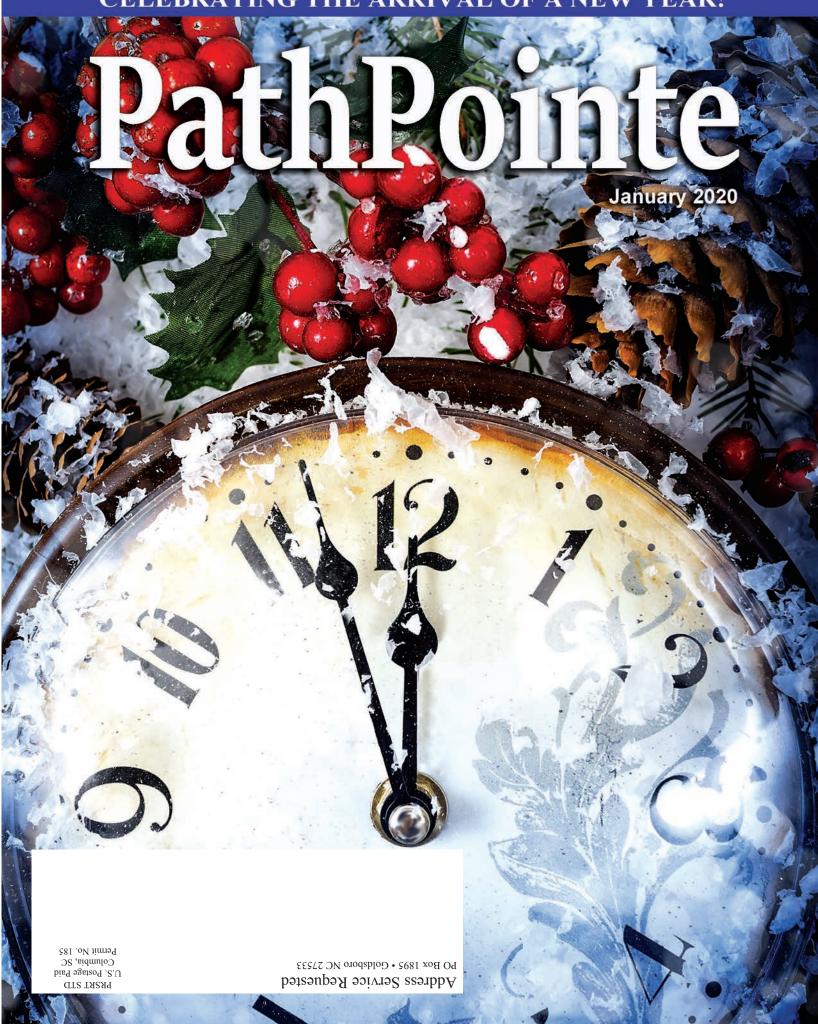


### **CELEBRATING THE ARRIVAL OF A NEW YEAR!**



















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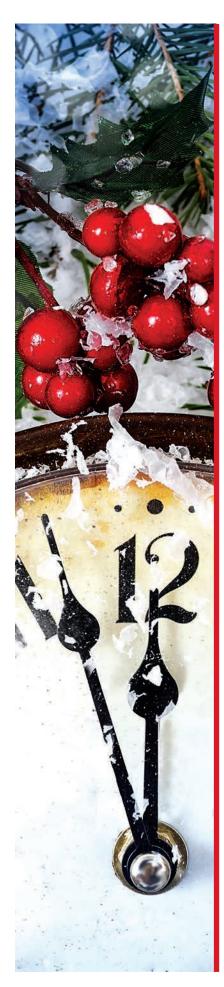
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#### PathPointe Magazine

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Okay, I am going to venture outside of the box for a moment. Please extend a little grace before you brand me a heretic. I am going to make a declarative statement that being nice is not always the best virtue to shoot for. Nice in our society has become a tool the world holds against us for not bowing to their image. To them, being nice equates to never upsetting any of them at any time, never rocking their boat, and being agreeable and accepting of anything they deem as politically correct. It also means being timid, quiet, inoffensive, and constantly apologizing for who we are and what we believe. Oops, I think I'm going to be on the naughty list this year. Do you suppose that's why I didn't get that shiny new Corvette for Christmas? Did I miss the nice list again?

It goes without saying that there is a minimum level of "niceness" we all should strive for just like we were taught as children. But does that mean that as a Christian I am always to be passive and non-confrontational? The sign on the front of a local school said "Be nice, not nasty." I guess that was a message to bullies, but are those my only two choices? I know nasty is considered an antonym of nice, but something about that doesn't seem quite right. As a man, one of the challenges of living the Christian life is avoiding the extremes of being sinfully aggressive or sinfully passive. I don't want to make the same mistake the Corinthian church made, in going along with sin just to avoid conflict.

There are two verses of Scripture that are often misread in an effort to support the idea that Christians should never assert themselves or say anything that someone could construe as not being nice:

"But I say unto you, that ye resist not evil; but whosoever shall smite thee on thy right cheek, turn to him the other also. And if any man will sue thee at the law, and take away thy coat, let him have thy cloak also." Matthew 5:39-40

On the surface these verses seem to teach we should be the best doormats in town. However, the lesson here was never meant to imply that Christians were to be "nice" and always let others take advantage of them. How do we know this?

- 1) Because we are told to be like Christ, and Jesus did not live that way. He repeatedly challenged evil people, and called them what they were: vipers, hypocrites, and white-washed sepulchres (Matthew 23:27). Was He being nice or nasty? Perhaps He was just being honest.
- 2) When slapped, although He allowed the beating for the benefit of mankind, our Lord still verbally



2

challenged the person slapping Him (John 18:19-23).

- 3) We are told in other passages to resist evil and expose it *(Ephesians 5:11)*. Resistance is not usually associated with being passive.
- 4) Jesus' teaching in Matthew was to show how the Jewish leaders had perverted the teaching of an eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth (5:38). They had pulled that verse away from its intended purpose as a limit on punishment and were using it to take vengeance.

Another example sometimes misapplied is that Jesus was silent before His accusers. There were certainly periods of silence during His ministry, however He was not entirely silent during His arrest and crucifixion. He challenged Judas for his hypocrisy of betraying Him with a kiss (Luke 22:48). He challenged the soldiers sent to arrest Him because of their cowardice in seeking to arrest Him at night and away from the public eye (Matthew 27:55). He plainly stated that He was the Son of God (Luke 22:69). He rebuked them for being unwilling to answer His questions or believe what He said (Luke 22:67-68). He warned that they would have to face Him as Judge (Luke 22:69). He also accused His accusers of being cowardly in their proceedings against Him (John 18:20-21). Jesus, at times, defended Himself, and so should His followers.

Another look at Jesus reveals someone who was anything but passive when it came to exposing error. He used physical force on at least two occasions to get His point across. The picture of Jesus with a whip and using it to chase people out of the temple and turning

over their tables in the process is not the effeminate, meek, and mild Jesus so many try to depict. Maybe it's time for every one of us to bear this kind of passion in our hearts for the holy things that belong to God.

He also used very strong language. No, He did not curse and swear, but He called people fools (*Luke 12:20*), hypocrites (*Matthew 23:25*), the children of vipers (*Matthew 23:33*), and blind guides (*Matthew 23:24*). He rebuked Peter sternly by calling Peter "Satan" (*Matthew 16:23*). He also told people, in no uncertain terms, that they were going to hell (*Matthew 23:15*; 33). None of these things were said in uncontrolled anger but rather were said for the benefit of the hearer.

Jesus did not win the favor of those in power around Him, but instead chose to be extremely "politically incorrect" when He took on the Jewish establishment of His day and exposed it as a complete sham. He challenged the people who followed Him and at times rebuked their shallow motives (John 6:26). Jesus also did not depict Himself as being unendingly patient or long-suffering. He once said,

"Oh faithless and perverse generation, how long shall I be with you? How long shall I suffer you?" Matthew 17:17

There are many passages that describe Christians as being bold or exhorting us to be bold (Acts 4:29, 31; II Corinthians 3:12; Ephesians 6:19; Philippians 1:20; I Thessalonians 2:2). In fact, the Old Testament sums up the life of the righteous as being "as bold as a lion" (Proverbs 28:1).

#### Isn't It Better To Lead A Quiet Life Behind The Scenes?

"If we would just learn to keep our Christian convictions to ourselves we could lead a more peaceful life." We may think that, but it is not always true. If we had been passive we would all be learning the German goosestep, speaking Japanese, or living under communism. Furthermore, the Protestant Reformation would have never taken place had Luther been a quiet pacifist. Jesus clearly warned us that for a Christian there is no such thing as a peaceful life. If we truly live the Christian life, we will be persecuted and there will be opposition









(John 16:33; Acts 14:22; II Timothy 3:12). Actually, often being passive only serves to invite more trouble and evil into our circle. If Christian men are not assertive for the truth, the playground bullies, those who lead others astray, will fill that void (Acts 20:31; Titus 1:9-11).

The modern idea is that if we just stay in the background, don't say much, refuse to take risks, and don't speak out on matters of truth, then we will be a better Christian. Isn't that exactly like the thinking and excuses made by the one talent man (Matthew 25:25) who was rebuked by our Saviour? Furthermore, which hero of faith in Hebrews chapter 11 lived a quiet risk free life? Not even a non-Christian who makes an important achievement lives this way. It seems to me that this type of soft and easy living only leads to mediocrity.

Being passive also does not guarantee you will never display excessive aggressiveness. People who are passive often become "passive-

aggressive" because eventually one gets tired of being a pushover and taken advantage of. Isn't that what's been behind some of the school violence? A kid who was picked on suddenly gets fed up. So being passive can eventually turn one into becoming violent. The way to avoid this is to be compassionately assertive for truth, for another's good, and for God's glory just as Jesus was.

Yes, we are told to serve our fellowman; however, first and foremost we serve Jesus Christ. Serving Jesus will sometimes mean telling people they are wrong so we can better serve the Kingdom. Sometimes you just have to wipe the dust off your shoes and move on. So it's okay to be nice, but it is better to be good. Put a higher priority on pleasing God rather than pleasing others. It is okay to have an opinion - if it is something worth expressing an opinion over. If people have taken advantage of your idol of niceness in the past, rather than getting angry at them, get angry at yourself for allowing it to happen. Put up some

biblical boundaries, and humbly hold people accountable just as Jesus did.

I know unsolicited advice is seldom appreciated, and no one likes a knowit-all. Questioning the actions of another must be seasoned with extreme insight and wisdom. Even Jesus didn't always confront people with their error. He was always aiming for the higher goal, the greater good, and the bigger victory. But remember, you are under no obligation to follow the world's rules in discussing the truth. You can answer a question with a question (Matthew 21:24). And you do not have to play by "the rules" invented by sinners.

Of course I want to be liked. I don't want folks to think I am some kind of jerk. I also don't mind being called nice if it is a result of following Christ. However, I also realize that when someone says I am "not nice" it is possible that such a statement says more about them than it does me. There is often a big difference between being nice to someone and actually caring for them. Apparently, the world's definition of "being a nice person" would usually exclude any Christian doing the will of God. Therefore, like John the Baptist and countless others, I think I will strive for something better. The Bible says that Jesus went about "doing good." It does not say He went about being nice. I will strive for both, but if a choice has to be made, well ... I guess you'll find me on the naughty list, again.



Dr. Worthington has been in the ministry over forty years and serves as President of Pathway Ministries.

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### Goals for the New Year

It's the arrival of a new year and only time will tell what may be in store for us in the future. The moral decline of our nation has spiraled downward at an alarming Many of the leaders in Washington seem to be far out of touch with the rest of us ordinary people living simple lives. feels at times as if we aren't even on the same planet. Even so-called "common sense" seems to be a thing of the past. In this new world where right is wrong and wrong is right, the sanctity of marriage and the protection of the unborn are seemingly not the slightest bit important to the



majority of our fellow Americans. As if this were not reason enough for concern, we have also seen more and more discrimination against Christians in general. There is no doubt that we have become the most discriminated group in our nation. How can we find meaning when all of this confusion abounds?

At GoMix Christian Radio, as with most ministry related organizations, we have faced our own share of challenges over the years. We cut expenses and reassess future projects on a regular basis these days. Many of you know we don't operate on the basis of wealthy investors or with a large cash reserve in the bank. We operate by faith to do the work the Lord has called us to do.

So, for the New Year we will continue to plan ahead and strive

for the outcomes we believe our Lord would have us to achieve. Just as we have been doing since 1998, we'll base our goals for this year on the power of the Lord and His faithful people rather than the boundaries set by the circumstances around us. We're looking forward to growing current relationships and partnering new relationships, all while growing our dependence upon the Lord.

As always, we thank you for your continued prayerful support. Have a safe and happy New Year!

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## Artist Spotlight - A Farewell to Servant's Heart

For Over 25 years, *Servant's Heart* has been singing for our Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ. It's been a pleasure to be a witness for Him all these years as we have traveled and shared the Gospel through song and testimony. We started out years ago as three country girls from **Pleasant Grove Original Free Will Baptist Church** in Eastern North Carolina. All three of us were alto singers, but somehow we ended up putting together some amazing harmonies. The group originally consisted of Jane Wilson, Joan Allen, and Lynette Hales. In the beginning we called ourselves *Inspiration*, but later changed the name of the group to *Servant's Heart*.

Along the way Joan's daughter, April Wilson, joined the group to sing soprano. In 2006, Lynette and her husband were called to another ministry. As we started looking for another alto singer to replace Lynette, Connie Mercer gave us a try and has been with us ever since. For all these years, God has been with us and blessed our ministry.

God says in Ecclesiastes 3:1, "To every thing there is a season, and a time to every purpose under the heaven:"

It is with much sadness that we must announce that the time has come for *Servant's Heart* to retire. We will miss all of you that have come to see us over the years. We will also miss our friends in the **East Coast Gospel Music Association**. We thank you with all of our heart for your support.

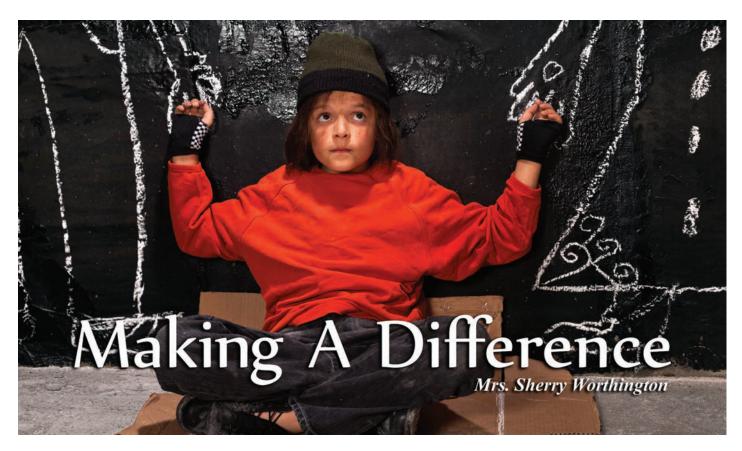
April Wilson has now been called into her own ministry speaking and singing at different events. More information on booking April can be received by calling 919-222-5851. Joan Allen and Connie Mercer will still be singing with a church group called the *Junkyard Trio*. This group also consists of James Kirby. They can be reached by calling 919-920-3276.

Again, thank you to everyone that has supported us over the years. Please keep us in your prayers and may God bless you all. With our love and gratitude, *Servant's Heart*.









ere we are in 2020. It is so hard to believe. Another year bites the dust. As I get older, each year passes by faster. I thoroughly enjoyed Christmas, but it is time to focus on the New Year. Each of us should look back over the previous year and examine our mistakes, see what we learned from them, and determine not to make the same mistake again.

Just as important, we need to be able to look back over our lives and see how we made a difference. This was the theme of *It's a Wonderful Life*. The main character, George Bailey, ran a small building and loan company that was barely making it. He was on the verge of bankruptcy and being arrested because of his uncle's mishap with the deposit to the bank. George felt his family would be better off if he was dead. They could at least get his life insurance. He tells his guardian angel that he wishes he had never been born. Without telling you the whole story,

George has the experience of finding out what the world would have been like without him. He made quite a difference in his little town and the lives of the people who lived there.

That would be a scary feeling to me. I wonder what the world would have been like if I had never been born. As a Christian, I will one day see how my life has affected others, for the good and the bad. The Lord will show me the opportunities I missed as well as the people I influenced. I wonder how many times I have walked past someone ignoring his needs. I wonder how many of my students I was too busy to listen to. I wonder how many times I have let my family and friends down. What have I done to help the strangers all around us that need to hear about Jesus? The list is endless.

I can only hope that I learned from my mistakes and took the time to do what the Lord wanted me to do at the time. It is so important to take time to listen and help those in need. It may be as simple as offering a shoulder to cry on or even someone to laugh with. Many parents are so busy. Our children simply need us to listen and be there for them. The times our children will remember are when we took time to show them the way and listen as they spoke from their hearts. Our elderly people are forgotten. We have good intentions. We mean to visit or help them out, but we just don't get around to it. And most importantly, we have a lost and dying world out there that most people don't even seem to notice. That is a thought-provoking question. What would be the difference in our world if you had never lived? I hope that one day I will see that my life made a difference for Christ.

I would like to give you some food for thought. What would our lives be like if Christ had never been born? There are so many ways Jesus changed the world when He came to die for us. He changed the hearts of men. According to Ryan Leasure, in ancient Rome babies were discarded in the trash (much like they are today), and Christians went around pulling them from the trash heap. The Romans practiced infanticide if they didn't like the way the child looked, sometimes just because it was a girl. Many Christians today are still fighting against this atrocity. We call it abortion.

Jesus had compassion for the sick and healed many people. Most people avoided the sick because they were afraid of catching the disease.

Most of our early hospitals were founded by Christians. Missionaries today go into third world countries at their own risk to help those that are sick.

Can you imagine what our world would be like without Christianity today? Look at the oppressive countries. If Christ had never come, that's what our world would be like. In those countries people are overworked, starving, and cold. They are

executed if they disagree with their government. The countries are poor except for the elite.

Many Americans, as well as other Christians from different countries, have not lived up to Jesus' message. We have not followed his precepts as we should have, but America is much better off because of Jesus Christ.

According to the internet site **Jesusisnotfakenews.com**, here are some statistics that might shed some light on some of the differences Christians have made.

Faith-based organizations provide a safety net for over 70,000,000 people with some kind of need.

Twenty of the top fifty charities are faith-based and raise \$45 billion annually.

During disaster relief efforts, 59% of the organizations providing relief services are faith-based.

Clergymen save America \$216 billion in mental health fees each year with free or low-cost counseling.

The US Catholic Health Association operates more than 1,600 care



facilities including hospitals and clinics for low-income families.

Through all their ministries, non-profit faith-based organizations save the US government \$2.67 trillion every year.

Simply put, Christianity feeds the poor, helps those in trouble, provides mental health, gives medical assistance, and saves the American Economy trillions of dollars.

English minister James Russell Lowell was so confident of Christianity's positive influence that he penned: "I challenge you to find on the face of the earth a single place ten miles square where a decent man may live

in safety and happiness where the Bible has not gone before to make that security and morality possible."

Do you think you could find a place that meets this challenge? In the countries where Christian influence does not exist, oppression, slavery, mistreatment of women, and low wages are commonplace.

We take so much for granted. Without Christ, many of the things we have grown accustomed to would not exist

today. Jesus Christ made a difference when He came down to earth as a man to save us from our sins. It is plain and simple; He gave it all, so that we might have life more abundantly.

...I am come that they might have life and that they might have it more abundantly. John 10:10b

Let us not take Jesus for granted. He could have

chosen not to come to earth. He could have let us die in our sins. But He didn't. We should each make our lives count for Christ. One day we shall see in what ways we affected others. Hopefully, we will see that we changed other people's lives here on earth and for eternity for their good.

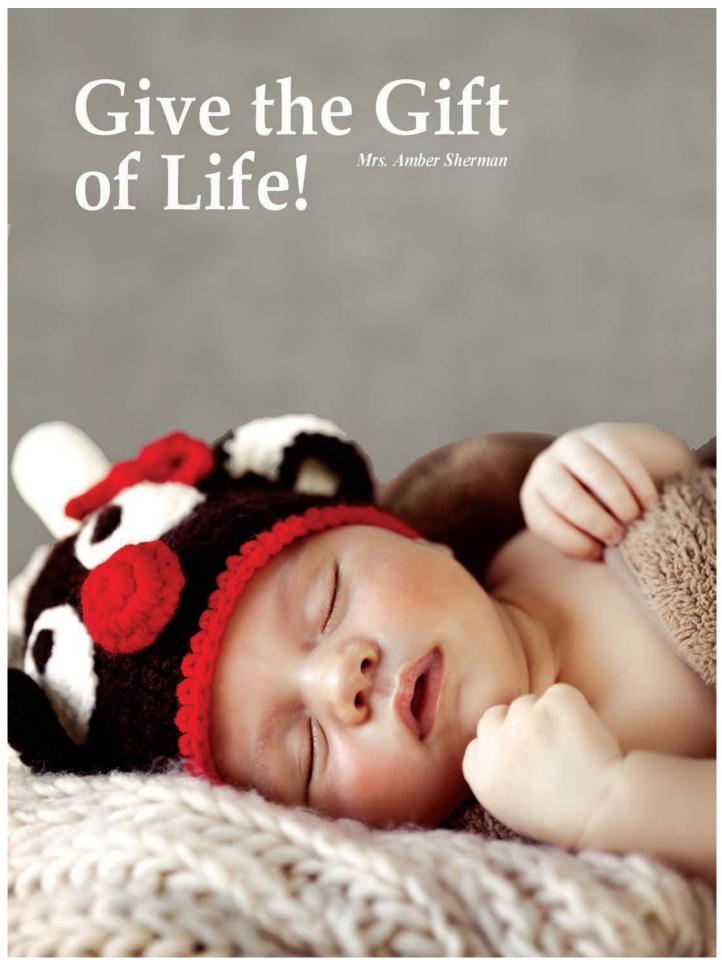
It is a New Year. Let us make a difference in someone's life today.



Mrs. Worthington has five children and eleven grandchildren. She serves as Principal of Pathway Christian Academy in Goldsboro.







January starts a new year for each of us. We just finished celebrating Christmas and the giving of gifts to one another. As I pondered over the many gifts unwrapped that special day, I began to think of the gift that many of us probably did not think about: life itself. Some of us have faced the fear of losing our lives, whether through sickness or an auto accident, or some other

near death experience. Many of

us were unaware of our very first gift at life, and that was our birth. In our culture today, you are counted among the lucky if you survive to that day. If your mother chose life for you, you are among the 80% who has survived. In the worldwide population, 20% has been murdered in abortion. That

means one of every five babies is aborted. It sure seems a lot more valuable to be alive when you think of it that way. I wanted to share some options for anyone who may be considering abortion or who feels they are being pressured into having one.

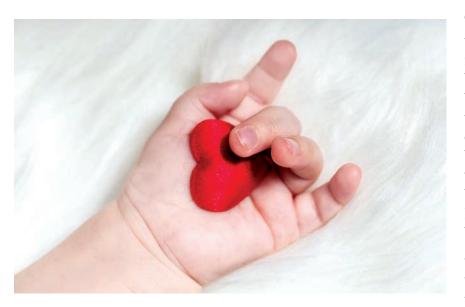
#### Give Your Baby Up For Adoption

There are so many couples who cannot have children and would love to. There are many who simply cannot afford the adoption process. Find someone who would love to have a baby, and legally sign your baby over to them (with due diligence of course). Check churches for help as well. We know

it takes courage to have a baby. Live your life with the comfort and freedom knowing you gave your baby life, not death. Take courage for your baby. Give the gift of life.

## Give Your Baby Over Under the Safe Haven Law

You do not have to have an abortion... because you can have the baby and surrender him or her under the Safe the CAFA (Center Against Forced Abortions)? These letters can be given to the various people who may be pressuring you into getting an abortion. You can download these and present them. You can also call **The Justice Foundation** for help. Know your rights and those of your baby. Give the gift of life. Do not forget you can find help at churches and Pregnancy Centers. They can help in many ways.



Haven Law. This Law, which varies according to state, allows a baby to be surrendered at a Fire Station, Hospital, or Police Department with no questions or explanations. It's purpose is to prevent babies from being hurt or killed due to abandonment.

## No One Can Make You Get An Abortion

Did you know it is illegal to force anyone to get an abortion, even a minor? If you are under 18 years old or are even over, and feeling pressure to abort your baby, could I encourage you to go to www. The Justice Foundation.org and look for their legal letters under

They say the best things in life are free - they cannot be bought. believe that to be true. Our salvation certainly cannot be bought. Favor with God cannot be bought. And life itself cannot be bought... it must be given. There is no greater gift we can give today, or any day, than to give

the gift of life. Gifts are not usually free; they usually cost the giver. Our children need us to give the gift that only we can give... their lives. Life itself is a precious gift. What an honor God has entrusted to us. Will you give your baby the gift of life? Will you spread the word that there are so many more options than abortion?

Will you give this special gift that is beyond measure today?



Mrs. Amber Sherman is the mother of four and serves as a part-time teacher at Pathway Christian Academy in Goldsboro, NC.



# And Finally...



### My Spouse...

I am so thankful for the spouse God gave me September 16, 1962. We have been married 57 years. He was in the United States Navy from 1956 until 1960. We met through a mutual friend after he got out of the service. I never dated anyone else after I dated him. He waited for me to turn 18 so we could be married. He is loving, protective, faithful, supportive, and understanding. When we walk down the street, he still walks on the road-side to protect me. He was always a fine man, but on September 16, 1969, he gave his heart to Jesus and was saved. He is now 82 years old and is so good to me in every way. I respect and love him more than I could ever say. Thank you, Jesus, for my spouse! S. D.

When I had a massive stroke 31 years ago, the doctors and my family wanted to give up on me. My wife of 8 years would have none of it. For the past 31 years she has loved me and cared for me as no one else could. The stroke left me a quadriplegic with only slight use of my right arm and hand. I am a big man and she is very petite. She is now 64 years old and still cares for me every day. She washes me from head to toe, dresses me, transfers me to my wheelchair, prepares and feeds me breakfast and dinner, gives me water through my feeding tube 4 times a day, and gives me my medications throughout the day. On top of this, she somehow managers to do the food shopping, laundry, mow the grass, and take care of other needs in the house. She does all this by herself without any outside help. If this is not true

love, I don't know what is. I am so very thankful to have her in my life.

R.S.

My husband is dedicated to our family and takes care of us without complaining. He is patient towards both me and our little ones. He listens to me when I'm mad, stressed, happy, or sad. I love that about him. He takes the time to teach our children about right and wrong. He encourages me to be the best I can be. He makes me a better person, a stronger person, and he's taught me how to stand up for myself. I pray to God to always keep him in good health and away from harm. He's a wonderful man and the best husband and father I know. He's not perfect. No one is, but he is perfect for me.

L.M.

### "My Ancestry Research"

We'd like your help for an upcoming edition of "And Finally..."

Write to us in 150 words or less and tell us about any research you have done concerning your ancestry.

The deadline for submission is January 31, 2019.

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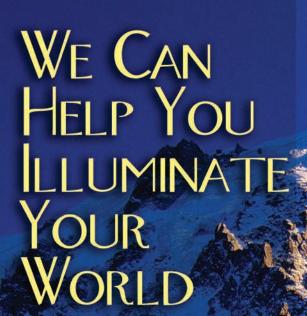
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