand God's truth, who have discernment and know how to execute justice. We need to raise children who are not afraid to speak God's truth, even in the face of opposition and persecution. The psalmist said, "I will speak of thy testimonies also before kings, and will not be ashamed." (Psalm 119:46)

Truth is not always easy to make known. People often compromise the truth because they are scared of the repercussions. But we are not raising wimps—we are raising warriors. We are raising children who are not afraid to face the enemy. We need soldiers like C.T. Studd prayed for:

*Lord, send us lion-hearted men
With good courageous habits,
Who ne'er will run from the devil's gun
Like hares and bunny rabbits!*

Some translations of Psalm 127:5 say, "Contend with the enemies in the gate." Our "arrows" must know how to contend for their faith and the truth.

"How do we train our children to speak?" you may ask. Perhaps Apologetics should be part of every homeschooling curriculum. Our children must learn how to give an answer for the faith that is in them (1 Peter 3:15). Of course, it will be



Ten baptisms! Recently 10 of the cousins were baptized in the creek. It was a wonderful moment as they all confessed their faith in Christ so boldly. As each one came out of the water we sang, "I have decided to follow Jesus, no turning back, no turning back." Left to right: Meadow Barrett, Mercy Campbell, Pashida Johnson, Arrow Johnson, Cedar Allison, Challice Allison, Crusoe Johnson, Arden Allison, Jireh Johnson and Sharar Johnson.



Gabriel (Gabby Campbell) our lovely 16 year old granddaughter, who has recently left to go to Bible School in Sydney, Australia, and sweet Josephine (JoJo) her sister.

difficult to prepare children to be truth-bearers if we are not heralding the truth ourselves. We must not be afraid to speak God's eternal truths, even when they are

counter-culture. The ideologies of our society regarding family are not working. There is so much heartache in marriages and family life. Marriages are continually falling apart. God's way, although different to man's ways are the way to success if we are prepared to be obedient to them. We must not ever be ashamed of the truth. We do not have to be intimidated by our adversaries. We can speak with confidence for we know the way that works!

We should be like the apostle Paul who spoke boldly in the synagogue and in the market place, testifying, reasoning, disputing and persuading people in the truth. The psalmist and Paul both confessed, "I believed, therefore have I spoken." (Psalm 116:10 and 2 Corinthians

continued on page 12

Finding Contentment



Cyril and Rhonda's children are Gabriella (7) and Daniel (3 1/2) and new baby coming.

I always longed to find a man to fulfill my need of loneliness. After meeting and marrying my soul mate in Hawaii, we settled down to a happy life in California. "Happily ever after" right? Well, on most days. But now there was a new concern—what happened to all of my single friends?

Suddenly all my friends who were single were not spending the time with me that I would have liked. Soon, God brought more married couples for us to fellowship with, yet I still felt incomplete. According to these new friends, we hadn't arrived yet. We had to have the dream home and the children to go with it. My husband wasn't ready to settle down with a home yet and we were seen as odd or out of place.

After being married for a while, God blessed us with children despite being told I was infertile—a beautiful daughter, Gabriella and three years later, a son, Daniel. At first, the work of taking care of a baby was overwhelming. Again, it seemed my old friends who didn't have children stopped coming by. If I couldn't talk to them at 10 pm at night about their relationship problems, I guess I wasn't good enough to be friends with them by their standards. But again, God brought me some new and beautiful friends to spend time with. These friends had children like me. I thought I had finally arrived until...

These friends started getting to their third, fourth and fifth children and I still could not get pregnant after two. Is something wrong with me? Why the sadness of heart? I had two beautiful children and a wonderful husband yet I thought I needed more. One friend, on the other hand, was content with one child but not content with her living situation. She thought she needed a much bigger house for her smaller family.

Then, there's the friend with the two children, dog and the picket fence, but now they can't make their budget and she has to find a job. Another friend

is married with two children but wishes her husband acted differently.

Suddenly, I found God bringing single friends into my life again and they were able to minister to me more than any others. One friend said it best. "Yes, I want to get married, but I don't want to make it an idol. My focus needs to be on God."

This got me thinking! I had a husband and two children, yet still wanted more. I was not content. Was I making having children an idol just like my friend made having a house an idol or a single person could make getting married an idol? I had never felt so convicted.

The grass is always greener on the other side. Recently, someone said to me to she was sick of people looking down on her because she was single. I almost laughed when she said that because in my circle, stay-at-home moms are always complaining that they are sick of people looking down on them because they stay home with their children!

Then there was an article I read recently about a working mom who was envious of her stay-at-home, homeschooling mom neighbor to find out that her life wasn't all it appeared to be from the outside. Then, there's the homeschool mom who envies the woman who gets to dress up in fine clothes and actually has money to get her hair and nails done.

My Pastor tells a story of a man who wanted new shoes but was thankful for the shoes he had when he saw a man across the street with no feet! It seems our human nature is to be discontent. Maybe it's all the commercials, billboards, and movies telling us that we are not complete unless we have a body like Barbie, brains like Hillary Clinton, new cars, the "dream" home, all those new computer toys and the list goes on.

Where has our society gone? Is this spiritual dilemma unique to our society and time or has it always been so? The Bible has a lot to say about contentment which tells me it is something God knew

we would struggle with:

"If we have food and covering, with these we shall be content." (1 Timothy 6:8)

"But godliness with contentment is great gain." (1 Timothy 6:6)

"Not that I speak from want, for I have learned to be content in whatever circumstances I am. I know how to get along with humble means, and I also know how to live in prosperity—in any and every circumstance I have learned the secret of being filled and going hungry, both of having abundance and suffering need. I can do all things through Him who strengthens me." (Philippians 4:11-13)

"The LORD is my shepherd, I shall not want." (Psalm 23:1)

"As for me, I will behold Thy face in Righteousness: I shall be satisfied, when I awake, with Thy likeness" (Psalm 17:15).

"Be content with your wages" (Luke 3:14).

The bottom line is that in this time of recession, the American "dream" may just be that—a dream for many. Or was it ever a reality to begin with? We have been much more blessed than others in third world countries.

What have you thanked God for lately? I can thank God for many things but the most important thing I am thankful for is having a personal and living relationship with Him daily—knowing that He is there in times of uncertainty and even when things don't go the way I would like it to go. He is a God of peace. Being a Jewish believer in Jesus, many Jewish people ask me, "If Jesus is the Messiah, why didn't He bring peace?" The answer is easy. He did bring peace for those who want it. Its peace that lies in the heart, knowing that no matter where you are, God is in charge. Peace and contentment go hand in hand. When we start looking at others and what they have, we will lose our peace quickly. Maybe that's why one of God's Ten Com-

mandments is "Thou shall not covet."

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P.S. I have a testimony since writing this article. I have experienced severe PCOS, getting my cycles every two to four months and for weeks at a time, plus I had cysts

over both of my ovaries. Although my heart's desire was to have more children, I wanted to be contented with what I had and not on what I could not have. Miraculously, God decided to give me the desire of my heart after all. We are expecting a new baby in December! The amazing thing is that an elder of our congregation prayed and anointed me with oil for healing of my ovaries and cysts a week

before I actually conceived. This is what the Bible tells us to do! I also used natural herbs (feel free to email me about the herbs I used) and tried to keep to a high raw diet. I know that it is only God who puts the baby in the womb. "Every good and perfect gift is from above, coming down from the Father of the heavenly lights, who does not change like shifting shadows." (James 1:17)



Have you ever put ten socks into the washing machine and only taken nine off the clothes line (or out of the dryer)? Where do they go? Here are some suggestions for your odd socks:

Saturday Socks

Odd socks in our family are called "Saturday socks." After the discipline of school uniforms on week days Saturday is the day to wear colours, more casual clothes and odd socks.

Old Shoes

Does your family go camping or is one child into all sorts of exciting, muddy and wet adventures? Odd socks go very well with old shoes.

Scented Bag

What about the lovely fine lacey socks that were given when your baby girl joined the family? After a carefree and pleasant walk in the park you arrive home and find one little foot quite bare. Don't despair, you still have one pretty sock left to fill with lavender or bating, fragranced with a few drops of essential oil. Stitch or tie the open end together, preferably with a piece of ribbon that has sentimental value, e.g. a length left over from a wedding trim or a piece which tied a special parcel, or attach a cute little button into the stitching. This makes a lovely scented bag to put amongst the clothes in your drawer or a heart warming gift for the Grandma that lives

away from you.

Christmas Tree

Colourful odd socks can be decorated with buttons, bells, ribbons, and tinsel—whatever you like. Stuffed with another odd sock these make unique decorations for the family Christmas tree. Another useful, but special gift for Grandma.

Sock Puppets

A wet day in school holidays! What can we do? Along with the odd socks, gather small pieces of wool, ribbon, string or material, buttons of all shapes and sizes, colourful pipe cleaners and anything else that may be useful for making sock puppets. Children can learn to sew on buttons while they make their special sock friends. When daddy comes home in the evening the children can entertain him with a puppet show that might include song and dance.

Shoe Shiners

Large, odd, adult-sized socks can put a beautiful shine on your shoes.

Marble Bags

Large socks tied at the top make great marble bags.

Bulb Storage

Where do you keep those small bulbs dug from the garden at the end of spring that need to be stored in a dry, dark but airy

Odd Socks!

place? You keep them in odd socks that can be pegged on to a makeshift line in the darkest corner of the garage or under the house.

Tennis Balls

Old tennis balls can also be kept in dad's odd socks instead of being left lying around the garden. At the end of play pre-school aged children enjoy racing each other to see how many balls they can fit into each sock. This activity helps to teach tidiness and safety.

Extra Warmth

Going out on a cold winter's day? Odd socks under your warm woolly ones can add extra warmth.

Bed Socks

Use odd socks as bed socks—you could probably even co-ordinate colours to match your pyjamas.

The uses for odd socks are limited only by your imagination. Next time there's an odd one in the laundry basket, don't despair—think creatively.

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Patricia and her husband Eric of 35 years have three children, 12 grandchildren and lots of odd socks.

Husbands & Church

Before getting married, I believed my husband and I would load up the children and go to church together. I dreamed we would drop the children off at their Sunday school classes and we would go off to our Couple's Sunday school class. In reality my husband was a firefighter with a crazy schedule. When we were first married, he didn't like church much anyway.

During this time the enemy used a powerful weapon on me. The weapon was FEAR. I had read all the statistics of how: "If the father doesn't go to church, the chances of your children wanting to attend church when they grow old, goes drastically down." I was so fearful of this that I tried everything to get my husband to attend church and Sunday school (when he wasn't working). You name it, I tried it. Shame, guilt and manipulation were my "tools" to get my husband to do what I wanted him to do. Needless to say, we were both miserable.

If he wouldn't go to church or Sunday school, then surely the next best thing would be a couple's Bible study, right? Wrong! He would attend for a short amount of time to please me, and then start using excuses. Eventually, I could tell he really didn't want to go. I ended up with feelings of bitterness, anger and resentment towards him.

After years and years of this miserable cycle, the Lord had had enough! He confronted me with my fears, unforgiveness and lack of trust in Him. He told me I was no longer supposed to worry about Steve. I should go to church for my children and for my own benefit. God would take care of Steve.

"But, what about the children?" I asked. "What about all those statistics that say my children will most likely fall away if their father isn't attending Sunday school or church?" The Lord reminded me that He was bigger than any statistic.

I had one more problem, though. "But it isn't fair! He gets to sleep in while I get all of these children ready for church by myself. This is hard work, Lord, not to mention when we finally get to church and I have to get everyone to where they are supposed to go. Many times I am exhausted and distracted by the time I sit down to worship."

I felt the Lord say to me, "Yes, it is unfair and it is hard work. That is your sacrifice to me. Stop complaining and grumbling about it and realize that this IS your act of worship."



From that day on, I trusted God to take care of Steve and took my children faithfully to church by myself. After many years, God changed his heart. Now, if he is not working, he regularly attends. He comes on his own accord, not because he is afraid of displeasing me. Since I left Steve to the Lord, he has changed in ways I could have never imagined. He is growing in the Lord by leaps and bounds! Only God can do that! Steve is still the type of person that is not interested in group Bible studies, but is now reading the Bible all the way through on his own and loves it.

I may be harried and distracted as I walk into church and I try to worship

while having to discipline a child or two, but the Lord knows that the true sacrifice for me is just getting there!

I know several moms that don't go to church regularly, if at all, because they are waiting for their man to be the spiritual leader and get their family there. Don't wait! Your children need to see that church is important. They need to go to a place where the lessons reinforce what you have been teaching them at home. I encourage you to go to God with your reasons and excuses. Be honest with Him and let Him speak to you. He will give the

strength to do what you need to do. I guarantee one thing, if your children do not see one committed parent who wants to go to church, why would they ever be motivated to go when they are grown up and on their own?

Be encouraged, God wants your husband to "not forsake meeting with other believers," but He wants to do it His way, which is always the right way. He is wooing your husband to Himself and your husband's spiritual walk IS a priority to Him. Remember, God will not woo your husband the same way He wooed you.

Everyone learns differently. You take care of your spirituality and let God take care of his. The benefit of this is LASTING peace, joy and a renewed sense of love and grace towards your husband. The conflict leaves in the home and God can begin HIS work.

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Steve and Stacie are blessed with Joshua (10), Marcus (8), Jessica (6), Andrew (4), Jacob (2) and Lily (3 months). Steve gave permission to print this testimony.

Stacie's blog is
www.afirefighterswife.blogspot.com

Our Parenting Journey

As a young mother, I was always very fearful of having teenagers. Having been a schoolteacher in my pre-children days, I had seen this age group in action. I'd been a bit of a handful as a teenager myself and feared this same fate for my own children.

My husband and I didn't accept Christ until we were well along in our parenting journey. Yet, with five children, God was ever-present in our lives. We just didn't know it yet! He led me to be a stay-at-home mother when my greatest desire was to hire a full-time nanny. He also led us to homeschool our children right from the start. My oldest child, and only daughter, Sydney has just graduated high school! We feel that being at home with them from morning to night fulfills the scriptural command, "Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your strength. These commandments that I give you today are to be upon your hearts. Impress them on your children. Talk about them when you sit at home and when you walk along the road, when you lie down and when you get up." (Deuteronomy 6:5-7)

Zero Tolerance

From an early age we've had high expectations for our children's behavior. My husband calls this his zero-tolerance policy, but we've always balanced this with heaps of love and support. We teach them when they're very young to be respectful of others. I am often surprised to see children in public back-talking their parents, calling them names and fighting with siblings without parents putting a stop to their behavior! Sadly, many parents see this as silly childish behavior to be ignored. Yet, if children don't respect you when they're little, they certainly won't when they're bigger either! My oldest sons (aged 15 and 13) are now 6' 3" and 6' 0". I have two fine young men on my hands, on the brink of adulthood.

Family Togetherness

We try to practice family-focused activities. If we can't participate as a family, whether in worship, leisure or entertainment, we generally don't do it. This keeps the family connected and challenges us to remove

distractions in our lives. However, as the children become more mature, we have encouraged them to explore some areas of personal interest such as drama ministry, cake decorating, karate, and piano, to name a few. Through these activities we're building up their self-confidence. After all,

we always try to quickly smooth out that bump in the road. We feel that sweeping a problem under the carpet, is just asking for trouble later when somebody lifts up the rug! Right from when the children were very young we felt it important to stop an incorrect behavior, take the child

Training Teens

as children, they are in preparation for becoming an adult!

The Bible doesn't recognize teens as a separate group and neither do we! Our teens are exposed to many Godly adults when they serve in ministries at the church such as drama, food ministries, audio-visual work on Sundays, leading boys and girls clubs, and so on. To earn these outside opportunities, our children have to demonstrate leadership in the home first.

Father's Example

A big part of teaching our sons has been my wonderful husband's way of treating me. My husband feels that teaching our seven boys how to treat a lady is critical to their development. From an early age (three years or so) he teaches them to open the door for a lady before going through yourself, not to hit girls, let the girls go first, and so forth.

My husband constantly role models how to be a man by the way that he treats me. He often points out things to the boys that he is doing to serve me, to sacrifice his own needs and show me his love. Sometimes, he'll even ask the boys where they think he should take me on our weekly date night! It's quite funny to hear their ideas. The little boys might answer, "Take mama to McDonald's" while the big boys may suggest he take me shopping for a new outfit and then out for a nice dinner or a walk! I can see the big boys becoming sensitive to what a woman might want to do!

Don't Ignore Problems

We readily admit that we've made many mistakes along our parenting journey, but



Rod and Susan's seven sons and one daughter are Sydney (17), Devin (15), Ryan (13), Nicholas (11), Joshua (8), Noah (6), Benjamin (4), Levi (2), and 5 pre-born babies straight to the arms of Jesus.

aside, and help them understand what they did wrong, including spanking should they be under the age of 10 and the infraction warrant it.

Correcting older children is just as important, although it can take a lot longer! There have been many times when my husband has taken a child out for a one-on-one with dad, maybe over an ice cream cone in the car, to talk over an issue. I've burned the midnight oil many times with teens that need time to talk.

Seek Wisdom

The wise counsel of older women (in the role of Titus 2:3-5) has been essential to my journey as a mother. I have learned much from other women who have successfully raised children to adulthood. I would encourage you to reach out to those around you who have children behaving in an appropriate manner, and ask lots of questions!

Parenting is our God-breathed ministry at this point in our lives. We believe that next to our relationship with our Lord comes our relationship with our spouse, and a close third is our relationship with our children. In addition to God's directions for parenting in the Bible and *Above Rubies* magazine, some materials that have helped us on our parenting journey are:

"*Keeping Our Children's Hearts*" and "*Preparing Sons to Provide for a Single Income Family*" by Steve and Teri Maxwell
"*The Socialization Trap*" and "*Home Educating with Confidence*" by Rick and Marylin Boyer

"*Family-Driven Faith*" and "*What He Must Be if He Wants to Marry My Daughter*" by Voddie Baucham

"*Created to be His Helpmeet*" and "*No Greater Joy*" by Michael and Debi Pearl
"*So Much More*" by The Botkin Sisters
Vision Forum Ministry, visionforum.com

SUSAN HALLADAY

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New Teen Tells his Story

We weren't allowed to see a lot of movies that other children might... because our parents thought some of it was inappropriate.

Our parents spent more time with us training us in polite behavior in public, and they still expect that of us now that we're teenagers.

We're not allowed just to spend our money that we earn at odd jobs on whatever we want. It has to be parent-approved. A lot of people don't have enough money when they get married and move out, so I'm saving mine for a car, house, etc.

I spend more time with my parents than a lot of other children, and we talk about more serious stuff.

Because we're homeschooled, we get our work done and don't waste as much time as at public school.

Because I'm around my brothers and sister a lot more, we have a good relationship.

Respectfully submitted by
RYAN HALLADAY, 13 years
Winnipeg, Manitoba, Canada

Young Adults

My husband has always told our children he will not tolerate 'teenagers' in his house. We refer to our teens as "young adults." It gives them a better picture of what is expected of them. It also lets them know we don't tolerate teenage behaviour, like slovenliness, rebellion, backtalk, or carousing.

We encourage our children to volunteer their time and energy to help others. They handed out home-made business cards to senior citizens in our neighbourhood, offering free help and services. Before too long, younger neighbours learned of their hard work ethics and hired our children for pay to clean house, garden, and care for their children.

Three of our children are now adults and all living for the Lord Jesus. They are all volunteers for different ministries. The next three are approaching "young adult" years and we are ready to start all over again.

SHERI HEPWORTH

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David and Sheri's children are David (26), Carmella (25), Tiffany (23), Katren (13), Caeley (11) and Samuel (9).

Tiffany is living with us currently and helping in the ministry of *Above Rubies*. She certainly is a testimony of being trained to have a good work ethic.

Start Young

I have found that the best way to train our teens in household chores and general helpfulness, is from the time they are young. If we wait until our children are old enough to learn how to properly help, we've waited too long. We need to harness that willingness and joy of helping while they are still very young, showering them with lots of praise.

Training Young Cooks

I almost always have at least one child with me in the kitchen when I cook and bake. In this

way, I train my children to learn how to cook, both boys and girls. I want my son to know how to cook, too, so as to be a blessing to his wife and be able to take care of himself while yet single. I've found that teaching them how to make breakfast foods is a great place to start. By the time my children are teenagers (I have three teens now), they all take turns making breakfast every day. They don't just put cold cereal on the table, either. They make omelets, waffles, pancakes, scrambled eggs, quiche Lorraine, and French toast, all made from scratch.

Career Training

We want our teens to have a varied skill set, and explore different vocational possibilities. I am a freelance web designer that works from home part time, and have helped them learn about website design, as well as how to use different software programs for graphic design and photography. We have found the website www.Lynda.com to be very helpful in this area. It allows you to have access to video tutorials for hundreds of different kinds of software for a low subscription rate.

I have also hired my children to do small graphics jobs for me. My 12-year-old daughter just made about 40 shopping cart buttons for me for a client, and earned some extra money that way. My 14-year-old son and 16-year-old daughter often take photographs and video for me to use on my website. They also help me create graphics when I am under a time crunch. This provides them with real life job skills, and allows them to earn money, while easing my own time crunch.

I have also taught my 16-year-old daughter how to use QuickBooks to help me with my day to day bookkeeping, and earn some extra money on the side.

Attitudes

The best training and instruction will come to naught if we do not give our children a good example in the areas we are trying to train them. If we have a surly attitude towards our workload, our admonition to not complain will fall on deaf ears as far as our teens are concerned.

I am very careful and mindful to not simply "use" my older children as my personal workhorses, but rather to communicate to them that I won't ask them to do what I won't do myself. I don't want them

to feel like purpose in our home is to lighten my load. I try to assign chores in our home to the youngest child able to perform that task, to keep my older children from feeling overworked and overburdened by their younger siblings.



Martin and Kimberly are joyful parents to Ruth (16), Judah (14), Anastasia (12), Esther (11) and Isobel (10).

Heart to Heart Conversations

I enjoy working alongside my children, especially my teens, as it allows us to get to know each other better. We often have great heart-to-heart conversations in the middle of completing a task together. We also sometimes enjoy a reward together for a job completed. For jobs where I haven't promised some sort of remuneration, I will sometimes treat that child to something special and unexpected: a trip to a nearby bakery, a pair of earrings, or something else they love.

KIMBERLY EDDY

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Visit Kimberly's Blog,
"Adventures in Mothering"
at www.joyfulmomma.org,
and for Above Rubies Readers,
you can get 30% off
any of Kimberly's resources
in her bookstore when you
enter this coupon code
at checkout: AR2009

"A room without books is
like a body without a soul"
- Marcus T. Cicero

Close Relationships

"Our relationship is what opens my ears and heart to hear what my mom has to say," stated our 18 year old daughter, Kelli, as we shared some tips with a group of younger moms.

What is it that makes the difference between teens who listen to their parents and those that reject their values, beliefs and even faith? A solid, happy and healthy relationship is a key. As I heard Kelli speak, I thanked God for every Snickerdoodle baked, every chapter of *Anne of Green Gables* read aloud, and every shopping trip enjoyed.

I remembered the young man, who when asked why he hadn't rebelled, answered, "How could I rebel against the man who takes me fishing?"

Teens want close relationships, lots of fun and they need the wisdom that comes from parents. Put those together in the package of a happy family and training them will be your joyful result.

CINDY KIRKPATRICK

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John and Cindy's children are Kelli who is married, Andy (23) and David (21).

Sharing Struggles

I have been blessed with wonderful parents, not just because they are Christians but also because they are living Christ in this world. And for them, it began with living Christ to their children.

When I was twelve years old, my family moved from the mountains of Alaska to the plains and heat of North Port, Florida. It was then that I had my most significant encounter with my mother's relationship with God.

One day, after being confined to bed with a heat-induced headache for most of the day, I yelled at my mother in frustration. I told her that I hated Florida. I hated everything about it. I just wanted to go home to Alaska. I remember being so surprised when my mother didn't march me into the bedroom for a spanking, even though I was twelve. We never talked to our parents that way.

Yet, my beautiful Mama looked at me and saw past my disrespectfulness, past my anger and saw the lost little girl who hadn't yet found the peace that passes understanding. She pulled me into her arms and whispered words of comfort. She sat me down and told me the story of moving to Alaska from New York, away from her family that she loved so dearly and away from the towering oak and maple trees of her youth. She told me of her own struggles and questions, how God responded gently to her by showing her the reasons for their time there.

She laughed as she finished, "Not only that, Tashi girl, but he gave me a love for the Alaskan frontier. I treasured the towering mountains, the fireweed blooming and the smell of the salty ocean air just as much as I treasured the memories of the colorful autumns of my childhood." Then she told me, "Go and pray and ask God to show Himself to you. He will. He won't leave you hurting and hungering."

So, I went. I found the difference between just believing in Jesus and being indwelt by the Spirit of God. The Word of God became alive to me, just like it always seemed to be to my parents. The words danced in my mind. All the verses I knew from my childhood became living breathing truths. How I praise God for my Mother's wisdom that day!

And she was right. Together we learned to love Florida—the sweltering heat and the dense palmettos, the night blooming jasmine and the towering clouds and breathtaking sunsets. My body adjusted and while I never could spend too much time in the sun, I learned to drink lots of water and keep myself shaded. Years later, after spending time in many tropical countries doing mission work, I praised God for the things I learned about dealing with extreme heat.

When I think about the "key" in our interaction through my teenage years, I believe it was my parents' transparency about their own spiritual walk with God. I knew when my mother struggled. I knew when my father struggled. And I saw God bring peace to their hearts over and over.

NATASHA METZLER

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Amos and Natasha plan to move back to
Lowville, New York in the fall.

I Always got Caught

While we don't have any teenagers in our home yet, I wanted to share something from my own adolescent years. My parents regularly prayed that if their children were engaging in any disobedient behavior without their knowledge that we would get caught. God was faithful to answer that prayer because I remember getting caught every time! Inevitably, my sin would find me out and I would reap the consequences of what I had sown. As a result, my parents didn't have much trouble with me growing up.

CATHERINE EWING

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Stephen and Catherine's children are Fiona (5),
Conor (3) and baby due in October.

Father's Permission

My 15-year-old wanted to campaign for Senator McCain in the '08 presidential election in Colorado. She had never been away from us besides visiting her Nana in California—this would be her first time away from us by herself. I had briefly spoken to my husband about her going and he was not for it.

She asked me what he had said and I told her to pray and ask God to speak to her father's heart. I talked about Queen Esther and how she approached

her husband for a request and she could do the same.

She waited for the right time and approached him with all the details and the phone number to talk to the group she would be going with. After he talked to the group he allowed her to go. She was very blessed and had a great time in helping in the political arena. That experience led her to walk in a pro-life march and other activities. It was also training her how to approach her future husband.

PRISCILLA GUADARRAMA

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Elijah and Priscilla's children are Alexis (15),
Leah (12), Bella (10), Joshua (8), Evangeline
(6), Victoire (3), Salem (20 months) and baby
due September 2009.

Do you want to be
freshly inspired each week in
your great career of motherhood?

Send a blank email to subscribers-on@aboverubies.org

You will receive email devotions to strengthen you
in your high calling of being a wife and mother.
You will also receive an occasional newsletter (a mini Above Rubies)
to keep you going until the next issue arrives!

"Your encouragement is like water to one about to die of thirst."

*"Your e-mails are like a compass pointing to true north
when I get all spun around and disoriented."*

"You always remind me that my job at home matters and I am important to my world."

*"In our busy mommy lifestyle, it is great to get our hands on short, easy to read
and understand studies, that impact us greatly and give us lots of food for thought."*

"I feel that these devotions are written 'just for me!'"

*"Thank you for the reminder that this calling of Motherhood
is something wonderful... a crown to wear with honour and dignity.
Thank you for helping me to not feel so hopeless."*

*"I don't like to spend much time at the computer and am always trying to get done
and back to 'real life', but when I see your e-mails
I make a special effort to read (and re-read) them."*

If you were dropped off the list when we renewed
the Above Rubies web site, subscribe again.

From Our Home to Yours continued from page 5

4:13) What do you believe? That's what you'll speak about. What are you teaching your children to believe? What is the passion of their heart? That's what they'll speak about. Not clichés, but convictions!

Never forget—silence is surrender, but speaking the truth can change the culture of the nation.

Raise your children to be warriors for the Lord. Raise them to know the truth. Prepare them to speak the truth—anoined, not-giving-in, not-backing-down words—in the market place and in high places.

May your home be filled with the blessings of the Lord.

NANCY CAMPBELL

Founder and Editress
Primm Springs, Tennessee, USA

Further Reference:

Speaking boldly, disputing and persuading:
Read Acts 4:13; 29-31; 9:27, 29; 13:43, 46; 14:3;
17:17; 18:4, 13, 26; 19:8, 26; 28:23; Ephesians
6:18-19; Philippians 1:20; 2 Corinthians 5:11;
Proverbs 28:1.

Speaking before kings and rulers:
Psalm 119:46; Proverbs 22:29; Acts 4:8; 24:10-21;
24-27; 26:1-32.

Always ready to speak, even to those who oppose:
Ezekiel 33:8-9; Matthew 10:18-20; 32-33;
Colossians 4:6; 2 Timothy 2:25; 4:1-2; 1 Peter 3:15.

Finally Surrendered!

My husband and I met, fell in love and got married. I was not a Christian and looking back, now with three daughters of my own, I am terrified that my children might one day marry non-Christians. But the Lord is gracious and so good.

We had a great honeymoon period. Then life got hard. I became angry and resentful. I made more money than my husband, and coming from a family that had a lot of money, I had certain expectations for how things should be. While I managed a bookstore, he taught elementary school. We bought our first house as merely a "starter home." I thought I needed more to make me happy.

We then took the next step and decided to get pregnant, right on my schedule and all looked perfect. Yet it wasn't. We drifted apart and hardly talked. After our first daughter's birth, the Lord convicted my husband to get back into God's Word and into fellowship with other believers and he did. He always took our daughter with him—my resentment got deeper, my heart harder and I was so angry with him for leaving me on Sunday mornings.

Since I worked in a bookstore, I brought home New Age books, Wicca books and everything that was deemed "religious" but wasn't Christian. My dear husband never got ruffled or angry. He just kept doing what the Lord commanded Him to do and he prayed a lot!

When our second daughter was born, (we were hardly talking so how did I get pregnant?) she was born perfectly healthy, but at 10 months contracted the RSV virus leaving her left lung badly damaged. Every cold she caught meant a night in the hospital on a nebulizer and steroids. It was exhausting.

One day I collapsed. I was at the Children's Hospital in Minneapolis crying when a nurse came in and said, "Don't you worry, the Lord has plans for this little one." I could have slugged her. If I heard one more thing about God I was going to scream. I went to the bathroom and as



Lilyanne was being attended to, I wept. I kept thinking that all we needed to help Lilyanne was more money and better doctors. I thought I could control this. But, alas, I couldn't. No one can control when children catch viruses. No one human, at least.

I asked the Lord to reveal Himself. I prayed that if He was real to come out of hiding and fix Lilyanne. I cried and cried and surrendered Lilyanne, my marriage and myself to Him. But I did it with a list of "if, then" statements which isn't complete surrender. But guess what? The Lord showed up every day when I asked. He led me to the right people to talk to, He brought me to His Word, which I secretly read when my husband wasn't looking. He healed Lilyanne. He healed my marriage. He brought me to my knees in front of my husband. He restored my soul.

I did completely surrender to Him about two weeks after meeting with Him in the hospital restroom. I quit my job. I began to live on a budget. Slowly, with baby steps and sometimes great strides, I wanted nothing more in life than to be a good wife, helpmeet and mother!

Coming to Christ and having my world changed so dramatically has not been easy. My daughters all love the Lord and want to serve Him. I still can't help but cry when they are singing hymns in the church service. Who am I to have this in my life? Who am I that my children will know who the Lord is and can freely read His Word and pray? Why am I so blessed to be His?

This year, my husband and I will celebrate our 18th wedding anniversary. We were married for seven years unequally yoked and have now enjoyed eleven years walking with Christ. My heart just swells at the Lord's faithfulness. I love our little, one bathroom house! I love that we are homeschooling our three daughters even though my husband teaches in the public school. I love that I am a stay-at-home mom! I am grateful that my husband was strong enough to help me walk to the cross.

STACIE WENNDT

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Blair and Stacie's children are Jordan (15), Lilyanne (12) and Miranda (8).

SIMPLICITY |

As I sat on the step of our one room cabin, watching my little ones climb trees and chase a group of mischievous goats from the clearing, I found myself wondering what God must think of me. Nine months pregnant, my husband and I had just moved our growing band of children and a dog across the country. We left our nice, large home in Wisconsin in search of simplicity and a fresh start. Sweat trickled down my face as the almost 100 degree heat beat down. I glanced around at the old garden shed that was to be our outhouse and laughed out loud. Who would have thought an outhouse could be considered a luxury? Forget air conditioning, computer access and a telephone. We're talking about hauling

water and potty runs with a shovel deep in the woods in the middle of the night!

Our journey toward simplicity began almost 10 years ago, shortly after my gorgeous husband and I were married on another sweltering day in August 1998. As young and idealistic newlyweds, we were aware of the pull of the world and the insidious desire for more. We spent long nights, sitting outside, watching the fireflies, planning how we would raise our children, what our family would stand for, and how we could bear the light of Christ in the world.

Although we wanted to live a life of radical devotion to Jesus, we were unsure how to implement our ideas into everyday living. We bought a grain mill and I tried

my hand at making bread. After our first child was born, we insisted on only a few wooden or cloth toys (which we found to be nearly impossible), used cloth diapers (until the laundry piled up) and stopped watching TV. While life did seem simpler for a time, the busyness and materialism of this fast paced world continued to beat on the door of our hearts.

Time and time again, we modified our lifestyle, pruned excess and sought God for the answer to our struggle to maintain a life of simplicity. While we experienced His blessings, we continued to feel restless and once again we embraced the very mentality we shunned. After three moves and four children, we found ourselves in a beautiful



..... | A State of the Heart!

new home on twenty acres. This surely would be the place of simplicity we had longed for.

Four years and a homebirth later, we found that living in the country made the drive to the mall just a little longer. Yet great deals could be found on-line and a larger house meant more storage for the things we acquired, but didn't really need. We sought God and felt a call to leave everything and live with only what was absolutely necessary. My wonderful family agreed that we could move in to their cabin. When my husband miraculously landed an incredible job in a neighboring town, we felt confident God was opening the door for a radical move.

We held a yard sale and loaded what was left into our family van. Leaving behind an amazing church community, friends and family, we took the leap of faith into the unknown. Our air conditioning went out and 28 hours later, we arrived for our "fresh start" not feeling the least bit fresh!

Three months of living in our little cabin taught us many lessons—big snakes can squeeze into tight places, children can sleep through Papa's snoring, but Momma cannot sleep through children sleeping through Papa's snoring when it is at 98 degrees at midnight. Goat droppings look a lot like little rocks, fire ant hills are not the best mountains for hot wheels, showers are priceless, wet wipes are essential and a hawk will try to carry away a two year old! We also learned life in a one room cabin is far from simple—gone were all romantic notions of Little House on the Prairie!

As the birth of our sixth child was fast approaching, through the kindness of new friends, we moved into a small house on the

top of a mountain with a gorgeous view. The leaves were turning and the brilliant hues reflected our sense of change. After years of searching, simplicity seemed to finally have become the fabric of our life. Our baby was born surrounded by love at the home of our incredible midwife. As we drove home with our new baby, my heart was full and the sun was shining.

Later that day, however, my husband broke the news that because our house in Wisconsin hadn't sold, we would have to move back. During our six-month stay in Virginia, we had used our reserve funds and could no longer afford two mortgages. Although the thought of returning to our friends and family in the dairy state was



Stephen and Marisa Larson are blessed with Dionne (16), Isaac (9), Gabriella (8), Meadow (6), Kateri (4) Alexandra (1.5)

appealing, leaving our new life and our hard won sense of simplicity was hard to swallow. We had prayed like never before that our house would sell and had been confident that God had led us to Virginia. Questions filled my mind. Had we misheard God? Was our faith not strong enough? After many tears and heartbreaking conversations, we said good-bye and on a gray and

rainy morning, headed back to our home in Wisconsin.

As I now sit on the familiar deck of my large house, in the middle of a winter that seems to know no end, watching my little ones play in the snow, I find myself once again wondering what God must think of me. I imagine Him smiling at the fact that it took ten years, three moves, including a move across the country and three months without running water in a one-room cabin to finally teach this slow learner that simplicity does not lie in the size of our house, the make of our vehicle or in whether or not we soak our grain!

Simplicity is a matter of the heart. I have learned that wherever we are, if we seek God with single-mindedness and with our whole heart, we will find Him. He is to be found in the simple things. The simple decisions we make every day and the choices we make can draw us closer to Him. I am now grateful for every blessing we have been given and daily seek to be a good steward. On those days when that old restless feeling comes back, I remind myself that this world is not my home and that I am just a traveler passing through.

I love what St. Augustine said over a thousand years ago, "Our hearts are restless, O God, until they rest in you." I now know that simplicity is not a place, it is a matter of the heart! I am simply in love with God.

P.S. I still thank God every time I flush the toilet!

MARISA LARSON
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"And can the liberties of a nation be thought secure when we have removed their only firm basis, a conviction in the minds of the people that these liberties are the gift of God? That they are not to be violated but with His wrath? Indeed I tremble for my country when I reflect that God is just: that His justice cannot sleep forever."

Thomas Jefferson

“I’m not going to have any more than two children. I don’t want my figure ruined.” “I’ve got my career. I’ve got more important things to do than stay home with children.” “I don’t want to nurse my baby; I don’t want to get sagging breasts.” The comments keep coming—women trying to preserve themselves from childbirth or any extra sacrifice to their womanhood.

But, in actuality, does this work? I am always challenged by the words of Jesus in Mark 8:35, “For whosoever will save his life shall lose it; but whosoever shall lose his life for my sake and the gospel’s, the same shall save it.” It is an eternal law, that when we try to save our life we end up losing it.

And what about this lovely promise in 1 Timothy 2:15, NAS. “Women shall be preserved through the bearing of children if they continue in faith and love and sanctity with self-restraint.” Every woman wants to be preserved. She wants her body to be preserved in good health, her figure to be in shape, and she wants to be preserved mentally and spiritually.

This world system feeds us lies. It pours out the reasons why women should not have too many babies. But God’s Word says we will be preserved through embracing motherhood and the bearing of children! A woman’s body was created for this task and her womanly functions atrophy when they are no longer used. The word “preserved” in 1 Timothy 2:15 is the Greek word, *sozo*. It means to be “protected, delivered, restored, saved and preserved.” I certainly want to be preserved in my womanliness, don’t you? Let’s discover some of the ways we are preserved.

We are Preserved Physically

Ovarian Cancer

Ovarian cancer is on the increase today. Twenty-two thousand women are diagnosed each year and 15,000 die of this cancer. One of the reasons is that women are cutting off childbearing. Pregnancy and breastfeeding provide a crucial resting period for the ovaries. Because of limiting their families, most women today are ovulating about 450 times during their life time instead of only about 150 times.

An article called, *Timing of Pregnancy*

and the Risk of Epithelial Ovarian Cancer¹ states, “The accumulated evidence from epidemiological studies suggests that the risk of epithelial cancer of the ovary is strongly related to the number of ovulations throughout a woman’s reproductive life.”² Pregnancy hormones are beneficial to the ovaries. They help to clear precancerous cells from the epithelial lining of the ovary. Because older women will have accumulated more cells than younger women, pregnancy at an older age is also a blessing.³ A case-controlled study revealed that women 30 years of age or older at the time of their last birth had approximately half the risk of women who completed childbearing before age 25 years. Another study reported a 60% increased risk of ovarian cancer among women who delivered their last birth before age 25 compared with women who delivered at an older age.⁴

The more children a mother has, the less risk of ovarian cancer. Women who bear their first child before the age of 22 are less likely to develop ovarian cancer which again proves the Bible when it says, “As arrows are in the hand of a mighty man; so are children of the youth.” (Psalm 127:4) Interestingly, a mother who gives birth to twins, or more, reduces her risk of ovarian cancer even more than a single pregnancy.⁵

Breast Cancer

Breast cancer is the most common malignancy in women. With every menstrual cycle, cells in the breast grow and divide and therefore have the possibility of accumulating mutations which could lead to breast cancer. Therefore, the longer a mother breastfeeds, the less likelihood of breast cancer. In *The International Journal of Epidemiology* it says that breastfeeding can reduce the risk of breast cancer by up to 30 percent.⁶

David Bjerklie writes in *Time Magazine*, “An analysis of nearly 50 studies involving 150,000 women in 30 countries found that the number of children women bear and how long they breast-feed may help determine their chance of developing breast cancer. Women who had six or seven children and breast-fed each for two years had cancer rates less than half those of women who had two or three children and breast-fed them for only two months.”⁷

And what about your figure? Breastfeeding helps you to get back into shape sooner, bringing you back to size by

Pre

six weeks postpartum. And you use up to 500 calories a day while nursing! Isn’t that good? I loved all the years I was nursing babies. I didn’t have to worry about what I ate and I still stayed slim!

Human Chorionic Gonadotropin

Do you feel sick when pregnant? It is the hormone, hCG, which is produced by the placenta to maintain the early stages of pregnancy. Don’t despair; try and smile for it is actually a blessing. When you feel lousy with morning sickness, remember that this hormone is helping you to prevent cancer. Johana Vanegas, M.D., a research associate at Fox Chase, revealed that rats exposed to hCG over a 21 day period (the length of rat pregnancy), are far less likely to develop breast cancer when exposed to a known carcinogen.

Estriol

Estriol is a protective estrogen hormone. It is one of the three estrogens produced by the body—estrone, estradiol and estriol. During pregnancy the body produces up to 1,000 times more estriol to protect the mother and developing baby.

In one particular study, researchers compared estriol levels during pregnancy with breast cancer incidence 40 years later. Results revealed that of the 15,000 women who entered the study, those with the highest levels of estriol relative to other estrogens during pregnancy had the lowest cancer risk. As the relative level of estriol increased during pregnancy, risk of breast cancer decreased 40 years later. In fact, women with the highest level of estriol during pregnancy had 58% lower risk for breast cancer compared with women who had the lowest serum estriol levels.⁸

Estriol has also been shown to improve EAE, MS and collagen-induced arthritis.⁹ It also has benefits for heart health, bone density and postmenopausal health.

Anti-Aging

Estriol, this wonderful pregnancy hormone, also has anti-aging properties.

Preserved through MOTHERHOOD

Manufacturers are now using estriol in face creams to reduce wrinkles, maintain skin firmness, elasticity and moisture content. This is just another proof of being preserved through motherhood. Every pregnancy will help your aging. I love this, don't you?

Adrenal Fatigue

Pregnancy can help heal the adrenals. I know a young mother who suffered with panic attacks because of going through a serious trial in her life. She feared getting pregnant again knowing she did not want to combine the traumatic panic attacks with pregnancy. Eventually, after much research she read that adrenal burn out could be remedied through pregnancy. She went ahead in faith, became pregnant and has not had a panic attack since. Adrenal Fatigue, *The 21st Century Stress Syndrome*, page 252 quotes, "Pregnancy helps adrenal fatigue because the fetus produces a greater amount of natural adrenal hormones than the amount in the non-pregnant female."

Oxytocin

God is so good to the mother. He doesn't give her a baby and say, "Here you are; now you can manage on our own." Instead, He gives her two hormones to help her with mothering. Both oxytocin and prolactin are produced in the pregnant and nursing mother. Oxytocin is known by different names—the "love" hormone, the "cuddle" hormone and the "bonding" hormone. I love to call it the "calming" hormone. When the mother puts the baby to the breast and the milk lets down, she experiences a calming feeling come over her. Often she will fall to sleep on the job! This is such a wonderful boon to a mother, especially when she has a number of little children. I was not a calm and relaxed person when I started on the adventure of mother—the very opposite, in fact. But as I

nursed my babies over the years, constantly being calmed by this God-given hormone, my personality changed. My daughters used to call it "relaxin" instead of "oxytocin."

A dear young mother, who I know personally, gave birth to her third baby when her husband had an accident with very serious head injuries. It was touch-and-go for his life. Well-wishing friends advised her to wean her baby because it would be too much for her to cope with, especially as she had to drive an hour and a half to the city each day to visit her husband. But her wise mother encouraged her to continue nursing. Every day, through the long difficult months, she took her nursing baby to the hospital with her. It turned out to be her greatest blessing. The hormone oxytocin helped reduce her stress levels during this trying ordeal.

Oxytocin is also released in love-making, touching and even eating together. I am sure we would see a lot more peace and contentment if families would sit together and fellowship for their family meals. It is interesting that studies reveal less domestic abuse in breastfeeding families. And few breastfed mothers suffer from postpartum depression.

Oxytocin also causes contraction of the uterus, which inhibits the risk of bleeding and promotes the return of the uterus to its original shape and size.

Prolactin

Prolactin, which is involved in milk production, also has a calming and sedating affect upon the mother. Prolactin increases with sucking stimulation. The more a mother nurses her baby, the more prolactin she produces and the more motherly she feels. An interesting study disclosed that when prolactin was injected into a rooster, he became clucky, gathering the little chickens under his wings. Researchers on animals in the wild show that while nursing, the mother

will fight to death any intruder that would touch her young one. But once she has weaned, the young animal is left to fight for itself. This hormone binds the mother to the baby and causes her to be very motherly and protective.

Bioidentical Hormones

Today many women are using bioidentical hormones (not chemical HRT) to balance their hormones, to increase lacking libido, to feel good and to stop anti-aging. What are these hormones? They are the same hormones that increase amazingly in the pregnant woman—HGH (human growth hormone), estrogens, progesterone which increases one hundredfold and available testosterone which increases by 20 percent. Each time a woman becomes pregnant, she has all these benefits and the blessings continue throughout her life.

Progesterone

I'm sure you'll want to know just a few more plusses you receive from progesterone which jumps up 100 times when you are pregnant. Not only does it guard you from breast cancer, but it protects you from cardiac-related health problems and also promotes the function and maintenance of the brain. Progesterone helps alleviate anxiety and depression by increasing your production of GABA (Gamma-Aminobutyric Acid), the neurotransmitter that causes you to feel calm and relaxed. GABA is often called the "sleep inducer".

If all this is not enough, progesterone also improves the immune system, builds bones, improves hearing, protects from seizures and decreases allergies, irritable bowel syndrome, interstitial cystitis and water retention.¹⁰

Multiple Sclerosis

Prolactin also spurs spontaneous production of myelin, a fatty substance that

rebuilds a protective coating around nerve cells. This process can repair damaged nerve cells responsible for MS. A study at the Hotchkiss Brain Institute compared pregnant and non-pregnant mice of the same age group. They found that pregnant mice had twice as many myelin-producing cells as non-pregnant mice and they continued to generate new cells during pregnancy. This is another reason why MS usually goes into remission during pregnancy.¹¹

Diabetes

A diabetic mother who is breastfeeding her baby needs less insulin than a bottlefeeding mother.

Rheumatoid Arthritis

Seventy-five percent of women who have RA go into remission when pregnant.

We are Preserved Emotionally

As we have already learned, God gives calming hormones to nursing mothers that help her stress levels.

Having children also delivers us from a self-centered life. Before we have children, we have time to dote on ourselves. Some young people take at least half an hour or more to put on their make up each day. Wait until children come. They soon learn to do it in two minutes or less!

We are all prone to self-pity and selfishness but children take our mind off ourselves as we minister to their needs. This is healthy. We are much better emotionally when we care for others. Often when people come to me, depressed and full of self-pity, I encourage them to think of something they can do for someone else. I myself have been healed from sickness in my body and self-centeredness in my mind by doing something for someone else. We come back again to the eternal law that Jesus gave, "Whosoever shall seek to save his life shall lose it, and whosoever shall lose his life shall preserve it." (Luke 17:33)

I have observed women totally taken up with their problems, fears and phobias, but when they married and children came along they soon forgot about all their little personal problems. How wonderful to be preserved from our self-pitying, self-complacent, self-pleasing, self-satisfying, self-gratifying, self-seeking, self-pampering, self-conceit-

ed, self-opinionated, self-serving, self-preoccupied and self-centered life. There is no greater deliverance!

We can rejoice that motherhood delivers us from emotional weakness. For the sake of children we must not give into emotional stress. We have to be strong and take courage, exercising self-control and a disciplined life. And who gets blessed in doing this? You and me.

I am always challenged by 2 Corinthians 5:15. "And that He died for all, that they which live should not henceforth live unto themselves, but unto Him which died for them, and rose again" And also John 12:24, "Except a corn of wheat fall into the ground and die, it abideth alone: but if it die, it bringeth forth much fruit."

We are Preserved Spiritually

The context of the Scripture in 1 Timothy 2:13-15 is that we will be saved from deception. Verse 14 NEB says, "It was not Adam who was deceived; it was the woman who, yielding to deception, fell into sin. Yet she will be saved through motherhood..." The more women move away from the purpose for which they were created, the more prone they are to get into deception. Embracing motherhood keeps us in the perfect will of God. Embracing child-bearing keeps us walking in the very purpose for which we were created.

Thousands of women have been lured from the home by humanists and feminists trying to find their fulfillment in their career outside the home. They have been deceived to think that childbearing is an inferior task when all along it is the greatest mission given to them. Many women come to me after a seminar and say, "Thank you for giving me permission to be who I really want to be!"

God didn't make two Adams to go out from the home and leave the children. He made an Adam and an Eve. He planned for the mother to be in the heart of the home and embrace and nurture children. Feminists have deceived women to believe that motherhood is second-rate, yet they themselves are deceived. They are actually annihilating womanhood. They purport that a woman can only find status in doing what a man does, whereas a woman doesn't have to do what a man does to find her

worth. She finds her worth in who God created her to be—a woman! She has been given the wondrous gift to conceive life, to nurture it in her womb and to nourish, mother and train this life.

Each new life a woman conceives is an eternal soul that will live forever.

Motherhood is an eternal career, not some earthly aspiration that will be left behind one day. Truly, as we embrace motherhood, we are saved from deception.

NANCY CAMPBELL

P.S. If you have a testimony of being healed from a disease, hormonal imbalance, or anything else through pregnancy, I would love to hear from you. Send your testimony by email attachment, with subject heading, PRESERVED to nancy@aboverubies.org Type only one space between sentences.

Footnotes:

- 1 David C. Whiteman, Victor Siskind, David M. Purdie and Adele C. Green. Timing of Pregnancy and the Risk of Epithelial Ovarian Cancer. Population and Clinical Sciences Division, Queensland Institute of Medical Research, Queensland 4029, Australia
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- 3 Fathalla M. F. Incessant ovulation—a factor in ovarian neoplasia? *Lancet*, 2: 163 1971 and Adami H. O., Hsieh C. C., Lambe M., Trichopoulos D., Leon D., Persson I., Ekblom A., Janson P. O. Parity, age at first childbirth, and risk of ovarian cancer. *Lancet*, 344: 1250-1254, 1994 and Rodriguez G. C., Walmer D. K., Cline M., Krigman H., Lessey B. A., Whitaker R. S., Dodge R., Hughes C. L. Effect of progesterin on the ovarian epithelium of macaques: cancer prevention through apoptosis? *J. Soc. Gynecol. Investig.*, 5: 271-276, 1998.
- 4 Titus-Ernstoff L., Perez K., Cramer D. W., Harlow B. L., Baron J. A., Greenberg E. R. Menstrual and reproductive factors in relation to ovarian cancer risk. *Br. J. Cancer*, 84: 714-721, 2001.
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- 6 WESTPORT, Jun 24 (Reuters Health) - International Journal of Epidemiology.
- 7 David Bjerklie, *Time Magazine*, July 29, 2002
- 8 Siiteri PK, Sholtz RI, Cirillo PM, et al. Prospective study of estrogens during pregnancy and risk of breast cancer. *Public Health Institute, Berkeley, CA.*
- 9 11 Samantha S. Soldan, Ana Isabel Alvarez Retuerto, Nancy L. Sicotte, and Rhonda R. Voskuhl. Immune Modulation in Multiple Sclerosis Patients Treated with the Pregnancy Hormone Estriol.
- 10 Uzi Reiss, and Yfat Reiss Gendell, "The Natural Superwoman", pages 112-117.
- 11 Dr Samuel Weiss and Dr V Wee Yong, Hotchkiss Brain Institute

We've all heard the phrase, "Laughter is the best medicine." It is not an old wives' tale. It is proved medically. Laughing protects the heart, relaxes the body, relieves stress, releases endorphins and boosts the immune system which improves resistance to disease. It sounds like we could do with a dose of laughing, doesn't it? My mother told me about a man she read about who was diagnosed with cancer. He decided that if he only had three weeks to live, he might as well make them happy. He asked people to find all the funny movies they could find for him. He laughed so much that he laughed himself back to health! We know the adage, "An apple a day keeps the doctor away" but recently I read that "A laugh a day will keep the heart attack away."

The following are a few of the hundreds of stories our readers have sent in about funny things that have happened with their children and in their homes. Laughing is contagious in the home—more than coughs, colds and 'flu's. I remember reading a book on the plane between Los Angeles and New Zealand. Some incidents were so funny that I couldn't stop laughing out loud. People around me started to laugh too, even though they didn't know what I was laughing about. May laughing fill your home. Nancy

I Better Call Mother!

My husband and I had been married for about a month when we began to invite families to our home for dinner. As the second oldest in a family of twelve I had been a main cook in our home. I now discovered a whole new world as I tried to do everything by myself. I frequently called my mother just to "check" about this recipe or that.

One of the first families we invited were dear friends from church. I was in a craze trying to make sure everything was cooked to perfection. Was the steak overcooked? What if the bread was doughy? What was I supposed to preheat the oven to again? Not wanting to drive my mother insane with so many calls, I scoured the Internet for any facts I needed.

Later that night after dinner (yes, the steak was overcooked, but the "medium-rare" husbands were more than forgiving) the mother of the family asked if she could show us a really interesting video she had seen online. Michael ran to fetch the laptop and the first thing the dear woman saw

Time to LAUGH!

when the Internet browser popped up were some very (overly) detailed instructions on how to cook a BAKED POTATO! The room erupted into laughter and I turned a very dark shade of red.

Maybe next time I'll just call my mother..."

REBEKAH THOMAS

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Michael and Rebekah were married on February 21st 2009 and are eagerly expecting a new addition to their family this December.

observed her walking about as she prayed. Spencer stopped her to ask, "Why do you pray with your eyes open?" To appease him, she said, "Well... the Bible says to watch and pray." She then reached for his hand and asked, "Do you want to pray with me?" He sat down and replied, "No thanks. I'll just watch."

CHARISSE DULANEY

Mount Airy, North Carolina, USA
risse_d@earthlink.net

Glenn and Charisse's children are Spencer (13), Brooklynn (11) and Alyssa (9).

A Good Salesman

When we were first married, my husband sold tiles and tried to sell some to me as he talked in his sleep. Later he had an office job and had to write a lot of letters. One night, as he sleepily prayed in bed, instead of ending his prayer with "Amen", he finished with, "Yours sincerely, Martijn Stolk."

TIENKE STOLK

Boskoop, The Netherlands.
tienke@stolk.it

Martin and Tienke's children are Jedidja (7), Arnon Esli (5) Sara Helene (3) and a new baby due in October.

Stole the Underwear!

A few years ago, when the younger children and I were reading through the book of Genesis together, we came to the story of Jacob moving away from Laban. My little girl interrupted me as I read and asked in the most shocked voice, "Did Jacob steal his father in law's underwear?" I'd just read Genesis 31:20, "And Jacob stole away unawares to Laban the Syrian in that he told him not that he fled."

SHERI HEPWORTH

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David and Sheri's children are David (26), Carmella (25), Tiffany (23), Katren (13), Caeley (11), and Samuel (9).

Juice Bar

My three-year-old daughter, Cara, was fascinated to watch me nurse the new baby, Katrina. One day, as we were rocking and nursing, she asked me, "Mommy, is that milk?" After some thought, she asked, "And is that grape juice on the other side?"

MICHELLE HOWE

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Watch and Pray

When my son was about four years old, he was in the prayer room with a friend of ours before the church service began. He

Mighty Man of Valor

It was the middle of the night. I was lying next to my husband nursing our 17-month-old son. The dog barked outside and woke up our three-year-old daughter in the other room. She cried out, "Mommy, the dog is barking"... over and over as small children do. I gently tapped my husband on the shoulder and said, "Hun, the dog is barking and woke up Marianna."

He instantly woke up, flew up out of bed and jumped up with eyes wide open in

a quarterback football stance ready to take on the world, but had no idea what he was supposed to do. I had to repeat what I had already told him and he went to comfort Marianna and hush the dog. Of course, Marianna ended up in bed with us wide-awake.

We still enjoy a great laugh at how quickly he flew out the bed to tackle the world with no idea why!

STEPHANIE BLAIR

Winchester, Virginia, USA

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Tim and Stephanie's children are Marah (15), Mikayla (10), Miranda (7), Marianna (3) and Landon (17 months).

I'm a Hooker!

As we were driving back from Massachusetts, five-year-old Nadia kept unhooking her seat belt. I had said something to her each time but this is the dialogue of the last straw...

Mama: "Nadia! Are you unhooking your seat belt again?"

Nadia: "I am just helping you to fix it."

Mama: "Nadia, I keep telling you to leave it alone. It is not a toy; it is to keep you safe. I am going to have to talk to Officer Powell so he can have a talk to you about seat belt safety. I will tell him that you are an unhooker."

Nadia: "But Mama, I am just a plain hooker!"

SHANNON ZAICHENKO

Chesapeake, Virginia, USA

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Dmitri and Shannon are blessed to have Nadia (5) and Deema (2).

Mom's Cooking Needs Help!

My husband, David, often asks one of the children to bless a meal. When our four-year-old was called on to pray recently, he very sincerely thanked the Lord for those who "repaired" the food.

BECKY COMBS

Girard, Pennsylvania, USA

dcombsfamily@bellsouth.net

David and Becky's children are Erica (22), Andrew (13), Emily (9), Paul Isaac (4), and Caleb (4 months).

Umbilical Cords

My oldest was 2.5 yrs when her little brother was born. She was completely fascinated

with his umbilical cord stump. She watched as it darkened, hardened into a little black nub and finally fell off. Eating pizza one night, she looked at her slice in disgust. When asked what was wrong, she pointed to the black olives and said, "I not eat dose!" We couldn't understand her sudden aversion to her once favorite topping until she explained—she was positive that they were umbilical cords!

JULI MARCELLUS

Richmond, Virginia, USA

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Dwight and Juli's children are Abby (8), Jack Grayson (5) and Kit (15 months).

Wrong Plumbing!

When going to the restroom, my then three-year-old son came in. When he saw that I didn't have the same anatomy as he did, he gently put his hand on my leg and said, "That's okay, Mommy, Jesus will fix you!"

RENEE FURMAN

Buckly, Washington, USA

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David and Renee have two sons, Taylor (14) and Zachary (11).

Janine's Jokes

The following are just a few of the funny things my children have said...

Out shopping with my five children aged six, four, two and newborn twins, a lady stopped and said, "Looking at your family makes me feel sick to my stomach" to which my daughter added, "Run to the toilet and do it there!"

I homeschool my children and when asked at the store the other day why they were not at school my oldest explained that he was home schooled. Oh, said the lady, you must have a great teacher (winking at me), to which my son replied, "No, she is just my mom!"

Coming into the kitchen my five-year-old daughter told me that she was starving. I replied, "I don't think you are starving." She said, "Yes, I am, Jesus ate all my food and drunk all my drink" (Jesus lives in her, literally!)

As pastor of our church, my husband held a

couple's newborn son to pray over him and bless him. He had just started to pray, when my three-year-old commented rather loudly, "Is that baby trying to nurse on daddy or something?"

Stopping to look at our identical twin girls a lady asked my six-year-old son how he tells them apart. "Oh, it's easy," he says, "this one has a funny face and that one doesn't."

We had anklets around our twin daughters' legs so we could tell them apart. We had green on one and yellow on the other. My mother-in-law was over and commented on how nice they looked and then proceeded to ask, "Why didn't you make them the same color?" Overhearing the question, my six-year-old replied, "Grandma doesn't seem very bright." Thankfully, Grandma laughed right along with us!

JANINE FERRIER

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Jonathan and Janine's blessings are Kaleb (6), Lydia (5), Malachi (3) and Rachael and Rebecca (1).

I Beg Your Pardon!

My African-American friend and I gave birth to our babies around the same time. Sometime later, we decided to go to the mall to enjoy some walking with our new babies and let the toddlers and preschoolers play on the mall play area (as it was freezing cold in Michigan at that time). Marlene had both babies in a double stroller, I had two younger toddlers in another stroller, and we had a whole gaggle of little ones around us.

An older gentleman came over and asked Marlene that same old question, "Are they all yours?" Before she could respond, her then four-year-old son said very matter-of-factly, "Just the black ones, mister."

The poor man was red-faced and speechless!

KIMBERLY EDDY

Fostoria, Michigan, USA

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Martin and Kimberly are joyful parents to Ruth (16), Judah (14), Anastasia (12), Esther (11) and Isobel (10).

Brains or Drains?

When my son was about five years we were sitting at the dinner table when he suddenly

continued on page 22

I grew up in a dysfunctional secular home with two brothers in Birmingham, Michigan (1959-1975). I was very dissatisfied with the ideas I'd been raised with—that everybody and everything came from nobody, and that everything is an accident.

I was exposed to the New Age movement at 13 years, and followed those false teachings until I was nearly 28. I left home

right after turning 15, and lived in ashrams (communities of people following yoga and Eastern religions) in Hawaii for three years. I then lived in India for two years, following the gurus. From age 20 to 28, I pursued what I thought was the good life, enjoying sports and travel, spending winters in Aspen doing snow sports, and summers windsurfing in Hood River, Oregon and Maui, Hawaii.

While visiting my grandmother in Texas in November 1987, I was invited by two Mormon missionaries to come and hear their presentation. Wanting to be informed about their religion before I went to their talk, I went to a Christian bookstore in Corpus Christi to research their teachings. I had never been in a Christian bookstore before, so I asked for help, and was led to the cult section. I ended up reading all day, for six days in a row. I started with books on Mormonism, and moved on to books about the New Age, then finished with *The Cult Explosion* by Dave Hunt. I learned that everything I had believed was a lie.

The people in the bookstore knew I wasn't a believer, and must have been praying for me. They cheerfully allowed me to sit and read in their store for six straight days. On the sixth day, I came to faith in Jesus Christ right there in the bookstore, and bought my first Bible. I also told the Lord, "I'm going to share my new faith instead of keeping it hidden."

I met with the young LDS missionaries and told them they needed to read those books in the bookstore that explained their Mormonism from a Biblical point of view. They weren't interested.

I drove home to Aspen, Colorado, crying for joy at finding the truth and mourning my 28 wasted years. I later realized that as it says in Romans 8:28, "All things work together for good to them that love God...

[and] are called according to His purpose." The Lord has used my bad past to give me a burden for the lost, especially to reach the most unreached in India and Southeast Asia. They aren't "those poor people over there," they are my people, because I once believed as they believe and once lived as they live.

When I reached Aspen, I found a

church and was baptized. My worldview began to change when I came to faith, but I still had the same friends and lifestyle. Two years later, I dated a non-believer, fell into sin, conceived, and got loving counseling at a Crisis Pregnancy Center. Shawn was born August 1990. I repented of my sin and began living for the Lord and my son. My church (Island Hope of Paia, Maui) helped me and my Christian friends were my family.

I began reading *Above Rubies* in 1991 and it turned my thinking around completely and was totally life-changing. I thought, "Why don't they teach any of this in church?"

I moved back to Aspen when Shawn was 16 months; Hawaii is too expensive for poor single moms. I moved to Colorado Springs when Shawn was five, so he could grow up in a normal non-resort town, and I could have better homeschooling support. I attended my first *Above Rubies Ladies' Retreat* in November 1996. It was heavenly. The last day of the retreat Nancy asked if anyone needed prayer and I came forward. She prayed that God would bless me with a Godly man with a father's heart, and provide a daddy for Shawn. I had little faith when she prayed because I had been asking God for this for seven years, and I was very discouraged by now.

Five days later, that prayer was answered. I met Spike provisionally at a friend's home over supper. I wasn't even supposed to attend, but the hostess dragged me in when I stopped by to drop something off. Spike was involved in creation science evangelism, which was close to my heart. We courted in purity, got married, Spike

adopted Shawn, and has always been a committed father. The Lord gave me beauty for ashes, and the oil of joy for mourning (Isaiah 61:3).

Together we had one son (Thaddeus, nearly 10 now), and three miscarriages. Then menopause came early at 43. We've had a wonderful 11 years of marriage. Shawn graduated homeschool, is 19, and is

DECEPTION EXPOSED

servicing the Lord at *Gospel for Asia* in Dallas, Texas. He just completed the one-year School of Discipleship program, and has now joined staff full-time.

I've now attended eight *Above Rubies* retreats (so far!) You'll make friends with the most wonderful sisters if you go to a retreat. We also had a blast three years ago when we volunteered at the Campbell's house.

TERI PSARRIS

Gig Harbor, Washington, USA
(moving to Dallas, Texas)
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Teri is a local volunteer for *Gospel for Asia* and loves to share in small groups and churches. Teri's husband Spike is a former engineer in the US military space program—he entered that program as an atheist and an evolutionist, and came out a creationist and a Christian. For 15 years, he has been a speaker on evidence for God's Creation in the Universe. *Above Rubies* readers can watch his DVD on Creation and Astronomy for free online at: www.CreationAstronomy.com/aboverubies

asked, "Why do we have brains?" I went into an elaborate story of how God made us special with special parts for special jobs and how the brain helps us to not only think, but to do all the fun things we like doing, like laughing, jumping—and on I went. My son looked at me rather strangely and said, "Mum, I was asking about BRAINS! The things that have the water go down in the gutter."

ROBYN CARTON

Brisbane, Queensland, Australia
grskcarton@ourbrisbane.com
Geoff and Robyn's children are Sam (15) and Katie (13).

A Hole in the Car!

My mother, whom my children call Mia, was visiting. As she was leaving she waved out of the sunroof of her station wagon. Shortly thereafter my mother-in-law came over and my daughter said matter of factly, "Mia has a hole in her car. She should fix it."

DEBRA WALLACE

Rochester, New York, USA
debwallace@gmail.com
Jason and Debra are blessed with Matthew (6), Christian (5), Melody (3), and Caleb (7 months). Matthew and Christian are adopted and they lost three to miscarriage.

Who is Real?

Ben and I were in the kitchen together. He was washing dishes and I was frying the last of the pancake batter. Three or four younger children sat at the table eating when Ben, always trying to find a "legitimate" way to play a joke, said to his little sister, "Liz, did you ever hear the story about how Ben made a duplicate? I'm his duplicate."

Liz, having been fooled too many times, replied, "Now I KNOW that's a made up story."

Ben said, "No, really. I'm Ben's duplicate. I do all the work while the real Ben reads books all day." That got us all going. Abby said, "I'm Abby's duplicate. The real Abby's in bed."

I said, "I'm Mommy's duplicate. The real Mommy is out hiking the Appalachian Trail with all her real children."

We continued to share our ideas of what our "real" selves were doing while our

"duplicates" stayed home and did all the work. But this humorous exchange became a blessing to me when Ben said, "But when it's time for prayer meeting all the real people come back and go to prayer meeting."

CATHY NEWTON

Lunenburg, Ontario, Canada
keeper_at_home1986@yahoo.ca
Tom and Cathy's children are Nathanael (21), Josiah (19), Sarah (17), Elijah (14), Benjamin (13), Abigail (10), Elizabeth (6), John (4), Timothy (3) and Samuel (14 months).

Get it Straight

While in the van with my in-laws on our way to the zoo, we talked about my three-year old Ty's new friend, Westin. My mother-in-law said, "That's great that you made a new friend, Ty." Ty answered, "No, I didn't make him. God made him!"

TRACIE DELICH

Brooklyn Center, Minnesota, USA
lucasandtracie@hotmail.com
Lucas and Tracie's blessings are Ty (4), Clay (3) and Blake (1)

The Poor Cupboard

One evening when Jenny was about six months old I set her on the floor and told 13-year-old Matt to watch her while I hemmed a dress. I heard a thump and Jenny started crying.

"What happened?" I said.

"She fell and bumped her head," Matt said.

"Well, do something," I said, busily sewing. "Rub where she bumped it." Jenny kept crying. I turned around and there was Jenny sitting on the floor crying forlornly while Matt was on his knees earnestly rubbing the edge of the cupboard.

"Matt, WHAT are you doing?"

"You SAID, 'Rub it where she bumped it.'" He was serious.

DORCAS SMUCKER

Harrisburg, Oregon, USA
dorcassmucker@gmail.com
Paul and Dorcas' children are Matt (23), Amy (20), Emily (18), Ben (15), Steven (14) and Jenny (10).

A Frog in my Throat

Our five-year-old son's friend told him, "I have a frog in my throat." My son had never heard the expression before and asked if he

could see. Matthew opened up so he could take a look. Later Brock told me, "There really was a frog in there, 'cause it smelled like a frog!"

SHERRI WIEBE

Moorefield, Ontario, Canada
jmrc@cyg.net
Jack and Sherrie's children are Destiney (12), Brock (10), Madison (7) and Carter (4).

Food in the Desert

When Julia was in 1st grade, I gave her a standardized test to see how she was doing in school. One of the questions was, "Where would you most likely find food?" and three pictures were presented: an ocean, a mountain, and a desert. She marked "desert" and after we sent our test back in I questioned her about this. She answered, "God fed all those Israelites in the desert, so you can get a lot of food there!"

LAURA PALACIOS

Southlake, Texas, USA
laurapalacios@netzero.net
Ernest and Laura's children are Emily (11), Julia (9) and Joseph (8).

Grandma's Glasses

When I was teaching my oldest daughter how to read, she was struggling to understand the basic concepts of phonics, though she desperately wanted to learn. Finally, after a visit with my in-laws, she told me she figured out what was wrong. "I know what the problem is, momma. I don't have any reading glasses like grandma!"

KIMBERLY EDDY

Fostoria, Michigan, USA
kimberly@joyfulmomma.org
Martin and Kimberly are joyful parents to Ruth (16), Judah (14), Anastasia (12), Esther (11) and Isobel (10).

Forget Teeth brushing!

A couple of years back a toothpaste recall was issued on the 6:00 news. Apparently certain toothpaste brands could possibly have dangerous chemicals in them, which could be harmful or even fatal to consumers. The news channel gave a website that listed brands and lot numbers for everyone to check their toothpaste.

My husband instructed our children to retrieve their toothpaste tubes from their

bathrooms and bring them to him so he could check them against the website. Our two daughters quickly responded with their tube, followed not so quickly by their brother, Austin.

As my husband typed away on the computer to verify the safety of the first tube, Austin laid his on the desk next to the keyboard and said, "Here is my toothpaste, Dad. Um... so Dad, this toothpaste could kill ya huh?" To which my husband replied, "Yes son, that is a possibility."

Horrified and without thinking Austin quickly replied with great relief, "Well it's a good thing I don't brush my teeth then!"

TINA BLESSITT

London, Kentucky, USA

Blessitts@yahoo.com

Allen and Tina's children are Aaron age (22), Ashley (18), Ally (15) and Austin (13).

The Jitters

About four years ago we went on a family holiday in the Marlborough Sounds (New Zealand). The weather was cold and rainy most of the time. When we finally got a reasonably fine patch we jumped in for a swim. Ben quickly got cold and started shivering. We still laugh when we remember him asking "Mummy, why does my mouth keep going open and shut?"

BRONWYN KERR

Marlborough, New Zealand

bronwyn@paradise.net.nz

David and Bronwyn's children are Ben (8), Sam (5) and Jamie (3),

Daddy Wouldn't Forget

I loaded the four children into the van, threaded through a detour and one-lane traffic to the downtown library. We parked and as I lifted Benjamin from his car seat, I detected the sweet, buttery scent of baby poop which had migrated up his back.

In our scramble to leave the house, I had forgotten to pack an extra outfit for him. I wiped him down as best I could, reasoning that no one would see his stained clothing because he would be tucked inside the sling. I walked to the passenger side to let the older children out and asked, "Where is the library bag?" The realization it was still at home by the door hit me! Without our book returns it was pointless to go on.

We re-buckled with my promise to

drive home, grab the bag, and come right back. As we pulled out of the parking lot, a young voice in the backseat piped up, "Daddy would never forget the library bag, would he?"

KRISTIN SHOCKLEY

Salisbury, Maryland, USA

two_pogs@verizon.net

Brian and Kristin's children are Gavin (6), Maddie (4), Owen (2), and Benjamin (8 months).

Which Miami?

Four-year-old Madelynn upon hearing a change of plans...

Mommy: "Daddy's going to take you to Miami for your Doctor's appointment this time"

Daddy: "That's right pumpkin; I'll take you to Miami."

Madelynn: "So... are we going to your Ami Daddy, or are we going to Mommy's Ami?"

MICHELLE SMITH

Naples, Florida, USA

mickeyade@embarqmail.com

Glenn and Michelle, married 15 years, blessed with three children here on earth, Madelynn (10) Jacob (8) and Graham (3), three in Heaven, and expecting another blessing this August, a baby girl named Claire.

Protecting Husband

My husband and I arrived home from our honeymoon to our little college housing apartment. Beautiful wedding gifts were perfectly displayed on the kitchen cabinet. I was cooking supper when a furry little mouse scurried across the counter top. I screamed. My husband being the male protector, grabbed his over-powered BB gun and proclaimed, "Get back, I'll get him." As I ran, he aimed the gun, following the mouse all across the cabinet. Finally, I yelled, "No, our wedding presents!" Luckily, it distracted my husband long enough for the mouse to get away and my beautiful wedding presents were still in one piece. Still relishing his first real "protective" duty as a husband he proclaimed, "I would have gotten him!"

MELISSA SCHULTZ

Fort Collins, Colorado

missaann628@yahoo.com

John and Melissa's children are: Christopher (5), Lily (2), and Dalton (2 months).

Hand Mixed!

One afternoon as I was doing (yet another load of) laundry, four-year-old Max came to the door of the laundry room and asked, "Mommy, can I make some pudding for desert tonight?" (He was four or five at the time).

A bit distractedly I said, "Not at the moment, Max. I'm kinda busy."

With his usual persistence, he replied, "But I'll get one of the brothers to help." (Meaning his three older brothers, who ranged in age from seven to twelve).

Good, I thought, he's already recruited Brendan or Scott. No problem! "Yes, Max. You may make some, if you've got your brother helping. Make sure you follow the directions."

"We will, Mommy," was his little bird-chirp reply. He waited for me to reach up and get down his pudding box, which I did with a pause of reflection for how big he was growing.

I turned back to the enormous pile of clothing mocking me from the dryer, and he headed back out into the kitchen, chosen pudding flavor in hand.

Silence reigned for a bit as I folded socks and underwear... and more socks and underwear. There was some whispering from the kitchen, then Max came back into the laundry room with a bowl. "Should we use this one?"

I glanced over my shoulder and nodded in the affirmative. "Yup, that's probably just the right size." He smiled happily and returned to the kitchen.

A little more silence, then some more whispering, and Max was back at the door. "Mommy, should we use the beaters to mix the pudding?" He had the handheld mixer in his hand. Thinking momentarily of the pudding mix splashing all over the kitchen, I shook my head. "No, mix it by hand, honey. It'll only take you a minute or so. Pudding sets quickly."

I finished the load of laundry, picked up the basket, and walked out into my kitchen. Perched at the counter sat my two youngest sons, five and seven, mixing the bowl of pudding "by hand."

Flabbergasted I could only stare helplessly before asking, "Max...what are you doing?" Innocent as can be, he looked at me with those big ole brown eyes and smiled, "You told me to mix it by hand, Mommy."

Sheepishly, I shook my head and

raised my eyes to heaven. A sudden thought occurred to me, and I asked, "Max...did you wash your hands first?" A furtive glance between the pair told me all I needed to know, and I made a mental note to make a second desert to go with dinner.

MISH BESHORE

Fleetwood, Pennsylvania, USA
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*Jason and Mish's children are Scott (13),
Brendan (12), Lucas (8), and Max (7).*

Pray for Costco

Thad loves to pray with relish and gusto! At times we have had to cut him short as his lengthy prayers can take over our family worship times. Recently, we were a little mystified as to why he was faithfully praying for the "missionaries at Costco", a large warehouse store. "Please give them strength and help them to obey," he would pray almost daily. The bigger children would open their eyes and smile at each other, holding in their giggles. God must have laid on his little heart some special people at Costco.

One day as the children were playing a game with the world map taped over our kitchen table, someone said to find Mexico. "There it is! There's Costco!" Thad proudly proclaimed. It all suddenly made sense, especially because a few weeks earlier my husband had been telling the children about an escalation in persecution against the believers in Mexico... or should I say, Costco!

MELODY TEN KLEY

Portland, Oregon, USA
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*Shon and Melody's children are Clara (10),
Timothy (8), Audrey (6), Thad (4)
and Caleb (20 months).*

MERCY

Today...

another dawn appeared. The sun in its striking fullness rose. The songs of the cardinals broke forth heralding a reminder of God's ordained declaration from the beginning of time—

Another Today!

To this we awoke, breathing...

This is Mercy!

Yesterday...

we struggled with our weaknesses, with the battle between our will and His, the warring of flesh and spirit. We struggled with our own selfishness and, maybe, we lost. A harsh word tumbled out, an old hurt or wound was unearthed, and the chill of doubt challenged our hearts. Wrong attitudes showed their ugly heads. Impatience and irritability wormed their way into our spirit and stealthily stole the joy of early dawn. A cloud of heaviness came over us, formidably unmoving and we even despaired. We battled with an aching body, a throbbing headache, the persistent pain of a chronic illness, and even a simple cold. We struggled with a loveless marriage and loneliness seemed our only companion. We labored with a fevered child, a wayward son or daughter. We wrestled with shattered dreams, the seemingly endless black hole of addiction and we thought we could not carry on.

Yet night came...

and with it, the ancient display of majestic, twinkling splendor, and we remembered the omniscient One who flung these twinkling miracles into the heavens and called them all by name.

This morning...

we came again and knelt, or simply stumbled from our bedroom to the kitchen, lifted up our voice and told him EVERYTHING.

The One, the ancient "I AM" who aligned the planets and whirled the galaxies into space with pinpoint precision, the One who holds it all by the power of His word, our Redeemer, called us by name, and bent his ear, and heard our cries!

This is Mercy!

~ Kate Marchiniak ~

The House of Life

"No one ever breaks into "the house of life" and is innocent or unpunished. The moment conception takes place, that moment there is life; and whether the crime be committed in six hours, six weeks or six months, the sin is in all case of equal enormity. Murder is in the intent, not in the act alone. When you intend to rid yourself of the little life if possible, you have committed murder as surely as if the murdered child lay dead in your arms."

From What a Young Wife Ought to Know by Emma F. Angell Drake, M.D.

On a sunny afternoon late in March we received an unexpected message on the answering machine. The gentle voice on the other end said that she was calling to tell us about a child who needed a forever family—a two-year-old girl with special needs, named Ongie. Our hearts skipped a beat as we listened. My husband and I had once hoped to adopt a child or sibling group with special needs, but were now in the process of becoming foster parents and mere weeks away from getting our license. Perhaps we could adopt and then do foster care as our ultimate goal for foster care was to eventually adopt. We prayed for Ongie and decided we could not ignore this phone call.

I remember what happened next as clearly as if it happened yesterday. I sat at the computer desk with the phone hot against my left ear and a pen in my right hand. Ongie's freshly printed profile lay before me. I held my breath as I waited to hear the social worker's voice. As she spoke, I wrote down words that will forever be etched in my memory, Chiari I Malformation and Schizencephaly. The former is a malformation of the skull and the latter is a cleft in the brain. Words describing neglect, both pre and postnatal, assaulted my ears. A picture was painted of a child who would face many obstacles throughout life and, possibly, never overcome. I just knew there was something better for this precious child.

The next month was a whirlwind of activity. We proceeded in faith, believing that Ongie would be our daughter. There was research to be done, visits to be made, plans to be outlined and prayers to be said. I learned all I could about neurodevelopment and attachment. On April 26, 2007, the day of our tenth wedding anniversary, we were officially chosen as the forever family of little Ongie. Exactly one week later, our beautiful daughter was home.

Although we had visited Ongie in her foster home several times before, she had never been to our home. Imagine going on a road trip with your new friends and falling asleep in the car. When you wake up, you find yourself in a place that you have never seen before, in a home void of anything familiar. You have been told that these friends are your new family. You really have no idea what family means since it has changed so often in your short

Heart and Brain



life. Your new family explains that this strange place with unfamiliar sights, smells and sounds is your home. Do you want to stay? Do you feel at peace? This very experience was terrifying for our little girl.

Fear was nothing new for Ongie. Her fears had continually been expressed through anger while in foster care. We had been warned about the violent rage that could come from this tiny body. We had also been warned that, due to Schizencephaly, Ongie had little to no control over her emotions. These were not the only things we had been prepared for. Ongie's brain abnormalities were also manifested through gross motor delays, balance difficulties, sensory integration disorder and visual weakness. While our daughter did not seem quite as helpless as the child that had been described to us, we did see obvious signs of her neurological abnormalities. We also believed that Ongie showed signs of deep spiritual and emotional wounds that, if left untreated, would fester and hinder her from living life abundantly.

In John 10:10, Jesus said that He came that we may have life, and have it abundantly. Scott and I believed that Ongie had been given to us to experience an abundant life. Immediately, we began speaking God's truth to Ongie through

songs, Scriptures and prayer. We also used nutrition, music, fresh air, art, books and exercise. Along with these things, we gave Ongie the nurturing she had missed as an infant. We bathed, dressed, cuddled, rocked and soothed her. As beautiful as this may all sound, the weeks that followed Ongie's homecoming were among the most challenging I have experienced. God's love was new to Ongie and therefore not easily accepted. It became very apparent that the biggest battles ahead of us would be spiritual. As a result, we relied heavily on God to survive and immersed our newest child in prayer.

As time went on, Ongie settled in and began making changes which had never occurred anywhere else. The first changes that took place were emotional. Ongie slowly let go of anger and began to accept our love. By the time Ongie's adoption was final, she had been with us for three months and was already a new creation. We were lead to change our daughter's name to Abigail, which means, "My Father's Joy." That is what our daughter had become; a joy to her parents and to all who met her.

Each month brought new growth. As Abby gained control of her emotions, she also gained physical and mental strength. It seemed as though most of the things we

dealt with had more to do with our child's past than neurology. I decided to ask our paediatrician, who stated an upcoming MRI would make things clearer.

That MRI took place in March, 2009, nearly two years after we first heard about Abby. As I laid my daughter's sedated body on the gurney, I said a silent prayer for her safety and for good news to follow. Then Scott and I proceeded to the waiting area, where my prayer continued. About half way through our wait, the doctor overseeing the MRI came to speak with us. My heart began to race, but as she spoke I was reminded of God's power. The doctor asked questions about Abby's condition and admitted that she was unable to

find what she was looking for.

Apparently, records of Abby's last MRI had not arrived and the doctor was confused by what she saw. I did my best to explain where the schizencephaly was, as well as anything else I knew about her brain. The doctor walked away perplexed.

The next seven days passed slowly. Thoughts of the MRI raced through my mind as I sat in a chair for the follow-up. I had eagerly awaited this appointment, wondering what the results would be. As the paediatrician sat down, she smiled and said, "Well, this is very interesting." Indeed, it was. Schizencephaly and Chiari Malformation were not found in Abby's MRI. Excited discussion between the two

of us followed. Finally, the doctor confessed, "We believe in a God who heals."

In our prayers, we asked for Abby's heart to be healed and for her little brain to work at its best. Honestly, I never imagined that she would receive the physical healing that she did. That is an amazing thing about God. He loves to surprise us with more than we ask or imagine!

TEREASA MANSFIELD

Beamsville, Ontario, Canada
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Scot and Tereasa's blessings are Gabriel (8), Abby (4) and Sam (3).
Tereasa's blog is
senoritaicanada.blogspot.com

Do you have Peace with God?

The most important thing in this world is to have peace with God, your Creator and Savior.

You cannot have peace while there is sin in your life. God is separated from sin and to be true to Himself, He must judge sin. But He loves the sinner. He sent His only beloved Son, the Lord Jesus Christ, to die for your sin and take the judgment of your sin instead of you. Romans 5:8 says, "God demonstrates his own love towards us, in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us."

Acknowledge and confess your sin. Thank Jesus for dying for you. He is the pure, spotless Lamb of God who shed His precious blood to atone for our sins. Hebrews 9:22 says, "Without the shedding of blood there is no remission."

Fall at His feet with repentance and accept His great salvation. This is your way to peace.

A Wonderful Thing

Being a mother is a wonderful thing,
My bedside alarm, it never need ring,
I'm awakened each day with bright cheerful faces,
And soon 'round the table they've all taken places.

Our meal is seasoned with plenty of chatter,
The fruit and the muffins fly from the platter,
There are stories to share and a Bible verse too,
We reverently pray—it's not always a zoo!

The day is so full of a number of things;
First chores, then schoolwork, then song practicings,
Cooking and cleaning and book-reading too,
A mom of wee children has plenty to do!

I've heard busy times end as quick as they start,
So I'll treasure these days, store them up in my heart,
Small children grow up—the time goes so fast,
The business of mothering soon will be past.

Be cheerful and thankful each day that you've got,
Greater joy anywhere, there surely is not!
As you work through your duties may God hear you sing
'Cause being a mother is a wonderful thing!

Lora Nolan
Wasilla, Alaska, USA

ABOVE RUBIES

RETREATS AND SEMINARS

Family Camps are for the whole family – fathers, mothers and the children. Singles and single mothers are also welcome. The speakers are Colin and Nancy Campbell. Colin will minister to the fathers and Nancy to the mothers, unless otherwise stated. All ladies are welcome at the Ladies Retreats – wives, mothers, singles, teen daughters, and of course, we always welcome the nursing babies. Come and be encouraged, challenged, fortified, strengthened, uplifted and inspired in your divine calling of parenting.

Check www.aboverubies.org for additional retreats or changes. More retreats are currently being finalized.

— — Camps for 2009 — —

September and October Ministry in Europe,

Contact Alice Gurr, Ph: 0208-224-3628 or aboverubies@ntlworld.com

9 — 11 OCTOBER, ENGLAND

SOUTHERN LADIES RETREAT - SUSSEX

Contact: Katy King, Phone: 01342 837525

Email: katyking@btinternet.com

16 — 18 OCTOBER, ENGLAND

NORTHERN LADIES RETREAT - DERBYSHIRE

Contact: Sarah Dawes, Phone: 01246 827042

Email: sarahdawesuk@yahoo.co.uk

30 OCTOBER — 1 NOVEMBER

LADIES RETREAT - OREGON

Contact: Pam Fields, Phone: 503-363-0579

Email: Larue@Divix.biz

or Contact: Terri Burkert, Phone: 541-580-2905

Email: BurkertsTravel@yahoo.com

6 — 8 NOVEMBER, KENTUCKY

LADIES RETREAT at B.A.S.I.C. Retreat Center, Hardin

Contact: Anna Ruth Hale, Email: ralphpamela@wk.net

Phone: 270-628-3730 or 646-784-6652

Pearl and Meadow will be singing at this retreat

6 — 8 NOVEMBER, ONTARIO, CANADA

MEN'S RETREAT, Camp Crossroads, Torrance, Ontario

Contact: Cindy Mallon, Phone: 905-899-6076

Email: jdmallon@vaxxine.com

— — Camps for 2010 — —

5 — 7 MARCH, TEXAS

TEXAS LADIES RETREAT, Mt. Lebanon Camp, Cedar Hill, near Dallas

Contact: Jeanette Watje, Phone: 830-608-0880

or Contact: Christine Salinas, Phone: 972-741-9346

Website: www.TexasRubies.com

19 — 20 MARCH, NEBRASKA

LADIES RETREAT, Spirit of Life Church

3148 Dove Hill Avenue, Kearney

Contact: Lezlie Keeling, Phone: 308-234-1185

Email: spiritoflife@rcom-ne.com

Or: Brenda Kremer, Phone: 308-293-1730

Email: kremerdb@gmail.com

27 — 29 MARCH, WISCONSIN

FAMILY CAMP, Inspiration Center, Williams Bay

Contact: Roger and Jackie Thelen, Phone: 262-715-1587

Email: safehaven@pensys.com

16 — 18 APRIL, TEXAS

LADIES RETREAT - Victory Camp in Alvin, Texas (near Houston)

Website: <http://www.victorycamp.com>

Contact: Kim Griffith, Phone: 281-714-0171

Email: texasretreat@hotmail.com • www.aboverubiestx.com

23 — 25 APRIL, MANITOBA, CANADA

LADIES RETREAT, Camp Cedarwood, Pinawa Bay, NE of Winnipeg

<http://www.cedarwood-yfc.com/site/site.htm>

Contact: Michele Kauenhofen, Ph: 204-388-6015 (noon - 4 pm or after 8 pm)

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Memorial Day Weekend California Rubies Conference, Oakhurst
Camping/fellowship continuing May 31 through Saturday, June 5th
at Yosemite National Park

Contact: Brian & Charity Callis, Phone: 559-877-3777

Email: info@CaliforniaRubies.com

Questions, camping information and registration: CaliforniaRubies.com

"Liberty must at all hazards be supported. We have a right to it, derived from our Maker. But if we had not, our fathers have earned and bought it for us, at the expense of their ease, their estates, their pleasure, and their blood."

John Adams (2nd President of USA)

Good News! Teaching CDs are now also available as MP3.

Check page 30 for ordering.

By Nancy Campbell:

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Are you wilting, just surviving, or are you flourishing in your home? Find out how you can flourish.

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3 tapes on adventurous mothering - Third Heaven Mothering, Freedom Mothering and Tiveria's Story (Evangeline tells her testimony of the miraculous pregnancy and birth of their seventh baby, Tiveria Life).

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Who is parenting your children?

THE WEEPING WARRIOR

How does God want you to use your tears?

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By Colin Campbell

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A beautiful gift for
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*"Angel in My Arms soothes my little ones
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to relax and refresh and brings quiet
restfulness to each of us. Even Papa lies
to use it to help his little ones go to sleep."*

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classes. It is so relaxing and rejuvenating.
The melodies promote elegant,
graceful movements and after class
we all feel restored and better able
to minister to our families."*

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77

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