



# The Apple's Core

Keeping Christ at the Core

## Shared Steps

By Karen Maxfield

Those tottering first steps by ourselves! We take the proud steps across the stage to receive the diploma. We gracefully take steps down an aisle to take our wedding vows. We take these steps all alone. Then come times we need to share our steps to go through the normal, but challenging stages of life; the military deployments, having babies and moving cross country...again.

But what happens when the big one hits; the defining huge, definitely unplanned crises? I can only share my personal experience of how God sent Christian women into my life to share these hard steps.

I thought I could not take another step! I did not even want to get out of bed to take a step! After almost 20 years of marriage, my husband chose to leave our family with four daughters, ages 17, 16, 12 and 9 and begin another family. With this decision he also chose to leave his church, his faith, all of his previous commitments.

Now what; What did I believe now? I reached way inside and asked myself that tough question. I knew God still loved me and my family and had a plan for us. Also, the most important step was to tell and show my daughters that truth. Everything had changed, but nothing had changed in our life's foundation. God was still faithful and His Word had not changed. I also wanted them to know things would be different but we would be ok. We were still a family that could and would serve God. My oldest was getting ready to go to college with my second daughter right behind. This was a test in all of our lives and we were not going to fail or give up, no matter how hard. There were many steps we needed to take on our own but also many steps we needed to share. Thankfully, my teen daughters were already plugged into Immanuel's youth group and could share their steps with their female leaders. Also, a special family took my younger daughters with them on their family vacation. These were

huge blessings to us for which we will always be grateful.

My lips said we would survive but I internally felt completely depleted. Even worse, I really did not know how we were going to survive financially, emotionally, or any other way. I do not believe it was a coincidence that Focus on the Family began publishing their "Single Parent Family" (no longer published) magazine at that very time. It gave me strength after reading Shirley Dobson was raised in a single parent family. We too could make it and be used by God.

Many Christian acquaintances gave me support, especially initially. My lawn was mowed and meals were brought. I was grateful, but I also remember thinking, I have to show my children we can survive on our own. We have to learn to do some things and embrace who we are now. My first instinct was to try to keep everything, including my large house, the same.

*(Continued on page 2)*

## February



2007-2008

**Therefore as you have received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk in Him, having been firmly rooted and now being built up in Him and established in your**



Have a question for the Mentor Moms? Drop it in the "Ask the Mentor Mom" basket at one of our meetings or send it to: [e-moms@immanuelbible.net](mailto:e-moms@immanuelbible.net)

## Shared Steps

*By Karen Maxfield*

*(Continued from page 1)*

One of my good friends spoke the truth in love to me by saying; you don't have to have a center hall colonial house to raise a family for God! The reality is you cannot afford these huge house payments and maintenance. Reality was hard for me to swallow but it was good counsel, given gently. It was one of many lessons.

I learned a lesson by receiving just a loaf of whole wheat bread from a woman who had terminal cancer. Sharing steps doesn't have to mean giving a whole meal. Sometimes just a small gift given in disposable dishes is so much more appreciated. Another Christian woman at church thoughtfully made a casserole and left it for me in the church refrigerator. I did not pick it up for days because I knew I should write a thank you note and I did not have the energy to write a note or look for note cards! The woman called after she saw the food was not picked up. After I made excuses I finally broke down and admitted I dreaded writing a thank you note. She told me she was not expecting a note. That was the beginning of a wonderful "Christian soul sister" relationship! I learned just because I was in a single parent household it did not give me an excuse to be rude! Why does it take painful lessons to grow me up spiritually, Lord?

When my realtor called to give me one day notice to show my house, I knew I could swallow my pride and call my new friend to come help mop my floor; and she came. When my Christian counselor gave me a book to read, my friend bought the same book to be able to share those steps with me. When I needed to clean out an ignored desk and decipher mail I received that I just stuck back in the envelopes, my new friend again shared those hard steps with me by helping me decide what needed attention or whom I could call for information. Sharing the steps made the insurmountable tasks manageable. During those days, my friend made sacrifices of time, adjusting her schedule at times to share steps with me. Sometimes the shared steps were huge, giant steps. Other times the steps were lighthearted as they took us for coffee or to go fishing!

For months my friend played her guitar and sang worship songs in the 2 year old Sunday school classroom and I tagged along. Looking back, those were some of the most important shared steps to me, a Christian of over thirty years! Why, because it was back to the basics! Almost every Sunday we sang, God is So Good and Jesus Loves Me with those 2 year olds. I was forced to ask myself if I still believed that simple theology even when I didn't feel it. I concluded, yes, I did believe it because God's Word said it! Hooray! If I could believe and trust God in these basic truths, I could trust God for the rest, one shared step at a time! I certainly did not feel the "joy of my salvation" but I believed it! My emotional pool could now start to be filled up and it has even overflowed at times. Even when life's circumstances keep emptying it out, many buckets at a time, God is faithful to remind me of His promises. And He has graciously restored joy to my life as I serve Him and as I watch my four adult daughters all loving and serving God, raising my seven grandchildren in their Christian homes.

I pray daily for my daughters and grandchildren that when the big one comes their way, whatever it may be, they will remember that Jesus loves them and God will send Christian sisters to share steps with them.

## Step By Step

Lyrics by David  
Beaker

**O God, You are  
my God and I  
will ever  
praise You.  
I will seek You in  
the morning, and  
I will learn to  
walk in Your  
ways;  
And step by step  
You'll lead me**

## Resources

The E-moms Book of the Month for February is [How to Help a Grieving Friend](#), by Stephanie Grace Whitson. This book comes recommended by Sheryl McNally, a widow and mother of two boys. Sheryl says, "I find it hard to express what is truly on my heart. No one will really understand. Well, Stephanie has been reading my heart. She offers some fantastic helps for a friend who is grieving!"

We also suggest these titles: [I'll Bring the Chocolate](#):

[Satisfying a Woman's Craving for Friendship and Faith](#) by Karen Porter  
Finding and developing meaningful friendships is vital to a woman. Karen Porter walks you through many of the aspects of giving and receiving friendship and gives you a few delicious recipes (which include chocolate, of course!) along the way.

[Grown-Up Girlfriends: Finding and Keeping Real Friends in the Real World](#) by Erin Smalley and Carrie Oliver

These two women do a beautiful job of addressing the joys as well as the challenges of friendships. Their stories tell how "grown-up" friendships ultimately draw us closer to the God who loves us dearly.

[The Friendships of Women: Overcoming the Pain and Releasing the Power](#) by Dee Brestin

[What Women Want: The Life You Crave and How God Satisfies](#) by Lisa T. Bergren & Rebecca Price



*Buy the Book of the Month at tonight's meeting at a **20% discount**, or in the Immanuel Christian Bookstore at the discounted price this month when you mention E-moms before you check out!*

## Getting to the Core

When considering friendship, one Bible passage you may want to study is John 15: 9-17, which addresses our friendship with Christ. In verse 12, Jesus tells his disciples to "love one another" and in verse 14 he goes on to say, "You are my friends if you do what I command." This describes what WE bring to the friendship. He then tells us in John 15:15,

"No longer do I call you servants, for the servant does not know what his master is doing; but I have called you friends, for all that I have heard from my Father I have made known to you." Thus being a friend of Christ involves our obedience, our love for one another and Christ's knowledge revealed to us. In order to "hear" the knowledge that

is being given to us, we must be attentive to our friend and Lord, Jesus Christ. One cannot be close friends with someone to whom we don't pay any attention! Thus if you seek an intimate friendship with Christ, we encourage you to spend time in prayer and reading the Bible, so that you may be alert and obedient to what he reveals to you.

**Greater love has no one than this, that he lay down his life for his friends.**

**John 15:13**

## THE SOLE SOURCE

In January we asked for your ideas on how you safeguard your children concerning technology, or how you stay current on technology trends. Consider the wisdom in these suggestions from other E-moms!

- Our computer is kept in an open area. We use Net Nanny and passwords to keep content under control.
- We limit "screen time" by planning playdates with friends and spending time outside.
- I always use pluggedinonline.com for detailed movie reviews before the kids are allowed to watch something new.

Check us out on the web at [www.immanuelbible.net/family/parenting/emoms.php](http://www.immanuelbible.net/family/parenting/emoms.php)

for the complete list of this month's "Sole Source" ideas!



**Above all else, guard your heart, for it is the wellspring of life.**



## Keeping Christ

E-Moms is a Ministry of  
Immanuel Bible Church  
6911 Braddock Rd  
Springfield, VA 22151

Questions?  
703-941-4124 or  
e-moms@immanuelbible.net

*E-Moms is a ministry for mothers of Elementary-aged children. We aim to encourage, refresh, and inspire moms! You will get the opportunity to meet face to face and develop relationships with other moms in the same stage of life who are experiencing some of the same parenting joys and challenges as you. Our monthly meetings provide you with great food (all prepared for you), encouraging speakers (all relevant to you), and stimulating discussion (all geared toward you). Come join us!*

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CHECK US OUT ON THE WEB! YOU'LL FIND THE SCHEDULE OF SPEAKERS FOR THE YEAR, GREAT IDEAS FROM OTHER MOMS ON TOPICS YOU CAN RELATE TO, AS WELL AS E-MOMS RECIPES AND THE ELECTRONIC (PDF) VERSION OF THIS NEWSLETTER!

[WWW.IMMANUELBIBLE.NET/FAMILY/PARENTING/EMOMS.PHP](http://WWW.IMMANUELBIBLE.NET/FAMILY/PARENTING/EMOMS.PHP)

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### 90 Minutes

The theme for the 2007–2008 90 Minutes season is "Dad's Toolbox". Our reference is Chip Ingram's popular book, "Effective Parenting in a Defective World". Come join us on March 3rd from 7-8:30 pm in the Terrace Rooms to hear Jay Blackwell speaking on "Lessons to Live By." All fathers and grandfathers interested in being more purposeful in their parenting are invited to attend. Contact us:

ninetyminutes@verizon.net

### Coffee Break with Mentor Moms



Questions about discipline issues? Sibling rivalry? Homeschooling? Our experienced Mentor Moms—Melinda Bargery, Enid Walker, and Jan Yantz want to help with the parenting challenges you're facing!

Please join us for coffee on March 7th at 10:00 am at Einstein Brothers Bagels  
8317 Old Keene Mill Rd

Kids welcome!

### E-Moms

E-Moms will meet again on March 31 from 7-9 pm in the Terrace Rooms. Kathy Holley will share her insights on the topic, "One Step at a Time: Managing Your World." Come join us for an evening of refreshments, encouragement and fellowship!

*We love our children, but please remember that our meetings are for moms only.*



## WORTHY

The Immanuel Bible Church 2008 Easter Pageant

Presented by the Adult Choir, Orchestra, and Drama Ministries asking...

*"After all I've done, how can I be considered WORTHY in God's eyes?"*

Easter Pageant dates are March 14-19, and 20-22. Bring your friends and neighbors!

For more information, to download a ticket request form, or to volunteer at the Pageants:

<http://www.immanuelbible.net/community/music/concerts.php>