LOGOSOPHIA

A Pilgrim's Journal
of Life, Love & Literature

Issue #26
Summer 2026



Marriage & Family

In-Laws & Extended Family

"Grandchildren are the crown of the aged,

and the glory of children is their fathers."

— Proverbs 17:6 ESV



LOGOSOPHIA

"Wisdom's Words"

A community dedicated to creating and cultivating connections, unity and understanding between Christian denominations.

Greetings fellow pilgrims!
Welcome to the 26th issue of LogoSophia Magazine! In-laws and extended family can be quite the blessing, or sometimes quite the challenge. For those navigating such challenges, you may find helpful the pieces by Jim Wilson "How to be Free from Bitterness" and "Restoring Relationships with Your Parents." We have several touching selections of poetry about family. For our regular columns, our Holy Heroes are Ruth, Naomi, and Boaz, and we have a return winner for the Summer photo contest. Please join me in welcoming LSM's newest member, intern Sophia Bricker; you can find her author interview and original piece "Learning to Respond to Others with a Soft Heart," talking about L.M. Montgomery and extended family.
Enjoy, and happy reading!

Deborah Robertson
Editor in Chief

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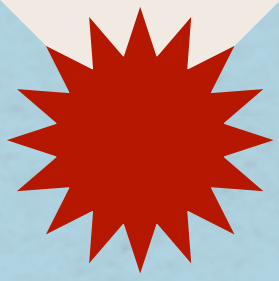
LETTERS TO THE EDITOR & OTHERS



This is where we will be putting anything you send in: letters to the editor, notes to authors, questions, agreements and disagreements… we can't wait to see what you have to say!
Just be sure to tell us what article you're responding to!

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Photo Contest Winner



courtesy of Joshua Morgan

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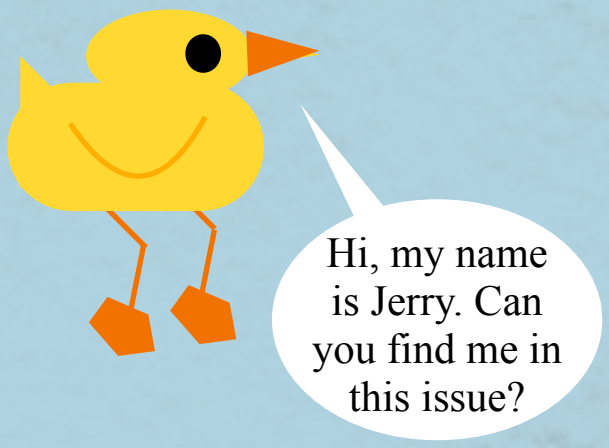


BIBLE VERSE~

But if anyone does not provide for his relatives, and especially for members of his household, he has denied the faith and is worse than unbeliever.

(1 Timothy 5:8 ESV)

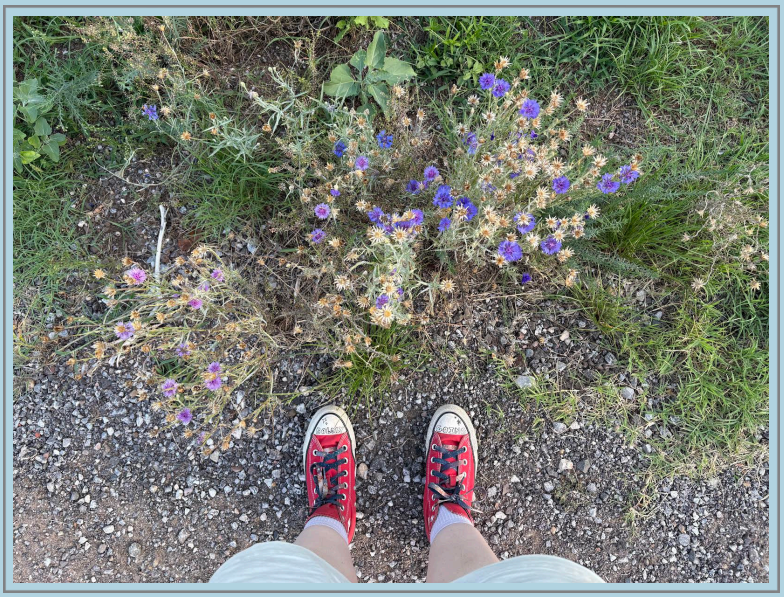
~PRAYER

Dear God,

You have made the family unit so unique and there are so many different kinds of relationships we have — thank You for them all! Thank You especially for in-laws. Please help us to understand our in-laws and the relationship that they have with our spouse. Holy Spirit please guide our actions towards our in-laws and help us love them just as Jesus would. We pray for the in-laws who may not have a healthy relationship with their children and interrupt the marriage that You have brought together. Please divinely intervene and help in-laws to see that their children are no longer their responsibility and help their children see that their spouses are now their responsibility. I pray for wives who feel negative judgment or inadequacy because of treatment from in-laws and ask that You redeem their relationship. Give wives strength, sense of worthiness, and the righteous way to respond in each interaction with their in-laws in Jesus' name, Amen.

— MarriageAfterGod.com

Photo Contest Entries



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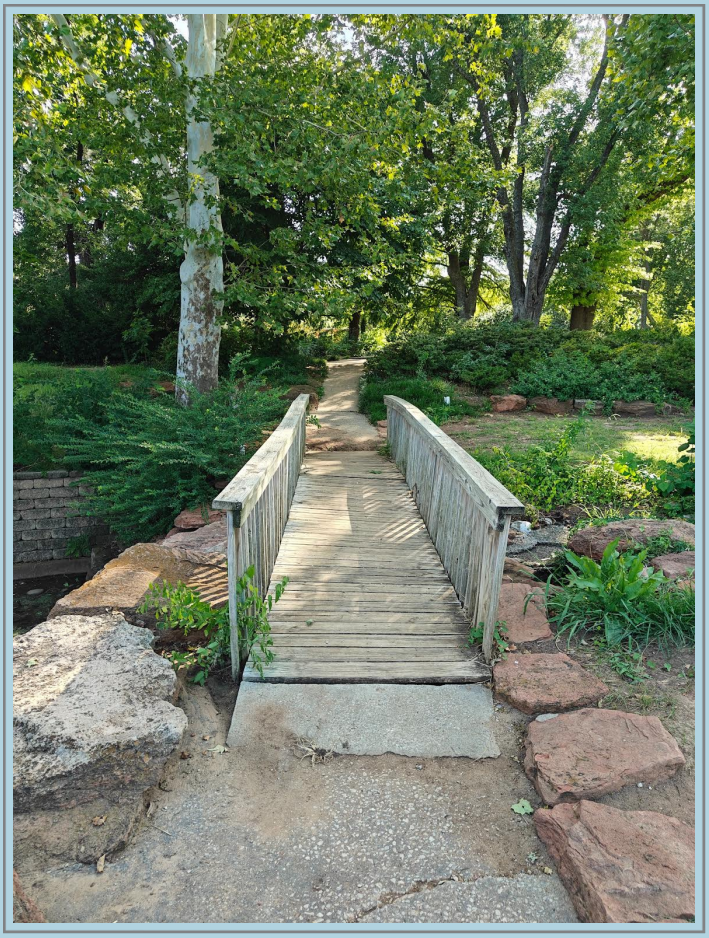

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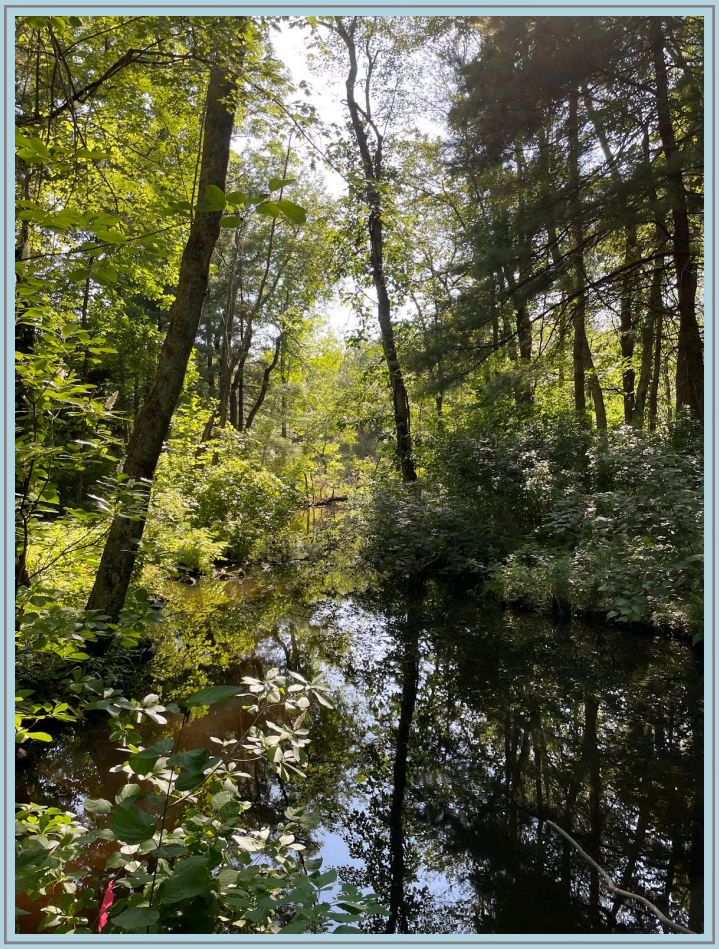

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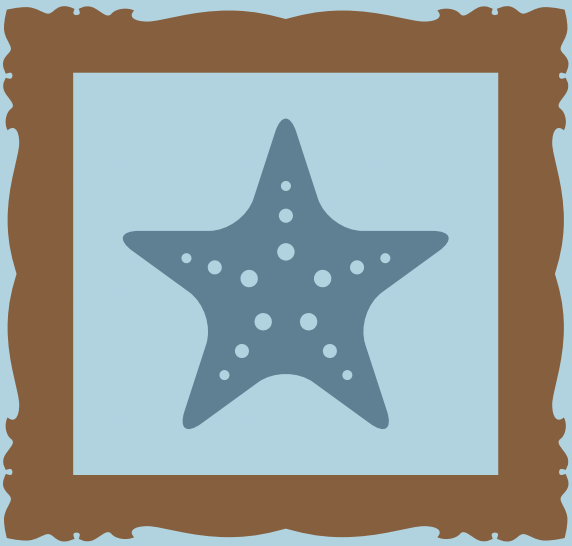



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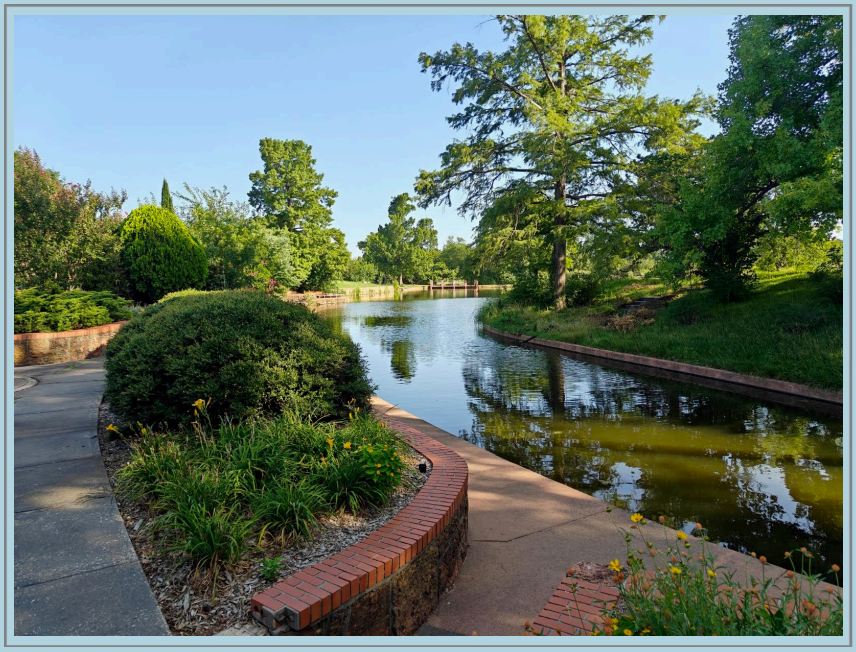

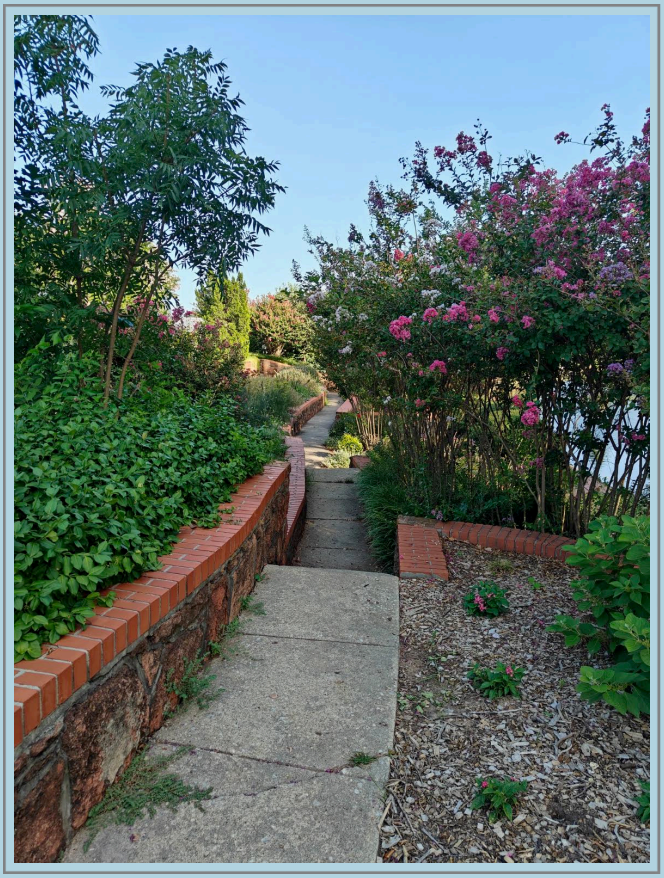

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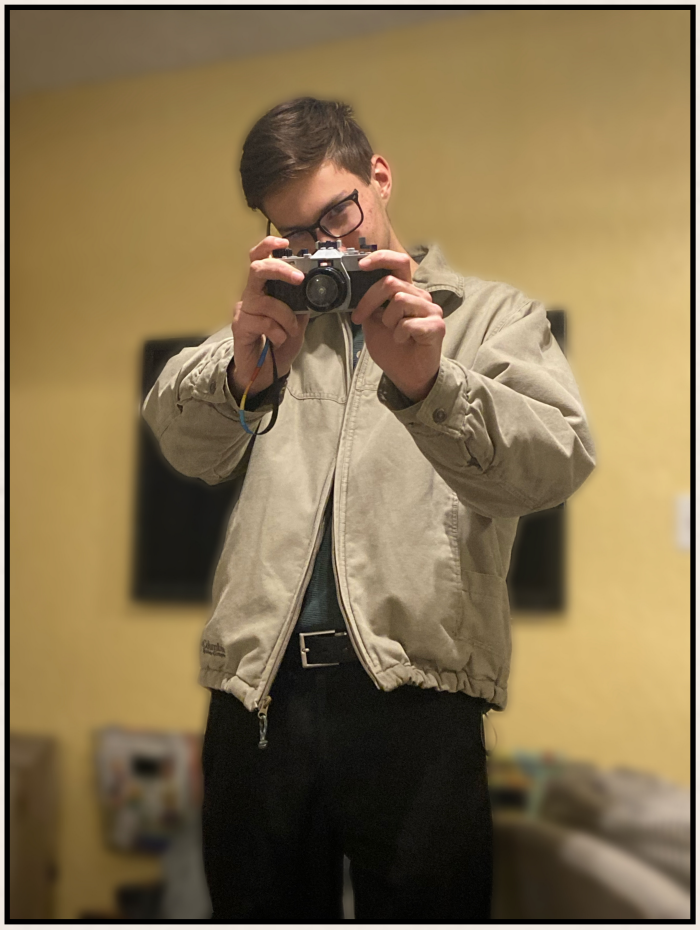
Calling all Photographers!

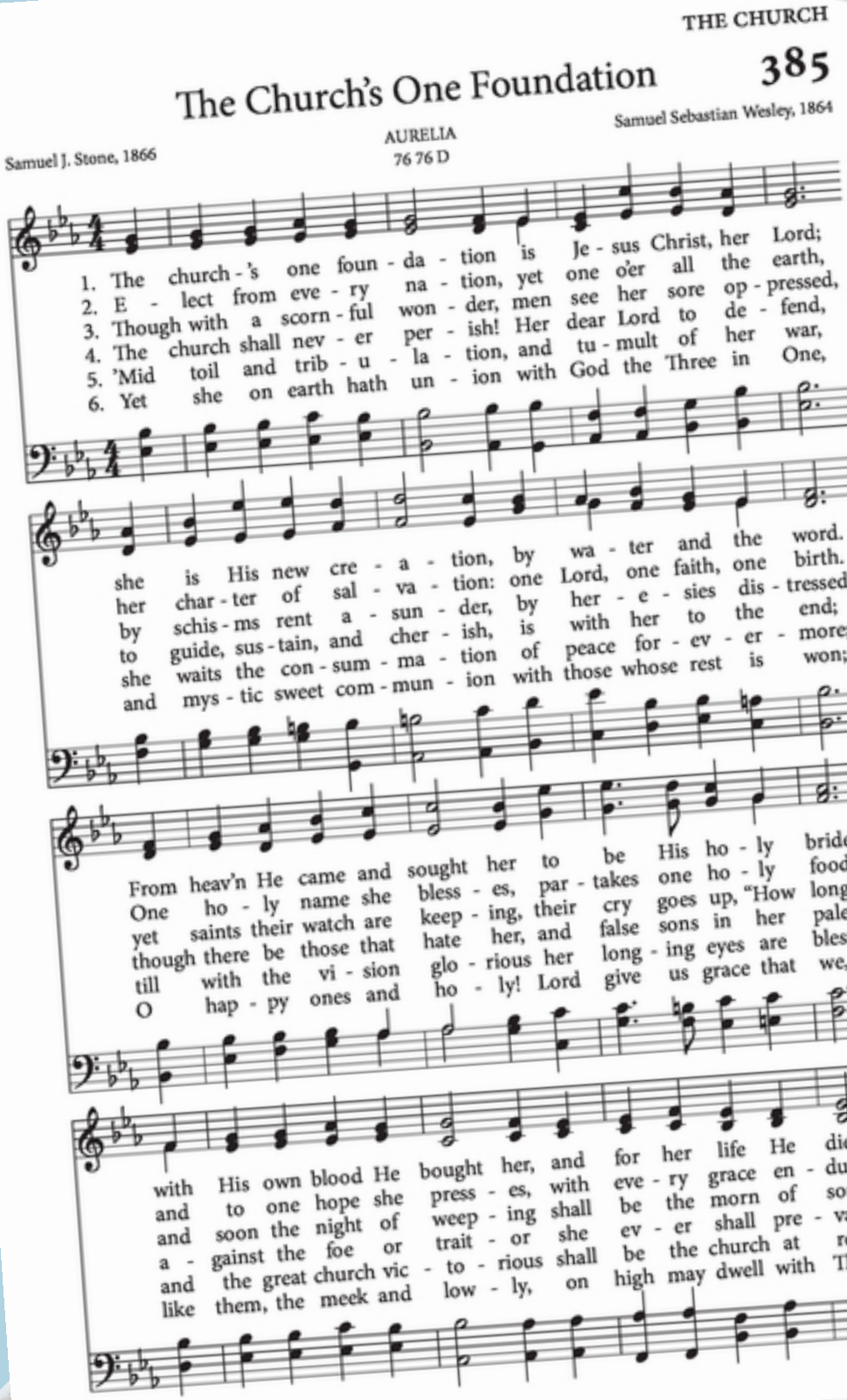
We are holding a contest for the best picture that encapsulates FALL



The winning entry will be put on the Table of Contents page of our next issue.

Email your entry to Editors.LogoSophia@gmail.com by September 4 — subject line "Fall 2026 Photo Contest".

hymn



THE CHURCH

The Church's One Foundation 385

Samuel J. Stone, 1866

AURELIA
76 76 D

Samuel Sebastian Wesley, 1864

1. The church-'s one foun-da-tion is Je-sus Christ, her Lord;
2. E-lect from eve-ry na-tion, yet one o'er all the earth,
3. Though with a scorn-ful won-der, men see her sore op-pressed,
4. The church shall nev-er per-ish! Her dear Lord to de-fend,
5. 'Mid toil and trib-u-la-tion, and tu-mult of her war,
6. Yet she on earth hath un-ion with God the Three in One,

she is His new cre-a-tion, by wa-ter and the word.
her char-ter of sal-va-tion: one Lord, one faith, one birth.
by schis-ms rent a-sun-der, by her-e-sies dis-tressed,
to guide, sus-tain, and cher-ish, is with her to the end;
she waits the con-sum-ma-tion of peace for-ev-er-more;
and mys-tic sweet com-mun-ion with those whose rest is won;

From heav'n He came and sought her to be His ho-ly bride;
One ho-ly name she bless-es, par-takes one ho-ly food,
yet saints their watch are keep-ing, their cry goes up, "How long?"
though there be those that hate her, and false sons in her pale,
till with the vi-sion glo-rious her long-ing eyes are blest,
O hap-py ones and ho-ly! Lord give us grace that we,

with His own blood He bought her, and for her life He died.
and to one hope she press-es, with eve-ry grace en-dued.
and soon the night of weep-ing shall be the morn of song!
a-gainst the foe or trait-or she ev-er shall pre-vail.
and the great church vic-to-rious shall be the church at rest.
like them, the meek and low-ly, on high may dwell with Thee.

Musical Musings

By Deborah Robertson

"The Church's One Foundation" was written in the 1860s by the English clergyman S. J. (Samuel John) Stone. This was one of many hymns by Stone, and a collection of his original hymns and translations alike was published in 1866.
In Stone's time there was a theological controversy happening, and "The Church's One Foundation" was written as a combatant to the issues arising. This hymn was part of a work known as *Lyra Fidelium; Twelve Hymns on the Twelve Articles of the Apostles' Creed.* The article "The Church's One Foundation" is on is "the holy catholic Church, the communion of saints."

As a Protestant, I do not hold to the Catholic faith, but nonetheless I admire and appreciate my Catholic brothers and sisters who hold so firmly and steadfastly to their faith, especially to the point of martyrdom. (Stone served faithfully all his life, but was not martyred and died simply in 1900).

The second verse, mentioned earlier, displays the unification Christians find in their Lord — we all become one family. "Elect from every nation, yet one o'er all The Earth." In communion we share one table, "partake[s] one holy food." "The Church's One Foundation" can remind all of us — Catholic or Protestant, from every nation — that our shared foundation for faith, "is Jesus Christ her Lord."



The Knights of Adonai

By Joshua David Ling

There is no new chapter of The Knights of Adonai for this issue — making it the perfect opportunity to catch up on any of the other exciting chapters you might have missed!



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leads a fellowship of Christian creatives crafting tales in the spirit of Lewis and Tolkien. Where sacred poetry meets epic adventure—through original serialized podcasts and a thriving creative community.

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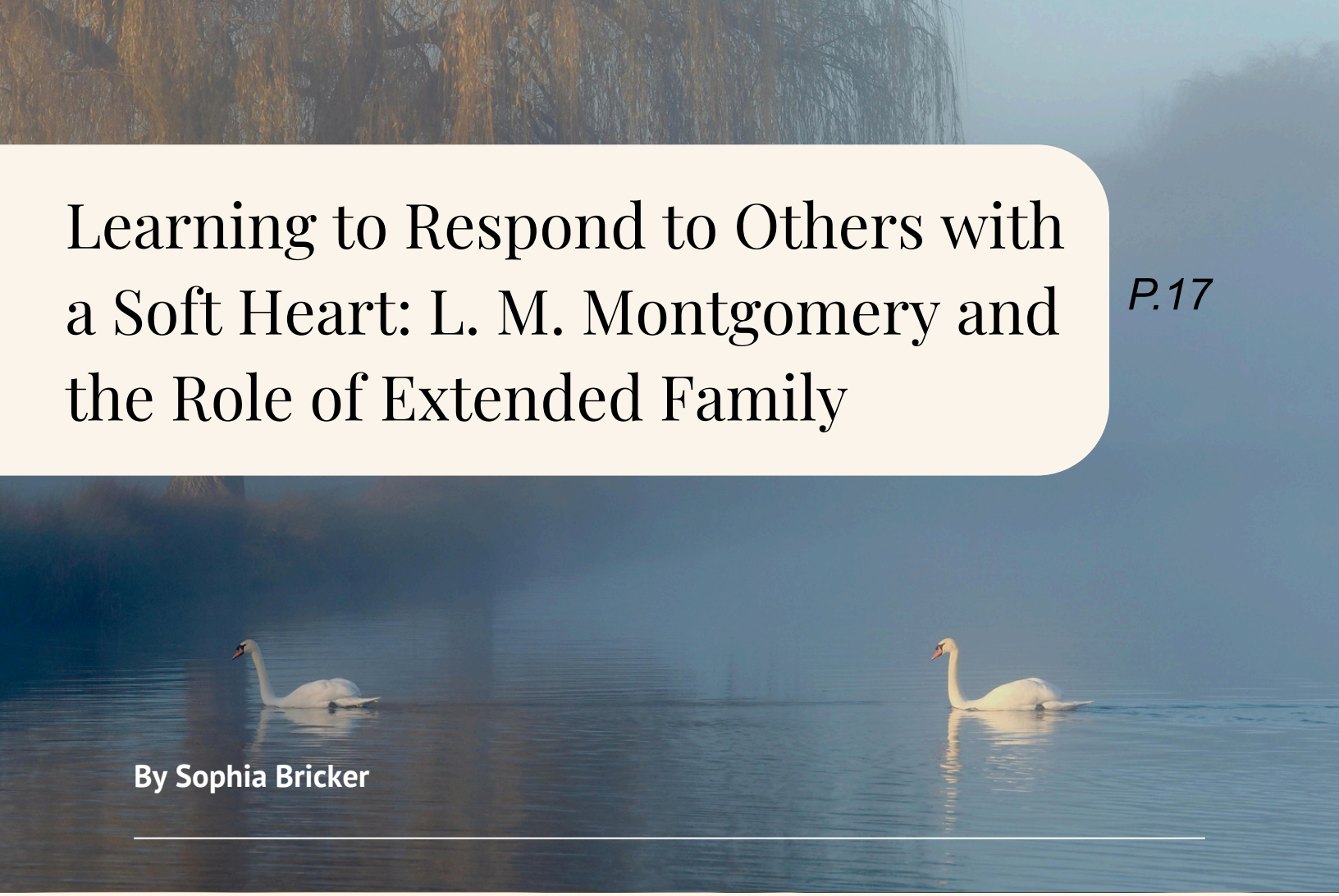
Learning to Respond to Others with a Soft Heart: L. M. Montgomery and the Role of Extended Family

P.17



By Sophia Bricker

"Kindred spirit:" A person with similar interests or concerns (*Merriam-Webster.com Dictionary*)

The impossible happened as I stood at the edge of the lake in a city park, staring at a swan gliding through the water. Not only had my sisters and I been allowed to go somewhere together unaccompanied by a parent––a rare phenomenon––but we were talking to a cousin we never knew existed. She was young, though multiple years older than my oldest sister, who was a teenager at the time. Most of the relatives we had met before were elderly: women with puffy clumps of white on their heads or shuffling aged men.

We scrambled after our cousin as she led us under the bridge, pointing at the stone walls. This would be an excellent place for public art, she informed us. If that included spray paint––well, that was merely part of the process, she said. As we explored the park, we talked about music and creativity. My sisters and I kicked at the rocks near the lake, looking at each other in shock. She was not only young, but she enjoyed similar things to us: art (we preferred the legal kind), rock music, and expressive style. The swan glided by again as thoughts formed in my head. This eccentric and fun person was my relative, not only by blood, but as a kindred spirit.



The term "kindred spirit" became famous through L. M. Montgomery's *Anne of Green Gables*. Interestingly, the term draws upon the definition of "kindred," or family relation, to connect people through shared qualities instead of blood––a bond of spirit. As an author, Montgomery introduced us to many such friends through her skillful development of characters. Reading one of her novels is like entering a home as a friend's guest and meeting a vast array of family members, close and distant. We greet the prickly yet lovable aunt, run in the yard with the adopted children, shake hands with the oddly talented cousin, and curtsy respectfully to the wizened great-grandmother.

Perhaps these worlds dotted with large families reflected Montgomery's own desire for familial bonds, a desire that was unmet as a child.

She was accustomed to being unwanted––her father sent her to stay with grandparents after her mother died, and she was raised by them (Montgomery, *The Alpine Path*, 16-18). Extended relations in the form of grandparents and aunts were the closest thing she had to a family unit, and that only went so far. As Rea Wilmshurst wrote in her introduction to *Akin to Anne*, "Montgomery's early journals give a vivid picture of a suppressed and stultifying existence, physically adequate but emotionally deprived" (vii).

It is not surprising, then, that extended family often takes center stage in her fiction works, usually in the form of orphaned children staying with aunts, cousins, and other relatives. Emily Byrd Starr is the most famous for being raised by her two aunts, Elizabeth and Laura, and Cousin Jimmy. Originally, Emily thought they were only taking her in out of duty––an obligation Aunt Elizabeth begrudgingly agreed to. Emily eventually comes to understand that her aunts, including stern Aunt Elizabeth, love her.

But it is not only in Montgomery's most famous works that we see evidence of the care of extended family. Her short works, too, bear evidence of the common human desire to be accepted and loved by family in some form.

In "The Softening of Miss Cynthia," Montgomery writes about Cynthia finding an orphaned boy at her doorstep. Not only does he claim relation to her, but he takes it for granted that he will stay with her. Miss Cynthia will not have such an arrangement. The burden of a child in her life would be too much!

As she confided in her neighbor: "If I look out a place for him somewhere where he can do odd jobs and go to school in the winter, I think it's all anyone can expect of me, when he ain't really no blood relation" (*Akin to Anne*, 175).

She affirms the need to find the boy a place of shelter with food and access to education. But a loving home? Attention? The gift of friendship? That she withheld with a stiff hand.
Her decision had dire consequences as the boy grew ill from being overworked, and Cynthia soon learns that he is in the hospital, alone, with no one to visit him. Slowly, seeing the child's suffering, her resolve begins to soften. She eventually welcomes the boy not only into her home, but into her heart. Only then does she really begin "to live" (180).



Extended family members often receive bad reputations in literature and reality. Hamlet's father was murdered by Claudius, Hamlet's uncle. Fairy tales are replete with examples of "evil" stepparents. And even Emily Starr was cautious of some of her relatives, including Aunt Ruth, who constantly (and incorrectly) accused her of being sly: "Em'ly, you know what you did. I will not tolerate this slyness. What was your motive?" (*Emily Climbs*, 120).

Most of us have family members that we are told not to speak of, or to act as if they never existed. Even those relatives we do grudgingly greet during holidays or weddings, we would prefer to avoid or talk with as little as possible.

We might even shut them out, taking the same attitude as Cynthia, claiming we have no responsibility because they are not really blood relation––not like our close family.

But hardening our hearts is dangerous, including towards extended family members. If we cannot love relatives, then how can we claim to love our neighbor? Scripture speaks of the responsibility to assist those who are less fortunate, including widows and orphans, who might just be within our extended families (James 1:27). The Apostle Paul even gave specific instructions to guide Christians in discerning whether a widow needed help from the church, or if there was a Christ-following relative who had the ability (and therefore responsibility) to care for the family member (see 1 Timothy 5:3-8). The default position is not hard-heartedness, but soft-heartedness.

Of course, in modern society, it is much easier to wall people outside of our lives. We love those who love us, and when situations start getting difficult, that is when we are ready to bow and leave. At times, setting boundaries is a legitimate and much needed response, especially in situations of abuse and unfaithfulness. Leaving is sometimes the wisest choice. However, if we always measure out our love according to what is most convenient, or withhold it because of a perceived slight or trivial misunderstanding, then our understanding of Jesus' love is stunted.

"But hardening our hearts is dangerous, including towards extended family members."

He did not only die on the cross for the disciples around Him, those who had welcomed Him as a great rabbi; He died for those who sentenced Him to death, nailed Him to the cross, and hurled insults at Him. If the love of God is ultimately shown in the death of the Son, then we must admit that His love is for all (Romans 5:8). And it is not based on whether that love is returned or not, or if we are worthy. As it is, we love because He first loved us (1 John 4:19). To love like Christ is to love without expecting anything in return. The author and minister George MacDonald wisely wrote: "[I]t is by loving, and not by being loved, that one can come nearest the soul of another" (181).

How can we claim to know the love of our Savior if we refuse to talk about family members or hold onto generational grudges? Why should we agree to turning away from the distant relative in need because, like Cynthia, we perceive it as an inconvenience? Who else is being hurt by refusing to speak the name of that one family member?

During L. M. Montgomery's time, individuals understood the responsibility placed upon them to care for extended family. Hence, she included a multitude of characters who opened their homes to others. The flip side of that, though, was that too many opened their doors without opening their hearts. What Montgomery showed through her stories was how much pain can come from accepting responsibility without a hint of kindness.

Turning away in hatred and welcoming with tight-lipped assent are both dishonoring attitudes to God.

Jesus said that His followers would be known for their love for one another (John 13:35). If we can't love those who we are related to by blood, then how are we supposed to love those we become related to by the Spirit? Past and present, we have a large family in God made up of brothers, sisters, mothers, fathers, sons, daughters, nieces, nephews, uncles, aunts, and cousins.

Let us not miss the opportunity to grow through knowing them, which starts with a willingness to be vulnerable. To care. To listen to others with whom we do not always agree, or necessarily like. For we learn how to welcome others in Christ when we practice compassionate care toward others, especially within the training field of the family.

Who knows? We just might find a kindred spirit.

"If we can't love those who we are related to by blood, then how are we supposed to love those we become related to by the Spirit?"

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My Brother Lost His Wife

Which sounds as if he misplaced her, like car keys

But she has gone away, as must we all

Into those far-beyond mysteries beyond our poor knowing

And leaving us vacuums and vacancies

And he is sorting out bills to be paid

Her nursing license which will not be renewed

The bits and bobs to be given to the children

Daily remembrances in all the little things

His days are mysteries

Filling in the great emptiness in his life

and all the small ones

By Lawrence "Mack in Texas" Hall

Experience the glory of Camelot like never before in these fast-paced fantasy tales!

In a forgotten time when magic ruled, the mighty King Emrys with his bard Taliesin must defend the land of Britain from malicious gods and terrible monsters.

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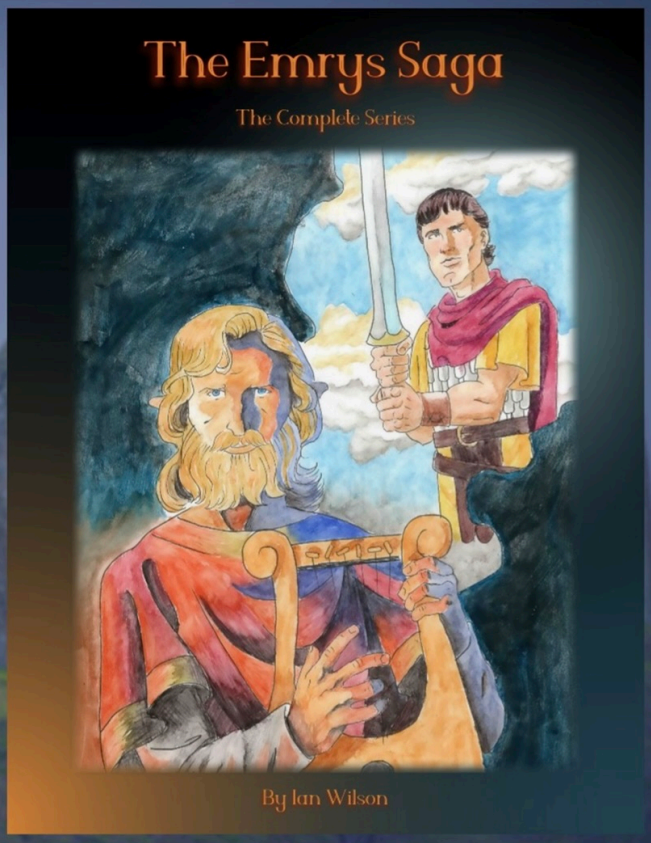

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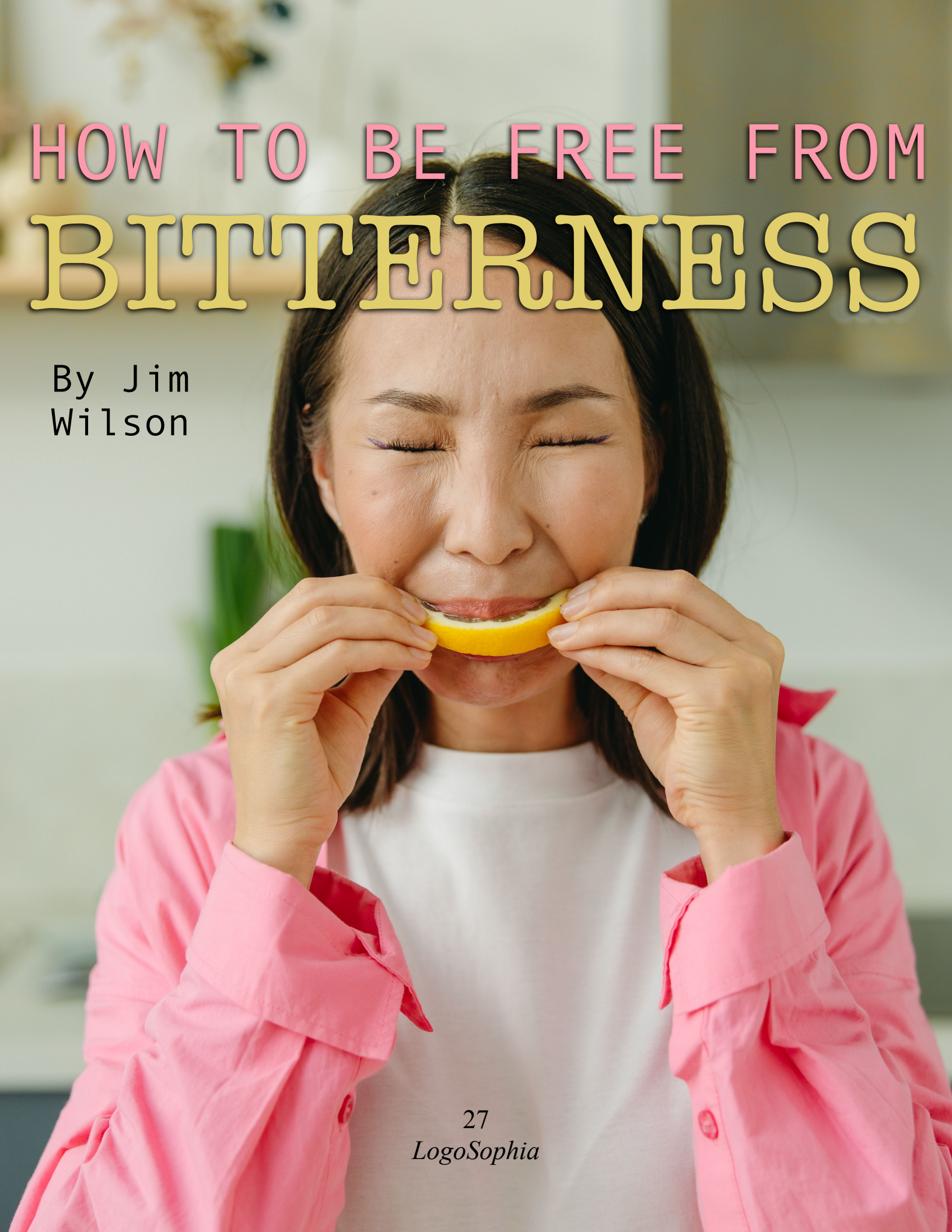
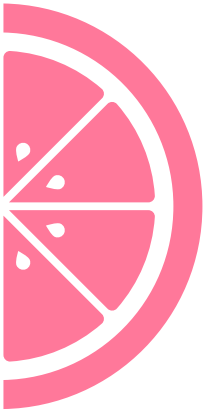


HOW TO BE FREE FROM BITTERNESS

By Jim Wilson

27
LogoSophia

Get rid of all bitterness, rage and anger, brawling and slander, along with every form of malice. Be kind and compassionate to one another, forgiving each other, just as in Christ God forgave you. Be imitators of God, therefore, as dearly loved children, and live a life of love, just as Christ loved us and gave himself up for us as a fragrant offering and sacrifice to God. (Eph. 4:31-5:2)



In our text, we are instructed to get rid of all bitterness. Before we begin discussing how and why this must be done, it is crucial to realize that the basis for all our actions in this regard must be what Jesus Christ has done for us on the cross. In all our actions, we are to be imitators of God.

In the Old Testament, there was a woman whose name meant Pleasant. Her name was Naomi, and she had moved from Israel to another land with her husband and sons. But her husband had died, and within the next ten years both of her sons died.

She made some comments to her recently widowed daughters-in-law about it. Ruth 1:13b: "It is more bitter for me than for you, because the Lord's hand has gone out against me!" She was comparing in order to determine who had the right to be more bitter.

In Ruth 1:20-21: "Don't call me Naomi," she told them. "Call me Mara, because the Almighty has made my life very bitter. I went away full, but the Lord has brought me back empty. Why call me Naomi? The Lord has afflicted me; the Almighty has brought misfortune upon me."

Her bitterness was toward God. It was God who had taken away her husband; it was God who had taken away her sons, and she held it against Him. Five times in these three verses she held God accountable for her bitterness.

There are many people like this today. Not only are they bitter; they enjoy being bitter. They somehow like it, and they feed on it. They wouldn't know what to do if they got rid of it; they wouldn't have a purpose for living. They like being bitter.

We know people like that in the world, and we know people like that in the church. It is easy to recognize when someone is bitter. You can see it in the eyes and in the lines of the face—even if the person is young. You can see it in their mouth; you can see it when they're smiling or laughing. You can hear it in the tone of their voice. You can hear it when they protest that they are not bitter. The bitterness is central, and it pervades everything.

There are bitter people in the Bible besides Naomi. In fact, there are quite a few. For example, Jonah was a bitter man. The Lord said to him, "Do you have a right to be angry about the vine?"

"I do," he said. "I am angry enough to die," (Jonah 4:9).

He thought he had a right to his anger. "I like being angry. God, You are wrong to forgive people. I don't want You to forgive people."

People enjoy holding things against other people. But our text requires us to remove all bitterness and to maintain a tender heart.

Here's the question: Is it possible to be kind, compassionate, tenderhearted, and yet bitter at the same time? These are all interior attitudes. Tenderheartedness, by definition, involves a tender heart. Bitterness is also on the inside. But it is not possible to have two different, contradictory attitudes on the inside.

Paul says to get rid of all bitterness, and to be kind and compassionate one to another. Therefore, the bitterness must go. But before it can be removed, it is necessary to know what it is—and that it is there.

It is relatively easy to see when other people are bitter. But it's not so easy to see it in ourselves. It is therefore important to have a good understanding of the Bible's definition of the problem.

Let us suppose that a Christian commits a sin. He tells a lie, for instance. When he tells this lie, does he feel guilty, or does he feel bitter? The answer is guilty. When we sin, we feel guilty. It is straightforward. Now suppose that someone told a lie about this same Christian and spread it all over town. What does he feel now—guilt or bitterness?

Guilt is what we feel when we sin, and bitterness is what we feel when others sin against us. The very definition of bitterness points to the action of another. If we had committed the offense, we would feel guilty and would know that we had to confess and forsake our sin. We might not confess the sin when we are guilty, but not because we did not know what to do. But what do we do with the guilt of others?

Bitterness is always based upon someone else's sin—whether real or imagined. Consider the imaginary sin first. Many times we can be bitter toward someone for what he said, when in reality he did not say it. We heard a false report, and now we are bitter. We wait for an apology which he cannot offer. Shall we remain in bitterness the rest of our lives because he never says he is sorry for something he did not do?

Incidentally, many bitter people cannot imagine the possibility that they are bitter over imaginary sins. As far as bitterness is concerned, the other person's guilt is always real. For such a person trying to be free from bitterness, it is acceptable for them to assume that the guilt of the other person is real, so long as they get rid of their own bitterness.

But what about genuine sin? There are many bitter people who really were mistreated by the offender. So how do we deal with a genuine offense?

Bitterness is based on sin that somehow relates to you. It is not concerned with how big the sin is; it is based upon how close it is. For instance, if some great and gross immorality occurs in Iran, Iraq, El Salvador, or Colombia, what do we do? We read about it, but we will not feel guilty. We read about it, but we will not feel bitter.

We might be appalled or amazed, but we do not feel guilty, and we do not feel bitter, even though it was an awful sin, and someone actually committed it. So it does not depend on how great the evil is; it depends on how close the other person is to me. Bitterness is related to those people who are close.

Who are likely candidates? The answer is simple: fathers, mothers, brothers, sisters, husbands, wives, children, boyfriends, girlfriends, roommates, immediate superiors, immediate subordinates, coworkers, business partners, and maybe some other relatives—grandparents, uncles, etc. There are even many people who are bitter against God.

We do not get bitter towards evil outside of our own immediate contact. Bitterness is based upon the sin of someone who is close to us and who did something to us. It might be minor. It does not have to be great; it just has to be close. Does he pick up his socks? No? Can you get bitter over that? Well, no, but what if he neglects them 5,000 times?

You may think you have a right to be bitter. But the Bible does not grant anyone the right to be bitter. The text says to get rid of all bitterness.

"See to it that no one misses the grace of God and that no bitter root grows up to cause trouble and defile many" (Heb. 12:15). Here it describes bitterness as if it were a root. A root is something that is underground and cannot be seen. But there can be visible evidence of its presence, as when sidewalks are lifted.

The fact that you cannot see roots does not mean they are not there. Neither does it mean you will never see them. They drink in nourishment, and they do not stay roots. Eventually they come up.

The fruit that is born bears a direct relation to the root that is producing it. The roots of an apple tree provide us with apples. If there is a bitter root, it will bear bitter fruit.

That is what this verse is saying. Beware lest any root of bitterness spring up, cause trouble, and defile many people, which means to make many people filthy. Have you ever seen bitterness go through a church? Bitterness can go through a congregation like a prairie fire.

It can go through the workplace or a dormitory. Why is this? Somebody decided to share. He was bitter, and he let the root come to the surface and bear fruit. He shared it, and many people became bitter. The author of Hebrews warns us about this. He says beware of missing the grace of God. When you allow it, bitterness comes up and defiles many people. It makes many people filthy.

What happens to a person if he keeps bitterness on the inside for many years? What happens to him physically? Suppose it is bitterness toward some member of the family. He has not shared it. He has not defiled many people—he has kept it down inside. When he keeps it in for some years, he finally begins to hurt. He goes to the doctor, and the doctor says, "You are right; you are sick. But your sickness is not the kind I deal with. I am going to send you to the other kind of doctor."

So he sends him to the psychiatrist, and the psychiatrist agrees. "Yes, you are sick all right. And I know why. You are sick because of twenty years of bitterness towards your father. You have kept it suppressed all these years, and it's rotted out your insides. You have kept this poison within, and this acid on the inside has made you physically ill. So what I want you to do is to go home and share it with your father. Why keep it in and get sick? Let it out. Get everybody else sick."

So the world has two solutions: Keep the bitterness in and make yourself sick, or let it out and spread the sickness around. God's solution is to dig up the root. Get rid of it. But this takes the grace of God. A man must know the Lord Jesus Christ to be able to do this. He is the source of grace.

Christians should not use the world's solutions for bitterness. When Christians copy the world, they have two poor choices. The Bible says to get rid of all bitterness. You must not keep it in, and you must not share it. Surrender it to the Father, through the Son.

"But if you harbor bitter envy and selfish ambition in your hearts, do not boast about it or deny the truth. Such 'wisdom' does not come down from heaven but is earthly, unspiritual, of the devil. For where you have envy and selfish ambition, there you find disorder and every evil practice" (James 3:14–15).

When I was a young midshipman at the Naval Academy, I thought that the pettiness and jealousy I observed would give way to maturity. I thought the higher you got in rank, the more mature you became, the less this sort of thing occurred. But as I grew older, I found out that the jealousy just got more intense. Bitterness accumulates. Unless there's a solution to it, people do not get less bitter with maturity. They get more bitter over the years. It gets worse and worse.

And if you harbor bitter envy, evil practice will result. It does not come from heaven. It is straight from the pit and is of the devil. Every evil practice results from this attitude. As should be obvious, we have a real problem. How do we get rid of bitterness?

Before we can get rid of bitterness, we have to realize that we are bitter. How can we tell if we are bitter? One good rule of thumb is this: bitterness remembers details. You have had thousands of conversations in your life, most of which you have forgotten. But this one took place five years ago, and you remember every single word, his intonation, and every inflection of his voice. You know exactly what happened—which means you are bitter.

Someone might object and say that it is also possible to have a good memory of a wonderful conversation. Is this possible? Yes, but not likely. Why? Because memory is helped by review, review, and more review. People do not usually mull over the wonderful things as much. But they do go over and over and over the bad things. I have done quite a bit of counseling with people who are in the process of getting divorced. I have known some of them since they got married, at a happier time in their life. But at the time of the divorce, they cannot remember a single happy time. All they can remember is what they have gone over and over. They are bitter.

This doesn't mean there were not happy times. It just means that they have concentrated on how right they were and how wrong the other person was. If someone has a sharp, detailed memory for things which happened years ago when he was a child or a young man or woman, and that memory is at all accusative of anyone, then it is an indication of bitterness. And the solution for bitterness is to get rid of it.

One time, a host of time asked me to speak on bitterness, which I did. Afterwards, a couple came up to see me. I had known them eight years before in Pullman, Washington. The wife said, "We have been married for eight years. The first year of marriage, I was so bitter toward my mother that I laid it on my husband every single day. Our first year of marriage was just awful because I kept sharing this bitterness toward my mother with my husband."

Then she told me that seven years earlier I had spoken on bitterness, and she had gotten rid of hers. One day, she saw another woman who was really bitter towards her own mother. She thought, "I can help that woman. I can share all the common experiences. I went to her to share this, and I couldn't remember any of the details. My detailed memory had gone. All I could tell her was I used to remember things, and I do not remember them anymore." The Lord had really taken care of her bitterness.

Another time, I was teaching a four-week course on marriage. I had put a notice in the paper and did not know who would show up. A woman came who had been referred to the class by a doctor. I can honestly say that I have never seen anyone more bitter in appearance in my life. She had forty years of accumulated bitterness. She got rid of it that night and made an appointment to see me the next day at the bookstore where I worked. She came into the store, and I did not know who she was — she looked so different. I had just met her the night before, but she was clean inside now.

What is the problem? Why do we not get rid of bitterness? If I tell a lie, I can confess it and be forgiven. In order to get rid of it, I have to bring it back to my own heart. We need to bring the realization of bitterness back to our own hearts. Instead, the temptation is to look at the offender. "Look what he did." That is the nature of bitterness. In order to get rid of it, I need to recognize that it is my problem before I can confess and forsake it.

You say, "I am not bitter. I just get hurt easily." But the symptoms of getting hurt are very close to the symptoms of resentment. Do you know what instant resentment is?

You might say. “It is not bitterness—it is just hurt feelings.” But there is a close relationship between being hurt and being resentful. Someone gets hurt, and he gets resentful. There is another very close connection between resentment and bitterness. Resentment turns into a deep bitterness; bitterness is just resentment that has been held on to. It has become rancid and rotten. It is kept in, and it gets worse.

The links in the chain continue. There is a connection between bitterness and hatred, and a very clear Biblical identification between hatred and murder. What I am saying is that hurt can lead to murder. Some might object that this teaching is too strong. But the strength of it is from the Bible.

What we want to do is make it apparent how sinful bitterness is. The bitter person must first recognize that he is bitter, and secondly, that it is a gross evil. Again, the reason people do not deal with this sin is that they think it is the other person’s sin. The devil says, “Well, when he quits lying, or he quits doing this or that, or when he says he’s sorry, then you will feel better.”

But suppose he does not quit? Suppose he never quits? Are you going to be bitter for the rest of your life because someone else insists on being in sin? That does not make any sense at all. You may say, “I will forgive him when he says he is sorry, but not until then. I have a right to my bitterness until then. When he says he is sorry, I will forgive him and everything will be fine.” You keep this wall of bitterness up, and one day he comes to you and he says, “I’m sorry.” Can you forgive him now? No, because bitterness doesn’t forgive. In order to forgive this person when he says he is sorry, you have to be ready before he says he is sorry. And if you are ready to forgive him before he says he is sorry, then it doesn’t depend on whether he says he is sorry or not. In other words, you get rid of bitterness unilaterally. It does not matter what the other person does.

Earlier, I made the point that bitterness seems to stem from the other person’s sin—real or imagined. That is only how it appears. In reality, bitterness is a sin that stands alone. The bitter person decides to be bitter independently of the offender.

You say, “No, he sinned against me, and when he says he is sorry everything will be fine.” That is not true. I have known situations where an apology was offered, and the person is still bitter. Or suppose the offender is dead and cannot apologize. I know people who are extremely bitter, and the bitterness is towards their parents who died years ago. But the bitterness has not died. Bitterness is the sin of the bitter person alone, unrelated to anyone else.

One time around Christmas, I went to the Walla Walla State Penitentiary to spend the day with the inmates. I spent about six hours there. During the afternoon, I was in maximum security, talking about and teaching evangelism. One fellow asked about reaching the really hard-core criminals. I thought he was really interested in such evangelism and talked to him about it. Then I spent time in minimum security, protective custody, and other places. In the evening, I was back in maximum security, and thought I would talk on the subject of bitterness. I figured there were probably some bitter people there.

The same fellow who had asked about evangelism in the afternoon asked me another question. He said, “How can you get rid of bitterness towards somebody who beat up your three-year-old son unmercifully?”

I told him how, and then I said, “You know, when you get rid of your bitterness you can help this person so that he won’t beat up other little kids.”

He said, “No, this guy cannot be helped.”

I said, “Sure, he can.”

“No, no.”

“Why not?”

“He is not with us anymore.”

This inmate had murdered him. He had murdered him because of what he had done to his three-year-old son—that’s why he was in prison. But even though he had killed the man, he was still bitter. In other words, expressing his bitterness did not get rid of it. Nor did death get rid of it.

When someone else says he is sorry, it does not get rid of our bitterness. The only thing that gets rid of it is confession before God because of the Lord Jesus Christ's death and resurrection. This is the only solution.

You may say that the person you are bitter toward died many years ago. You did not kill the person like the man in prison. Otherwise, there is no difference; the other person is dead, and you are still bitter.

If the person who died was a believer, he is with the Lord, forgiven and pure. You are bitter towards someone who is rejoicing in Heaven because his name is written in the Lamb's book of life.

If the person who died was not a believer, then he is under the judgement of God described in 2 Thessalonians 1:6–8: "God is just: He will pay back trouble to those who trouble you and give relief to you who are troubled, and to us as well. This will happen when the Lord Jesus is revealed from heaven in blazing fire with his powerful angels. He will punish those who do not know God and do not obey the gospel of our Lord Jesus."

"Do not take revenge, my friends, but leave room for God's wrath, for it is written: 'It is mine to avenge; I will repay,' says the Lord" (Rom. 12:19). God is just, and God does the repaying.

Even if these people were alive, they could not take care of your bitterness, nor could you by going after them. Being dead, they have been taken care of, either way. That leaves you, alive and bitter, hurting yourself and everyone around you for years. Your bitterness is your sin, regardless of what you think caused it. God will allow you to experience the forgiveness and joy that is yours when you repent and confess your bitterness as a great sin against God. We must not keep it, and we must not share it with others. There is only one thing to do, and that is to confess it as a great and evil sin. We must be as persistent in the confession as necessary.

Once I was speaking in Monterey, California, at the U.S. Naval Postgraduate School. There was a man there who had a great reputation as a Bible teacher. He was a line officer in the Navy, but he had been passed over for the command of a submarine, and he was bitter.

I spoke on confession of sin and bitterness, and he was really wiped out. He came and saw me and got rid of his bitterness. The next morning, his wife said to me, "I've got a new husband." He had been bitter toward the Navy, but it was his sin, not the Navy's.

Amy Carmichael has a note in her little book If: "For a cup brimful of sweet water cannot spill even one drop of bitter water, however suddenly jolted." If a cup is full of sweet water and is jolted, what will come out of it? Sweet water. If you give it a harder jolt, what's going to spill? More sweet water. Jolts do not turn sweet water into bitter water. That is done by something else.

Jolts only bring out of the container what is already in it. If you are filled with sweetness and light and you get jolted, you're going to spill sweetness and light. If you're filled with honey, the honey will come out. If vinegar comes out, what does that prove? It shows what was already in the container. In other words, much bitterness is not based upon what the other person did at all. It is the result of what we do and are.

Many years ago, I was working in our bedroom at my desk. My wife Bessie was reading in bed. Whatever I was doing wasn't going well. Bessie said something to me, and I turned around and let her have it. It was something un-Christian. She looked at me in amazement and got up and left the room. I sat there thinking, "She should not have said it. Look what she said. Look, look, look." I did that for around ten minutes. I was bitter towards Bessie, but all she did was jolt the cup. What was in the cup came out.

If I had been filled with sweetness and light, the jolt would not have mattered. I sat there and thought about what she did. I knew better, because I had already learned this truth about bitterness. Still, I thought about her "sin" because there is enjoyment in accusing the other person. Some people do this for years.

I sat there for a while and then got up and went over to my side of the bed, got on my knees, and said, "Lord, I was the only one at fault. It was my bitterness and my sin. I am confessing it, forsaking it, and please forgive me."

I got up off my knees and said, “But look what she said.” I got back on my knees.

“God, I’m sorry for what I did. I accept the responsibility. It was my sin, and mine only.”

I got up off my knees and said, “God, You and I know who is really at fault.” I knelt back down. I stayed on my knees for forty-five minutes until I could get up and not say, “Look what she said.”

I do not remember now what Bessie said, and I do not remember what I was doing at the desk. I do not remember the details. The only thing I remember now is getting up. But I also know that if I had not taken care of the bitterness I would know to this day exactly what she had said. That is the nature of bitterness.

In order to get rid of bitterness, I have to see that it is evil, and that it is my sin and my sin only. I do not get rid of it through the other person saying he is sorry. I do not get rid of it if the other person quits or dies. I do not get rid of it any other way except calling it sin against the holy God, confessing it, and receiving forgiveness.

The difficulty is getting my eyes off the other person’s sin. But just the fact that I think it is his problem shows that it is not. If it actually were his problem, and if I were filled with sweetness and light, and not bitter, then I would be concerned about him. I could say, “That poor guy! Look what he did. If I did something like that, I would feel awful. He must really feel awful. I think I will go help him.” If that is not my response, then I am bitter, and it is my sin, not his.

I believe that this sin is a major hindrance to revival in this country. When Christians start confessing their sins, they will be able to forgive the sins of others.

Sentimental Spot* (2025)
A poem by William S. Kilgore



Driving by every now and again,
my response is often to cry,
remembering all over again
homemade ice cream on Fourth of July.

Although changing over the years,
memories still not easy to obscure.
Even as I've increased in years,
of those memories, I'm still sure.

I loved being a child over there,
liverwurst and candy dishes,
books to read for hours there,
medicines for all ailments and itches.

There's a new building out in back,
with front landscaping all rearranged.
But, as I imagine it, thinking back,
my childhood has not changed.

Paving now on the driveway,
with brand-new paint in a fresh coat,
Yet, I feel like I could pull in the driveway,
step out of the car, and leave you a note.

Feeling aside, such is impossible,
as the residents are now unfamiliar.
Managing the grief seems impossible,
as the two of you are … nowhere near here.

It's been a while since you moved out,
approximately five years apart.*
In contrast, memories don't move out,
wishing my childhood could restart.

Ah, but it doesn't work that way,
staring at a split-level brick building.
Only a husk, with the good gone away,
the way back, forever unyielding.

There's no gas fridge, stocked full.
There's no treehouse in the tree.
Just me with sentiments full.
There's just ... *me*.

Yet, that same tree still stands.
There, by the ball field across the street.
Still living ...
...

Joyce and Al have moved away.*
There's no one living in that house.
Of course, there *are* people living there;
but they are not like Joyce and Al,
grandparents, so dearly loved.



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* Title: This poem is dedicated to the memory of Albert and Joyce Rains, the author's late grandparents.

* Stanza 7, verse 2: See my poem, "Five Years" (2024).

* Stanza 11: This entire verse is a reworking inspired by the structure of an ancient Chinese poem, "Shu is Away" (The Chou Dynasty, 1046-256 BCE), translated by Arthur Waley, and included in the book, *World Poetry: An Anthology of Verse from Antiquity to Our Time* (New York: Quality Paperback Book Club, 1998).

HOLY HEROES

Ruth, Naomi, and Boaz

By T.K. Wilson

In the annals of Holy Scripture, you can find many examples, good and bad, of family dynamics. You have Jacob/Israel's family, Lot (big yikes!), Abraham, Noah… then you have Ruth and Naomi.

As recorded in the Book of Ruth, in the days when the Judges ruled Israel, there was a famine in the land and a Jewish man named Elimelek took his wife Naomi and his sons, Mahlon and Kilion and moved to the nearby land of Moab. There they settled, intending to move back to their hometown of Bethlehem after the famine was over, Elimelek having sold some property so they could move. While there, the two boys married Moabite girls, Orpah and Naomi.

After about ten years, Elimelek and both of his sons died, leaving the three women alone, but with the good news that the famine in Israel was over. Naomi, knowing she had rights and property there, decided to return to Israel. At first, both of her daughters in law wanted to go with her, but she urged them to remain in Moab and go back to their parents' homes. Orpah listened and left, but Ruth stayed, choosing to accompany Naomi home and serve the God of Israel.

When they returned to Bethlehem, Ruth, knowing that as a widow and a foreigner she had rights, went to work in the fields gathering barley. She happened upon the field of a rich man named Boaz, and impressed him with her work ethic and kindness to Naomi, who was a relative by marriage of his. Boaz treated her as one of his own countrywomen, and treated her kindly and generously.

As the harvest was finishing, it came to Naomi to make sure that Ruth was provided for. So, rather like the Godmother in Cinderella, Naomi advised Ruth to dress up in her finest clothes and go down to the threshing floor, where Boaz was throwing a party. Once the celebration was done, she was to remove

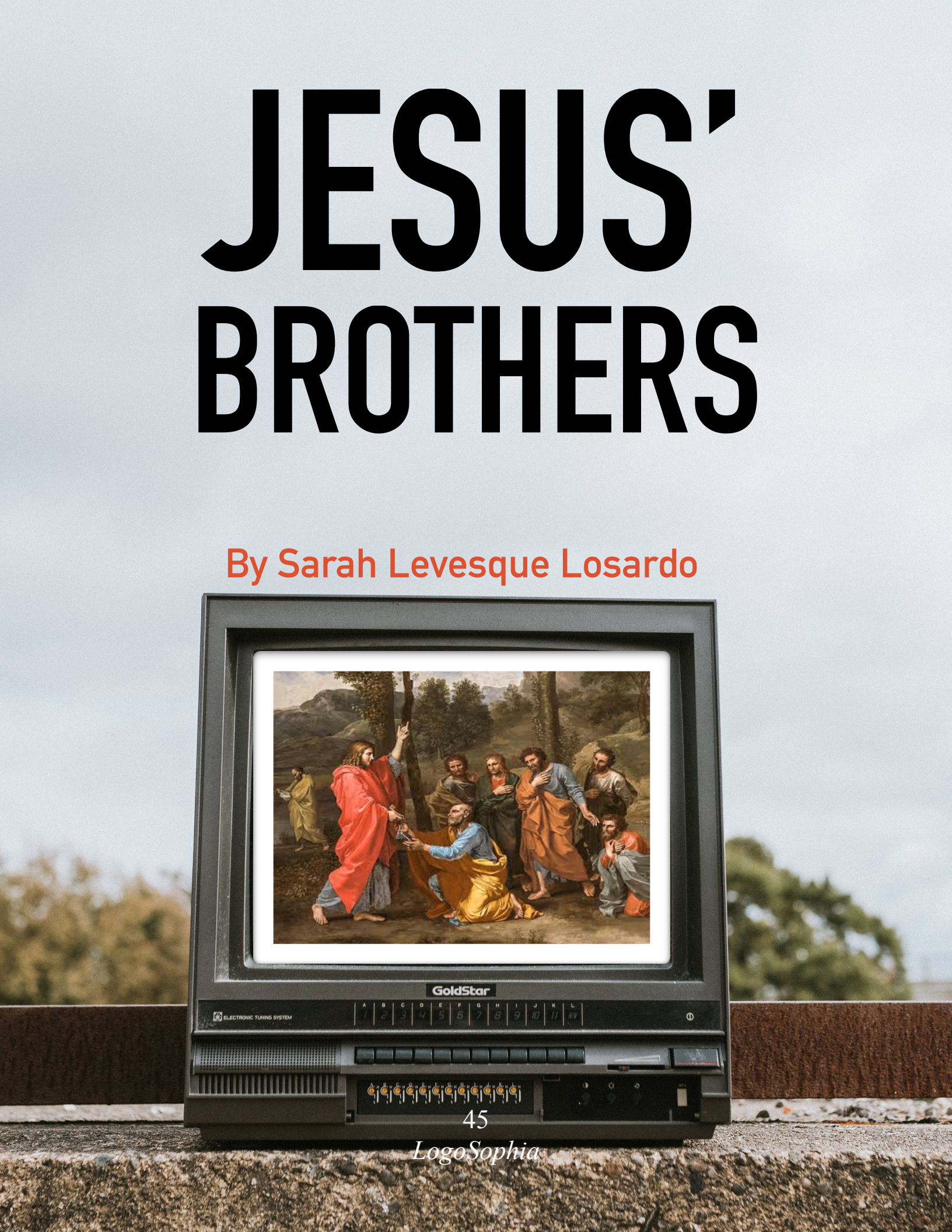
his sandals
and lay at his feet.
When he awoke, Boaz found Ruth at
his feet. Surprised, she explained that she
wanted him to perform the service of the
kinsman-redeemer: buy the land left to her
and Naomi back from one of Elimelek's other relatives,
and marry her to the bargain. Boaz enthusiastically agreed to do so,
and arranged a meeting with the elders of the town the next
morning.

Boaz and the other relative came to a quick agreement, causing Boaz to redeem the land and Ruth as well. The elders of Bethlehem, knowing Ruth's reputation as a good woman, blessed the union and praise Ruth. In the passage of time, Ruth gave birth to a son, who was named Obed, who would be raised by Naomi. Obed was the father of Jesse, who was the father of David, and thus Ruth is in the family line of Jesus Christ.

The great lesson of the account of Ruth is that family isn't always the person closest to you. It is the person that stands by you in times of trouble. Ruth became an unexpected heroine by choosing not to give up on Naomi, Boaz became a hero by not abandoning either Ruth or Naomi, and just being a good man. When a good man and a good woman come together to build a family, not even the gates of Hell can stand against it.

JESUS' BROTHERS

By Sarah Levesque Losardo



Imagine you turn on the TV and see the newscasters talking about a sensational man who is down by the Mississippi River with a sign that says "Repent." You roll your eyes and are about to change the channel when the camera switches to him and you suddenly realize that you know him. More than that, he's your cousin. And what is that he's wearing? It looks like he sewed his clothes himself out of… you're not even sure, but it's definitely not normal and can't pretend to be fashionable. Then you realize the newscasters are saying that he's living on the frogs and dandelions he finds near the river, and you feel sick.

The news switches to another story, and you suddenly remember to exhale, your brain spinning. But what's this next story? A man gathering huge numbers of people in impromptu crowds to tell them about God, and what he says is turning the neat order of national thought on its head.

What's worse, with a sinking feeling, you realize you recognize that voice. As the camera zooms in, you can verify—it's another one of your cousins, this one at least respectably dressed. But oh, you know he's going to be in big trouble when the powerful people he's calling names catch up to him.

This was the experience of Jesus' family, modernized. First John son of Zechariah, then Jesus of Nazareth decided to abandon all that was expected and normal to preach unexpected ideas about God and call out the local authorities (Herod, the Pharisees).

It should be no surprise, then, that when Jesus starts his ministry, the Bible tells us his family attempts to stop him (Mark 3:21). The English Bible uses the term "brothers," but in the Greek, the term used is adelphoi, plural of adelphos, which is the same term used for the relationship between Abraham and Lot—that of nearest male relative rather than born of the same parent(s). We know that the apostle James the Less is considered the Brother of Our Lord, but he is also identified as James son of Alphaeus, and his mother is named as Mary, mother of James and Joseph, one of the three Marys to witness the Resurrection (Matthew 27:56, Mark 15:40). This is further pointed out by Papias of Hierapolis, who lived from about 70–163 AD.

Also, it is interesting to note that, in His last hours on the Cross, Jesus entrusted His mother to the apostle John, an indication that she would have nowhere else to go (no other children to care for her) at His death. But this moment was more than just Jesus taking care of His mother - He was giving her to all of us as the Mother of the Church. We are all Jesus' brothers and sisters, not only because of this gesture, but as He said "My mother and my brothers are those who hear the word of God and do it." (Luke 8:21, Matthew 12:50). Let us pause and reflect, considering where we fall in Jesus' family—are we hearing the Word of God and doing it? Are we trying to stop Jesus? Or are we lukewarm, in danger of being "spit out" or cast away by the Lord (Revelation 3:16)?

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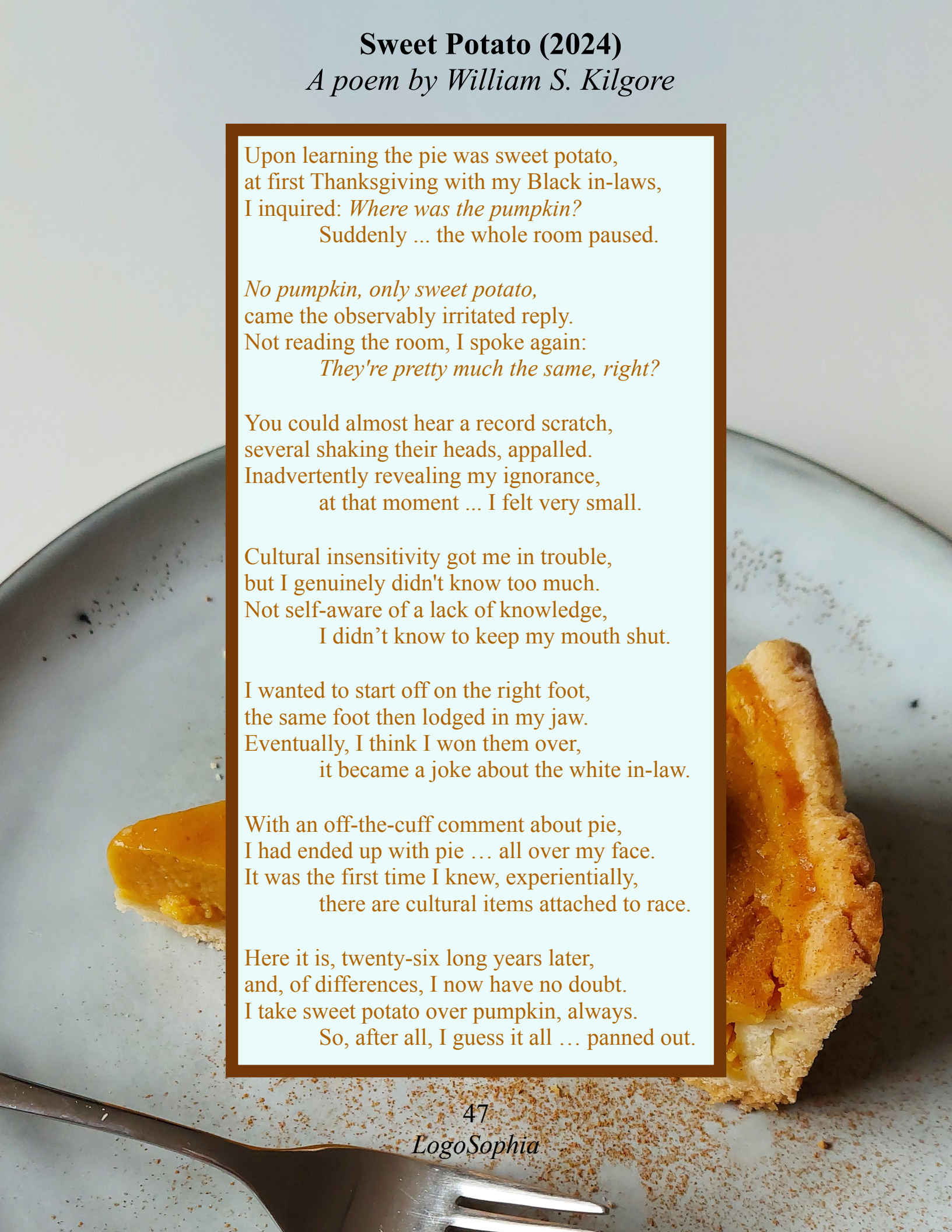
Sweet Potato (2024)

A poem by William S. Kilgore



Upon learning the pie was sweet potato,
at first Thanksgiving with my Black in-laws,
I inquired: *Where was the pumpkin?*
Suddenly ... the whole room paused.

No pumpkin, only sweet potato,
came the observably irritated reply.
Not reading the room, I spoke again:
They're pretty much the same, right?

You could almost hear a record scratch,
several shaking their heads, appalled.
Inadvertently revealing my ignorance,
at that moment ... I felt very small.

Cultural insensitivity got me in trouble,
but I genuinely didn't know too much.
Not self-aware of a lack of knowledge,
I didn't know to keep my mouth shut.

I wanted to start off on the right foot,
the same foot then lodged in my jaw.
Eventually, I think I won them over,
it became a joke about the white in-law.

With an off-the-cuff comment about pie,
I had ended up with pie … all over my face.
It was the first time I knew, experientially,
there are cultural items attached to race.

Here it is, twenty-six long years later,
and, of differences, I now have no doubt.
I take sweet potato over pumpkin, always.
So, after all, I guess it all … panned out.

Restoring Relationships with your Parents

By Jim Wilson



Honor your father and your mother, so that you may live long in the land the Lord your God is giving you. (Exod. 20:12)

Our country is full of broken families. Whether you are a Christian or not, from a hurting family or a whole one, God calls you to honor your parents. The apostle Paul tells us this "is the first commandment with a promise—'so that it may go well with you and that you may enjoy long life on the earth'" (Gal. 6:2-3).

Your relationship with your parents affects your relationships with your spouse and children. If you are not yet married, a good way to prepare for those future relationships is to reestablish a good relationship with your parents. The Ten Commandments give us two statements that relate to this. The first is the Exodus quote above. Here is the second:

> You shall not make for yourself an idol in the form of anything in heaven above or on the earth beneath or in the waters below…for I, the Lord your God, am a jealous God, punishing the children for the sin of the fathers to the third and fourth generation of those who hate me, but showing love to thousands who love me and keep my commandments. (Deut. 5:8–10)

God says that He will punish children for the sins of the fathers to the third and fourth generation. People have stumbled and troubled over this for a long time. How can a just God punish you for someone else's sin? The answer is that He does not.

> Yet you ask, "Why does the son not share the guilt of his father?" Since the son has done what is just and right and has been careful to keep all my decrees, he will surely live. The soul who sins is the one who will die. The son will not share the guilt of the father, nor will the father share the guilt of the son. The righteousness of the righteous man will be credited to him, and the wickedness of the wicked will be charged against him. (Ezek. 18:19–20)

God does not hold great-grandchildren responsible for what their great-grandfather did. Ezekiel says very clearly, "The soul that sins shall die" (v. 20). The person who is in sin is the one who will be held accountable.

What Deuteronomy *is* saying is that sin flows downhill—for generations. Look at your parents and grandparents. Can you see how you are affected by the things your parents did, and how they were affected by your grandparents? The sin of our ancestors affects us. This is generational bad news.

However, the sentence in Deuteronomy does not end with verse 9. It continues with something wonderful: "But showing love to thousands who love me and keep my commandments" (Deut. 5:10). God punishes the children for three and four generations, but He shows love to *thousands*—not just thousands of people, but *thousands of generations*. "Know therefore that the Lord your God is God; he is the faithful God, keeping his covenant of love to *a thousand generations* of those who love him and keep his commandments" (Deut. 7:9). Sin and hatred of God cause downward movement to three or four generations, and obedience and love of God cause upward movement to a thousand generations.

How do we turn our lives from three and four generations going downhill to a thousand generations going uphill? If you are part of a broken family, the solution seems obvious: get converted, leave home, and marry a Christian. That should turn it around, because you are not going to do life the way your parents did, right? You are going to love God and obey Him.

Certainly, a major part of the solution is to become a Christian, keep God's commandments, and marry a Christian who also keeps His commandments. You *must* do those things. Without them, you can expect more bad generations.

However, these actions alone bring no automatic guarantee of halting the curse. We still have the descending promise of three and four generations, and leaving to establish a new home does not change that. Even if you have no contact with your parents, you carry the effects of those relationships with you into your marriage. I have heard this many times: "I decided I was not going to be the kind of father (or mother) who raised me. I would become a Christian, marry a Christian, and do it right. I became a Christian, married a Christian, and I am still doing it wrong, just like my parents."

Leaving your parents is not the answer. What you need to do is to *reestablish relationships with your parents*. When you get married, you will have children, and those children are going to need grandparents. If you are estranged from your parents, your children will be deprived of a very important part of their growth. They need grandparents; they need aunts and uncles; they need cousins. The entire family is important. In fact, the family is *even more* important than the church. God created the family first. Of course, the best family is a Christian family, but your own extended family is what God speaks of and gives examples of in the Scripture.

My family holds regular reunions. The year my mother was eighty-four, her six sons, their wives, their children, and their grandchildren all met for a reunion in Moscow, Idaho. To see how all the children and grandchildren got along with each other was great. It was a wonderful time. Every family needs this.

If you are in the second or third bad-news generation, it is possible to turn the descent around now. But unless you change your relationship with your parents and grandparents, you will have to wait two more generations. (And preaching the gospel to your parents does not change the relationship. It needs to be repaired first.)

About 400 years before Christ, the prophet Malachi gave a negative conditional prophecy: "See, I will send you the prophet Elijah before the great and dreadful day of the Lord comes. He will turn the hearts of the fathers to their children, and the hearts of the children to their fathers; or else I will come and strike the land with a curse" (Mal. 4:5-6). Notice that to stop the curse from happening, hearts must be turned both ways. Unless you do this, you are asking for another generation of bad news. You cannot expect to be a good husband or a good father, a good wife or a good mother, if you have not turned your heart to your own father and mother.

Because we have not obeyed God's command to honor our parents, we may be in the third- and fourth-generation promise, and we will not live long on the earth (cf. Eph. 6:1-3). The Malachi text is a call to repentance, a turnaround of the heart.

We can turn our family around by obeying what the Ten Commandments tell us: *Honor your father and your mother* (Exod. 20:12). We are promised that a thousand generations of blessing come from keeping God's commandments, and this is one of them. If you want to turn the flow around, this is primary.

How do you honor parents who are not honorable? You may have parents who are divorced. You may have a father who left home before you were born, and you don't even know him. You try to get in touch with him, and he does not want to know you. How do you honor someone you don't know? How do you honor someone who is an alcoholic, mistreats his wife, or mistreats his children?

The Scripture says to honor your father and mother because they are your father and mother, *not* because they are honorable. When God tells us to love our enemies, does He mean that our enemy is lovely? Does he have to *deserve* love? No. Love is based upon the person who does the loving. Likewise, honor has to do with the person doing the honoring, not the person being honored.

Do you know any children who have been mistreated at home? How do they act in school? Poorly. On the other hand, if children are treated with respect at home, how do they act in school? Generally, they do well. If you want to make someone *unrespectable*, treat them with no respect. The opposite is true as well. Just as love makes people lovely, respect causes them to be respectable. As Christians, we do not honor, love, and respect people because they deserve it; we do it because they *need* it. Fathers and mothers need it. "No, they've got to earn my respect first." No, they don't. If you want to turn your family around, then *you* obey God: honor your father and your mother. If you have not honored them, confess that as sin first and then choose to honor them.

Here are some suggestions for how to go about either reestablishing relationships with your parents or making existing relationships better.

First, write two letters home. Do not write, "Dear Mom and Dad." If you write that, who answers the letter? Mom. Dads are illiterate when it comes to answering letters. In many cases, the father thinks that any communication is between mom and the kids. He doesn't think *he* ever gets a letter, even if it is addressed to both Mom and Dad. So, write a letter to your father and a separate one to your mother. Make them very clearly separate. Put on the outside "Dad Only," "Mom Only." (Yes, I am suggesting sending actual letters in the mail. It will mean more than an email.)

When you write to your father, include at least five things. I recommend covering one element per paragraph as follows

1. Tell your father how much you respect him. If you do not respect him, do not write the letter until you do respect him. You must not be hypocritical. But not respecting your father is not one of your options. How can you do it?

First, confess this disrespect for your father to God. Your father is to be honored because he is your father. God has commanded you to honor him. It is not optional. If you do not honor him, then you have sinned. The same is true with your mother. Sin is forgivable, and repentance is required.

Now with freedom and sincerity, write to your father how much you respect him. If he is not respectable, make sure you are not being dishonest. It would be a lie if you said, "I respect you for divorcing Mom, for being a drunk, for…" No. Don't respect him for anything other than being your father. "I respect you as my father."

2. Tell him how much you love him. If you do not love him, that has to be corrected first. You might object that you would have loved him if he had loved you first, but he didn't. That may be true, and he *should* have loved you first. As a father, he should have loved you so that your natural response would have been a loving one. But we cannot go back to childhood and start over. Even if we could, that does not guarantee that your father would do it any different the second time. We address the problem from where we are, not from where we should be.

One of the reasons your father didn't love you may be because *he* had never been loved. If you had to answer for your father, would he say that his father loved him? I have asked many college students this over the years. The answer I usually get is, "No, his dad didn't love him. He's told me all the fights they had." Next, would he say that his wife loves him? "No, mom doesn't love him." Would he say that his children love him? "No, he doesn't think his kids love him." Would he say that God loves him? "He doesn't know God; he's not a Christian."

Do you mean to tell me that your father doesn't think God loves him, his father loved him, his wife loves him, or his children love him? And you wonder why he drinks too much! He sees that everyone who should be close to him does not love him.

"His perception is wrong. We *do* love him, and God loves him."

That's not what I asked. Does he *think* that you all love him? No.

So here we have a person who *couldn't* love you first because he has never been loved. He doesn't know *how* to love.

I used to ask this question when speaking to a crowd: "How many of you know that your parents love you?" Ninety-five percent would raise their hand.

If you have previously been rebellious towards your parents, there is one more element you should add at the beginning of your letters. First, you must confess to God your rebellion to your father or mother, and now also confess it to your earthly father in this letter, with no excuses or accusations.

Then I would ask, "How many of you think they expressed it to you adequately?" Only half of those hands would stay up.

"Of those who think it was expressed adequately, how many could have used more love?" Everybody's hands stayed up. *Nobody* gets enough love at home, even when love is there.

You are now an adult, and as a Christian you have unlimited access to love and forgiveness—a love that your family does not have if they are not Christians. If you are waiting for them to love you first, you've got it backwards. *You* are now the source of love for your family. Straighten out your unlove for your parents with God. Is it sin? Yes. It is disobedience to the command of God. We have been commanded to love our neighbors, love our brothers, and love our enemies. Your father fits into one of those categories. Confess this lack of love to God and forsake it. After you have confessed and have been forgiven, choose to love your father. This love requires expression, so tell him in this paragraph.

3. Tell your father how grateful you are to him. You may be grateful for a lot of things. Enumerate them. Or you might have to go back to preschool days to think of something. Think of it and thank him. Go back to some nostalgia; tell him how much you appreciated sitting on his lap when you were three, or the fishing trip you had that one time. If you are not grateful, then as with respect and love, it is your problem, not his. The procedure is the same. Confess your unthankfulness to God. When you are forgiven, express your thankfulness to your father.

After I had been teaching this for years, I wrote a letter to my mother. (My father had already passed away.) Most of it was just news, but I put in one last sentence of gratitude and praise to her, and she called on the telephone to talk to me about it. Nobody gets enough! Start expressing respect, love, and thankfulness.

These elements are necessary and required. The next two are suggestions for further ways to convey respect.

4. Ask your father for his autobiography. He probably won't write one, but he will be glad that you want to know about him. If you live near your parents, you can ask your dad for this in person. One young woman whose parents lived in the same town asked her father for his autobiography, and that man who is normally extremely quiet talked for four hours. She asked, and he was so glad to be asked.

5. Ask your father for advice, in general and on specific matters. This is part of honor. Has he given you advice before, and you didn't like it? Unsolicited advice is generally much rougher than requested advice. It is rougher on you because you didn't want it, and it is *given* rougher because you didn't want it. But when you request advice, the person is usually more considerate, more thoughtful, and the advice will be better.

Ask for counsel, and be open to it. You might be surprised at the advice you get. There are very few parents who are not concerned about the direction their children go and what they do. You might find that they were just waiting to be asked, and they will be considerate.

Of course, sometimes the people I speak with acknowledge that they don't love their father and that their mother hates him.

If you are still single, this is especially important regarding anyone you are dating. Ask your father what he thinks of this guy/girl. You may hear things you don't want to hear. When you do, you had better listen. Even if your father is not a Christian, he's been around a while. His answers may be sheer prejudice, but likely they are not. He knows you, and he knows people, so pay attention. If he dislikes the person you are going with, go slow. Even if this man or woman is absolutely right for you and you both know it, it is not right until your parents *also* know it. It is wise to go slow even if you are right and they are wrong.

Some parents will say it doesn't make any difference to them what you do, and you should just do what you want. Don't believe them! They think that is the proper thing to say because you are an adult. Ask them, "*If* you were going to give me advice, what would you want me to do?" If they still don't give you advice, but you know your parents well enough to figure out what they think, pay attention to that, even if they are not willing to tell you outright.

Your father may not answer the letter you have written him, but he will almost certainly read it more than once, and he will not throw it away. If you have Christian siblings, tell them what you are doing and encourage them to do the same thing.

Next, write the same kind of letter to your mother, but with one change. The first paragraph should express your love to her, and the second paragraph should communicate your respect. Both sexes of the human race need love and respect. But of the two, women need love more than they need respect, and men need respect more than they need love. Tell your mother how much you love her; then tell her how much you respect her. The rest of the letter can follow the same pattern as the letter to your father.

As much as possible, follow up on the letters by *spending time with your parents*. Show them with your attention that they are valuable to you. When you go home, express affection to your parents physically. Don't do the polite hug. Get into it. Really give them a squeeze. Maybe even a kiss! Just rock the old man. Surprise your mom.

You may receive a favorable response to your letters. If you do not receive a response, do not think that you did something wrong. Be patient and keep on giving. Some cultures (e.g. those of Northern Europe) are not expressive with their emotions, except for lost tempers. This kind of expression from you may be embarrassing for your parents. But they still want and need to receive this expressed love, even if they do not know how to return it.

If your parents are still alive, it's not too late to do this. One man I know who is in his late fifties wrote this kind of letter to his father. His mother replied, "I have been married to your father for sixty years. When he read your letter, that was the first time in our marriage I saw tears in his eyes."

Some years ago, my wife Bessie and I held a summer school of practical Christianity at the Delta House of the University of Idaho. Respect for parents was one of the subjects. About forty students attended. Because the class was big, I did not get to know everyone well and did not know the effect of the teaching.

The confession must be done first—you cannot obey on top of accumulated disobedience. Once you are clean, you can choose to obey this command, with God's help.

The following fall, I was teaching the same subject again at a nearby university, and one of the students spoke up. “I heard this at the Delta House last summer, and I took action,” he said. “When I was sixteen, my father kicked me out of the house and told me he would never see me again. Later, I became a Christian and married a Christian woman, and now I am a graduate student in economics. I had never seen my father since he kicked me out of the house. This summer, I wrote two letters, one to my father, and one to my mother. I didn’t know it, but my parents were on the brink of divorce, living in separate bedrooms at home in North Dakota.

“It took me several days to write each letter, so I sent them a few days apart—but the letters arrived on the same day, and both my parents were home when the mail came. My mother took her letter to her room, and my father took his letter to his room. After reading them, they came out and traded letters, and went back to their rooms to read the other letter. When they came out the second time, my father had tears in his eyes. He told my mother, ‘I’m flying out to Pullman to see my son.’”

He had seen his father between the summer school and the fall Bible study. It saved his parents’ marriage.

Another student who had recently graduated told me of the awful relationship he had with his father, and I made this suggestion of writing letters. Some months later, when I was speaking to another group on this subject, he spoke up. “Jim told me to do this several months ago, but I wasn’t going to. I *hated* my father. In fact, one day I was going to write to tell him what I really thought of him and what a lousy father he had been. I had the entire letter in my head. But when I sat down to write, instead of that letter, I wrote the kind that Jim told me. My father got the letter, and he came down from Spokane immediately to see me. He’s dying now, and I read the Scripture to him by his bedside.” It reestablished the relationship.

If you already have a good relationship with your parents, go ahead and write these letters anyway. It won’t hurt. One young man I know did this, and a few weeks later, he told me he had gotten a letter back from his dad. I asked him what it said. “My father said that he wrote a letter like this to *his* father when he was my age, and, boy, was it good to get one from me!” That is your thousand generations, when you do it right.

What do you do with disappointment? Another student wrote two letters to her mom, the first about love and respect, and a second one later asking for advice. The mother’s response to the first letter was, “Why are you being so soupy?” and the second reply was in anger: “Why do you need this information?”

You can expect questions like this the first time around—so send more than one letter. Likewise, if you come from a family that never hugs, the first time you hug your father, he’ll stand there like a fencepost. It will be awkward. *Keep doing it.* Hug him when you get home, but also, when you’re at home, hug him every time he walks by.

This might make him ask, “What’s your angle?” or “What is this going to cost me?”

Say, “Dad, do you really want to know? If you buy me lunch, I’ll tell you.” Get together with him. Rather than being disappointed at his response, consider those questions an opportunity to do more.

Tell him, "Dad, here is why I'm doing this. I know you love me very much, but I have had to take it by faith. You have not been the best expresser of your love. So, growing up I did not think you loved me. You fed and clothed and housed me and sent me off to school. I know that is love, but there's more to love than that, and I have needed more. You wondered why I got in trouble in high school and college. It's because I needed more affection than you were giving me. I was looking for the male affection I was missing at home. I don't think you would want me to get it somewhere else now. I still need my father, and you need me, so I thought I'd come home and prime the pump."

Here is a very important caveat: if you tell your parents that you are giving them affection because you did not get enough growing up, be careful not to say it in an *accusative* fashion. What makes the difference is your attitude, your heart, and your manner of speech. Don't say, "Dad, you never loved me." Say, "*I know you love me.* And I love you. But I didn't always know that, and now I want to cause more love." Say it in a helpful way. Some people will still take it accusatively, but if you keep giving affection, they will learn better.

You do not need to become a constant hugger if that is not your nature, but you should go to the limits of your normal means of expression, which is probably far more than your parents have been getting, and they do need it. If you keep on giving affection after the questions you get back, you will soften your parents. In a matter of weeks, months, or years (the timeline varies with different people), you will see a real turnaround. Be patient, and keep on showing love.

There are two problems to take care of in your relationship with your parents—the heart problem and the action problem. The heart problem is first. Only a true repentance of heart will 1) stop the curse, 2) cause long life, and 3) turn the three or four generations of bad news around to a thousand generations of good news. Your own unlove, your disrespect, and your ingratitude towards your parents have to be taken care of in repentance toward God. To write these letters without being forgiven by God only ensures that your letters will be insincere and hypocritical. You may have a long wait if you wait for your father to turn to you first. You cannot afford the wait, so get right with God now. After you are clean, write the letters. Then continue writing, calling, texting, and visiting your parents, expressing respect, love, and thankfulness.

Doing these things will change you. You will become a better husband, son, and father, or a better wife, daughter, and mother. Your love and obedience will bring love for a thousand generations.

Restoring Relationships with your Parents

By Jim Wilson

The University of Granddaddy

By Lawrence "Mack in Texas" Hall





In Memoriam

BY AMANDA PIZZOLATTO

Every Memorial Day weekend, my grandma's side of the family has a family reunion. While we haven't gone every year, in the years that we have gone, I couldn't help but notice the dwindling numbers. There have been a couple of people who have passed away, but the numbers I'm referring to are the people who it seems just aren't showing up anymore. Many probably just couldn't make it this year, but it did make me think of what seems like a growing trend of people forgoing family reunions for one reason or another when they just don't want to go. Many might ask, what's the purpose of going? I ask, what's the purpose of not going? What is it that you don't like about family reunions? The family fights? Hearing the stories from the old days? Realizing you're getting older year after year? Though, birthdays should be doing that for you if that's the case. Or is it knowing that, one day, you will be the oldest member of the family, with the stories of the old days, wanting to see everyone as much as possible, knowing your end is near?

But if that is the case, then it becomes your duty to gather those family stories and pass them down, as they have been done, from generation to generation. It is how history is told, how it is remembered. The people part of that history is most likely no longer with us, but that doesn't mean they were any less alive than you or I. Why should they be forgotten? It is how we got here. The past was alive so the present can live and the future will be born. We cannot forget those who paved the way for us to be here.

"Let the past die. Kill it, if you have to." A rather controversial line from *The Last Jedi*, one often quoted enough in regards to many things from the past. While it can be argued that, since it was a villain who said this, it is a flawed thought process, one can't quite deny the almost vitriolic disdain many writers seem to have for once popular IPs, the stories and heroes of the past. Are there problems that occurred in the past? Absolutely, but to sweep them under the rug does a disservice to all as the lessons to be learned can no longer be learned, and will be repeated. Hence the phrase, "those who do not remember the past are doomed to repeat it."

A different movie, *The Lorax* (2012), does tackle this, as the main character must learn about the mistakes of the past and figure out how to right things. By listening to the story of the Onceler, the main character returns to the town with the remedy and the town sings "Let It Grow," wanting the trees to return to their town. But it is by listening to the stories of old that he comes across the solution to the problem. Granted, not every story you hear will have the solution, but you never know which one will point you in the right direction. After all, sometimes, a listening ear is all that is needed.

The elderly man walks through the museum, his grandson holding on tight to his hand. They pass by several old movie posters, the museum showcasing several movies from the years of 1980 to 2005. A scene from one movie is playing and when the man sees it, bursts out laughing.

The little boy looks at him inquisitively. "What is it, grandpa?"

"Oh, see that movie up there? We thought we were going to have hoverboards by the year 2015!"

"Don't you mean this year?"

"No, 2015, not 2050. See, he goes into the future of his own life to protect his son."

"Oh. But why?"

He chuckled. "I think I'll just ask your parents if we can show you the movie. It's a classic. It's about time you saw that, as well as several other movies shown here."

The boy points to a poster of *The Lord of the Rings*. "Like that?"

"You might be a bit young for that one in particular, but eventually, yes, you will see it."

He began to bounce. "I can't wait!"



His grandpa chuckled. "I'm sure you can't. But first, we need to catch up. And then we'll go to the party."

The boy frowned. "Why? What's so important about it?"

"You'll see." The elderly man just smiled. Yes, it was just another family reunion, but he had been looking forward to it all year. He got to see everyone yet again. Age was catching up to him and he wasn't quite sure just how much longer he had, so he wanted to spend every minute he could with his family. Oh, they had their spats, but his wife usually got them under control by the time the reunion actually happened and they would always leave laughing, wondering what they had even fought about. He could hear their chatter as they went around the corner, talking about the old movies they liked, movies he had introduced to them as he enjoyed it.

He smiled at his wife when she caught his eye. This was a good idea, finding common ground. Hopefully it was all up from there.

"The past was alive so the present can live and the future will be born. We cannot forget those who paved the way for us to be here."
- Amanda Pizzolatto

Miss Carrie

A poem by William S. Kilgore

That little house on Main Street,
a monument to a saint.
You occupied as long as you could,
not one of us left the same.

It's been handed to a new generation,
kept inside the family still.
Yet many continue to see it as yours,
and we likely always will.

...

I was there that day at your party.
Turning seventy, visibly thrilled.
Counting the years a blessing,
yet happy with whatever He willed.

God had yet more life to grant you.
More years, a decade and some change.
But I could tell you knew it was coming,
as you approached your final days.

Enjoying your time and using your gifts,
you made a spot in Texas a better place.
So many came through for the hospitality,
you always making the time and the space.

Meals cooked in your kitchen were legendary,
some of the best food I ever tasted.
Married to your daughter all these years,
I can assure you: that gift wasn't wasted.

You had to know you'd be sorely missed.
I could almost hear angelic hosts sing.
I hope all heard what you so often repeated:
that you had found the One True King.
...

I remember when you passed on …
I held it together, support for my wife.
Then, one day, I saw some pig's feet on sale,
the kind I used to buy for you sometimes.

That was some months after your death.

I picked up the pig's feet from the meat section, and I ...
... *I burst into tears*.

No doubt, the shoppers around me thought I was crazy,
holding pig's feet and crying.

I wasn't. I was just incredibly ...

sad.

...

Miss Carrie made a little spot in Texas a better place, and anyone who knew her knows this.

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* Title: This poem is dedicated to the memory of the greatest mother-in-law anyone could ever hope for, Carrie McKenzie (1938-2020).

Controversy Corner

How does your denomination celebrate Pentecost?

What is Controversy Corner?

Controversy Corner is the section of LogoSophia Magazine where people of different faith traditions discuss controversial topics in a succinct manner.

If you would like to submit a topic for discussion, please let us know!

Don't see your denomination represented? Help us fix that! We're always looking for new writers.

Disagree with the representative of your denomination? Write in and tell us why in a respectful manner, and we'll publish it...

in our next magazine under "Letters to the Editor & Comments"!

For these and any other questions, email us at Editors.LogoSophia@gmail.com.

Confessional Lutheran

represented by Shay McNally

For For Confessional Lutherans, Pentecost is the joyful celebration of the Holy Spirit's descent upon the apostles and what's essentially the birth of the Church. The readings center on Acts 2, where the Spirit bestows the miraculous ability to preach Christ to all nations, in many languages, so that everyone can hear "the mighty works of God."

It's also a rather visually unusual day for us, because the color of our paraments and pastoral vestments is red to signify the tongues of fire, the Spirit's power, and the bold confession of God's Word. Outside of Pentecost, red is only ever reserved for special occasions, such as Reformation Sunday or the installation of a new pastor.

CREC Presbyterian

represented by Deborah Robertson

For the celebration of Pentecost one of our church families throws a "Pentecost party" at their home, it is a greatly looked forward to liturgical social event. During the Sunday service it's wonderful to see how many of the congregants come together decked in the liturgical reds of Pentecost. I enjoy the visual element of this day. During the service as well the hymns are focused on the Spirit and doves.

Roman Catholic

represented by Sarah Losardo

Pentecost (from Latin pent: five) began as a Jewish feast fifty days after the Passover, the Feast of Weeks. It was on this feast that the Holy Spirit came down upon the apostles. Most Catholic churches celebrate it the same as a normal Sunday Mass, but there is a less-used Extended Form Vigil that has four Old Testament readings (as opposed to one), each followed by a Psalm and a prayer, then the New Testament reading and the Gospel. After the readings, Mass continues as usual. Hymns and songs tend to be very Holy Spirit based. Another time we celebrate the Holy Spirit is during the sacrament of Confirmation, typically celebrated once a year per parish, when the Bishop calls down the Holy Spirit upon those who are receiving the sacrament (typically students).



Author Interview With...

Sophia Bricker



LSM: Tell us a little bit about yourself, Sophia.

My name is Sophia Bricker, and I'm a writer. I have written for multiple different publications. I've written for different sites on Salem Web Network for their faith side of the website. I've also written for devotionals including Unlocked, The Upper Room, The Secret Place, and this year I had a short story published called *What Grows In Cursed Ground*. And so I have a mixture of nonfiction and fiction, articles, and stories that I write.

S. B.

LSM: Why do you write?

Why do I write? That was a question that I was thinking about. First I would say that I write because I enjoy it. There's something just satisfying about sitting down and thinking about a certain topic, and then being able to express my thoughts on that topic. From a very young age, I really enjoyed writing.

Author Interview

Sophia Bricker

Whenever I was a kid, I started writing stories based on movies that I had seen. I once did a Harry Potter spinoff, but it was just like Harry Potter, just with a girl protagonist. And then later I did a spinoff of Alice in Wonderland. As a teenager I started my own newsletter. So yeah, I've just always really enjoyed writing. I would say that another reason I write is more so because I see it as a vocation; like, as a calling. Not in the sense I've heard God tell me directly, you know, that I should write, but that I believe that this is something that He has equipped me to do. And so I see it as to be a good steward to use those skills that He has given me to serve Him.



LSM: What helps you write? Music, reading, a specific pen...?

So I would say that something that helps me to write is music. Mainly because it helps me to stay focused when I'm writing, 'cause it's so easy to get distracted, especially in this technological age that we're in.

Author Interview

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I mainly like to play instrumental music whenever I'm writing — that could be classical music or sometimes I just do piano music or fantasy-themed music, depending on what I'm writing. It helps me to stay focused and oftentimes it can also get me into the realm of the story or more so the thinking space of that. And then of course, having an idea for what I'm writing or a plan, like an outline. Those things can really help me whenever I'm working on a project so that I know what I'm doing.



LSM: What has writing taught you?

This was an interesting question. First I would say that in the act of writing, I'm willing to pay more attention to words – of course, reading has done that for me too – but writing forces me to think about what I'm saying, what I want to say and how I'm going to say it.

Sophia Bricker

So for me, as someone who has struggled with social anxiety and shyness for most of my life, writing really gives me an avenue to be able to express my thoughts in a way that allows me to have the time and the moment to think about what I'm going to say, which I think I do better with than with in-person communication, at least at this period of my life. I think I relate a lot to where the Apostle Paul, he says that the people found him weighty in his letters, but not as impressive in person. That really resonates with me. Something else that writing has taught me has been where I have more time to think about things that God is teaching me. So when I write, especially for my nonfiction writing, I get to slow down and think more about the passage and more of what the themes and concepts are in that passage. So I think that by trying to help other people understand aspects of the Bible has also helped me to better understand those different aspects.

LSM: You mentioned relating to St. Paul. Who are you inspired by in your writing?

Author Interview

Sophia Bricker

So of course, I would say God inspires me in my writing, because of course, He's the ultimate Author of everything, He was writing our story. I would also say that my mom also has inspired me. Growing up she always encouraged me in my writing. More recently I would say she encourages, she inspires me in a different way because so much of my writing nowadays centers around themes of grief and loss, which comes from where I lost my mom when I was 19. I have a lot of writing that kind of centers around that with grief and loss, and also the hope that can come despite the darkness that we encounter.



I would also say that I am inspired by other authors. I really like J.R.R. Tolkien, C.S. Lewis, Andrew Peterson, Sarah Clarkson, George McDonald, L.M. Montgomery, Michael Morpurgo – all of them really inspire me, especially when I read their works I want to write and also to write in a way that is the best I can.

Sophia Bricker

In my own writing, some of the characters that I've written, they have inspired me. So one of the ones that stands out to me is Bridget from my intended debut novel *The Mountain Pass Keeper*. She's a woman in the story and she's been held in captivity for a long time, and she is a healer, so what a modern-day doctor or nurse would be. She continues to fight for hope even though she's in such a terrible situation. And to me, I think that's very powerful because it takes courage to have hope, and it takes courage to also offer that hope to others. I would say that she inspires me too.

LSM: Do you go back and reread your writing after it's been completed?

That one's a hard one, because of course in the editing stages I will go through and I will read what I've written of course for different drafts and multiple drafts as I'm working on projects, whether that's a book or articles. But when something has been published and it's on a website or has been printed and I'm holding it in my hand like a devotional, I'm not really one to like to look at it because I think I'm going to critique it because I'm going to say that, "Oh, well I could have done this better," or I could improve upon it.

So I think sometimes it's better for me just to leave it alone and trust that it's good enough – that readers will be able to still take something from it instead of me just like going back over it, 'cause it's just gonna make me stressed because I see something wrong with it.



LSM: Trusting that by the grace of God you got that far.

Yes.

LSM: What is your advice to writers?

My first thing would be what most people would offer, is to read. But I would go a little bit farther to say that you should read widely. So you should read beyond just the genre that you're wanting to write in. I think it's very easy for us, especially with the different advice and things that we hear, whether that's in articles or in a MFA program, is that you should know your genre. But I think there also is a benefit of reading widely so that you get exposure to a lot of different literature, of different forms, also different forms of stories.

Sophia Bricker

For me, I found that helpful that my MFA program wasn't just centered on one realm of writing. So I got exposed to fiction, nonfiction, poetry, and screenwriting. And you might think that those things are unrelated, but they are actually related – they can actually help you become a better writer, even if you are just doing one specific genre. I don't think we need to miss out on what older books can offer us because that is really what modern literature is built upon.

My other piece of advice is to be prepared for rejection. That's just going to happen in any sort of art form that you participate in, because people have different views on what is good and what is bad, and that's subjective. However, just because a story is rejected or a piece of writing is rejected does not mean it is bad or worthless. Sometimes it needs revision or greater work, but sometimes we just have to keep going with it. We just have to keep pursuing that publication or that article because we know it has merit in it. And also if we consider history, lots of the people that we admire as authors also faced a great amount of rejection. I think of L.M. Montgomery with *Anne of Green Gables*. She went through a hard time trying to get that book published. But now we see it as a classic, and so I think that that shows a lot of her own endurance in continuing on despite being initially rejected.

Author Interview

Sophia Bricker

Keep writing, keep submitting your work, and keep believing in your work and that it has worth and purpose.

Sophia Bricker is a writer with a passion for good, true, and beautiful stories that honor Christ.

Her work has appeared on websites and in various publications, including Christ and Pop Culture, The Curator, Unlocked, and The Upper Room. When she is not writing, she enjoys reading, gardening, and listening to music.

Those interested in her work can visit her Substack,

The Cross, a Pen, and a Page, https://thecrosspenandpage.substack.com/ , or visit Cultivate where

she writes with her sister, https://cultivatechristianity.wordpress.com/ .



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Further Reading

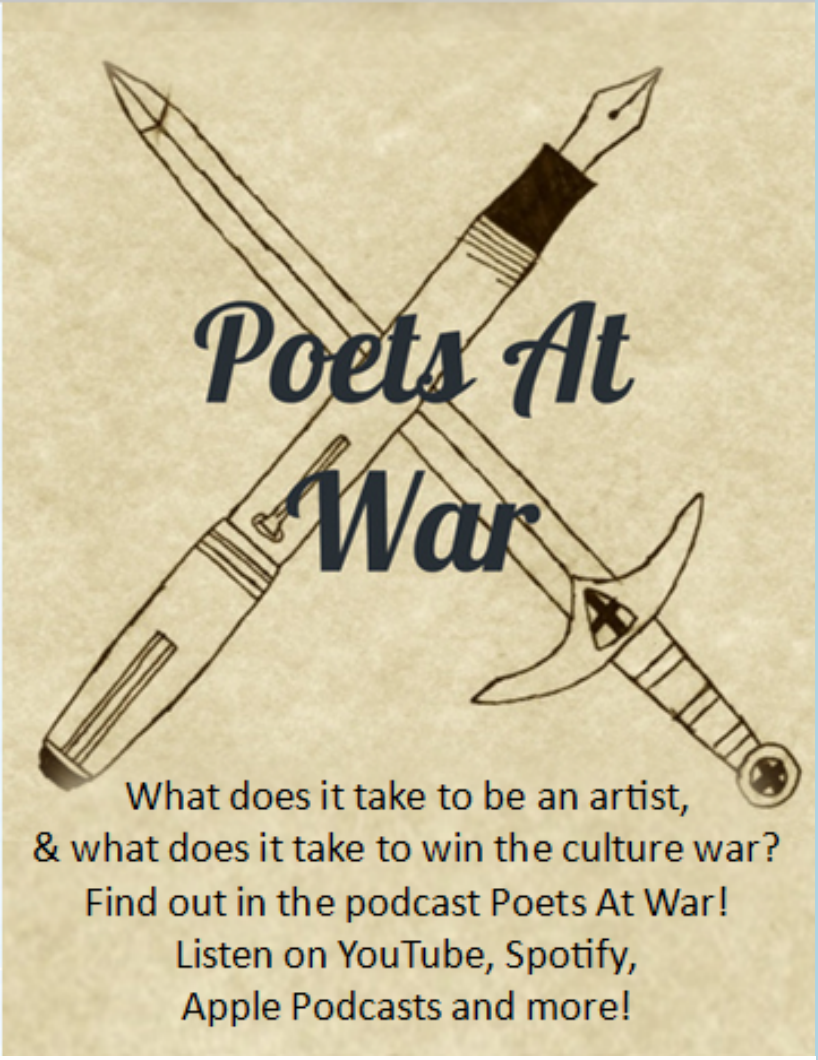
In-Laws & Extended Family

In-Laws: Married with Parents (Resources for Biblical Living) by Wayne A. Mack

Making Room for Her: Biblical Wisdom for a Healthier Relationship with your Mother-In-Law or Daughter-In-Law by Barbara Reaoch and Stacy Reaoch

Grandparenting books from Focus on the Family

suggestions by Deborah Robertson



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Bible Trivia!

1. The relative Mary visits while pregnant with Jesus was named…
A) Sarah
B) Rachel
C) Elizabeth
D) Hagar

2. True or False: **Ruth was Naomi's only daughter in law.**

3. Mordecai was what relation to Esther?
A) Uncle
B) Brother-in-law
C) Cousin
D) Step sibling

4. In Genesis Tamar seduces her father-in-law, Judah, for what reason?
A) For funsies
B) She had not been given the husband promised to her
C) An evil spirit had overtaken her
D) A powerful army leader was forcing her

5. Ruth and Boaz's son Obed was the grandfather of which major Biblical figure?
A) David
B) Moses
C) Jesus
D) Noah

6. *True or False:* **David's father-in-law tried to kill him.**

7. Jesus healed the mother-in-law of which disciple?
A) James
B) John
C) Matthew
D) Peter

Bible Trivia Answers

1. C) Elizabeth (Luke 1:39)

Mary visits Elizabeth while Elizabeth is pregnant with John the Baptist, John jumps in Elizabeth's womb in the presence of Jesus.

2. False (Ruth 1:4)

Noami had two sons, Mahlon and Chilion, who both married Moabite women. The name of the other woman was Orpah, she chose to turn back and return to Moab when urged by Noami.

3. C) Cousin (Esther 2:5-7)

In Esther she listed as "the daughter of his [Mordecai's] uncle". Esther was orphaned and Mordecai took her in as his own daughter; so while their technical relationship is cousins, he fills a father role for Esther.

4. B) She had not been given the husband promised to her. (Genesis 38:6-26)

Tamar's first two husbands, Judah's sons, God had killed for their wickedness. Judah promised his third son to Tamar as a husband when the son had grown and then failed to fulfill that promise; due to Judah's neglect to provide the promised husband Tamar disguised herself, Judah mistook her for a prostitute and she conceived by Judah — bearing twins.

5. A) David (Ruth 4:21-22)

"Salmon fathered Boaz, Boaz fathered Obed, Obed fathered Jesse, and Jesse fathered David."

6. True (1 Samuel 18:9-11, 27)

Saul, the father of Michal, David's first wife, tried to kill him on multiple occasions.

7) D) Peter (Matthew 8:14-15).

Jesus heals Peter's mother-in-law, who was sick, whilst visiting with some of the disciples.

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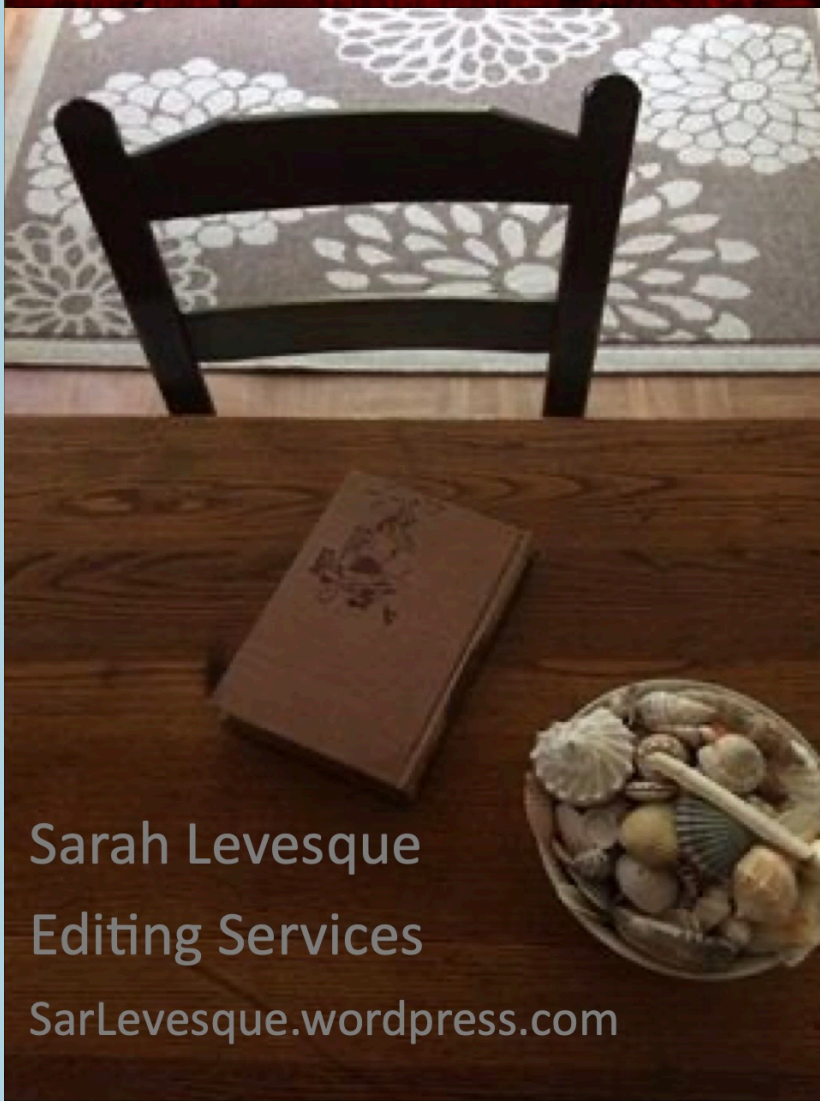



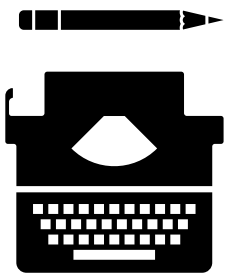

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— *Desmond Tutu*

Thanks for reading!

Until next issue