What a wonderful gift God gave us when He created family! In addition to our biological families, we have also been blessed with a family of friends, those special people who have become a part of our lives through various experiences, circumstances, and events. These people enter our lives and become a part of us, sharing our joys and sorrows, lending a helping hand or a listening ear. Recently, we had the privilege of taking my Mother to visit a friend of more than forty years. My mother and father, along with Gladys and her husband, vacationed together, worked together, and spent many hours walking, talking, and experiencing life together. Mother and Gladys were there to support one another through the loss of their husbands. Although separated by several states, they have kept in touch by writing and calling one another. Now, for the first time in fifteen years, they were face to face. Their smiles beamed through the tears, and their embrace told of the love and care they have for one
another. They recounted old stories and answered each other’s many questions. The joy they experienced and the realization that this would probably be the last time they would see each other brought a special embrace as they parted. I am so thankful we could make the journey together to see Gladys. As they were parting, my thoughts were taken to heaven where there will be no more parting, no more separation by circumstances or death. Let us treasure the moments we have with those who are so dear and prepare our hearts for the hereafter.

Alane Waters
Editor

Pause & Ponder.

“By perseverance the snail reached the ark.” Charles Haddon Spurgeon

"But without faith it is impossible to please him: for he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him.” Hebrews 11:6

Have you been blessed by Forever a Family?
Drop us a note—we would love to hear from you!

New Zealand
Just writing to say how much I appreciate the Forever a Family magazine. Every article is a gem. May God continue to bless you in this ministry.

Michigan
I just want to let you know how much your Forever a Family magazine has been a blessing to me.

Missouri
Hello! We HAVE been blessed by the magazine. Thank you so much for your efforts.
In our marriage, things are always changing: new job, new home, new environment, and new baby. Thus, we often find ourselves in a position to adapt. While change offers opportunity for growth, it can also cause couples to grow apart.

We have experienced most of these changes in our marriage many times over. We’ve lived in at least eight different locations, worked in multiple emergency rooms, lived parts of several years overseas, and had a baby. While we’ve built memories and grown together, not every change has been without stress on our relationship.

In the midst of these transitions, we realized an important factor in our growth together has not been the changes but the constants. One of these constants is prayer.

Every night after we crawl into bed, wherever we may be, no matter how tired we are, we have prayer together. It isn’t necessarily a long session, but it is an important closure to our day. This practice has benefited us in many ways.

For instance, if there is something between us that we’re upset about, it makes it hard to pray until the wrong has been made right. Not letting the sun go down on our wrath (Ephesians 4:26) is a practical biblical principle that leads to a stronger marriage.

Prayer also helps us to remember that no matter what our cares have been, we can cast them on our Savior, for He cares for us! (1 Peter 5:7) When we place ourselves in His hands together, we find unity in peace and trust. It is then we can rest in sweet sleep.

While nightly prayer is a tradition for us, we try to make sure we don’t just mumble something and roll over so that we’ve completed the ritual. That’s what the devil would like - to steal away the benefit and blessings of this special time together. We sometimes share a heavy burden with the Lord in prayer our spouse didn’t even know we carried. This gives us the opportunity to understand each other better and to help bear one another’s burdens. (Galatians 6:2)

Perhaps you’ve heard it said that the couple that prays together stays together. We couldn’t agree more!

Beaver and Rebecca are working on establishing a medical aviation project in Mongolia. Their 8-month-old daughter Zoe is the joy of their lives.
“Take therefore no thought for the morrow: for the morrow shall take thought for the things of itself. Sufficient unto the day is the evil thereof.” Matthew 6:34.

I have often pondered this text and have desired to practice this principle in my life.

No worrying about tomorrow! So many times I get caught up in being concerned about future events, how this or that will work out, how we will live and survive, etc.

I knew things had to change if I wanted the peace God has promised. So I began asking the Lord to help me focus on only the day at hand. If I started thinking about the future in an anxious way, I would remind myself, “That’s tomorrow’s burden.”

So often I have tried to solve all the problems of yesterday, today, and tomorrow and at the end of it all I am exhausted with thoughts of what if, maybe, and so on. In effect, a lot of my exhaustion has come from trials or problems that could come in the future and might never happen. Over time I have learned to put my entire trust in God, eliminating anxious thoughts or concerns for tomorrow.

We are only given today. Yesterday is a memory and must be left in the past. Tomorrow may never come to us. Today is the day in which we can live and work and plan.

Just recently I came across some interesting statistics listing what causes people anxiety. An average person’s anxiety stems from focusing on:

- things that will never happen - 40%
- things in the past that can’t be changed - 30%
- criticism by others, mostly untrue - 12%
- health, which gets worse with stress - 10%
- real problems that will be faced - 8%

Be encouraged that the events of tomorrow, though hidden from our view, are open to the eyes of our Omnipotent God, and that we can trust Him to care for any future needs.

Let us claim the promise found in Deuteronomy 33:25 “… as thy days, so shall thy strength be.”

Kym writes to us from Victoria, Australia, where she lives with her husband and daughter and works as an Administrative Officer.
Before my senior year in college, I was ready to get my own car. I was twenty years old and was done with not only having to borrow my parents’ van but also having to share it with my younger brother. Being a proud young man looking to impress my friends, I thought buying a new car was a no-brainer. At the same time, being an accounting major, I knew I had to look at my finances to determine what I could afford.

A $17,000 car would require about $2,000 down and approximately $300 a month for payments. I had saved enough money to afford a nice new car and would only have to make payments through my last year of school, but my bank account would be running low as the year came to an end. I would need a job right out of college to continue making payments. Was it a workable situation? Yes. Was it the most financially intelligent decision? No. After seeking advice from my parents and spending time in prayer, I decided to look for a less expensive car and save all I could.

About that time, a woman from my church was selling her car, a 1989 Honda CRX with 260,000 miles and an “I Love Bach” bumper sticker, for $300. At first, I thought there was no way I would drive a car like that my senior year of college and the years after when I would begin making my way in the business world. Eventually, the price and economical value of owning a vehicle that got 40+ miles to the gallon outweighed my pride. I ended up owning that car for three years before buying the new car I wanted. By overcoming my pride and making a wise financial decision, I saved over $12,000 in payments. I was able to save enough money to not only purchase a new car but also soon after to buy a home. This one decision taught me a great lesson in money management; you have to spend money on what is needed, but you need to be careful not to waste money on extras just to keep up with the world. This one decision has helped me to become financially sound and successful in these first years of adult life.

Jason and his wife Galina live in San Bernardino, CA where he works as a Supervising Auditor for San Bernardino County.
Have you ever had the frustration of looking for something and not finding it? When things are out of order it creates an atmosphere of unrest and irritation. This is why we are instructed in 1 Corinthians 14:40 to “Let all things be done decently and in order.”

Here are some simple suggestions to organize your space and enjoy the blessing of orderliness.

- Take one room at a time and begin cleaning every drawer, closet, and cupboard until everything is organized and in its own place. Throw out things you don’t need or want or set them aside for a garage sale or to take to a thrift store. Start with the smallest, least cluttered room in the house whether that is the bathroom, laundry room or a bedroom. Once we conquer one room we are more motivated to tackle the next.

- Keeping the organized room in order, tackle the next room and go through the same process until every room in the house is complete.

- Take only one thing out at a time and put it away before getting something else out. This will keep little things from becoming big messes when left out.

- Work together as a family. This makes it fun for all, gets the job done more quickly, and helps each family member know where things are.

- When you see something left out, pick it up and put it away: it will be quicker than waiting until several things pile up before you do something about it.

Remember Galatians 6:9, “Let us not be weary in well doing, for in due season we shall reap if we faint not.”

Alane is a co-founder of Restoration International and lives in Montana with her husband Tom.
As I was sitting in the lobby of the career counseling service, I watched as a bank of elevator doors opened to reveal a group of my former co-workers.

Observing these business people make their way to the area where I was seated, my mind was impressed that this was a group of highly skilled and talented individuals. It dawned on me that being laid off is not always about poor performance. Although a comforting thought, this realization did not change the fact that I was now looking for a job. This was not my first experience being between jobs (code for unemployed) but it was a first with a wife and two small children.

I had been praying about how my family could move out of the city. At the time losing my job was not easy to accept; but in looking back this was a direct answer to prayer. Our Heavenly Father knows just what we need, and He leads in ways we do not expect.

Being unemployed is stressful, and it is important to keep a positive attitude. I find it very easy to dwell on the negative; but by God’s grace, He is helping me to replace negative thoughts and feelings with trust and hope. As I exercise faith and trust in God’s word, fear of the future is replaced with confidence in God’s ability to supply all my needs.

When you are unemployed, you tend to have more time on your hands which results in more time for Bible study and prayer. Spending time with God is always important; but when life presents a difficult situation, I sense an increased need for God’s leading. While this dependence is a good thing, I do not like being in these types of situations. Therein lies the struggle. I have found there is a peace that comes into the soul when we cast all our cares on God and trust fully in His divine providential leading.

Within two months of being laid off, I found a job and moved my family from Texas to Mis-
It was good to have a job again, but the pay was 40% lower than my previous position. Over time my experience grew, and my compensation increased along with it. I became a more well-rounded accountant, and the experience gained in this new position has been invaluable. In looking back, I can see the Lord’s leading, and the challenge I now have is to see His leading in the moment, not just in retrospect.

Eventually, my new company met with hard times and filed Chapter 11 bankruptcy. I was asked to assist in closing down the operations, which was a new experience for me. This time I had several months notice before losing my job. I began saving money in preparation for my job ending.

Several things have helped my family manage while between jobs. First, we are out of debt. Second, we live below our means when I am employed. After leaving my last job, we were able to live on my weekly unemployment checks without having to touch our savings or my wife having to return to work full time. Third, we exercise. This is a great way to relieve stress and provides time to talk with God. Last, but not least, we place our trust wholly in God. He knows what we need and when we need it and there is a tremendous amount of peace that comes when we are fully surrendered to Him.

After winding down operations with my former employer, it was four months before I landed a job with my current employer. All the knowledge and experience gained from my previous job would now be utilized in my new position. Again, the Lord was leading and supplying my every need. Unfortunately, my current employer has been affected by the economic downturn; and there is a degree of uncertainty in our future. Working in the accounting department, I see the financial picture and wonder if I will be looking for another job soon. Those two small boys have grown up and my wife and I are looking to send them to college. Some say these are the worst economic times since the Great Depression. Some economists are saying this could be a jobless recovery. While the current economic environment seems daunting the Bible says in Jeremiah 32:27, “Behold...
Men tend to be single focused fixers. We think as long as we take care of the yard, the car, the projects around the house, we are providing what our wife needs. While our wives do appreciate things getting done and problems fixed, they prefer meaningful time with us.

One of the best kept secrets of true love is giving our wives what they need, not what we think they need. I remember coming in one day and recognizing my wife looked tired and a little discouraged. I had the quick fix! I told her to go relax, and I would do the dishes and oversee the children. She said, “I just want time with you. Let’s do the dishes together.” By the time we were finished she seemed rejuvenated.

Situations like this helped me recognize that I needed God to help me tune in to the real needs of my wife and show me how I could meet those needs. For years now, I have prayed for God to make me a tender, affectionate, and caring husband. I ask Him to open my eyes to opportunities to display these attributes.

It is amazing how God answers these kinds of prayers. I have found I express more genuine appreciation and encouragement throughout the day rather than noticing mistakes or faults. I daily express appreciation for my wife’s commitment to exercise and take care of herself and let her know how much it means to me. It has been incredible to watch how motivated she is to continue from my simple encouragement. I tell her she looks great and give her tender touches of love. These little acts of affection are powerful and strengthen the bond of love between us. Most importantly, I do not take for granted all that she does around the home and the delicious meals she prepares for me.

Men, let’s go to God with a heartfelt desire to truly love our wives. He will help us unlock this secret of true love in learning how to meet their needs, not just fix problems. We will see happiness grow in our marriage and find fulfillment in our love. It is worth every effort as God multiplies the results.

Tom is a cofounder of Restoration Internationall and lives in Montana with his wife Alane.
As the boys entered quietly through the front door, the lady sitting on the couch began to count. “One, two, three, four, five, six, seven. Wow, seven boys. You have enough for a basketball team.” Jerico, my oldest son, answered and said, “No, maybe not, but maybe a missionary team instead.” I was the last one to enter the room. When I heard the last bit of the conversation, I was surprised at my son’s response. A missionary team - just think of it! How many of us desire in our hearts to have our children be missionaries for God!

As I thought about what my son had said, I reflected on our own home experience. What are we doing to help our children be a family team? We encourage our boys to work together as a team when shoveling snow, cutting firewood, and doing chores around the house. They especially love working together with their father. Using hand tools, helping Daddy with projects and riding bikes are favorite activities. They know the sooner they work together, the sooner they will get the job done, and the sooner they can have family fun time.

All this is good, but it still doesn’t answer the question. How are we raising our children to be a team?

I know, it’s the little things, like making sure no matter how many times our children mess up, they work together and do it again with all their might to the glory of God. It’s singing together for the dying man on the couch or the elderly lady in the nursing home. It’s not provoking their brother to anger and arguing back even when they think they are right. It’s going the extra mile when a brother asks for help with the dishes. But, most of all, it’s encouraging the boys to help each other when they know one of them is falling into temptation; for together everyone achieves more.

Michelle lives in West Virginia with her husband and homeschools their seven boys.
Throughout our marriage, we have found one common denominator that has helped us in raising our three biological children and now our four adopted children. That key is consistency.

Early in our marriage, we did not have the benefit of learning practical biblical principles of child rearing. We did what we thought was best and applied what we knew. Unfortunately, we made many mistakes; and our children paid the price for it. It was not until later that we learned the ABC’s of parenting that have helped us shape our own children and the lives of the foster children that have come into our home.

The ABC’s of parenting are accountability, boundaries, and consequences. By applying these simple principles, we have seen order and respect grow in our home and attitudes change for the better. It is amazing to see how God’s principles work when faithfully applied.

As our children were growing up, we taught them that personal accountability should be taken for all their actions. By taking personal responsibility, they were learning how to be accountable to others. When Adam and Eve fell to temptation, they were quick to blame someone else. Human nature has not changed since then.

We have established rules within our home, providing boundaries to teach our children right from wrong. As adults, we understand there are consequences to our actions: break the rules, expect to be reprimanded. This same principle should apply within our homes. Boundaries determine how far we can go and also provide freedom to live freely within those boundaries.

Having several foster children who came from many different homes where godly principles, for the most part, were never taught, has proven what we have learned along the way really does work. We have seen dramatic changes for the better in the lives of our adopted children and in the children that have stayed in our home. We still make some mistakes along the way in raising our children, and we learn from them; but one thing we have not forgotten is that we need to be consistent and work together as a couple, continuing to apply God’s principles in raising the young people He has blessed us with.

Lee and his wife Lynelle live in rural central Virginia with their four adopted children. They host Restoration International’s Virginia Family Campmeeting.
Children, do you know we have been given a wonderful ability? It is the ability of speech. Every day we have the choice to speak kind and thoughtful words or words that hurt others.

Do you remember the Bible story about Jesus and Mary? Mary had made some bad choices, but instead of speaking unkindly to her, Jesus said "Neither do I condemn you, go and sin no more." Jesus’ words of encouragement motivated Mary to choose to follow Him. Because of Jesus’ kind words, Mary’s life was changed.

Here are a few tips to help us choose our words wisely:

First, it is helpful to remember the angels in heaven are writing down everything we say. When we are tempted to say unkind words to our brother or sister, we need to remember it is not just our brother or sister that is hearing us but Jesus, too!

Second, we should remember our words have an affect upon others. We may never know until we get to heaven how others were affected by our words, but we can choose now to only speak kind words.

Last, we should ask Jesus to help us speak only kind words. If we ask Him, He will help us!

We never know what long lasting results our words will have. Maybe someone will be in heaven because of something we said!

Now unscramble the words in the box. They are the kind of words we would want to say.

Hannah speaks with her parents and brother at the eleven annual Restoration International Family Campmeetings.
Dear Reader,

We are pleased to continue to offer *Forever a Family* Magazine to you free of charge, even in these challenging economic times. We pray that it has been a blessing and that the articles will continue to encourage you as you face life’s many and varied challenges.

Readership continues to grow and we are in the process of having the magazine translated into other languages. These translations will be available online at www.foreverafamily.com. You may want to use the FAF website as a resource to pass along to others you think might benefit from what it has to offer.

If you would like to help us offset our growing costs by contributing to the publication of *Forever a Family*, you may use the enclosed self-addressed envelope to send your tax deductible donation. Checks should be made payable to Restoration International, publisher of *Forever a Family* magazine.

Thank you in advance for helping us provide this tool for strengthening families the world over.

God bless,

Alane Waters
Editor
UPCOMING EVENTS

Sept. 10-12, Topsham, ME
Contact: Ken & Julie Lombard
(207) 865-9745

Sept. 15-19, Virginia Family Campmeeting
Hosts: Lee & Lynelle Perschino
(540) 420-0028 va@fcmhost.info

Sept. 23-26, Colorado Family Campmeeting
Hosts: Bill & Kelly Plank
(303) 593-2899 co@fcmhost.info

Oct. 6-10, Indiana Family Campmeeting
Hosts: Doug & Cyndi Leffler
(217) 322-6184 in@fcmhost.info

Nov. 4-7, Hawaii Family Campmeeting
Hosts: Thomas & Shirley Soares
(808) 960-2702 hi@fcmhost.info

2010

August 25-29, MINNESOTA
Hosts: Kent & Delores Mishleau
(507) 645-2576 mn@fcmhost.info

September 15-19, VIRGINIA
Hosts: Lee & Lynelle Perschino
(540) 420-0028 va@fcmhost.info

September 23-26, COLORADO
Hosts: Bill & Kelly Plank
(303) 593-2899 co@fcmhost.info

October 6-10, INDIANA
Hosts: Doug & Cyndi Leffler
(217) 322-6184 in@fcmhost.info

November 4-7, HAWAII
Hosts: Thomas & Shirley Soares
(808) 960-2702 hi@fcmhost.info

2011

February 18-21, FLORIDA
Hosts: Milton & Brenda Adams
(407) 429-7281 fl@fcmhost.info
BUT THUS SAITH THE LORD, EVEN THE CAPTIVES OF THE mighty
SHALL BE TAKEN AWAY, AND THE PREY OF THE TERRIBLE
SHALL BE delivered: FOR I WILL CONTEND WITH HIM THAT
CONTENDETH WITH THEE, AND I will save thy children.
Isaiah 49:25