

Your Caring Room

by Bethany Notgrass

Who are the people in your life that have shown you caring? Who has been loyal? Who has listened without looking at the clock? The people in our lives that care leave good memories in our minds and in our hearts. Even an untrained unprofessional can place a healing hand of caring on another person, leaving behind peace and fresh new hope.

As He walked with us on earth, Jesus cared about the people He knew and the ones He briefly encountered. He made no distinctions based on wealth, prestige, health, or attractiveness. His manner said "I care" in every way to every person.

As Christians we are called to care as Jesus did. Galatians 6:2 profoundly states that we are to bear one another's burdens. That goes beyond caring to an active, involved participation in the soul of a fellow pilgrim.

But just how are we to be involved? How much, how often, and in what way? There is so much pain in our world, so much need. How can we know who needs us most and where God is calling us to care, get involved, and bear burdens?

Luke 6:12-13 says, "... Jesus went out to a mountain-side to pray, and spent the night praying to God. When morning came, he called his disciples to him and chose twelve of them . . ." (NIV) Jesus, like all of us, had to make choices about where He invested His time and energy. He took this responsibility seriously, even spending a whole night praying to God before choosing the twelve apostles. Rather than spreading Himself in a thin layer by trying to have a close relationship with everyone, Jesus gave His time, attention, and teaching especially to twelve, and even more particularly to three. Peter, James, and John were an inner circle of the inner circle that got even more specialized time, attention, and teaching.

Has it ever occurred to you that this was exclusive? Most of Jesus' followers did not get chosen to be part of the twelve. And most of the twelve were left out of the inside trio. Why do you think Jesus did it this way?

Jesus was a real human. While He walked on earth, He lived with the same limitations we do. He only had 24 hours in his day. He got tired. His spirit was taxed by His own grief and the pain of those around Him. He experienced the same demands and fatigues we do. He had to stop sometimes and go away by Himself. He had to take a break and get something to eat. He had to choose where to put His relational energies.

As a person following Christ and being led by the Spirit of God, you have unique qualifications for caring. You have a close relationship with the One who knows how to care perfectly. You have the answers that every person needs--not in yourself, but in the Jesus you follow. You're not only equipped to care and help, you are called to. The Christian does not live facing inside. We are charged to live with eyes and hearts open to people who need food, clothing, hope, guidance, understanding, and love.

This requires wisdom. Jesus was serious about His responsibility to care and to serve, and we are to follow in His path. Just like Jesus, you and I have a certain amount of time in each day, a certain amount of energy we can expend between resting and refueling, and a certain capacity for involvement in the lives of others.

Jesus walked around His world caring. The Bible tells us of many brief encounters Jesus had with all

different sorts of people. It seems that He left the fragrance of caring as He walked along fulfilling His mission. In fact, that kind of caring was part of His mission. It's also a part of ours. To the lady at the checkout counter, your dad's coworker, the small child who smiles at you, the stranger on the other end of the phone line, your words and expressions are to be a representation of the God you serve. It's fitting that our passing meetings be characterized by grace and joy. Even brief encounters can have meaning.

We should also follow the example of Jesus in having a circle of long-term high-investment relationships. These are the people that we know and continually know better. They are real friends, with whom we have something that connects us. These are people that we can serve over months or years. We need them, and they need us. Our opportunity for impact is proportionate to the investment we place in their lives. With these people, we have a special ministry of caring. No one can handle an infinite number of relationships like this. Not even Jesus tried that.

For most of history, a person's opportunities for relating to people were limited to their geographic area. Recent history has exploded with ways of meeting people and communicating with them. News reports give us unending information about what's happening in the lives of people we don't know: disaster victims on other continents, populations engulfed in war, peoples oppressed by their governments. Now that technology allows us to know so much, we just know so much! Our caring room can get filled up really fast. It's hard to know what to do with all this information, or how to care for and care about millions of people we'll never see.

Is this what God designed us for? To focus on pain that we literally can't do anything about? To be bombarded by far-away need via our computer screen? What if this keeps us so busy that we fail to notice the person upstairs or on the other side of town that needs to talk? Are we in danger of "caring about" everyone, while really bearing the burdens of no one? Caring is tiring and frustrating, but that investment should count for something. Plus, all of these useful technologies create an easy way for us to deceive ourselves. We can "care" in ten seconds by reading articles, looking at people's status, forwarding "you are awesome" e-mails. But does that impact lives in a lasting way? Bearing one another's burdens is not passive. It's vibrant and active; it does things. It talks and listens and goes deep. It takes real time, not just a minute here and there.

Even Jesus didn't try to have dozens of "close friends." Look at the results in the history of the Kingdom of God because of what He invested in the lives of three men. He was really there, close beside them, loving them in a way that they could see and feel. I struggle with knowing which way to turn among all the need and opportunity I see. Let's follow Jesus' example and seek God's direction for how to manage our caring room, making effort that counts and investing in people in a long-term way. There are billions we'll miss, but God has someone assigned to them, too.



about this issue

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Let us
consider
how to
stimulate
one another
to love
and good
deeds.

Hebrews 10:24

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Queen of the West

The Story of Dale Evans

by Amy Puetz

Dale Evans leaned forward in the saddle to better hear the yarn Gabby Hayes was spinning. When the old codger reached the hilarious climax, Dale threw her head back and laughed, accidentally digging her heels into her horse, making him take off like a bolt of lightning. Dale held on for dear life as the animal continued the mad flight. Quick as a wink Roy Rogers mounted Trigger and rode after Dale. Just as she was about to fall off her horse, Roy scooped her from the fleeing steed and set her safely on Trigger. Letting out a sigh of relief, Dale thanked her kind co-star for rescuing her. She thought this deed outlined any of the stunts he preformed on camera. It was good to have friends, Dale thought, as she looked around the Republic studio seeing Roy Rogers, the Sons of the Pioneers, and Gabby Hayes. Billed as the "Queen of the West," Dale Evans enjoyed a blooming career during the 1940's, playing in B-westerns. Her road to fame had not been easy and it would be a while before she found true happiness.

Dale Evans was born Frances Octavia Smith on October 31, 1912, in Texas. Her parents, Walter and Betty Sue, raised her in a loving Christian home. Since Betty Sue wanted Frances to have a head start in school, she taught Frances to read and write before she entered the first grade. The result was that Frances attended half a year of first grade and then was moved to the third grade. Loaded with talent, Frances sang beautifully, loved to improvise on the piano, and had a pleasant personality that made it easy for her to make friends. Frances always seemed to act older than she really was. At the age of twelve she entered high school. At fourteen she fell in love and got married. Her marriage bliss soon turned to sorrow when her husband left her. When she gave birth to a son, Tommy Fox, at fifteen, her husband was by her side, but soon afterward he left her for the last time and asked for a divorce. Despite her lack of a high school diploma, she managed to attend business school and get a job as a secretary for an insurance company. Her parents kindly offered to help Frances raise her son, but she felt that he was her responsibility and was determined to care for him.

Although she earned a decent living as a secretary, her creative spirit longed to do something else. Getting a job at a radio station, Frances felt that her dream of playing on Broadway was one step closer. Over the next few years Frances worked at stations in Louisville, Kentucky; Memphis, Tennessee; and Dallas, Texas. While she was working in Louisville, the program director at WHAS gave her the stage name Dale Evans.

One day Dale returned from work to find Tommy very ill, and she realized how much she loved her son and how little she was able to protect him. Fearing it was polio, Dale prayed fervently for God to spare her son from the dreaded disease. She even bargained to live for Him, read the Bible, and pray. When Tommy's tests came back negative, Dale soon forgot her promises. Another event occurred that shook Dale into action. Her neighbor's daughter caught fire and died while being rushed to the hospital. Dale feared that something like that could

happen to Tommy. Swallowing her self-reliant attitude, Dale allowed her parents to take care of Tommy for a while.

Dale enjoyed a thriving career in radio. After marrying Robert Dale Butts in 1939, the couple set out for Chicago. She worked for CBS in Chicago and was heard all over the United States. When an agent from Hollywood heard Dale sing, he contacted her about coming to California. Reluctantly, Dale agreed, thinking nothing would come of it. She was interviewed by the casting director at Paramount Studios for a role in "Holiday Inn," which was to star Fred Astair and Bing Crosby. Although she did not get the role, she did do a screen test. She got a job at Twentieth Century Fox but had only a few bit parts.

To be accepted in the Hollywood image, Dale's son, Tommy, was passed off as her younger brother. The deception bothered Dale a great deal. Reluctantly, Tommy agreed to go along with it, but he promised never to lie about it himself. In 1941, World War II started and the studio canceled "Campus in the Clouds," which was to be Dale's first starring role. Instead she used her talents entertaining soldiers at training camps and USO shows. She also recorded songs that were sent to soldiers overseas. After working for a while in radio, Dale signed a contract with Republic Studios.

When the studio owner told Dale that she would be the new leading lady in a B-western with Roy Rogers, Dale was horrified. Wanting to play in musicals and on Broadway, she dreaded the prospect of playing in B-westerns. She knew a little about Roy Rogers. His manager, Art Rush, had been her manager for a while, but she got tired of hearing about Roy and thought Art spent more time taking care of Roy's affairs than hers. Since she did not want to be in this kind of movie, Dale planned to give such a great performance that she would be given better roles. Her scheme didn't work, and she and Roy Rogers became a silver screen team. Despite her aspirations, Dale enjoyed working with the shy, mannerly Roy Rogers, the fun, fatherly Gabby Hayes, and the smooth-singing Sons of the Pioneers. In 1944, "The Cowboy and the Senorita" was released and received rave reviews, especially of Dale's performance. A close friendship developed between Dale and her coworkers and she also became friends with Roy's wife, Arlene, and his two small daughters, Cheryl and Linda. Dale took riding lessons to help her perform better in westerns. After their success with "The Cowboy and the Senorita," Dale and Roy played in such movies as "The Yellow Rose of Texas," "Don't Fence Me In," and "My Pal Trigger." From 1944-1947 the silver screen duo played in several blockbuster hits and made the top-10 box office moneymakers list.

Although happy with her success, Dale still wanted to be more than a cowgirl in B-westerns. Tired of getting fourth billing (after Roy, Trigger, and Gabby) Dale returned to radio. Sadly, in 1945, Dale's marriage to Robert Dale Butts ended in divorce. Both were so focused on their careers that their relationship crumbled.

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We Have Seen His Glory

a study of the book of John, part 5

1. Read John 8:1-11. How did Jesus speak to the woman and to her accusers?
2. Read John 8:12-27. What do you think it was about Jesus that kept the Pharisees and other religious leaders coming back to Him to ask questions and argue?
3. Read John 8:28-32. What does it mean to continue in the word of Jesus (verse 31)?
4. Read John 8:33-45. Contrast the truth of Jesus and the lies of the devil.
5. Read John 8:46-59. Why did the Jews pick up stones to throw at Jesus after His statement in verse 58?
6. What are some things that people say in our day when they are trying to resist Jesus?
7. What are some of the short-term and long-term results when a person resists Jesus?
8. What are some of the short-term and long-term results when a person believes in Jesus?

He who follows Me will
not walk in darkness, but
will have the light of life.
John 8:12



Letters from Rachel Starr Thomson

Amazing Grace

"Oh foolish Christians! Who has bewitched you that you should not obey the truth, before whose eyes Jesus Christ was clearly portrayed among you as crucified? This only I want to learn from you: Did you receive the Spirit by the works of the law, or by the hearing of faith?"

Are you so foolish? Having begun in the Spirit, are you now being made perfect by the flesh?" (NKJV)

Hard words. We can almost feel the frustration with which Paul writes; we can almost see his fist pounding the table in front of him. Yes, these are hard words—but they are also, when taken into our hearts and applied to our lives, words that impart the most incredible freedom! For those who did not recognize the above quotation, it comes from Paul's Epistle to the Galatians, chapter 3, verses 1-3 (with a slight modification).

These words of Paul's have spoken to me many times, and I hope that they might speak to you as well. They have humbled me, saddened me, and most of all, released me . . . for in them is the bountiful mercy and power of God revealed.

My struggle with grace dates back a number of years. Struggle? Oh, yes, I've struggled with the grace of God. And so, I suspect, have many Christians. The Galatians certainly did. I'm not sure exactly why grace is such a difficult thing to embrace, but it is. Perhaps it is our pride that gets in the way, that wants to claim some credit for ourselves. In Ephesians, Paul says that grace is the gift of God—not of works, lest any man should boast. What God wants to give us, our blind pride would rather earn. This may be why so many people have to hit "rock bottom" before coming to the Lord. Sometimes, it takes the absolute decimation of pride to make us able to meet God.

It was a number of years ago, while I was working in ministry, that I slipped into a belief that God expected me to earn my way into His good favor. Some of Scripture's more frightening passages tormented me, with their warnings of sheep and goats, of castaways and those who "fall from grace." My works became a matter of desperately trying to keep my head up above water, instead of flowing from my love for and faith in the Lord of life. The harder I tried to work my way into God's good books, the more aware of my own utter depravity I became. No matter how hard I prayed, studied, and worked for the Lord, I could not rise above my failings. My fellowship with God became hindered, and my work became crippled . . . I could hardly be effective for a God who must certainly be unhappy with me.

During all of this, I still held to the doctrine of salvation by faith through which I had come to the Lord in the first place. This other belief, this trying to perfect myself through the flesh, was a new development. At last I came to a place where I could take it no longer. I fell on my knees and cried out to God: "Lord, I have to know what grace is, or I can't go on anymore. I can't keep serving You without this understanding."

I felt impressed to read the Book of Romans, which I have always had difficulty in understanding. Feeling a bit as though I was being led to a dry well and told it was going to start filling up at any moment, I started reading. Every day I read a chapter and memorized a few verses in it to mull over for the day, and when I felt that I had come to an understanding of what I had read, I would move on to the next chapter.

What I learned in Romans would take a long, long time to articulate, and I'm not going to try and record it all here. Rather, I would like to tell you about the other Scripture passage that God used to crystallize the concept of grace in my mind, and in my heart. It is found in John chapter 8, and to me it is one of the most moving passages in the whole book. It is the story of grace.

In it, a woman is brought to the Great God of the Universe, embodied in a man named Jesus Christ. She is brought roughly before the Judge of the Ages, thrown down at His feet and accused as an adulteress. She is certainly guilty. She was caught in the act and brought here! She lays on the ground, her head hanging, not daring even to look at Him. This is the God whose fingers once wrote on two tablets of stone, who commanded for every person

in every time that "Thou shalt not commit adultery!" This is the God who demanded the penalty of death for this crime. It is at His feet she now lies, and it is to His ears the challenge is thrown: "Teacher, this woman was caught in the act of adultery. Now, Moses in the law commanded us that such should be stoned. But what do You say?"

For a moment the Son of God's eyes sweep the crowd, and then He stoops down and begins to write on the ground. There is a moment of shock. Is He ignoring them? And then He looks up, and says quietly, "He who is without sin among you—let him throw the first stone."

And He is back to His writing in the dirt. A very old man with a very white beard abruptly turns and leaves the scene. Others follow, some quickly, some slowly, with more reluctance. The Christ's words have come to bear on every man. They stand all convicted; all guilty. So they leave. And He is left. The sinless One.

The Alpha and Omega, Judge of the Hearts of Men, the Great I AM, He who reigned fire on Sodom and Gomorrah; the One before whom the angels cry, "Holy! Holy! Holy is the Lord of Hosts, the whole Earth is full of His glory!" His Law has been broken by this woman. His Rule has been mocked. Almighty God stands affronted.

His voice is gentle as He asks, "Woman, where are your accusers? Has no one condemned you?"

She raises her eyes, just a glimmer of hope beginning to warm her heart. "No one, Lord."

And oh, so quietly He says words that cause the heavens to shiver, that cause all of creation to draw in its breath and gasp in astonishment. "Neither do I condemn you. Go, and sin no more."

Did you hear it? Did you hear what He said? "Neither do I condemn you!" Do we understand that God does not wish to condemn us? That though His justice must demand the ultimate penalty for our sins, it breaks His heart to do so? This is why He died! In that moment on a dusty bit of Israeli earth, the Messiah proclaimed His heart and the reason for His coming! He threw His mantle of protection, the ransom of His blood, over the woman and set her free.

This is not cheap grace, certainly! This is not something to be taken lightly! With His own life He bought grace for us. With His death He made mercy possible! It was on the promise of His full payment that David was forgiven his crimes, that Abraham and Moses talked with God, that Rahab was redeemed. Only because of His sacrifice does mercy reign in this world. Only because of His heart, the heart that broke and bled and stopped beating for our sake!

Understand! Every one of us who has come to God has come this way: thrown down to the ground, bloody and exposed and reeking with guilt. Every one of us has come with the voices of the Accuser and his demons cursing and taunting and shouting over our hanging heads, "The Law demands death. What do You say?" Every one of us.

And to every one of us He has said it: "I do not condemn you. Go, and by my grace, sin no more." His is the right to condemn, His is the power. And because of His sacrifice, He has refused to exercise His right. He has refused to condemn us!

I hear joy in His voice, joy of such depth that I doubt any of us have ever fully experienced it. This is joy to make the stars sing, to send the Spirit of the Son of Man leaping and skipping and dancing upon the mountains. "Neither do I condemn you!"

Only one thing is asked of us: Accept this grace. Accept it, and go forth from this place of confrontation with your sin—go forth a free man, or a free woman, and sin no more. Enter into this love and joy of your God, and learn to live by His Spirit.

And when you fall again, grace is still there.

Rachel Starr Thomson is the oldest of twelve children, a homeschool graduate, and the author of several books including the fantasy *Worlds Unseen* and its sequel *Burning Light*, *Tales of the Heartily Homeschooled*, *Letters to a Samuel Generation*, and *Heart to Heart: Meeting With God in the Lord's Prayer*. She is a believer in Jesus Christ, the Son of God and hope of the world, and she loves to write about His goodness and grace. Rachel loves long walks, good books, and the fellowship of God's people. She is an incurable tea-drinker and a counter-culture revolutionary who thinks life would be far, far better if we all chucked our television sets out the window. Visit www.rachelstarrthomson.com

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Queen of the West

The Story of Dale Evans

continued from page 2

A year later, Roy's wife Arlene died shortly after giving birth to her first son. When Dale's son, Tommy entered the army he listed Dale Evans, actress, as his mother. The press found out about it and finally the truth was known. A huge weight was removed from Dale when she could tell the whole world that Tommy was her son and she did not have to hide behind the ridiculous lie anymore.

When Dale realized that she had more of a future as a cowgirl than she did in radio, she returned to Republic. The studio even allowed her to perform in a few musicals, but the movies were flops. Roy Rogers and Dale Evans were again teamed together. To promote their movies, they traveled all over the United States making personal appearances. While waiting for a rodeo to start in Chicago, Roy asked Dale to marry him. She accepted and they tied the knot on December 31, 1947, during a raging snow storm in Oklahoma. Dale and Roy balanced each other very well; she was spontaneous and outgoing, while he was shy and easy-going. They shared fifty-two years of marriage.

Roy's children found it difficult to accept Dale as their mother. The strain of rejection began to make Dale's life miserable. When her son, Tommy, saw his mother's struggles he suggested she and the children go to church with him and Dale agreed. The sermon "The House That Is Built on the Rock" hit home. She longed to have a home with a foundation built on Christ. Dale wanted to go forward when the invitation was offered, but her pride got in the way. She had been baptized at the age of ten (more from fear of hell than a true commitment to Christ) and she reasoned that she didn't need to go forward. At home, the sermon stayed with her and later that night Dale shed tears of remorse for all the wasted years. She promised to go forward next Sunday and rededicate her life to Christ. After Dale's conversion, a change began to take place in the Rogers household. Through Dale's example and God's prompting, Roy also accepted Christ as his savior. Their lives started to change, and Christ used them in ways they could have never imagined.

In the 1950's Roy and Dale moved from the silver screen to television. "The Roy Rogers Show" premiered on December 30, 1951 and ran for six years. The show closely followed the storyline of their successful movies. Set in the fictional Mineral City, Roy owned the Double R Bar Ranch and Dale ran the Eureka Cafe. Together they rode for right and defended justice. Trigger was of course a prominent player and Dale rode her horse Buttermilk. Also in the cast was "Bullet The Wonder Dog." Pat Brady from the Sons of the Pioneers played their sidekick alongside his stubborn jeep, Nellybelle.

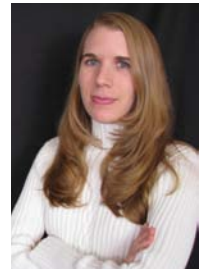
Although Dale had been told she could not have any more children, the Lord blessed them with a baby girl on August 26, 1950. Robin Elizabeth Rogers came into their lives for only a short time, but her influence was eternal. Born with a defective heart and Down syndrome, Robin brought a piece of heaven with her. Shortly before her second birthday, Robin came down with the mumps and died. Dale wrote *Angel Unaware* to share all that Robin had accomplished for Christ during her brief stay on earth.

Knowing they could not have any more children, Roy and Dale began looking into adoption. Their first adopted child was a little Choctaw Indian girl named Mary Little Doe. They called her Dodie. Next came a five-year-old boy, Sandy. They became the guardians of a thirteen-year-old Scottish girl, Marion, whose parents were still alive, which made it nearly impossible for them to adopt her. Last came a three-year-old girl from Korea whom they called Debbie. Dale and Roy were busy balancing careers and a growing family of seven. In the mid 1960's, the Rogers family lived through the traffic deaths of two of their children. Debbie was killed in an automobile accident while returning from a mission trip to Tijuana. Sandy joined the army and while stationed in Germany he died as the result of an accident. These losses made Dale more dependant on God. She commemorated her lost children in two books, *Dearest Debbie* and *Salute to Sandy*.

Dale enjoyed success on many different fields during her illustrious life. She excelled as a writer and published over twenty books including *My Spiritual Diary*, in which she shared the story of her journey to Christ. She always shined as an actress and singer. As an accomplished songwriter she penned such songs as "Don't Ever Fall in Love with a Cowboy (He'll Love His Horse the Best)," "Aha, San Antone," "The Bible Tells Me So," and the theme song of their TV series "Happy Trails." After Dale became a Christian, she devoted much of her time to spreading the gospel. She and Roy participated in many Billy Graham Crusades and gave their testimonies when asked. Probably her most rewarding job was being a mother. She was even named the California Mother of the Year in 1967. In the 1990's Dale had an inspirational talk show called "A Date with Dale" where she shared her faith and encouragement with others. In 1995 Dale was inducted into the National Cowgirl Hall of Fame.

When the Queen of the West died of heart failure in 2001, the world knew they had lost a talented lady and a Godly woman. Her legacy of faith lives on through the people she influenced: those who knew her and those who have read her books and watched her movies. Some of the trails she rode were hard but she knew at the end she would reach a place where the streets are paved with gold.

Amy Puetz, a homeschool graduate, loves history, sewing, and working as a graphic designer for her company A to Z Designs. She is the author of an e-book series for young ladies called *Heroines of the Past* as well as a growing number of historical books. Visit her website at www.AmyPuetz.com to see many resources relating to history. Join her mailing list and receive a free e-book!



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Don't forget the amie Writing Contest

Wings of Hope

See the April issue for all the details and guidelines. If you have any questions, please contact Bethany at bethany@notgrass.com. Remember the deadline is June 30, 2009!

Brain Bender Answers:

1. \$98.50
2. \$15.00
3. 98¢

4. \$6.50
5. \$1.90
6. 40¢
7. 25¢

8. 95¢
9. 35¢
10. \$3.70
11. \$1.15

12. \$32.95
13. \$62.50
14. \$14.98
15. \$9.35

A Message from My Heart

Interviews with women of God by Annalisa Perry

A Talk with Sinead

This interview is continued from the April issue. Sinead lives with her husband and four daughters in England.

How can I have a better relationship with my parents?

Well, you have probably heard this a gazillion times, but I find the simplicity of God's word very useful and, unsurprisingly, don't feel I can better His advice: Honour (excuse the spelling; I'm British!) and obey. If you haven't done so already, spend a little time working out exactly what that word "honour" means. It's not such an everyday word these days.

From a practical point of view, the benefits of this are numerous, including staying in what our family calls the "safe & happy zone," and the safe and happy zone brings freedom within its boundaries. Parents will feel confident in widening those boundaries in line with their children's demonstration of ability to stay within them. Another benefit is that the more you honour and obey, the less time your parents will have to spend training you and the more time you will have for doing more pleasant things with them!

Communicate with your parents about everything, bad, good or indifferent. They love you and want to know what is going on in your heart and mind, especially if it is something you are struggling with, as they will want to help you. Keeping things inside can easily allow them to grow into something bigger than it needs to be. Whereas a loving, outside perspective can help things to decrease or disappear.

Take opportunities to be with your parents and do things together. This builds any relationship. And try not to be too narrow about what you class as an "opportunity." In this context, it doesn't have to be something hugely fun and exciting or a special set-aside time or a treat. A good friend once said to me that he enjoyed living in a house where there was no dishwasher because he felt that doing the dishes together with someone was an excellent way of building relationships!

Truly accept in your heart that all their decisions are made with your best interests at heart, in the context of the needs of the whole family. So, even if the decision does not go your way or is incompre-

hensible to you, you can still be content in the knowledge that you are loved and guided by the people God wanted you to be with.

"Help" is a good word here, too. Anyone in a position of authority is enabled by those around them who help them. You can enable your parents by helping them in any appropriate way, thus making their role not only more achievable, but also more enjoyable.

See Hebrews 13:17. This is about elders, but I think the same applies to parents.

How can I be there for my friends when they need me?

Be a regular part of their lives and don't get too busy. Both of these will enable you to be available to your friends.

As with your younger siblings, be a friend, not a judge. Friends give sensitive support through struggles. This doesn't mean they don't say the things that need to be said. It is the best kind of friend that does that. It is just that everything that is said is said with love and gentleness.

Be open, honest, and humble about your needs. Your friends will then feel more comfortable about sharing theirs with you, and you can both support each other, whether it be through prayers, Bible study, sharing experiences or something practical.

See Proverbs (Solomon had a lot of useful things to say about friendship, if you want to look into it further).

Annalisa is the eldest of eight children. She enjoys reading books, writing stories, talking to people, and spending quality time with her family. Annalisa and her family were missionaries in Germany for five years before they moved to Georgia two years ago. She enjoys homeschooling because it gives her independence and unique opportunities. She is in 11th grade. You can write Annalisa at annalisaperry@yahoo.com



BRAIN BENDER *Thinking is a full-time job.*

Sears, Roebuck, and Company Catalog 1900

Match these real items from the Sears, Roebuck, and Company catalog of 1900 with their listed prices. Answers, page 5.

- | | | | | |
|---|--|---------|---------|-----|
| 1. Our New American Home Upright Parlor Grand Piano | 8. Handsomely Dressed Doll | 98¢ | \$62.50 | |
| 2. Stanton's Very Finest, Extra Heavy Weight, Plain Black Double Diagonal All-Wool English Worsted Cloth Men's Suit | 9. Rubber Snake, 19 inches long | \$3.70 | \$32.95 | |
| 3. <i>Every Man His Own Doctor</i> (book) | 10. Acme Lawn Mower | \$1.15 | \$15.00 | |
| 4. Imitation Mexican Marble Clock | 11. Our New 1901 Wagon Umbrella | 25¢ | \$14.98 | |
| 5. Gold-Filled Spectacles | 12. Roll Rim White Enameled Bath Tub, 5 ½ feet | \$98.50 | \$9.35 | |
| 6. The Famous White Lily Face Wash for Beautifying the Complexion | 13. Fancy Stanhope Two-Seater Buggy | 95¢ | 40¢ | |
| 7. Ladies' Gingham Sun Bonnet | 14. Royal Blue Marble Tombstone | \$1.90 | \$6.50 | 35¢ |
| | 15. Stylish Ladies' Cape Made of Fine Seal Plush, Neatly Embroidered with Black Soutache and Beads | | | |