

# *Treasures of A Grandmother's Heart*

*Esther Burroughs*

*When that first grandchild is born,  
a "grandmother" is also born.*

A friend once told me this:

*"Being a grandparent is belonging to a select-club and  
the only way one could get in the club is - if your children  
cooperate – and when this happened, you will be a lifetime member  
– with no fees - but many expenses!*

It does not matter what the Grand Ones call you. Enjoy your new title.

## *What A Grandmother Is*

*Written by an 8 year old girl (name unknown)*

*A grandmother is a lady who has no little children of her own, so  
she likes other people's little folks!*

*A grandfather is a "man grandmother." He goes for walks with boys,  
and they talk about fishin' and things like that.*

*Grandmas don't have to do anything except...be there.  
They are older, so they shouldn't play hard or run.  
It is enough if they take us to the market where the pretend horse is,  
and have plenty of dimes ready.*

*And if they take us for walks,  
they slow down past things, like pretty leaves or caterpillars.*

*They should never say, "Hurry up!"  
Usually, Grandmas are fat! But not too fat to tie the kid's shoe.  
They wear glasses, and they can take out their teeth AND gums!*

*They don't have to be smart...only answer questions like,  
"Why dogs chase cats." Or, "How come God isn't married?"  
When they read to us, they don't skip words,  
or mind if it is the same story over again.*

*Everyone should have one, for Grandma's  
are the only grown-ups who've got time.  
And this is what my Grandma means to me.*

When the Grand Twins were quite young and when we lived in Florida, Bob and I were visiting my Father in Alabama. We made a quick 45-minute drive to Birmingham - because we knew our son's family was flying home that afternoon so we made arrangements to meet for a short visit at a nearby Chick-Fil-A.

We were so excited for just 30 minutes with them. We literally ran from our car and the moment we opened the door, the twins were out of their chairs, running into our arms, and calling our names over and over: *Nana! Bop! Nana! Bop!*

Our grandson, Walker, ran to me and our granddaughter, Milligan, ran to Bop. We scooped them up, hugged them, and sat down, each of us with an "armful of love." Walker hugged close to my side as he ate his chicken nuggets. He looked up and with those big, brown eyes, said, *"Nana, I go you house?"* How is it that a little redheaded smile and words would melt me into a puddle of joy?

Surely, God created mothers with special nurturing spirits and that means grandmothers have a double portion...as a mother - and a grandmother.

### **Gifts of prayer and legacies reap eternal value.**

2 Timothy 3:15 is an excellent biblical example of godly parenting and grand parenting for our instruction and inspiration:

*"But you must continue in the things which you have learned and been assured of, knowing from who you have learned them and that from childhood you have known the Holy Scriptures, which are able to make you wise for salvation through faith in Jesus Christ."*

From his childhood, both his mother and grandmother taught Timothy! I can picture in my mind those two women - on their knees praying for young Timothy, and teaching him God's word.

### ***It's a legacy***

*Pray with your children and grandchildren,  
by phone, e-mail, text, or written notes.*

What a Godly heritage Timothy received! His father is not mentioned, perhaps because he may have died during Timothy's early years. Paul reminds young Timothy, that he prays for him daily through his tears, and recalls for Timothy: *"Your genuine faith that is in you, which dwelt first in you grandmother, Lois, and your mother, Eunice, and in you also."*  
(I Timothy 1:5)

Paul pours out his heart for his *son-in-the-ministry*, stating: *"You have been handed down as it were the gift of faith."*

Dear friend, you and I are called to pass to the generations our *faith stories* - *inside God's story*. God instructed Moses to tell them over and over again until they their children know the faith story of their family. This model must be well taken, so we will seriously take on the task of grand parenting. Travel with me in this journal of stories, ideas, and your own thought and prayers as we continue parenting the next generation.

### ***Legacy ideas:***

#### *Ten Good Things Rituals do for Children*

- 1. Impact a sense of identity*
- 2. Help to navigate change*
- 3. Provide comfort and security*
- 4. Teach values*
- 5. Cultivate knowledge of faith*
- 6. Teach practical skills*
- 7. Solve problems*
- 8. Create wonderful memories*
- 9. Generate joy*
- 10. Unite the Family*

### **• 3 • *Nana, Just Stay Long Enough***

For many years, my daughter and her family lived in Atlanta, GA. In my travels to and from my speaking engagements, it often worked out for me to spend a night or two with them. Whenever I was there, I would always ask for the privilege of reading the bedtime stories to my grand girls...and the grand girls begged for me to do it. They knew that I would read as many stories as they liked and...they knew that I did not skip any pages! I remembered, that long ago when my two were small, I did just that...skipped a page or two. Mothers are usually in a hurry. *Grandmothers are not*. That is why, Dear Reader, as grandmothers, we must choose to be

involved with our grandkids. They need the balance of mothers and grandmothers. Children can sense "hurry." Grandmothers can help slow the pace for our grandkids.

On one such occasion, I read Anna Esther all her favorite stories and then said prayers and kissed her good night. As I stood to leave the room, she looked up at me and said: "*Nana. Could you just stay long enough for me to tell you how much I love you?*"

My heart stood still and it almost burst with delight. I turned back, and bent down to hold her again, knowing that was the only way to respond to such precious words. She reached up, took my face in her hands, pulling me ever so close, and whispered: "*Nana. I could never get over telling you how much I love you.*" Tears flowed. I left her room - wanting to find a quiet place to cherish and settle her words in my heart. I wrote those precious words in my journal - so they would never be forgotten.

That is just a grandmother story. No, it's a *God story!* God sent His Son, Jesus, to die on a cross and His outstretched arms reach to all humanity with this love message:

***I could never get done telling you how much I love you.***

He took the burden of our sin, nailed it to a cross, and signed it with his own blood, sealing His love story forever. He never stops telling us of His love...no matter what we have done...where we have been...or what we will do. He spoke his message: ***It is finished!*** Like a grandchild who declares, "*I could never get done telling you how much I love you, Nana,*" our Heavenly Father gives the same message: "*I will never get over my love for you.*" Cherish His words. Read 1st Thessalonians 3:12 again and again: "*...may the Master pour on the love so it fills your lives and splashes on everyone around you.*" (The MESSAGE Bible)

*...treasures of the heart*

- Take your Journal and copy 1st Thessalonians 3:12 in it. Then write your own paraphrase of this verse. Make it personal.

*...pearl of wisdom*

- Write one of your grandkids a “love letter” today. Splashing your love on him/her by sharing the qualities you most admire. Sign off with a scripture verse.

### • 3 • *A Happy Ending!*

Arvella Schuller, wife of Dr. Robert Schuller, once the pastor of the Crystal Cathedral, Anaheim, CA, shared this grandmother story in a now out-of-print book, *Friends for Life*, by Jim and Sheila Coleman.

*One night, Arvella agreed to babysit her daughter, Sheila's four rambunctious boys, ages one through four. As Sheila and her husband rushed to get out the door on time, they hurried through last-minute instructions about diapers, bottles and emergency phone numbers. "Oh, yes," Sheila added, "Here's the medicine for Nicky's bronchitis. Give him a teaspoonful before he goes to bed."*

*It was a hectic evening, but Arvella didn't forget the medicine! Nicky make a terrible face and fussed a lot, but she forced the medicine into his mouth. When he tried to spit it out, she held his lips shut until he swallowed. Figuring it wouldn't hurt to check the bottle just to be certain the dosage was correct, Arvella made a horrible discovery! She had given baby Nick the dog's medicine!*

*Horrified she called the poison control center, only to be put on hold. When someone finally came back to the phone, he suggested Arvella call a vet. The story does have a happy ending. The medicine was only a combination of vitamins. There was nothing harmful in the concoction at all. In fact, when Arvella called her daughter the next morning to check on Nicky, Sheila responded cheerily: "Well, I checked him over this morning. His hair is pretty shiny, his nose is wet, and he's been barking orders at me ever since he got up."*

I hope you are laughing! Go ahead...laugh long and loud! Smile! Smile broadly! Everyday needs more laughter and joy these days!

Grandmothers sometimes do not get it right...all the time. But...laughter is a simple and helpful prescription for life's ills and struggles. The great news is that doctors now say laughter releases the same endorphins as exercise. So put away your walking gear and get on your laughing gear! It helps in most situations and it helps the medicine of life go down. In Proverbs 17:22, a wise King Solomon said: "*A merry heart does good, like medicine. But a broken spirit dries the bones.*"

As grandmothers, let us choose *laughter* on this journey...and we will refresh ourselves as well as our grandchildren.

### **...treasures of the heart**

- Journal one of the funniest events of your life. You must have many. This will leave happy memories for your children and grandchildren to discover and read after you are gone.
- In the scriptures, research the word, "joy," and enter your favorite "joy" verses in your journal, and tell why, if you desire

### **••• pearls of wisdom**

- Purchase a clean joke book from a local book store and email your grandchildren a joke a week.
- Anytime your grandchildren are with you, make room for laughter!

### • 3 • *Answer to Prayer*

I had prayed for her since August 5, 1989 - since the time I knew she was to be born. I did not know at that time, of course, that the new baby would be a girl - or that my daughter would give her the name, *Anna Esther Reid*, to honor her Great Grandmother and her Grandmother. My prayer journals recall that name many times over the past 12 years. Praying mothers and grandmothers should become sensitive to the working of the Holy Spirit in the lives of their children.

My daughter and I knew in the early months of 2001 that Anna's heart was showing signs of interest to inviting Jesus into her heart. In fact, her sister, Caroline, my second granddaughter, for whom we had also prayed daily, prayed with her parents inviting Jesus into her heart on Thanksgiving day, 2000...a day she will always remember. When Melody told Anna about Caroline's decision, she said she was waiting to talk to her Nana. When this child came into the world, she presented me her heart. I feel as if she has chosen me. I don't understand it, and I am trying to handle her trust very carefully.

**Nana's Summer Camp** was over and Anna stayed on with me for three additional days while her Mom and siblings returned to South Carolina. The morning of June 7th...well, let me just let you read my journal entry for Thursday, June 7, 2001 - 3:15 PM:

*In my quiet time this morning, I was praying from the Anne Graham Lotz devotional book, Daily Light - like the one I had given to Anna on her 10<sup>th</sup> birthday. I have been praying from this book with Anna on the phone every Thursday night that I could for two years. The first scripture was Romans 10:9-10. Immediately, I felt the Holy Spirit remind me about Anna's need for Christ in her heart. So I asked God to give me just the right moment in the day to ask Anna if I could share with her how to ask Jesus into her heart. That*

*afternoon the right moment came. I took her to Romans 3:23 and showed her our condition apart from Christ, His provision for us, and what our response could be. Then, I asked her if she would like to ask Jesus into her heart and she smiled real big, and softly said "Yes." Then, she prayed, confessing her sins and asked Jesus into her heart. Of course, I cried. I said, "Anna, you have been waiting for me to ask you about Jesus, haven't you?" Her eyes filled up with tears and her hug answered my question. She wrote these words in the margin of my bible, next to Romans 10:9-10, "I asked Jesus into my heart today - 6/7/01."*

What a sweet peace covered her the rest of the afternoon. There were many smiles! Our precious Anna is very private. I shared that we needed to tell her parents and her grandfather. She asked me to tell them and her Bop. That night, as we put her to bed, Bob prayed the sweetest prayer over her that any ear could hear. I know God's heart was touched, as was Anna's. What a humble experience - to be able to assist in showing Anna Christ's love for her. As soon as I could I called her parents, they also rejoiced and her Daddy said, *"You could not have given me greater news in all the world today and it seems so right that it was you, Nana! She loves you so much."*

A month later, I was visiting my then 94-year old father and his wife. During the visit, he handed me a written letter in his beautiful penmanship. I cried again, knowing that my Father had also been praying for Anna, as well as for all his grand and great grandchildren. It's a *grandparent thing!* He wrote my dear Anna, expressing his joy in her decision to accept Christ and giving her verses of assurance for her to memorize. Someday in the future, Anna will show her child the handwritten letter she received from her great grandfather on her birthday in Christ.

### **...treasures of the heart**

- Record the birth dates of your children and grandchildren, their salvation birthday/year/season. Write what you can remember about each experience on the next page. Write out a prayer, thanking God for their salvation.

### **...pearl of wisdom**

- Start a tradition! Each year give them an age-appropriate devotional book. Look for one in which they can journal. When you are visiting in their home, ask them to share their writings with you.

• 4 • "God Did It!"

It had been a busy day for Mom. Wednesdays were usually tough days because of grocery shopping, the cleaners and other excursions that Moms have to make. Then, perhaps a church event. But, Wednesday afternoons were Anna's most favorite time of the week. Not yet in school, but old enough for preschool children's choir, this little one eagerly looked forward to her time in choir. She loved the teacher. She loved the music. She loved to sing. She loved the activities. She loved the bible stories. And, she always came home from choir quite full of energy.

After arriving home and having a cookie and milk, her Mom was not having much success in settling Anna down and ready for bed. Melody suggested that the two of them to up and lay down on the bed for a few minutes and talk about choir.

*"Tell Mommie what you learned in choir today, Anna."*

*"Mother! Did you know that Jesus fed this huge crowd of people...and then His disciples gathered up the food, and there were just **gobs** left over!"*

*"How do you think that happened?"* Melody asked.

Getting close to her mother's face, she said in a loud whisper, *"God did it!"*

What a wonderful truth! I'm thankful for little children. They often preach powerful messages through child-like awe. Don't you love it when the breath of God brushes your heart with His words...painted by a child's simplicity?

*“God can do anything, you know--far more than you could ever imagine or guess or request in your wildest dreams! He does it not by pushing us around but by working within us, his Spirit deeply and gently within us.”* (Ephesians 3:20, The MESSAGE Bible)

### **...treasures of the heart**

- Think back over your life for those moments when you absolutely knew that "**God did it!**" Write some of them down for future thinking. Pray, thanking Him for those moments that you will never forget and journal on of these events, it will bless future generations!
- Begin a "Life Story Book" for your children and grandchildren. Purchase a small scrapbook and gather a few significant photos, such as your wedding day, college graduation, first home, or first car. Begin slowly by writing your life story. May I suggest you do this by years, such as ages 25-35, 35-45, and so on. This time frame will assist you in remembering in segments and you won't be overwhelmed by having to remember 50+ years! Don't panic. It has taken a long time to live your life and it will take a long time to write it. Then, share this with your grandchildren when the visit. Your children and grandchildren will treasure it!

### **...pearls of wisdom**

- With today's technology, most grandparents can work an iPhone camera! Take regular video and photos shots of you and Granddad...by yourselves...with your children...with your grandchildren...and pass this along as recorded history for your family. Someday, they will treasure this video footage.
- Once in a while, visit one of the children's choir rehearsals in your church and just enjoy watching and listening to the children and the teacher. Ask permission to come to

rehearsal, of course, and if you are of a mind to do so, you might volunteer to bring homemade cookies! This would be a special treat from a Grandmother.

- Consider volunteering as a helper in a children's choir. You will remind the children of their grandmother. You might even get to be an "adopted grandmother" to a child, as well as blessing the choir leader weekly by your help. Bring along Granddad some days!

## • 5 • *Do You Know Anyone Who Is Hurting?*

A pastor was visiting in a church member's home. He began to sense much turmoil there, and prayed to the Father for a word or thought that he might could share that would get the family talking to each other. He fumbled out these words: *"Do you know anyone who is hurting today?"* Beth quickly responded: *"I do! My daddy is hurting, but he doesn't want anyone to know it."* Realizing what she had done, she ran to her father, put her arms around his neck, and hugged him. *"Beth, stop it!"* he said. *"You're hugging me to death.!"* *"No Daddy!"* she replied. *"I'm hugging you to life!"*

Families struggle in and with relationships. It is an on-going occurrence. These struggles never end! That's just "family." Bob and I have a "three day" rule with our family. Three days together is just about the right amount of time to have a good visit. It really works for us. The three-day rule came from reading C.S. Lewis, who said: *"Fish and family begin to stink after three days!"*

How hard it is for children in a family when they sense hurt, or are hurting themselves. I know a secret! Nothing heals hurt more quickly than a "touch." If it's true that people need eight hugs a day to be healthy, then you and I had better get busy! Can you recall a time that words just would not come or dare be spoken because the hurt was so deep and then, you felt someone's touch? It may have felt like a "hug to life" or a releasing of the hurt.

In the spring of 2001, our daughter-in-love had minor surgery on her knee and she came home with her knee bandaged - and walking on crutches. At first, her daughter, Milligan, was afraid - and would not even come near. In a little while, she reached out and ever so gently, touched her mother's knee, saying, *"Mommie has big boo-boo."* Then leaned down and kissed her Mommie's knee.

The "touch of healing" is be a powerful tool. It is not used near enough in this day and age! As grandmothers, we have the power, time, and right to be regularly touching our children and grandchildren: affirming them... complimenting them...encouraging them...supporting them... but most of all, loving them...to life!

### **...treasures of the heart**

- An idea treasure box where kisses and hugs tumbling out
- When was the last time you gave someone a "hug to life?" Our grandchildren need us to hug them, touch them, and be special to them. Hugs can be phone calls, too. Do it today.
- Remember when you hugged a grandchild and kissed away the pain? Using your journal, write the response of the child to your action.

### **...pearls of wisdom**

- Read Matthew 9:18-30. In your journal, write in your own words how Jesus touched and what happened.
- You can "touch" a grandchild today by sending a funny card... making a phone call or sending an email! You can send an "E card" by logging on to the www (world wide web) and going to one of several electronic e-card websites. One of my favorites is <[www.bluemountain.org](http://www.bluemountain.org)> You can choose the card and you can write your own text! And...it is FREE !! They will LOVE getting an E-Card from their Grandmother - who knows how to use the Internet! If you can't do this, get help! Someone in your circle of friendship can do E-cards for you.

## • 6 • *Building Life-Long Traditions*

In 1999, I learned of Anne Graham Lotz's wonderful devotional book, *Daily Light*. I was especially touched by Ann's story in the Forward. She writes these words:

*Winning a relay race depends not only on the speed of the runners but also on their skillful ability to transfer the baton.*

*In my family, one way the "baton" has been passed from generation to generation is through the use of the little volume entitled *Daily Light*.*

*My grandmother gave a volume to my mother when she was a young child in China. My mother gave me my first volume on my tenth birthday. I gave a volume to my children on their tenth birthdays, and it has become a regular part of their daily devotions.*

I thought about the blessing of all the family members reading the same scripture...everyday. *Daily Light* has morning and evening readings. It is simply scripture...nothing else. I can't tell you how it ministers to my heart everyday in my private prayer time.

Then...an idea came! Why not begin a "*Burroughs Family Tradition*" using *Daily Light* ! I wrote my friend, Anne, telling her that I desired to pass on her tradition—of giving her children this book on their tenth birthday—to my grandchildren. I asked if she would be so kind as to autograph a book to each of my five grandchildren and one for their mothers. She delighted in doing this for me. I gave Anna Esther the first one in the summer of 1998 and presented one each to my daughter, Melody, and my daughter-in-love, Colleen. In the summer of 2001, Caroline was presented her book in a family worship time at **Nana's Summer Camp**. The other three signed books have been given to

Frances, Milligan and Walker—given on their 10<sup>th</sup> birthday! It is a “tradition!”

Every Thursday that it is convenient to do so, I call the grand children on my phone and after a bit of conversation, I ask how I can pray for them. Then we read one of the daily verses together and then I pray for them... specifically, and by name. Imagine how this tradition will bind our hearts to God and to each other!

Some day, when I am much older, I am hoping my phone will ring on a Thursday night about 8:00 PM and I will hear her say: *“Nana, did you read the verse for today in ‘Daily Light’ and didn’t you just love what it said! Nana, how can I pray for you today.”*

I will weep! I call this the *“passing on a legacy of faith.”* The psalmist says, *And even when I am old and gray, O God, do not forsake me, until I declare Thy strength to this generation.* (Psalm 71:18) You can do this, too. All it takes is a bit of time - and you have that. It takes a weekly phone call - and what grandmother would not want to speak to a grandchild weekly. It takes a prayerful heart for each grandchild.

### **...treasures of the heart**

- Call your local Christian Bookstore today or go online to [www.annegrahamlotz.com](http://www.annegrahamlotz.com) and order this treasure, *Daily Light*. grandmother, mother and grandchild will all reading the same scripture on the same day.

### **...pearls of wisdom**

- You may wish to give this book to a grandchild the Christmas before they turn ten...or at a family reunion...or on a tenth birthday. When you do decide to give it, make a ceremony and celebration out of it. You can do this by having a time of singing, and someone reading Ann's story from the forward of the book. Have a special prayer and then present the signed book to this first grandchild. Include in the celebration that you will be giving a book to each of the other grandchild as each one turns ten.
- Start a tradition by giving each grandchild an age-appropriate devotional book each year. This is a great Christmas stocking gift. Look for one in which they can journal. When you are visiting in their home, ask if you can share thoughts together.

## • 7 • *The “Price” of Peace*

Some time ago, my daughter’s family was given a wonderful Christmas gift from a good friend. It was called the “*Jesse Tree*.” This handmade book is for the Advent Season, explaining in symbols the spiritual heritage and names of Jesus. Each of His names is placed on the pages of the book with Velcro and as each day’s ritual of prayer and bible reading is completed, the symbol is then placed on the Christmas tree. This is such a delightful way to help children and grandchildren learn the names of Jesus, and also, count down the days until December 25th. (Read Isaiah 11:1)

One of my Christmas visits to my daughter’s home allowed me the opportunity to participate in a “*Jesse Tree*” worship time with her and the three girls. It was Anna's turn to read, Caroline's turn to pray, and Frances’ turn to place the symbol on the felt tree hanging in the entryway. Grandmothers really understand the significance of whose turn it is to do what! It was a beautiful moment in worship and made me so grateful for my daughter’s attention to spiritual training and traditions with her girls and my grand girls.

The second evening was still just the women folk. It was Caroline’s turn to sit in Nana’s lap and her turn to read. Anna, the oldest, was on the floor with her own book...rolling her eyes and complaining all the while that this would take so long, because Caroline at that time was a beginning reader. The littlest one, Frances, was on the floor by me...and was misbehaving by swinging her legs and hitting Caroline. Caroline complained, but kept reading. I kept trying to reach down and grab hold of her leg to keep her from interrupting but always missed! Frances had been told several times to stop doing this. She didn’t stop! Then, in a flash, daughter Melody grabbed Frances, and headed upstairs. I heard the crying and knew she was being punished for inappropriate behavior. I smiled, confirming her action. Caroline never even hesitated. Pronouncing each word very slowly, she read:

*“His name shall be called Wond-er-ful ... Coun---Coun-sel-or...  
Mighty God...Price of Peace!”*

My heart skipped a beat! I did not correct her! The *breath of the Spirit of God* whispered: He is the priceless *Prince of Peace!*

In the middle of a somewhat less than peaceful family altar...picture the chaos of one grandchild getting a spanking...another acting indifferent and uninterested and the one in my lap struggling to pronounce the words...I heard His whisper! Yes, the Prince of Peace at a great **price!** His life... brings peace to our chaos.

I find myself these days looking more and more for those “*ah-ha*” moments when I see God in all His glory...stooping down...in my chaos...allowing His own Son, *the Price of Peace*...to become flesh and as THE MESSAGE Bible says, “...Move into the neighborhood,” forever touching everyday lives with his peace. That, Dear Reader, was paid at a very great price.

### **...treasures of the heart**

- Find a copy of the book, *Two From Galilee*, by Marjorie Holmes. Perhaps there is one in your church library. Or you can order it from your Christian bookstore or from [www.Amazon.com](http://www.Amazon.com). Get yourself a cup of tea and put some peace in your life by enjoying this delightful story. So it's not Christmas! His peace is ours and it's everlasting—and is for all seasons.
- If your grandchild is a pre-teen, introduce her to this book. It is an easy read and will make for great dialogue for the two of you. If convenient, read it out loud together.

- While at the bookstore, browse holiday books and glean ideas for your next holiday. Go ahead—make a morning of it. Grab a cup of special coffee, or even lunch at the bookstore and settle in and just read. Pamper yourself.
- Call a bookstore in your area to try and find about the *Jesse Tree*. You can also search online and discover a whole wealth of information.

### ...pearls of wisdom

- Call another grandmother and invite her to tea this week. In your fellowship, share the *Jesse Tree* idea with her and help her to begin a tradition with her grand children.
- Prayer this prayer daily for a grandchild:

*Father, my heart is so full of the treasures of my grandchildren. Today, I ask your divine protection and care as \_\_\_\_\_ (name) goes to school. May he/she be made aware of You in someone's kindness toward him/her, or in making a new friend, or in a kind word from a special teacher. I pray this prayer in the strong name of Your Son, Jesus. Amen*

## • 8 • *Praying for Grandchildren*

The grand parenting journey has been a wonderful experience for Bop and me - as we have prayed daily for our grandchildren. We have had many anxious phone calls from our children, asking specific prayer for their children...and our grandchildren. I can still feel the tug to pray for each family need and request throughout the day.

When we pray, we must learn to “*leave it there,*” just as the old gospel song tells us to do! Often, early in the morning on my knees, I take my children and grandchildren to the Lord, praying scripture over each one of their lives. About noon, I go back and pick up where I left off. The reason I know I pick it back up is...I begin to ponder it again. Well, to be perfectly honest, I begin to worry about it again. Not only that! I explain to God just how I want the prayer answered!

Consider practicing a way of life and prayer described in *Cycle of Victorious Living* - written many years ago by Earl Lee. The book is out-of-print. The process is based on selected verses from the 37th Psalm:

1. Delight yourself in the LORD and he will give you the desires of your heart.
2. Commit your way to the LORD; trust in Him and He will do this:
3. He will make your righteousness shine like the dawn, the justice of your cause like the noonday sun.
4. Be still before the LORD and wait patiently before him.

Here’s how it works.

First step: I commit to the LORD. I take my problems, whatever they are, and I figuratively lay them out on my hands, palms facing upward. I specifically state what the problems are, and then I turn my hands over - with my palms open, and let the problems drop into God’s hand. I commit

the problems to Him. Psalm 37 instructs us to commit our ways to the Lord. Then immediately, it tells us to trust Him to take care of them. Now I have relinquished my problems to the Lord. By an act of faith, not feelings, I simply pray: *“Thank you Lord, for I know you are taking care of my problem. Lord, I believe. Help my unbelief.”*

Second step: trust Him in what you have given Him.

Third step: delighting the Lord, praising Him and thanking Him for what He can and will do. To help remember the steps of this prayer of thanks, as you delight in the Lord, you use this acrostic made with the letters of the word delight:

**D**aily  
**E**verything  
**L**aid  
**I**nto  
**G**od’s  
**H**ands  
**T**otally

Repeating this phrase will help you to remember to keep committed to the Lord.

Step four: Rest in the LORD.

1. Commit problem to LORD
2. Trust in to the LORD.
3. Delight in LORD
4. Rest in LORD

My comment is this: the word totally is the *surrender* part of the prayer. This is where most of us fail. Surrendering is hard. Our Human nature always wants to fix things ourselves. Another way to say this is: *we want to play God...by thinking we know best.* What foolishness!

What great words of comfort: *“Be still before the Lord.”* Rest. Everything is centered in the Lord. It is not in our power or control. This will take practice, but I enjoy the ritual of DELIGHT.

Prayer this prayer for you child or grandchild from Jeremiah 29:11:

*“For I know the plans I have for ‘\_\_\_\_\_,’ (insert the name) declares the Lord. Plans to prosper your good and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future.”* (NIV)

Scripture helps us see God’s perspective when we pray His word over our families. After all, remember in our daily walk that this is God’s breathed word, living word.

*“Prayer is the slender nerve that moves the muscles of omnipotence.”* (Theologian Charles Spurgeon)

### **...treasures of the heart**

- Begin praying in this manner for your children and your grandchildren. In writing these words, I have been reminded that I prayed this way for years for my children and I now need to start praying this way for my grandchildren.

**Daily  
Everything  
Laid  
Into  
God’s  
Hands  
Totally**

- Pray scripture for your children and grandchildren, putting their names in the bible passages. For example, use Psalm 8.

Jeremiah 33:3 tells us: *“Call on me and I will answer you and tell you great and unsearchable things you do not know.”* (NIV) if God is willing to do even more than we even know , things beyond what we can even imagine or think, then we should pray daily, even hourly for our children and grandchildren.

### **...pearl of wisdom**

- It seems that one of the most difficult things for the family is to pray together. Prayer is such an intimate experience, and that is all the more reason we should bind ourselves together in prayer...as a family...praying for and with each other often. You, Grandmother, can be the catalyst for family prayer time, if it is not already a regular occurrence in your family time. Be creative as to how you begin such an experience. Begin simply. It will catch on and become a precious time.

## • 9 • God “Wuvs” Us

Once, while walking past the grandchildren’s bedroom, I noticed Anna, age two, on the floor, reading to six-month old Caroline. I paused to listen. Anna had her arms around Caroline’s waist, while at the same time, holding their children’s bible, and showing Caroline the pictures. Turning the pages slowly as she said: “*God wuv’s us.*” Next page: “*God wuv’s us.*” Next page: “*God wuv’s us.*”

As I watched this precious scene, I silently prayed. “*Father, draw these children to Yourself with this simple truth: God wuv’s us!*” What a sermon!

### ...treasures of the heart

- Consider people in your “circle of influence” who might need to -- know “*God Wuvs Us.*” Write a letter to that person, sharing God’s love through scripture.
- Pray that your letter will help them come to the truth of John 3:16 and other “love” verses.
- Think back and journal a story of when your grandchildren have been a “living sermon” in your life. Thank God for this remembrance.

## • 10 • How Big is God?

On the way home from church, a child asked her mother this question:  
*"Mommy, the Preacher said that God is bigger than we are. Is that true?"*

*"Yes, that's true,"* the mother replied. *"He also said that God lives within us. Is that true, too?"* Again, the mother replied, *"Yes."* *"Well,"* said the little girl, *"If God is bigger than us and He lives in us, wouldn't He show through?"*

An inner-city child in a Houston Day-Care Facility said to the missionary, *"Ms. 'Quarter, are you God?"* *"No,"* she replied, *"but God's love lives in my heart."* *"No! You are God!"* the child insisted. *"No, I am not God, but God's Son, Jesus, lives in my heart."* Pointing to Ms. 'Quarter's heart, the child said, *"You are God for I can see him right there!"*

Can our grandchildren see God in us? We should be striving to naturally allow God to show through us, modeling His love for our grandchildren.

### ...treasures of the heart:

- Call you local community service agency and ask if you could possibly volunteer one afternoon - and take one of your grandchild. Ask them about their needs, and how the two of you might fit in.
- Plan a *"God Showing Through Community"* day with the grandchildren at an assisted living center, a Senior enter or the Salvation Army, perhaps to the children of the women in the program. Help in anyway you are needed.
- If you get to go and help, find out how many children are involved and prepare a basket of goodies and surprises that are especially wrapped for them.

• 11 • Friends

*Love that goes upward is worship.  
Love that goes outward is affection.  
Love that stoops is grace.*  
(Chuck Swindoll)

She had been warned many times, and even told specifically what would happen if she was late one more time. This little one's habit was to always be late. Begging for just one more chance and promising to do better, she was allowed to play at Becky's house. Firmly, she was warned that she was to be home at 4:30 – on...the...dot!

With all her heart, she promised she would be on time. 4:30 came...and went. 5:00 passed ever so quickly. It was become a very anxious time! Then, at 5:15, the little one comes bouncing through the door - all smiles and happiness...totally unaware that she was in deep trouble. She walked right into her father, who had been standing at the door...waiting for her return.

She looked up...as her father's face stared down, and she stopped dead in her tracks. Before she could speak, she was sternly told, *"You must know you are in serious trouble, young lady...and will be punished. It is 5:15 and you are 45 minutes late. Do you have a good explanation?"*

Smiling her sweet innocent smile, she told her Daddy how Becky had dropped her dolly and broke it. *"I suppose you thought you needed to stay and fix it,"* he said in his big "Daddy voice."

*"Oh no, Daddy! I just stayed to help her cry."*

*"A friend sticketh closer than a brother"* (Proverbs 18:24)

### **...treasures of the heart**

- Write in your journal a childhood memory where you got in trouble and the outcome. At some appropriate time, share it with a grandchild! They may begin to see you in a different light!
- Plan a “*Doll Tea Party*” with one or all of your grandchildren. Send invitations and ask for an RSVP. Have old gloves, hats and purses, and hankies ready for each invited guest to wear to put on and wear to the party. Use a small child table and chairs, if available. Have cookies and milk (or real tea). Be sure and take photos.

### **...pearl of wisdom**

- Schedule a “*Doll Repair Afternoon*” where you and your granddaughter(s) do doll repairs, wash and iron doll clothes and blankets. This will be good talking and dialogue time and you will learn lots of new things. Be sure to take photos!

## • 12 • Friendships...At All Times

The Grandgirls has worked really hard on the memory verses for presentation at the conclusion of **Nana's Summer Camp**. The memory skills were much easier for the two older girls because they were already in grade school and reading well. Frances, the younger, was having a difficult time!

We worked everyday on the memory verses, preparing them to recite for their parents on the last day of the camp. The time arrived! The parents were rapt in attention. The stage had been set. Standing tall, from the oldest to the youngest, they began their memory verse recitation. I watched as the youngest, Frances, drew herself up tall, swallowed hard, took a big breath, as if to help her confidence, then stated clearly: "*Love others at other times.*"

What a great paraphrase! What a wonderful thought: *Love others...at other times!*' That is so true...we should love others at other times...at all times...and every time.

Now - what can we learn and teach our grandchildren from Frances' wonderful paraphrase?

*"A friend loveth at all times."* (Proverbs 17:17)

### ...treasures of the heart

- When your grandchildren are in your home and the time is right, share with them that friends should not choose just "the right times" to be friends, but rather, true friends choose to be friends **all the times**.

- Just for fun, send a hand-made card about friendship to your grandchildren. Use construction paper and creative stickers. Place a surprise in each envelope, such as a bookmark, stickers, a stick of gum...or even a dollar bill! They WILL be surprised!

### ...pearls of wisdom

- Rent the wonderful classic movie, *A Secret Garden* , and watch it with the grandchildren. Have plenty of popcorn. Discuss the movie afterwards. See what *pearls of wisdom* you can mine from the conversation.
- In person, by email or phone, tell your grandchildren why you would choose them as a friend.
- In your journal page, write the names of each of your children and grandchildren in descending order. Beside each name, list one or two enduring characteristics of each grandchild. Remember: this book will be passed down from generation to generation...and will become a great blessing to them - long after you are gone. It will thrill them to know that you knew their sterling charter traits.

• 13 • **Spill A Glass of Tea....Please!**

Many years ago, Bob and I had the privilege of sharing a great friendship with the late humorist and entertainer, Grady Nutt. He was the one who gave this grandmother a lasting thought:

*“I'm me and that's good cause God don't make no junk.”*

Grady was a guest in our home many times. He infected our family life with his sense of humor and wisdom. He taught me much about humor and it's importance in life. He could wrap you around his finger with his laughter - all the while, stuffing “life-changing Gospel” into your heart and soul. He was a master storyteller, and could capture his audience with great truth. I can still hear his deep laughter.

This story was a pivotal event for me and for our family.

The story happened in Longview Texas. As was their tradition, several families met at Grandmother's house for the traditional Thanksgiving Dinner Celebration—a big deal. They had gathered for years as a big, happy family, to eat that special meal prepared with great love and care. The family members began to realize that this Thanksgiving might be the last one Grandmother would be able to do by herself. No one wanted to miss it. Just thinking about the feast would make their mouths water.

All the preparations were made - with all the traditional decorations and the special menu. The table was set with the special linen tablecloth and napkins...because it was the *tradition*. The china, crystal, and sterling were all in their proper places. By now, everyone had access to Grandmother's secret recipes...yet it still tasted better when these were served around her table. Again, it was *tradition*. Each one knew exactly where they would sit. Even the little ones came to the “big table” for this event. It was a sacred hour, indeed.

As tradition dictated, everyone around the table joined hands - while Grandpa said the grace for the meal. As each person bowed their head, the prayer was offered and finished. As Grandpa finished the prayer and released hands, the little grandson, who was sitting next to Grandpa, reached out his little hand and somehow knocked over his glass of tea. The tea began to slowly move past the green beans...on to the mashed potatoes...and toward the carrots. The entire family took a collective deep breath...*ahhhhhh*...as they turned their heads toward Grandmother.

After a few moments of a very uncomfortable silence, Grandpa said out loud: *“It appears to me...that this is too heavy a burden for a little fellow to carry all by himself!”* And with that remark, he reaches out and **knocks over his glass of tea!**

Once again, a “collective guest gasp” of disbelief was heard as the additional tea moves quickly down the middle of the middle of the table...past the turkey...the dressing...on toward the rolls...then to the salads, heading right for Grandmother. Every eye is turned to Grandmother and then back to Grandpa...back and forth as if in a tennis match...and then, Grandpa winks at Grandma. Looking down the long table at Grandpa, she says, *“Me too!”* and thumps over her glass of tea!

Laughter and tears mingle together at a family celebration that will never be forgotten and a grandchild's life...forever engraved by grace.

## ...treasures of the heart

- Next Thanksgiving, plan a special worship celebration immediately following the great meal. Involve all the grandchildren in the planning and the service itself. Here is a suggested order:
  - Hymn: “We Gather Together” or “Bless the Lord”
  - Scripture: \_\_\_\_\_ (An older Grandchild)
  - Prayer (A Younger Grandchild)
  - Testimony Time (Go around the room and let each person tell the most meaningful thing about Thanksgiving...or what this time together means...or something special about the meal...or something for which they are thankful.
  - Prayer of Celebration (by a Grandfather or Father)
  - Chorus: “God Is So Good”
  - Devotional Thought (One of the older grandchildren or a Mom)
  - Prayer (another adult)

• 14 • A Prayer of Grace

*Spring, 2000*

*Dear Bob:*

*You have held an important place in Amy's life. God has used you in a unique way to minister to her and encourage her spirit. I will always remember your phone call to my office from Palm Beach Atlantic University, asking where Amy was and why she was withdrawing from school. Then, you called her. That call that day, your counsel and encouragement were the reasons she decided to stay in school. Then through that year, you continued to be her own personal cheerleader, lifting her up and allowing her to believe in herself. She told us several times of your encouragement, hugs, faith in her, and helps in facing decisions. I sometimes wonder if you even knew how much you did for her by just being who you are?*

*Then lastly, you took time away from your vacation trip to NYC to see her on Broadway in CATS. It validated whom she was...and that she was good enough to make it. All through these last 4 years when she was with the traveling CATS group on the road, you never failed to ask about her and send to her your love and encouragement. There are not words to express to you how full this Papa's heart is for all you have done for her. You are one of 4 people whom God, the Father, used to answer the prayers of Valerie and me. Men and women of God helped form whom Amy is. I will forever be in your debt.*

*I told your Precious Esther how grateful I was for you and that the only way I could begin to repay you is to pray continually for you and her, for your children, and especially for your grandchildren. You see, Bob, God placed you in Amy's life because I asked Him to do so. When Amy was 11 and Matt was 8, God placed on my heart a burden for the men & women who would have a profound influence on their lives. I prayed that God*

*would send people into their lives that were Christ-like, God-serving, compassionate, and full of grace, and at just the right time, He has answered my prayer over and over again by placing "Bobs" like you...to guide them both, to teach by example and to love them through the growing times of their lives.*

*So here...along with the names of the children and grandchildren of 7 other important people who influenced my kids, is added to my prayer list your name, Esther's name, and the names of your children and grandchildren. I pray often that God, the Father, will provide for each of them godly men & women...who will guide and love them In the walk toward Christ and that He will provide for your family the same compassionate and loving encouragement and hope that you placed into the life of one of my most precious children, His child, Amy.*

*Please share this with Esther. I think it will help her understand what I have tried to say.*

*Thanks again, Bob, for making yourself available to be used of God.*

*Always your Friend.*

*Dick Hamel*

### **...treasures of the heart**

- Who was one of the most influential people in your life? Can you name the person? Write that name in your journal and if possible, write the person a letter - thanking them for their influence in your life. For the cost of a stamp...you will bless someone abundantly.
- Begin praying now that God will place just the right person in the lives of your grandchildren...at just the right time...to help them walk with God. It doesn't matter the age of your grandchildren... just pray often for them and those who will influence them.
- Write a note to one of your grandchildren's teachers, promising your prayers and give an encouraging scripture or quote. This will be a blessing to the teacher and a powerful witness.

### **•...pearls of wisdom**

- Consider asking another friend with grandchildren to covenant with you to pray daily for each other's grandchildren and stay in touch with each other by e-mail or phone - so you will know how to pray specifically. This will certainly lead to celebrating answered prayers together.
- Consider "adopting" the child of a single parent. Share with the parent that you would like to pray for the child and to be an "adopted grandmother." If allowed to do this, make sure to communicate often with the child by note card, email, or phone. Ever so often, take the child for ice cream or for a walk in the park. Or choose the child or children of one of your missionary friends and adopt them in daily prayer. Write them often.

## **A Treasure – His Name**

*I drove into the bank window and handed the teller a check that I had written to my eleven-year-old grand daughter, Anna. I gave the check to the teller with my driver's license and said: "This is my Granddaughter, Anna. Her father is a Vice President of this bank and I would like this check cashed." The teller nodded and promptly cashed the check. It worked. I used her father's name and position to accomplish my task. When you pray for your grandchildren, use your Father's name and position and pray... believing. He has given you His name. (John 14:13)*

## • 15 • Row, Row, Row Your Boat

Our son, David, and his wife, Colleen, had a wonderful tradition with their twins, Milligan and Walker when they were still in their high chairs. After the evening meal was completed and the table cleared, they would sit as a family and sing together. The children loved the fun-action songs such as “*Row, row, row your boat gently down the steam.*” Eventually, they move to the familiar “*Allelu, Allelu, Allelu, Alleluia! Praise ye the Lord.*” As Walker would sang the last “*Pwaise ye da Lord,*” he would throw his head back, open his little mouth and sings the last note...then slides up an octave!

While visiting, we were observing this grand event and I watched their Granddad, Bop, smiling as he listened with great delight. When they finished singing the last line, Walker reached out and grabbed Bop’s arm and said in a loud voice, “*Pwaise ye the Lord, Bop!*” Immediately Bop joined in the singing.

Continuing this tradition, it is then story time, bath time and finally, prayer time. Each parent holds a child and they begin to name all the cousins, aunts, uncles, grandparents, friends and even Maddi, the dog. Pray time also ends with singing. Walked led out that night with “*Jesus loves me.*” Colleen then invited Milligan to choose a song, and in her deep voice, she began, “*Row, row, row your boat.*” We all joined in. I smiled, grateful that Bop and I were a part of this tradition.

Later on, I rethought the experience and realized that some days are truly “*Jesus Loves Me*” days and then, there are the “*Row, row, row your boat*” days! As a grandmother, I am grateful for the “*Jesus loves me*” days, but I am so aware that Jesus spent time in boats, calming the sea and inviting His friends to get out of the boat. I am glad the Jesus, who loves me, has such great knowledge of His father’s care that He could sleep through the storm. In or out of the boat, He is with us. So have a great “*Pwaise ye the*

*Lord*” day! In fact, just break out in song! You will find the melody in your heart all day.

### **...treasures of the heart**

- Singing is a great tradition to have with your family...large or small! Begin early by having music in the family times. You can't beat Mozart in the background of conversation, meals, or fellowship times!
- Buy a child's scripture/song CD. Give it to your grandchildren for their next car trip. You will be mentoring them in God's words and truth. Singing scripture songs helps children memorize the scriptures and puts them deep in their hearts. You can find these at most book stores.
- If you have teenage grandkids, select such artists as Chris Tomlin, Steven Curtis Chapman, Aaron Keyes, and others. The bookstore can help you with teen favorites.
- The next time you are with your grandkids in the car, sing together, no matter how it sounds! Teach them your favorite childhood songs. They will enjoy hearing what you sang as a child.

## • 16 • Nana's Summer Camp

Since the early summer of 1998, I looked forward to what had become known as **Nana's Summer Camp**. I borrowed the idea from church friends, whose grandparents have done this kind of camp for years. I only have five grandchildren - and they live miles apart. I wanted my children and my grandchildren to know and enjoy each other. So...I plan the camp...and all they have to do is...show up!

Each year, camp has a theme scripture and theme song. I begin sending the grandchildren hints about the camp theme in January. They love to try and figure out the theme. We send menus...with crazy meal choices, such as follows:

### Breakfast (Check One)

- milk
- Orange Juice
- Flavored Swamp Water

### Lunch (Check One)

- Peanut Butter/Jelly sandwich
- Ham 'n cheese sandwich
- Gator Tail sandwich

### Dinner (Check One)

- Macaroni & Cheese
- Spaghetti
- Fish Eyes on Wild Rice

Each grandchild marks his menu choices and emails or sends it back. I also give them a "heads up" on bringing their American girls dolls and/or teddy bears for the Tea Party Day. I also ask them to bring their own special DVDs.

Bob and I began to make preparation months ahead. I purchase items throughout the year...all age appropriate. In early Spring, we prepare and send the ***Official Nana's Summer Camp Brochure*** - done on computer. Of course, we stated the theme, and giving some of the ideas and things we would be doing at camp. There were always Nana Surprises...two times a day. Cardinal Rule: You could switch surprises but no complaining allowed!

Admission to ***Nana's Summer Camp*** is “*One Hug and Four Kisses*” from each grandchild...payable upon arrival at the camp front door. As they enter the front door for Camp, each child finds their room assignment that is listed and hung on the kitchen cabinet - along with The Camp Rules. Each camper must sign the list of rules. The rules were:

### **Camp Rules 2000 (with a ‘water’ theme)**

1. First time obedience!
2. First time manners!
3. First time splash into bed!
4. Splash out and put back all stuff!
5. Splash quickly to snack time, 10 & 2 PM!
6. Splash hard and learn scripture memory!
7. SPLASH FUN over all campers!
8. All together now...**Let's make a Splash!!**

Twice a day, we have snacks...one of the most favorite times. At the 2001 Camp, I put a old sheet on the kitchen table, gave each grandchild a box of glitter glue paint and each one painted a corner...to their hearts delight. (Oops! I forgot to put “paint shirts” on the painters and just ruined one good camp t-shirt!) Each child painted something about the camp theme. We put the camp mural on the patio to dry and the next day, it was put back on the table. It hung over the table and to the floor...and became their “tent” where they hid to have their snacks. Simple fun!!!

Each day, Camp included the following things:

- Bible story
- Bible memory verses
- Missionary Moment
- Field trip
- Water sports
- Crafts
- Alone Zone (the favorite time for adults)
- Surprises
- Pool Fun
- Lots of touching and hugging

The grandchildren have come to love the “Missionary Moments.” If you don’t know any missionaries personally but wish to have access to email or write and ask if they would like to be part of our Camp, you can call the International Mission Board, Richmond, VA for international missionaries and the North American Mission Board, Alpharetta, GA, for Home Missionaries. These agencies have free personal directories. You might choose to use this time to pray for your family members who live in different states/countries.

In preparation for NSC (Nana’s Summer Camp), I email five missionaries in five areas of the world...and I assign one grandchildren to each missionary. I ask the missionaries for prayer needs and ask them to send me an email about their work. Some of them even send pictures to download! We print them out and have them available on the day they are to be our prayer focus. The grandchild love this part and it helps them visualize where the missionaries serve.

I place a large, laminated map of the world on the glass kitchen tabletop. This stays in place all week - under a plastic tablecloth, because this is also where we do crafts each day. For the Missionary Moment, I remove the tablecloth and we gather around the kitchen table. Each day, a child reads the missionary letter, and shows the photos. Everyone tries to find the

country and city where the missionary family lives and serves. When the place is found, a sticker is placed on the map. We then hold hands and pray for the missionary, their family, and their ministry.

The next year, the twins attended camp. They were 18 months old. You would imagine that they loved the “sticker” part. Milligan and Walker stayed over an extra day. The next morning, I discovered Milligan climbing up to the kitchen table and pushing back the tablecloth...reaching in and getting the stickers. She looked over to see me watching her. She knows she is not allowed on the table! When I saw what she was doing, I ran to get more stickers and gave them to her. She pushed the cloth back some more. I watched as she placed a sticker on the map...and then, clapped her hands in delight. She then folded hands...as if praying...a “holy moment” for this Nana.

Precious grandmothers - we must pass on our “legacy of faith” to the next generation. If we do no other thing in their lives than teach them how important it is to pray for missionaries, we will have blessed another generation.

## **Nana's Summer Camp Schedule (Typical)**

\*\*\*\*\*

**Wednesday, May 30, 2001**

- **Afternoon arrival**
- **Welcome** -- Nana and Bop
- **Activities**

Orientation  
Swim/relax

Dinner: Mexican Stack-Ups  
Hang out time/story time  
beds/clothes/surprises (can't grumble/can exchange)

\* \* \* \*

### Thursday: May 31, 2001

8:00 Breakfast  
8:30 Bible story  
Missionary map  
Memory verse

**Activity:** **Excursion:** Museum/Lunch  
**Alone Zone:** video/books  
**Activity:** Scrap booking with the older girls  
Twins: Swim, Art/Lagos  
**Late Afternoon Swim**  
**Dinner:** Chicken Casserole/Fruit salad  
**Worship service**  
**Sweatshirts painting**  
**Bath and Story Time**

\* \* \* \*

### Friday: June 1, 2001

8:00 Breakfast  
8:30 Bible story / Missionary Map

**Activity:** Water slide /games/Crafts  
**Lunch:** P&J/turkey sandwiches  
**Alone Zone:** DVDs, books  
**Dinner:** Nana's World Famous Spaghetti with  
Tossed Salad/Asiago Cheese Bread

\* \* \* \*

### **Saturday: June 2, 2001**

8:30 **Bible Story** / Missionary Map  
9:00 **Breakfast:** Krispy Kreme /shorts/flips  
Surprise Trip & Picnic Lunch  
**Alone Zone:** DVDs, books  
**Activities:** Bake and deliver cookies to neighbors  
Cookies/ice cream stuff  
Water games  
**Dinner:** Chicken/green salad

\* \* \* \*

### **Sunday: June 3, 2001**

8:30 Breakfast

**Bible Story** / Missionary Map  
**Activity:** Final Rehearsal for Camp Program

# **The Camp Finale ! ! ! !**

**CAMP ENDS for 2001!!!**

## ...treasures of the heart

- It is never too late to begin a *Nana's Summer Camp*! It will be a great experience for you and your grandchildren! Make up your own schedule or follow and improve on the one above. It can be as long or as short as you determine it to be. It can be as simple or elaborate as you wish to make it. Just do it!

## • 17 • The Oil of Joy

We started a “Burroughs” event in 1998. Bob and I rented a wonderful beach house over the Labor Day weekend and invited our adult children and our grandchildren to join us. We paid for it - they came! This was designed to be a time of fun: games, beach, ice cream cones, tennis, biking, swimming, eating, and everyone does just whatever they wish to do. The purpose of this weekend was to make sure our grandchildren grew up together - making life-long memories. It also turns out to be a good time to celebrate the birthdays for all the grandchildren.

Traditionally, when the Burroughs family is together for any extended time, we try to have a time of worship and celebration. On the most recent Labor Day weekend event, Bob and I were especially excited - because our son-in-love, Will, and our daughter-in-love, Colleen, had been recently honored by their respective churches to be asked to serve as deacons. We decided that our worship time on this retreat would honor these family members.

Bob usually plans our worship times, and gives each of us a specific responsibility. The Reid girls helped him plan this service. He assigned them the task of presenting “symbols of a servant lifestyle.” Bob read John 13, the story of Jesus washing the feet of His disciples, teaching them to serve each other.

After singing an appropriate hymn, Bob spoke to Will and Colleen about their new responsibility of service. He asked them to kneel behind the coffee table. Immediately, our little grandson, Walker, dropped to his knees, folded his hands together shyly, in front of his mother. This was an “*Ahhh*” moment!

Then, our oldest granddaughter, Anna, took a bible and laid it in front of them, and said: *“This is God’s Word and your guide as a servant.”* Caroline, the next oldest, brought a towel, and said: *“This towel is a symbol of a servant life style.”* Frances, the youngest Reid grandgirl, brought a basin, representing the water that Jesus used to prepare His disciples for service.

Bob then anointed the foreheads of Colleen and Will with the “Oil of Joy,” and spoke a blessing over their new ministry. Each member of the families was invited to come and speak a blessing or pray over these we were honoring. I watched as Melody bent over her husband and pray for him. A lump formed in my throat, and a *breath of joy* flooded my heart. What a picture for my grandchildren to see.

What happened next was the *breath of God* - touching our family through grand girl Milligan. She stood up, crossed the room, and picked up her plastic crayon container, came and gave one of her crayons to her mother and her Uncle Will. Our tears were our final prayer. The twins reminded us afresh of the power of...kneeling and blessing!

Isaiah tells us that a little child shall lead them. In Proverbs 20:11, we find these words: *“Even a child is known by his doings, whether his work be pure, and whether it be right.”*

Grandmothers, no one could have planned what happened in our time of worship that day! It was a *God thing!* I do know this: events like this will probably never happen unless we grandparents plan the opportunity for God to bless our family times together. I beg you - pass on your godly heritage of faith. Build in worship memories in your family.

### ...Treasures of the heart

- The earlier you can begin times of family worship, the easier it will be to retain it. And...regardless of how your teen grandchildren feel about doing it, do it anyway! They WILL come to appreciate it and will fondly recall these times when they are more mature! You are building *TRADITION!*
- Visit your Christian bookstore. You will find many wonderful age appropriate devotional books that you can share with your grandchildren. I challenge you to plan a time of worship the next time your grandchildren will be with you. Yes, the whole family together...right after mealtime...or just you and a grand child... before bedtime.

## • 18 • A Nanny Blessing

In the last video of “*Jesus the One and Only*” DVD Series, Beth Moore tells a wonderful grandmother story. She has given me permission to tell it to you.

As a five-year old child, Beth had a fall so bad that the impact pushed her baby teeth up in her mouth - causing her baby teeth to turn black. She could hardly wait for those ugly teeth to come out so her permanent teeth would grow in *pearly white*. Listen to her story.

*Pearly white they were, but they had been pushed up and when they came in, they grew out of the front of my mouth! Now, do you understand what I'm saying? I'm not talking “buck teeth!” I'm talking teeth you could set your sandwich on - and save it for later. And in those days, for whatever excruciating reason, they made you live with your teeth like that before they would fix them. And all the while, your self-esteem is suffering in ways you can't imagine. Kids are so cruel.*

*I'm telling the truth. At that particular time, I could not put my lips together! No matter what I did, my teeth would not come together. I had a 3rd grade class picture coming up. You know - the kind they take with the blue background? And I told my mom, “I'm not having my picture taken!” She said, “You are most certainly are! You are so beautiful to us.” I stood in the bathroom and literally practiced putting my teeth together until my teeth were sore and my lips were raw. I wasn't even trying to smile. I just simply wanted to cover them up. At that time, I constantly held my left hand over my mouth. It was traumatic for me.*

*So the day came for the picture. I went and stood in front of the camera and I had my hand over my mouth. The gentleman said, “You're going to have to put your hand down, Honey.” I said, “Are you ready to take the picture? Count to three and I will put my hand down. He counted...on...two...three, and I dropped my hand. He took the picture. I walked away,*

*thinking I did it...that wasn't so bad...until about six weeks later...when the teacher brought in a stack of pictures. My heart was pounding. When she laid it down on my desk, I laid on top of the picture - trying to cover it up. My classmates made fun by calling me names.*

*When I walked home that day, my mother and my grandmother, my "Nanny," were standing in the kitchen, and I said, "Don't you ever make me do anything like that again." I took those pictures and tore them up and threw them in the trash. I was devastated and I guess they were, too. All those years went by. I wore braces for 12 solid years. That's how long it took to fix that mouth.*

*My precious Nanny passed away when I was 16. I was in my early 20's and I was visiting in my mother's house in another city. We were visiting together and she said, "You're not gonna believe what I found the other day!" She got out this box...with a lid on it...and it said, "Nanny's Keepsakes" and it was even in Nanny's handwriting. I asked where this had been, and Mother said it had been in the attic. "I remembered it after she died," She said. "Nanny knew she was getting close to death. I've not looked into it. Let's open it."*

*In it, I found my grandfather's ledger. He was a lawyer during the Great Depression. I looked at letters from her sons, when they had served in WW2. Precious things. I found her bible and it was marked. When I slept with her for that length of time, we shared the same feather mattress. I can tell you that I went to bed every night with her reading the word of God over me.*

*All these years have passed and here were her keepsakes. I pulled everything out and found about six things. There was one little white envelope at the bottom and it appeared to be empty. I picked it up...and it felt like there was nothing in it. "What is this?" I asked. My mom said, "I have no idea, Honey." "Wonder if we should open it?" "Well, Nanny's not going to stop you! Go right ahead." And so I slipped my finger along*

*the top - being so careful, because this might sound weird to you, but I could just picture my grandmother licking the envelope and sealing it.*

*When I got it open, I started to say, "There's nothing in it!" But when I looked down in the corner, there was a torn piece of a picture of a little buck-toothed girl in the third grade. She had pulled that picture out of the trash, sealed it in an envelope, taped it back together and put it in this box. I looked at my Mother, as tears were streaming down my cheeks, and said, "Why did she do that?" She loved all of her grandchildren...she did not love me more than the rest. We didn't have a good answer. But now I think I now know. It was "hope." It was "hope." She did not even know all that had happened to me by that time. All she knew was that I was a troubled - but sweet child in her mind. But I believe she pulled out that picture and prayed over me and sealed me in an envelope and said, "I will never see what You do with this child...but I can hope! I can hope!"*

What a powerful illustration of the influence of a godly grandmother! Choose your words and affirmations carefully, Grandmother. Your influence may be raising an international bible teacher. *It's a God thing!* As my granddaughter said, **God did it!**

*Dear Father, when I heard Beth tell this story on tape, I got off my walking treadmill and got on my knees and wept begging God to let me have this kind of influence on my grandchildren. Father, let me put them in Your "Treasure Box," sealed with Your love and grace. Let me live and pray in hope for all You will make of them, with or without braces. I ask You to draw them to Your everlasting love and mercy. Precious Father, I ask You to claim the lives of my five grandchildren for your Kingdom. I will pray daily for them.*

*Nana*

### **...treasures of the heart**

- Go through your attic or basement and look for old photo albums with pictures of you and other members of the family when you were young. Especially look for pictures of you and your husband. Find a time to put these precious photos in a scrapbook or picture album. Write detailed explanations of each picture:
  - Where was it taken
  - What was going on in the world at the time
  - What was happening when the picture was taken
  - Who was taking the picture

This will become a precious treasure to you kids and grandkids!

### **...pearls of wisdom**

- Measure your words carefully to your grandchildren. They can have a life-long impact.
- Keep a treasure box of art, letters and notes from your grandkids. Take photos of these things and go to [www.shutterfly.com](http://www.shutterfly.com) - there you can make one or more albums of these photos to give to each grand child. There are instructions there to help you do this, even adding art work and placement of the pictures. They will treasure this in later years!

• **19 - Dee Dah Day !**

John Ortberg, in his inspiring book, *The Life You've Always Wanted*, tells a wonderful story I thought you would enjoy. It makes this Grandmother want to experience more "Dee Dah Days" in my life...with my children and grandchildren. Read...and enjoy!

*Sometime ago I was giving a bath to our three children. I had a custom of bathing them together, more to save time than anything else. I knew that eventually, I would have to stop "group bathing," but for the time being, it seemed efficient.*

*Johnny was in the tub. Laura was out and safely in her pajamas. I was trying to get Mallory dried off. Mallory was out of the water, but was doing what has come to be known in our family as the "Dee Dah Day" dance. This consists of her running round and round in circles, singing over and over again, "Dee dah day! Dee dah day!" It is a relatively simple dance, expressing her great joy. When she is too happy to hold it any longer, or when words are inadequate to give voice to her euphoria, she has to dance to release her joy. So, she does the "Dee Dah Day" routine.*

*On this particular occasion, I was irritated. "Mallory! Hurry!" I prodded. So she did - she began running in circles faster and faster and chanting "Dee Dah Day" more rapidly. "No, Mallory! That's not what I mean! Stop with the 'Dee Dah Day' stuff, and get over here so I can dry you off. Hurry!"*

*Then she asked a most profound question: "Why?"*

*I had no answer. I had nowhere to go...nothing to do...no meeting to attend and no sermon to write. I was just so used to the "art of hurrying," so preoccupied with my own little agenda...so trapped in this rat race of moving from one task to another, that here was "life," here was "joy,"*

*and here was the invitation to the dance - right in front of me - and I was missing it!*

*So I got up...and Mallory and I did the “Dee Dah Day” dance together. She said I was pretty good at it...for a man my age!*

### **...treasures of the heart**

- Be quiet, still. Think of a way you would like to spend a “*Dee dah Day,*” such as a movie...tea with a friend...lunch with your sweetheart...read a book, scrapbook or clean a closet. Go ahead now and do it! Enjoy your “*Dee Dah Day!*”
- Read Emily Barnes’ book, *Spirit of Loveliness*. It's a treasure full of pearls of wisdom, just for you. We grandmothers must nurture and take care of ourselves. This book will help.

## • 20 • You're Nobody Special Here!

I was given the middle name of my mother's mother, "*Esther*." Grandmother Woods was my "downtown" grandmother. Her husband was a coal miner. Her home was small. I can still hear the sound of her cinder sidewalk that led to the swinging gate. I spent many hours on that gate. I can still recall the fragrance of her "sunshine-dried" sheets. The outhouse was not far from the house, but it always seemed very far to me! Saturday evening bath time was in the kitchen sink. We were fortunate for Grandmother had an "inside pump." On my paternal grandparent's farm, the water pump was outside the back door. Bath water had to be heated on a coal-burning stove.

I know my grandchildren cannot even imagine that. Yet at times, they might choose just one bath a week. Grandmother bathed me, then, dressed me in fresh clean pajamas. Then came the ritual of putting my hair in "rags," so I would have ringlets for Sabbath day. I had naturally curly hair, so the Saturday "doo" would last me all week!

My child's mind remembers every day after breakfast! My Grandmother would dress me and then cover my dress with a little white lace apron. Then she brushed my hair, making ringlets around her fingers, and finishing off with a bow. I thought quite highly of myself. I cherished the daily ritual.

I happen to be a twin. My twin brother, David, was born 6 & 1/2 hours before me. That's right - 6 & 1/2 hours! I happen to be born in the "dark ages" where there was no such thing as a sonogram. I don't know who was more surprised - my mother, father or...the doctor. After returning my mother to her room, 6 & 1/2 hours later, she went back into labor...they did not know I was in there! I am so glad they found me!

When my twin and I were born on February 6th, our sister turned one on February 20. That is not all! The next March, our baby brother, Bob, was born. My precious mother had four children—in less than three years.

And...fourteen years later, my mother went to the hospital - thinking she had appendicitis, but a few months later delivered a baby sister to this crowd of teenagers. I was not happy about this...and told her so. I said to her: *"You can't have a baby! You are a MOTHER!!!"* At fourteen, I was embarrassed.

Now, back to my original story. My brother was not strong at birth , having had some breathing trouble. My Grandmother Esther came and cared for us and many times, and often, I would go home with her. It was after one such long visit with her that I learned some lessons of a large family. I fully expected my mother to curl my hair around her fingers... and place a bow in my hair. When she didn't do like Grandmother Esther, I protested and said: *"My Grandmother puts a bow in my hair every morning!"* *"Well,"* she said as she hastily brushed my hair, *"You're nobody special here! You're just one of the bunch."*

I thought about running away from home, but did not know how to get to my Grandmother's house! The truth was, I **was** one of the bunch, all of us in cloth diapers...with no day care...no nursery...and she was just doing the best she could.

I bless God for her. I often ask my Father how she did it. One of my favorite memories was special birthday cakes. Mother would hide little metal toys (they were metal back then!)...wrapped in wax paper in the birthday cake. Always, the birthday child got a nickel! I was mesmerized how she knew where the nickel was...but she did. That was a huge treat back then. A nickel would buy an ice cream cone! I learned my mother's spiritual gift was "faith." She often said, *"We'll just turn that over to God."* As a child, I knew when my mother prayed, God answered, because He knew her personally. She always gave Him the glory.

Looking back now, I believe I received much of my sense of well being from my grandmother, Mildred Esther. While in her home, I also received special attention. I loved going to her house. I'd run from the car and be swept into her bosom and held tightly. I can still remember her fragrance.

She poured her love into my life, reading to me and praying with me. She dressed me up daily and allowed me to cook with her. She had a sewing room on the screened-in back porch. I can still see her on her knees by the day bed praying...in that sewing room.

Grandmothers, perhaps, are little like God. How?

- They rejoice in the creation of a grandchild.
- They accept them as a gift from God.
- They love unconditionally.
  - They take plenty of time with their grandchildren.
  - Once in a while, they do the “*Dee Dah Day*” dance!
  - They know God can’t be everywhere so He made grandmothers...who have known Him for a long time and who want to share His love.

I long for grandparents to be connected to their grandchildren. Our grandchildren have made a big difference in our lives. I want to pass on cherished memories for my grandchildren! How about you?

### **...treasures of the heart**

- Do special things with your grand ones! They will treasure the memories for many years and remember the special time you gave them.

## • 21 • A Grandfather's Bible

My Father served in the ministry as a pastor for 40+ years. He and my Mother were married almost 62 years, before mother died from Alzheimer's disease in 1996. My Mother partnered with my Father all those years in the ministry and many years after retirement involved in short-term missions trips.

One day when we were together, she asked me, if I ever spoke to ministers' wives. I said occasionally I had the opportunity to do that. After a moment of pause and thinking, she said: *"This younger generation is different, isn't it?"* I agreed. Mother was in her 80's at this time. She went on to tell me that she had spoken to a group of your minister's wives and had told them that every Sabbath morning, she would lay my Father's clothes on the bed for him, which included his suit, tie, handkerchief, shoes and socks. She was taken aback as the women began laughing, and heard many saying: *"Let him dress himself!"* Quietly, she said to me, *"I never did tell them why I did that."*

*"It is a different day and time, Mother,"* I responded. *"But I've always wanted to know why you did that, too. I thought it was in the Minister's Handbook, on page seven!"*

Then she shared with me what I perceive to be the secret of their long ministry together: *"I laid out your Father's clothes...so he would have more time on his knees...before he opened the Word of God...to the people of God."* Whew!

My heart imagined what might happen in our homes if the mothers made special preparation for the family on Sunday...to help everyone prepare to hear the word of God...from the man of God. And being a "today's woman", what might happen if on Monday mornings if the Daddy fixed the lunches so the Mother could spend a little more time on her knees...for her children...as they go out into the world.

My Father passed to Glory, April 15, 2010 and every morning of his life, he met his Heavenly Father...on his knees...with his Bible open. In fact, on a recent visit, I walked by his study room and there he was...studying the Word...as if he had to preach on Sunday. He loves God's Word!

I have always been intrigued with his study notations throughout his Bible. His old Bible is fragile from much use. One day, I said, "*Daddy, I would like to have your bible after you are gone. I would like to give it to your namesake grandson, David Lloyd.*" He cleared his throat, and said, "*Your twin brother has already asked for my Bible.*" Rightly so, I thought. My twin, David, is Daddy's oldest son and a good bible teacher himself. He should have dad's bible, but I was a little disappointed.

In 1998, my Father - at **91** - remarried! He married a lady who had been close friends with my parents. In fact, at one time, my Father had been her interim pastor. All five of my brothers, sisters, their children and grandchildren were at the wedding. At the wedding ceremony, we stood as witness for Daddy. Her children, grandchildren and great grandchildren stood as her witnesses.

You would have loved this picture. The entire front of the church was literally filled with "family." I've never been to a wedding where when the minister pronounced them "*Man and Wife,*" an instant "standing ovation" resulted!

Our son, David, is an ordained minister and was asked by his Grandfather to be a part of the wedding ceremony. When my son walked out in his black robe and beautiful hand-made stole he had gotten in Africa...to stand with his Granddad for this ceremony, my eyes immediately filled with tears. Here was my son...in the marriage ceremony for his Grandfather! David told the congregation what he knew about his Grandfather - and then, began to tell how he knew Eunice through her book. She had served in Africa where David's wife, Colleen. She had grown up there.

Eunice is well known for her hospitality. She loved cooking for the missionaries. David began to share about Eunice being a servant and cooking lots of good food for the missionaries - and proceeded to get all choked up...and handed his notes to the pastor, and said, *“This is good stuff! You read it!”* The pastor began reading what David had written and he also became teary...so David took it back and finished it.

He said, *“Granddad, when you married Colleen and me, you gave us three words: leave, cleave, and weave. Now I give these words back to you and Miss Eunice. I have seen the nationals in Africa beside the road weaving baskets and when they put the three strands together, the basket becomes stronger.”* Beautiful words...from a grandson...to his grandfather. And you guessed it! There was not a dry eye in the place.

Little did David know that at the time, his Grandfather had bought a new Bible—just like his old one...and had been copying every word from his old Bible...to give to David. It took him five years to finish the project! What a treasure gift my son was given by his Grandfather. I call it *“passing on a heritage of faith to the next generation.”* It is a grandparent thing, Dear Reader!

I have a wonderful photo of my Father holding Walker Lloyd Burroughs and reading him from a Children’s Bible. As little babies, my Father held Walker ...Eunice held Milligan...and David asked their Great Grandfather to pray a blessing over them. He did. Colleen captured his words on tape...a intimate moment...a pearl of great price...blessings from their Great Grandfather.

## ...treasures of the heart

- Have you thought about to whom you will give your Bible? Or have you used a devotional book through the years that might have your tear stains and marking, such as “*Streams in the Dessert,*” or “*My Utmost for His Highest*”? Which grandchild would cherish this from your treasure box, likely more precious than a strand of pearls. Consider writing in the front cover of this ‘treasured book’ or other devotional books and your bibles, the name of the grandchild to whom you wish to have it given. Be sure and date it, and perhaps even more special, add a little love note.

## <sup>a</sup> 22• The Power of a Voice

Our son, David and his wife, Colleen, were going off on a ski trip - and this would mean it would be the very first time they had left the twins since their birth two and one half years earlier. They really needed the time away - together. I could feel Colleen's anxiety as she pieced together the childcare for the twins. A mother's heart is never quite settled when she leaves her children, especially for the first time.

I promised to pray hourly for their protection and care...and they were constantly on my mind. On an airplane, reading a Woman's Day magazine, I just happen to see "Tips for grandparents" on how to stay in touch with grandkids. The basis of the article was: simply read them stories on audiotape! That was it! I decided right then that when I got back home, while their parents were still away, I would send the twins "Nana's voice" by reading them a book. Of course, I went to the local bookstore and purchased two age appropriate books. My husband's assignment was to borrow a tape machine so I could make this happen! I was in a hurry. I wanted this to arrive the second day the parents were away. I knew how they loved reading books.

We got the machine, but it had no microphone! Off we went to get one that would work. We were so glad that Radio Shack was close. Now we were back home and ready to go. I practiced a little. Then Bob got everything set for me. It's amazing what Grandfathers will do for the Grandkids! Both books were completed, tapes were labeled with book name, and signed by Nana. I called Fed-X for Overnight Delivery. Of course I did! As my daughter-in-law said, "Only a Grandmother would do that!" My task complete, I set about preparing for my next speaking engagement in South Florida.

Later that week, I was speaking at Kempke's Music Florida. After the first session, I walked to the bookstore and getting in my purse, noticed my phone had a message. Turning it on, I heard this voice - full of tears. *"I can't believe you did that. Thank you for sending my children your voice on tape while I was gone...so they would hear a familiar voice! What a treasure you have given me...and them, and they will have this tape for their children to hear their Great Grandmothers voice someday!"*

I never thought of that possibility! A double blessing! The power in a voice to bring a blessing can truly be a blessing.

Colleen's voice message to me bought back another "voice message" memory.

When the twins were 3 months old, Colleen had a day trip out of town. David was to be "Mr. Mom" that day. I love how this young generation does parenting together. David had asked us to pray for him and the twins. It would be their first experience to nurse from a bottle. I prayed and then, of course, called a little after the ten o'clock feeding, to see how God had done. He shared that Milligan took it with no problem - but Walked would have nothing to do with the bottle. *"But Mom,"* he hurried on. *"Colleen called at 10:00 PM and I told her the problem."* She said, *"David, put the phone to his ear."* Then, she began to talk to her baby son and when she did, he began to nurse the bottle!

That is the awesome power of a mother's voice!

I thought how much that was like our Heavenly Father. He desires to comfort us like a mother comforts a child of her womb. How often the sound of His voice from the Word has comforted and nourished this Grandmother. His voice is so clear to me and it puts a thirst in my heart to hear His every Word. I often feel like the Psalmist: *"My soul thirsts for Thee, my flesh longs for Thee in a dry and weary land."*

Imagine a God who cares for us like a mother cares for a child! What more could we ask? Listen to His words for His chosen children of Israel in Isaiah 66: 12-13: *“For thus say the LORD, ‘Behold, I extend peace to her like a river, And glory of the nations like an overflowing stream; and you shall be nursed, you shall be carried on the hip and fondled on the knees. As one whom his mother comforts, so I will comfort you; and you shall be comforted in Jerusalem.’ ”*

### **...treasures of the heart**

- Borrow some of your grandchildren’ favorite books or purchase a couple age-appropriate books and tape your voice as you read these books to them. Yes, it does take times and energy, but what a treasure it will be to your Grandchildren!
- Record yourself reading a chapter book for an older grandchild. What a gift for a grandchild - to hear a grandparent’s voice reading a whole chapter of a favorite book! Of course, let the Granddad read some chapters, too!
- Send emails on your iPhone. Brag on your grand ones, record yourself doing it on the iPhone camera and send it to them.

• 23 • Tea for Two...or Four...or Six!! (not counting Doll and Bears)

Growing up in Canada, “tea time” was a daily ritual. I have loved visiting England and having “High Tea” in the late afternoon. It’s a virtual display of dainty goodies, all enticing and so delicious. It can be simple as a biscuit or very lavish with petit fours and finger sandwiches. It is no wonder the British eats supper later in the evening!

One of the treasures I have from my Mother is one of her teacups, with bright yellow daffodils. It is my custom, on the winter afternoon and anytime I’m writing, to stop for afternoon tea and drink from my mother’s cup. I love the connection.

Planning our second year **Nana’s Summer Camp**, I just had to put in the schedule time for an afternoon tea party. Aunt Colleen also has a tea tradition, having grown up in Africa and she had wonderful tea stories to share. I asked and she agreed.

Throughout the year, I was on the lookout for tea party things. I found a teapot, name place cards, little purse name placeholders with tiny spoons with teapot handles. So precious were these. When the day for the Tea Party arrived, the older girls made tiny name cards. I set the table with the linen tablecloths and gathered flowers from the garden for the centerpiece. Some years, I buy delicious treats, and on other years, we make them. Invitations were sent to the girls in advance - requiring a response.

One year, an invitation was also sent from Nana to each grandchild's American Girl Doll - or special teddy bear. I have dolls, also. I know this may not surprise you! The invitation stated “*Party dresses, please.*” I bought doll hats, as one of camp ‘surprises,’ so the dolls would be “properly dressed” for the tea party.

That year, a table was set for the grandchildren and a table for the dolls/bears, with their own nametags and tiny china tea sets! Each grandchild was responsible to host her doll, as well as be a guest herself.

Everyone wore hats and gloves that were provided. You know, children behave better when they are all dressed up for a party. Adults do, also. I learned a lesson that year. I had given much of this responsibility to Anna, since she is the oldest, and was the Assistant Camp Director.

She took real ownership in this tea party. As we prepared that afternoon, Anna's mother gently let us know that Caroline, the middle grandchild, was feeling left out and would like to help. I mistakenly thought that Caroline would love being treated as a guest with her doll. Well, the best laid plans....

I took Anna aside and asked her if she thought we could give her sister some of the responsibility, and of course, you can guess what her answer was. After all, I had asked her first, and it was her surprise for the sisters...and the dolls...and...on and on. More conversation about feeling left out and making everyone feel important - it was a party and we wanted everyone to have a good time. Reluctantly, she agreed and let Caroline help set the tables and make the name place cards, even for the dolls. As it turned out, the fun of the tea party for their mother and me was watching the two sisters work side-by-side to make a great tea party succeed.

What a treasured time it was. For just a few minutes, we are transported to our "pretend world," joining our hearts with grandmothers of other centuries, who shared tea time, stories and grandchildren...quieting hearts and blessings grandchildren. Life lessons come hard sometime, but it's great to learn that when joy is shared, it is doubled.

### **...treasures of the heart**

- Take photos of this special Tea Party time together...from beginning to end.
- Make up “*British Lady names*” and speak with a British accent.
- Make Tea parties a regular part of Nana camp.

### **...pearl of wisdom**

- Remember this: most of the fun for any tea party is in the preparation, the wisdom of unhurried time spent together.

## • 24 • Tears From Grandfather's Heart

It was Bob's idea! Let's give the grandgirls and their parents a "*Disney World Christmas!*" We just happened to have a very close friend who worked in the Magic Kingdom. The call was made. Reservations were confirmed. The letter of invitation to our daughter's family was sent. Everyone was happy about this early Christmas gift!

We choose the week following Thanksgiving. "Wilderness Lodge" was to be our home for four days and three nights.

Our first thought was to take just the two oldest girls, who at the time were five and one-half and seven and one-half...perfect Disney ages! At the last minute, we decided to include Frances, who was only three and one-half. What a gift that decision turned out to be! The entire trip for us was seeing the Magic Kingdom through the eyes of a little girl - who still believed in the Disney Magic...I mean **really** believed!

We also had the privilege of being selected to be the "Grand Marshals" for one of the afternoon Disney parades. This meant we got to ride in the open-air car - and be at the front of the parade. The two big girls laughed at younger Frances for choosing to wear her brand new "101 Dalmatian" pajamas - as her outfit that day! The crowd loved her.

We did not know we would meet such a wonderful person as Ray, the parade master, who was a cancer survivor, a believer, who had enormous joy for life and shared it. We were also privileged to share the Grand Marshall honors with a family from New Jersey - who had a precious special needs daughter, named Fulani. She was very tiny...and had a very tiny little voice. It made you want to hold her so you wouldn't miss a word she said. Such joy filled this child's face as we made the trip down Main Street. Her family was guests of Disney and the "Make-A-Wish Home." We learned that each night at the "Make-A-Wish Home," Disney characters come there and are with the children, reading bedtime stories to them and having special time with these special children.

At the end of the Parade, we were taken to a holding area where the Parade finishes, to wait for all the Parade Characters. Everyone was told that they could dance with any character they would choose as the characters stepped off their float. The wait was excruciating for the little ones! Fulani sat on the curb, with her feet barely touching the pavement, but under the watch care of her teenage brother...a tender sight. While we waited, our girls went over to speak to Fulani and her family. Children can be so accepting. She told them that she was having her best day ever!

As the parade came to an end, the characters stepped off the float and the children rushed forward to choose a dance partner. No, I didn't! I was in charge of the camera...and I was so glad...because I saw Prince Charming step off the float and head straight to the sidewalk where Fulani was sitting! He picked her up and danced her all over the road - as everyone cheered. I could hardly photograph my grandchildren for the tears that were spilling from my eyes as the Prince kissed Fulani as he put her in her father's arms as the music ended.

The parade was not about us. It was about sharing a treasured moment with a special little angel - named Fulani. My grand girls knew the significance of that day.

Later that evening, Bob and I took the girls to a special Disney Christmas Dinner Theater with cast and characters. It was pure delight. We were one table of many grandparents with grandchildren - out for a evening of memories. Yes, Santa showed and gave away gifts. We sang Christmas carols. It was an enchanted evening for sure. The real gift of the evening followed the Dinner as we waited for the show to begin. Little Frances was sitting in her Granddad's lap and she stroked his beard, whispering over and over, *"I love you, Bop. I love you, Bop."* I caught the moment in my heart as I watched the tears softly fall down his cheeks, over his beard, and into the heart of his youngest granddaughter. What if we had left her home...thinking she was too little?!

It's just a Nana story...but it is also a God story. He sent His Son to a cross, who shed His tears through His blood, telling us over and over, "*I love you, child. I love you, child.*" Our Disney trip was a wonderful treasure, but God's journey to the cross through His Son was a life eternal treasure that ensures we will never stop hearing the story of His love, nor will we ever be able to comprehend...it's a *pearl of great price*.

### **...treasures of the heart**

- Make a "memory" for a "special needs" child in your church/ neighborhood by planning a day for a child and their mother, taking them to a Christmas show, the zoo, or movie. If you can take your grandchildren, all will be blessed and perhaps, learn the real meaning of Christmas.
- Check your local social agency and see if you can spend an afternoon feeding the hungry, or tutoring a child to read. Make a difference in the life of some child who might need a "Nana."

### **...pearl of wisdom**

*For whoever desires to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for My sake will save it. (Luke 9:23)*

## • 25 • Time Out

My generation was not told about “time out.” We just knew the “switch” or belt. Come to think of it, we were put in the corner - after the switching - to ponder the error of our ways, I suppose. It worked. I first learned about “time out” as each of my grandchildren were born.

This has been a fun journey for me, as a twin...to watch twins. In their very early months of life, I was privileged to be with David and Colleen for a few weeks to help during the weekdays. I would fly out to speak on weekends and fly back to help. At the 5:30 AM feeding, I would listen at the foot of the steps as they nursed. When I heard their mother’s soft voice talking, I knew Milligan was finished. I would go up, get her, take her downstairs, burp her...diaper her and get her settled in the downstairs crib. I repeated the same process with Walker so Colleen could rest.

The twins slept in the same crib. I was fascinated and stood over them often just marveling. Their hands were always in the same position. When one turned its head, so did the other. They seemed to shadow each other’s movements!

Bob wanted to write a song for their baby dedication. I was asked to write the text. I felt the pressure. I kept saying, “*Just let me get there and see them and I will get inspired.*” It happened one morning early. The words came.

*A Miracle of Love*  
(Esther Burroughs)

*Intimately given from the heart of God  
Knit together in the parent’s love  
Tiny hands, Tiny feet  
Such a miracle of love*

*Perfectly formed by the hand of God  
How precious are His works of grace  
Little smiles, Breath so sweet  
Such a miracle of love.*

*Skillfully kept by the love of God  
As we journey on His path of love  
Guided by His truth and grace  
Such a miracle of love.*

*May our families give you praise  
For your awesome fearful ways  
May our families give you praise  
Guided by your Holy Ways.*

As I've watched them grow, they had a language only they understood. I'd listen early in the mornings...as they chatted back and forth. I know they understood each other because they answered each other. Milligan would tilt her head as she spoke to Walker. He always answered. It must be a twin language.

I continued to see them take care of each other. It be "y' or tw'urn, Walker." "Now it my tw'urn, Millie." Milligan is often in charge. Oh yes, they also hit each other.

When they were two, if Walker was put in time out, and he most often was, Milligan would pull up a chair and sit beside him. Is that cute or what? Walker has tender heart and words can melt this little red head down. This is not true with Milligan! She can stare you down...not melt down, but stare you down with the best of them. Recently, Walker hit Milligan - and then put himself in time out! Now that's a new one for me.

After a good laugh, I thought about the fact that God, the Father, is with us in "time out." Surely, He must tire of my consistent disobedience, as He hears the immature child in me say, like our twins, "*I do it myself!*"

He took our place on the cross - so we would never have to go there. What love! He gave the gift of His Holy Spirit - to empower us to live a mature disciplined life, so we can look like Him. What comfort! He has prepared a home for us in His presence, and in the meantime longs, to see our faces, just for fellowship! What devotion! What a loving Father. He must long for us to get over our wanting everything our way...on our timetable...with all the perks. He must tire of proving His love through discipline. Hebrews 12:10 says: *“All discipline for the moment seems not to be joyful, but sorrowful; yet to those who have been trained by it, afterwards, it yields the peaceful fruit of righteousness.”* Another translations says for the *“purpose of holiness.”*

Pray today, asking God to help you walk in holiness. Stay in His Word, Dear Grandmother. it will arm you with strength and endurance to finish the race.

### **...treasures of the heart**

- Consider, when appropriate, sharing with a grandchild a time their parents was disciplined. Laugh and learn together. It will encourage your grandchild, helping them know parents are people, too. You might even tell them a story about yourself.

## • 26 • A Great Aunt...A Grandmother To Many

We had gathered to honor my Aunt Mary, whom we called “Birdie.” She was the single aunt who became a business school professor. She is my Father’s only sister and passed to ‘glory’ at 103 & 1/2 years of age. Every niece and nephew has a needlepoint picture in his or her home - which she did for each one. Some have crocheted tablecloths. She is the one who paid for her grand nieces and nephews to have piano lessons. I know. I had them—and hated them. When we gathered at the farm, the last thing in the evening - right before bible reading and prayers, Aunt Birdie insisted that each of the children play the piano or whatever instrument they were learning. Of course, we should play for her! She paid for our musical gifts to be developed.

As children, we did not know she was teaching us to stand up and perform and share our gifts. I am most grateful. She corrected the grammar in our thank-you notes sent to her, and she sent them back - so we could correct the errors. She is the proud Auntie of nine nieces and nephews - and some thirty grand nieces and nephews. Her role has been much like a grandmother.

As my family gathered to celebrate her, everyone was invited to write a memory from their life about Auntie. It was a teary and tender evening. She kept saying, “*Oh stop it!*” But her tears and laughter spoke of her enjoyment.

Then my Cousin Ian, stood to speak. His wife read his story, because he could never have made it through his tears. Of all the cousins, this man has a tender and a proud heart in his heritage. He has worked at keeping this family connected, though it was Auntie’s idea to start these reunions some twenty years ago. Ian invited Auntie Mary to come and stand beside him. She fussed a bit but stood up and came to stand beside him. As he put his arm around her shoulder, and as he handed her a glass of water, he

said, *“I want to toast you.”* They lifted their glasses high, and all he said was: *“To Aunt Birdie!”* (Applause! Applause!)

Then he looked at her and said, *“A few years ago, you and I were talking about the old home place - and you mentioned in passing how much you would like just one more drink from the spring on the old homestead.”*

She nodded, as she remembered. He said, *“Well, you just had it!”* A hush fell over the family. How this nephew had honored his Aunt. He had made a long trip to the homestead, knocked on the door of the present owners and asked permission to gather a bucket of water from the old spring. Silently we looked...as he uncovered that bucket of water from the old spring, that had been carried many miles to honor an Auntie - who all her life has honored her God through her life of service.

I was reminded of King David doing battle with the Philistines. He was hiding in a cave of Adullam. It's almost like a passing comment when David says, *“Oh, that someone would give me water to drink from the well of Bethlehem which is by the gate.”* The story then tells of three mighty men, breaking through the enemy line, drawing water from that well and bringing it back to their King. When presented to him, David would not drink, but instead, poured it out on the ground as an offering to the LORD. David was overwhelmed with the faithfulness of his men - who put their lives at risk for their King.

Most of the time, I'm like David - longing for a drink from the wells at Bethlehem. Think about it. I can do the same by daily opening God's Word and drinking from the riches of His grace and being completely satisfied. Some days may be like breaking through the lines of the Enemy, but the risk is worth the reward of being satisfied by the *Living Water*. I thought of Isaiah's word in 68:11: *“And the LORD will continually guide you, And satisfy your desire in scorched places, And give strength to your bones; And you will be like a watered garden, And like a spring of water whose waters do not fail.”*

Later that evening, as the cousins laughed and shared again the stories they had told about their Auntie, it dawned on all of us! Each one thought they were Auntie's favorite! What a rare gift...to make all your grand nieces, nephews and grandchildren feel like they are your favorite.

*“Drink deep from the wells of God’s Word, for out of the overflow you will bless your children and grandchildren for generations to come, treating them as favorites like God treats us as His very own Possession.”*

(2 Peter 2:9)

### **...treasures of the heart**

- Think of a way to serve your mate/friend/grandchild today, just for the joy of serving and blessing.

### **...pearl of wisdom**

*“Even the Master did not come to be served, but to serve.”*

• 27 • **Feed the Soil...and the Soil Will Feed You In return**

Leonard Sweet, in his book, *A Cup of Coffee at the Soulcafe*, talks about traditions of Sunday at the home of his grandparents. His grandmother's way of putting the need to 'hallow' some time in our lives was by announcing: "*Now's Sabbath time.*" Life also needs fallow fields, green spaces, and empty places. We all need a break from the business of making an effort. Sweet says, "*Feed The Soil and the Soil will feed you in return, feed the soul and the soul will feed you in return.*"

Gramma liked to work hard. When people said to her, "*You work so hard!*" she would say in return, "*I'm going to take my vacation in heaven.*" But Gramma also knew the principle of "Sabbath time." Brought up a Baptist, Gramma was rigid about her Lord's Day. My aunts, uncles, and we grandkids couldn't even file a fingernail on Sunday! There was no ball playing...no hide-and-seek...no running wildly through the house. We had to stay dressed up in our Sunday best - all day.

A Sunday schedule at Grammas went something like this:

- It began like every other day, with a tradition of early rising.
- At 7:00 AM, the family gathered around the big table, with everyone dressed in his or her best clothes.
- Whenever the Boggs clan gathered together, Granddad asked the Lord's blessing. Gramma could read the scriptures, but she never prayed at table).
- At the sound of "Amen," everyone dived into a feast of bacon, eggs, biscuits, oatmeal, or...on special days, mush or hominy grits – a breakfast treat Gramma cooked on that giant wood stove she loved and refused to abandon.

- No one got up left the table until Granddad led everyone in family prayer.
- Then the chairs were pushed back and everyone knelt at the table for a time of bible reading and more prayer.
- While the table was being cleared, the rest of us put on the finishing touches for church.

Sunday afternoon was the primary time for visiting relatives and friends in neighboring hollers, playing the pump organ and singing hymns around the piano. On special occasions, Gramma would get out her dulcimer or banjo. Even more special were the times she and Granddad sang duets! There was also a Boggs' family tradition - helping out small country churches by leading worship and singing at 3:00 PM services.

When I was growing up, I protested the strictness of these Sunday regulations. Today, they stand as some of the most pleasant memories of my life. We all need to set aside desert days, fallow fields that are not being constantly plowed up with our own agendas and ambitions. *Recreation* means *re-creation* - that supplies your whole body with the energy you need to be creative. Recreation literally "re-creates you soul."

Leonard Sweet's story account took my heart and mind to my growing-up home. We had the same respect for Sabbath. It was the "Lord's day," my Mother always said. Some things about Sabbath day at our home always stayed the same.

- We prepared for Sabbath - on Saturday
  - The table was set with linen and the best dishes – on Saturday
  - Everyone took a nap – on Sunday
    - One of the four of us got a spanking – every Sunday!

I was an adult before I realized that a *spanking* was not on the order of worship of a Baptist church! Every few weeks, we all traveled up to the country schoolhouse church for Dad to preach. We never left anyone's home until Dad read the Word of God and prayed with the families that would host us.

I have many warm memories of us eating with friends in our home and in their homes. What great fun it was. We often ended by singing around the piano. Sundays were often long days, but the heart was full and satisfied.

### **...treasures of the heart**

- Invite your family and, if possible, your pastor's family for Sunday dinner soon - the old-fashioned kind! Yes...use your best china and linen. Make a memory. Perhaps include the single mother and her children. End with a worship service of singing, scripture and a prayer or two, with a testimony to God's goodness thrown in!

### **...pearls of wisdom**

- Ask God to show you a way to have a time of worship the next time you have company. Simply reading the bible after dinner and blessing your company and/or family in prayer might be sufficient and you'll be "feeding the soul."
- Blessing your family/friends is a pearl of great wisdom to them. Do not leave words unsaid that your soul feels and must express as a gift...for life. These will indeed be treasures of the heart.

## • 28 • Christmas Retreat

In the mid-70s, and returning home after a volunteer pastoring position in an English-speaking church in the Bahamas, my parents came to spend Christmas in our home when we lived in Birmingham, AL. Through our years in music ministry, my husband served in a local church- while at the same time, my father was pastoring churches even after his retirement. This meant, of course, our families spent very few Christmas holidays together. My children had not grown up living close to either of their grandparents.

Working with college students at the time, I planned retreats for the students and as Christmas approached, I got to thinking: why not do a Family Christmas retreat...right in our home?!

My husband is the creative one with retreat worship...but together we planned this family retreat in great detail. David was nine years old at the time and Melody was thirteen. My goal in this retreat was to help my children get to know their grandparents more intimately.

The first night of the Retreat was “game night.” Fun and laughter reigned. We ended the evening with our family devotions. Part of the devotion was an assignment for each of us to name our favorite childhood games. What fun it was to discover games that were played in the early 1900's...on the farm and...with no electricity.

Second night, each person had to tell the most exciting Christmas they had experienced and why. In preparation for the second night, we baked goodies after school...to be delivered to our neighbors that evening. Grandparents helped wrap the special Christmas package of cookies and cake for our neighbors. After supper, off we went! Christmas lights in the neighborhood windows made our journey easier. I had given the neighbors a “heads up” that we were coming before their children’s bedtime. We started at the top of the street. Our young Jewish neighbors

welcomed us joyfully, and their gift had a Hanukkah card enclosed. Our daughter was their favorite babysitter and they were so happy to see us. We sang “Jingles Bells” and “White Christmas,” accompanied by Bob...on his ukulele! Tabitha, our cat, followed us to each house. We sang to Methodists, Baptists, a Lutheran, some Catholics, and the unchurched. Christmas carols cross all denominational lines! It was a fun evening.

The next morning, the neighbors called and said: *“You have started a tradition as the ‘Von Burroughs Family’ and you must come next year.”* We did.

The third evening, we shared the Christmas traditions in our growing-up families. Our children not only learned about my growing up home, but about my parent’s growing-up families. It was a treasured time indeed.

The last evening of the Retreat was Christmas eve, and Bob had a nice fire going in the fireplace, and eggnog and goodies were on hand. I divided us in three teams - two on a team! My father and our nine-year old son were given the assignment of looking up Luke 2, and pretending that David was the young son of the Inn Keeper and he was behind the door as Mary and Joseph asked for a room. They were to tell the story through the eyes of a nine-year old boy.

The next assignment went to twelve-year old Melody and my Mom. They had to explain the Holy Spirit’s Angel visit - to her mother - about being the Christ Child’s mother!

Bob and I were to rewrite the Luke 2 account - as if it appeared in our morning newspaper in that year - 1978.

We discovered a wonderful way to experience Christmas through new eyes, bringing the story into our hearts in a new and fresh way. In the process, our children gleaned insight and traditions from their grandparents that they might not otherwise have had. My heart remembers a treasured Christmas retreat.

### **...treasures of the heart**

- You can do a retreat like this with your children and grandchildren sharing your generation's story of Christmas stories and traditions. Make up your own schedule. Be as creative as you wish. All it takes is a bit of time and insight.
- Share a childhood photo book of some of your childhood Christmas, and compare customs and traditions. This might begin a New / old tradition.

### **...pearls of wisdom**

- Read Dickens' "*A Christmas Carol*" to your grandkids.
- If possible, attend a performance of "*A Christmas Carol*" in your community. Surely some dinner theater or church drama group will perform it!

• 29 • **Be Ye kind...1...2**

I remember teaching this bible verse my grandchild, Frances: *“Be ye kind, one to another.”* She was (and is) bright and learned quickly. Wanting to show her off to her Dad as he came in the door, I said, *“Frances, say your bible verse for Daddy.”*

Softly, she said, *“Be kind, one...um. Be kind one, um...be kind, one two, three, four!”* lifting her hands in joy!! A child's treasure...with a *God truth.*

Colossians 3:12... *“chosen of God, holy and beloved, put on a heart of compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness and patience; bearing with one another.”*

I found the following quote somewhere and immediately, cut it out and put it on my desk. I need constant reminders!

**Always be a little kinder than necessary**

That led me to make this poster for the fridge, bathroom mirror, and the dashboard of my car:

**“Kindness rules!”**

It's difficult to act in kindness. But God's desire is that we are kind...1, 2, 3 times, and a whole lot more.

What might happen if **‘kinder than necessary’** ruled in our homes...and at school...at play...at work?

*Father, empower us to act if we are chosen of God...with a heart of kindness and gentleness, bearing with one another.*

(Read Colossians 3:12-14 from *The Message* translation. Wow!

**...treasures of the heart**

- Children learn by imitation. Pass on the “*gift of kindness.*”

## • 30 • Just An Ice Cream Cone

The fall of 1960 found Bob and me in Dennison, Texas. He was enrolled in Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary School of Church Music, and serving part-time (if there is such a thing) at Calvary Baptist Church. I was teaching and expecting our first child. It was a difficult time, and made more difficult when our almost eight-month old baby boy was stillborn. This was a day...void of sunshine.

When my Mother came to stay with me during the recovery time, slowly, light began coming back to my life. It was during this time that we became “adult friends,” as we shared family stories. It felt safe to have my Mother with me and caring of me. It's amazing how often, in tragedy, our hearts begin to open up and share, discovering each other's hurts, and just in the listening, and healing will begin.

I had no idea my Mother carried deep hurts in her own life, and her Mother, my Grandmother, listened and wisely counseled her through those times of hurt. I always thought mothers and grandmothers were strong and could do everything. Surely, one of the roles of a grandmother is to listen with her heart.

It was many years later, while on a speaking engagement in Asia, that I was able to listen, cry and hold a young missionary wife in her recent loss of a baby. I was able to listen and weep with her, because I had been taught well, having gone through the experience. I'll never forget her words: *“Thanks... for being my Mom this week. I needed you so much.”*

Light came to me during my recovery from another direction as well. I could hear his whistle before I saw him walk across the porch. There he stood, covered in flour all over his Pillsbury Flour Company hat and jacket. He had just come from work - directly to my front porch.

James Johnson stood at the door...holding an ice cream cone - just for me. He didn't come in and he did not speak much. The very next day, the scene was repeated. And the next. On the fourth day, I asked, "*James, how long are you going to come with an ice cream cone for me?*" "*Until your smile comes back,*" he said, as he hugged me and walked away.

God whispered his answer over and over in my heart, as healing started and my smile did return. Romans 12:10 came to mean much to me:

*"Be devoted to one another in brotherly love.  
Honor one another above yourselves."*

### **...treasures of the heart**

Answer these questions:

- Who needs your smile today?
- Who needs an ice cream cone?
- Who needs a *listening heart*? You can smile, listen, and give. Ask God to show you a young mother—who needs you. Get busy grinning and licking ice cream. Hurt is just a phone call away. Yes, you can smile even through a phone!

## • 31 • Family Traditions

The Burroughs Family is a family that has established many family traditions...seasonal and non-seasonal. For instance, the Friday after Thanksgiving Day, we used to put up our Christmas tree. We would string popcorn for the tree and while the children and I decorate, Dad would fix home made ice cream, hamburgers and fries. It was a tradition!

For a number of years, we have been sharing in a “Burroughs Family Tradition.” When our children were in their junior high years, Bob surprised each of us one Christmas. I can’t remember what year this tradition began, but on Christmas day, after all the gifts were opened, Bob got up and began looking in the tree branches as if searching for something! After a few moments, he brought out 3 small, rolled up scrolls - bound by a bright red ribbon. He presented these scrolls to the three of us - complete with our names on the outside. Each of us unrolled our gift and began to read his words in silence. Soon, you could hear sniffing sounds - as each of us read a love letter from our husband and Daddy - telling us in detail how much he loves us. What a treasure this is! This tradition continues even today - and now includes our grandchildren - when we are together for Christmas.

I heard about a grandmother who wrote her grandchildren a Christmas letter each year - enclosing a photo of the child. I knew I would like to begin this tradition at the birth of each of our grandchildren. Now, as the year goes along, I make notes of things that happen to each of the grandchildren - like keeping a history of their lives. This helps me write the letter in December. I choose an appropriate card for each child, and write a “love letter” to God, thanking Him for each grandchild and their special gifts. It is my way of affirming each child in its accomplishments during the past year. I also attach a recent photo of the child to the letter. This is great fun - because it is also a record of their physical growth, along with acknowledgement of their emotional and spiritual growth

through the year. These can also be a wonderful addition for their 'life' scrapbooks.

For me, this has become a way to let my grandchildren know of my love and concern as they become capable and worthy individuals in the Kingdom of God. It is also a way for me to share my love for them. I give them a scripture verse and tell them that I pray this verse over them often.

### **...treasures of the heart**

- Begin a Christmas or a birthday letter tradition with your grand kids. Remember: it is never too late to start a tradition of love and affirmation.
- Think of creative and innovative ways you can begin to relate to your grandchildren as special holidays or their birthdays approach. There are many special ways for a grandmother to become someone very special in the life of a grandchild!
- Give each child a tree ornament each Christmas, so when they leave home they will have a collection.

### **...pearl of wisdom**

- A great treasure for your grandchildren might be letter exchanges. Yes, you keep writing - even if they don't answer. Handwritten letters have great value! They can be read over and over...and will, I assure you.

## • 32 • I Didn't Do The Win One, Nana

All the Reid grandgirls are athletic as well as artistic. While living in Atlanta, each had the opportunity to participate as part of a neighborhood swim team. For sure, it keeps a mother busy. Caroline, the middle child, was little hesitant about the whole 'swim' thing. I mean it meant putting her head under water and she was not sure about this. Caroline is not as competitive athletically like her sisters, unless of course it's her equestrian contests. She loved training to be a "horsewoman." I could go on here about her gentle peacemaking spirit, but I won't bore you with grandmother bragging!

Coaxing Caroline did not get the job done, either. Finally, she was put on the "Tadpole" team. Once, when I was passing through town and was going to spend the night with them, I also got to spend some time at the pool, cheering for each of the grandgirls...and yelling at Caroline as the whistle went off: "*Get in the water! Get in the water!*" This is the child that was often encouraged, maybe even pushed by her mother from the starting position into the water!

I knew there was to be another swim meet soon. I also knew her sisters would bring home ribbons. I also knew Caroline doesn't major on ribbons. She called me and said, "*Nana, I did it! I did it! I did the swim meet!*" "*I am so proud of you, Caroline!*" I responded, and without thinking I said, "*Caroline! Good for you. Did you bring home a ribbon?*" "Nana," she said, speaking very slowly. "*I didn't do the 'win' one! I only did the one where all you have to do is get in the water and swim to the end of the pool...and everyone gets a ribbon!*"

I took a deep breath. Wouldn't life be easier...if all that was required of us was just to get to the end of the pool...simply doing your best, without being pressured about ribbons. Now I believe in competition! But wouldn't life be friendlier if life was not almost totally about completion and we were free to do just our best.

It was a great event for our middle grandchild - to get in the water and then make it all the way to the end of the pool. She had done well.

Paul said: *“I have fought the good fight. I have finished the race. I have kept the faith.”* (2 Timothy 2:7) He goes on to say he has laid up for himself a *crown of righteousness*. Perhaps that is what today’s grandparents need to remember - life is about finishing well in the kingdom of God!

### **...treasures of the heart**

- Support and encourage your grandchildren by attending their athletic events, music concerts/recitals, games and activities whenever possible.
- Was there anyone in your family tree athletic? Research this and provide this information for your athletic grandchild.

### **...pearls of wisdom**

- Share stories of great athletic victories and defeats with your grandchildren...yours or others. They will enjoy hearing these from you.
- Buy a bunch of multi-colored ribbons and make up awards for your grandkids—for no reason - but love. Give such awards as: *“Best In Class,” “Best Eater,” “Best Singer,” “Best Dish Washer,”* and *“Best Hugger.”* They will treasure these awards from their Grandmom!
- Make a “Blessing Box.” Fill it with simple gifts - to give to anyone ...at any time...for any reason.

# Tips for Grandparents

1. Compliment your grandchildren in front of their parents — often!
2. Always...always keep your promises to them.
3. Refrain from doing two things at once when you are with your grand ones! Give them your full and undivided attention.
4. Display proudly your grandchildren's honors! Be there if something important is happening!
5. Always give your grandchildren a second (and third) chance.
6. Give your grandchildren a subscription to a quality children's magazine in his/her name.
7. Spend a vacation with your family, if possible. Buy a travel book or CD to research the destination. Let everyone be in on the planning.
8. Cook often with your grandchildren. They will learn how to plan and prepare meals, and this is also a great way to spend quality time together.