

July 2025

GrowInGrace Marriage Newsletter

Issue No. 7



Life Lessons I'm Learning by Laurie - Did someone say FIREWORKS!?

When I think of July, I think of fireworks, and there are some fireworks that I really don't want in my life right now. Let me give you a little back story.

When I met Aaron, my dad Bill told him "look out, she has a really bad temper". I've always had a bad temper and have not been very patient. This is something I have been working on for many years. Most of the time I can keep it under control and it's not as bad as it used to be. But sometimes, I'm embarrassed to say, I lash out. The person who is on the receiving end is my sweet Aaron.

Fast forward 12½ years into our marriage and I will share where I am right now.

You may not know but on Friday, June 13th, I fell while dancing at my niece's wedding. Let me set the stage .. last dance of the night. Bride and groom are exiting with a sparkler send off. The DJ is playing "Don't Go Breaking My Heart". My daughter said 'Let's dance', so we did. I said 'Let's twirl' and that's when I went down on a wet spot on the floor. I apparently put my left hand out and the painful impact caused me to pass out. Needless to say, I scared the daylight out of everyone. When Aaron then saw what happened, he came to my side. They called 911 and off to the hospital I went.

I broke my left wrist in 3 places, and for those who don't know, I am left handed. On June 24 I had surgery on my left wrist. They put in a titanium plate and screws to help it to heal properly.

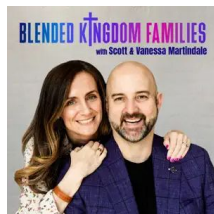
Aaron has been living out Galatians 6:2a, "*Share each other's burdens*". He has helped me in so many ways, which is NOT easy for me. Cooking, cleaning, and at times helping me get dressed. While I greatly appreciate it, it is also hard for me not to be able to do things I want to do.

Proverbs 15:1 says "*A gentle answer deflects anger, but harsh words make tempers flare*". Right now we can tend to be tired and cranky (me especially, I'm not sleeping well) and we snap at each other.

When I lash out, I'm only thinking about me and not us. Aaron is not my enemy. We are on the same team. It is so important that we realize this and stop, apologize, and start over! Thank Heaven for do overs! 🙏😊

Next month we are hosting a two day retreat on Vertical Marriage by Dave and Ann Wilson who are the hosts of the radio show & podcast **FamilyLife Today**. The focus of the study is on resolving conflict and strengthening your marriage.

It is at the Geauga Park District's Affelder House in Chesterland. Friday night includes dinner and Saturday includes a continental breakfast and a cookout in the afternoon at the end of the retreat. If interested, please get in touch with us, our contact info is on the corner of page 2 -Laurie



Featured Podcast

- Blended Kingdom Families -

Scott and Vanessa Martindale

Fight for Your Marriage and Build a Lasting Legacy Today

[<listen to podcast>](#) .. (May 19, 2025)

In this episode of the Blended Kingdom Families Podcast, Scott and Vanessa Martindale welcome marriage coaches and high school sweethearts Chad and Megan Lacefield, hosts of the Built for Two podcast. With over 30 years of marriage experience, they open up about the reality of fighting for your marriage, not against it, and what it really takes to leave a godly legacy.

From learning selflessness and setting "fight rules" to raising adult children and enjoying their role as grandparents, Chad and Megan share real stories, raw wisdom, and biblical truth. They discuss how humor, humility, confession, and grace have sustained them through decades of challenges and victories.

Whether you're newly married, parenting in a blended family, or facing conflict in your relationship, this episode will give you practical tools, spiritual insight, and hope for the journey ahead. - [<listen to podcast>](#)

Topics covered in this podcast:

- How to fight with your spouse, not against them
- Building legacy through everyday choices
- Healthy conflict resolution with "fight rules"
- Why laughter and fun matter in marriage
- Parenting your grandkids' parents
- God's redemption in messy family stories

*My spouse is
not my enemy*

Lean on Me ... When You're Not Strong

'I Do Everyday' Family Life - By Leslie J. Barner (6/7/25)

While we were on our power walk one afternoon, my husband, Aubrey, began to struggle with shortness of breath. Concerned, I asked why his breathing was so labored. Barely able to talk, he pointed to his crossbody bag.

You're probably thinking, Why was he wearing a heavy bag while going for a power walk? Good question.

Aubrey has a heart pump implanted in his chest to help his heart beat efficiently while he waits on a new heart. That bag carries the batteries that keep the heart pump operating.

So basically, that bag goes wherever he goes.

But I had an idea!

I offered to wear the bag across my body while we walked to lighten his load. This meant we'd have to walk closely together because the cords that extend from the batteries to the heart pump are connected to a driveline going into his abdomen and up to the heart.

At first, in light of his masculinity, he didn't want me to lighten his load.

But I insisted. And it wasn't long before his breathing improved.

I can't tell you how honored I felt to be able to share this burden with him, even in this small way. After all, he has been my biggest supporter, provider, load-lightener, best friend, and shoulder to lean on for 39 years.

I was reminded of Bill Withers' "Lean on Me." Leaning on each other when we need someone to help us carry on—that helps keep a marriage strong.

But more importantly, I was reminded of Galatians 6:2: "Bear one another's burdens, and so fulfill the law of Christ."

To love each other the way God calls us to love is to assure our spouse they are never alone; that we will be there to help them get through life struggles, big or small. And to know they will do the same for us.

[Find out why you really need your spouse](#)

The Good Stuff: Do not neglect to do good and to share what you have, for such sacrifices are pleasing to God. ([Hebrews 13:6](#))

Action Points: What's one tangible way that you can "lighten the load" for your spouse this week?

Love in Action!



Pay attention to tasks your spouse does around the home and note a few that aren't so glamorous ...

Then surprise them my proactively doing one or two for them the next time! 💖



Couples Corner

We're in your corner
praying for your marriage

Please pray for us as we
move forward leading this
Marriage Ministry



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Catch the Little Foxes

Content is from "Our Daily Bread Devotional" - www.odb.org

Song of Songs 2:15 - "Catch for us the foxes, the little foxes that ruin the vineyards"

"It's the little foxes that spoil the vine," my grandmother used to say. Then my mom repeated the same thing. And now I say it to my own children. But what does it mean to beware of "the little foxes"?

After planting grapevines, *it can take several years before they bear fruit*. The vines require a lot of patience, care, watering, pruning, and protection. **Foxes—even though small—can cause major damage** by destroying the roots, eating the grapes, or chewing the stalk.



In the poetic love story of the Song of Songs, Solomon warns, "Catch for us the foxes, the little foxes that ruin the vineyards" (2:15). Some scholars believe this refers to *seemingly small problems or behaviors, if left unchecked, that could threaten the young man and woman's relationship*.

Likewise for our spiritual journey, little things like bitterness (Hebrews 12:15), "unwholesome talk" (Ephesians 4:29), or even harmful influence from others (1 Corinthians 15:33) can slip into our lives and hardly be noticed.

My grandmother understood that little things can cause great harm, and her wisdom spoke volumes to her grandchildren. As we spend time in prayer and reading the Scriptures, the Spirit will help us "catch the little foxes"—the temptations or habits that might spoil our relationship with others and our walk with Christ.

Reflect & Pray - What little things do you need to catch before they cause harm? How can you warn others to watch for "little foxes"?

Dear Father, please help me be alert for and deal with the little stuff that causes great damage.

Insight - First Kings 4:32 tells us that Solomon's songs "numbered a thousand and five." The very first verse of Song of Songs attributes the book to this wisest of kings (1:1). Also called Song of Solomon, the song differs substantially from Solomon's other wisdom writings (Proverbs and Ecclesiastes). It isn't a collection of proverbs; it's a love poem. Solomon extols romantic love, and he does so in poetry so passionate it may cause some to blush (see ch. 7 for a case in point). Perhaps because of this frankness, some early church leaders tried to interpret the song allegorically (and some still do). They see it as a picture of God's love for His church. That's a possible interpretation, but the theme of the song is undeniably about sexual love. Importantly, this Song of Songs presents sex as God intended—within the context of a loving marriage between a man and woman. And as we live out what God has intended, we'll also catch the "little foxes" (2:15) that can destroy us and others.

Dig It Out

When I'm weeding our onions and don't get the root, they come right back (frustrating!). Getting the root requires digging deeper and runs the risk of disturbing the nearby plants. However, if I'm careful and take my time, I can gently loosen the soil between the plants and work the weeds free.

This reminds me of the parable of the wheat and the tares in Matt. 13:24-43. Our enemy, the devil, sows weeds among the things we'd like to see grow. When Adam and Eve sinned, the result was not just challenges in tending our garden, he put enmity in our relationships. Pride and selfishness stunt our growth.

Praise Jesus! The Bible tells us .. "In this world we will have trouble. But take heart, Jesus has overcome the world" (John 16:33). Can I get an AMEN!!

As sure as we experience weeds in the garden, we can expect hardships in life, but when we work through our hardships, just like loosening the soil and patiently digging those weeds out (thank you Lord), He makes room for bigger and better things to grow! .. Aaron

"Your cell phone has already replaced your CLOCK, your CAMERA, & your ALARM ..

Don't let it replace your FAMILY"

Arguing Is Like Eating a Bad Hot Dog

'I Do Everyday' Family Life - By Carlos Santiago (7/8/25)

The first fight I can remember with my wife was over a misplaced pair of tickets to a New York Mets baseball game.

I'm generally the more forgetful member of the family, so it shouldn't have come as a shock to me that I'd be the accused. But this time I wasn't having it. I felt disrespected, and my normally easy-going manner went into hiding along with the tickets.

"What? Is your memory perfect?" I said. "How do you know you didn't lose them? Why do you assume this is my fault?"

Before long, the fun afternoon we had planned began to feel like eating a bad hot dog.

How we respond in moments like these make all the difference in a marriage.

For most of us, forgiving feels like something is being pried from us: our justice, our sense of self, our dignity. Like the parable of the unforgiving servant (Matthew 18:21-35), the offense someone has caused looms large and unforgivable.

But forgiveness isn't saying what the other person did was just, nor is it bypassing accountability for the offender.

It's a choice to bless in the face of an insult, like Jesus did for us; to continue pursuit of a loving relationship when we want to wash our hands of the other person. It's a choice not to dwell on the offense. Instead, forgiveness opts to see a person as more than the sum of their errors.

Forgiven people forgive people. And the more we internalize the magnitude of how much we've been forgiven? The more those Mets tickets (or the equivalent) are eclipsed by mercy.

After a frantic search around the house, we eventually found the tickets. As it turned out, I was the one who had misplaced them!

Oops.

At that point, my wife had a choice. She could let our fight ruin the afternoon, or she could remember the forgiveness that Christ had given her and offer that same forgiveness to me. She chose the latter.

I don't remember who won the game, but I do remember this: On that day, we both won.

For more on forgiveness read "[What It Means to Forgive](#)" by Winston T. Smith on FamilyLife.com

The Good Stuff: ... forgive one another, as God in Christ forgave you. ([Ephesians 4:32](#))

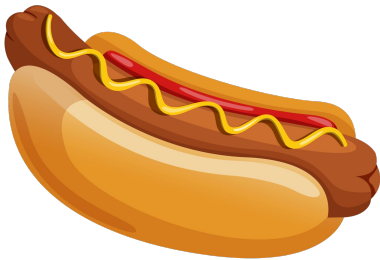
Action Points: If you were to think about one area in which you haven't forgiven your spouse—or need to choose forgiveness again—what would it be? What stands in the way of your choice to forgive? Is it worth sacrificing the forgiveness you've been granted? (see [Matthew 6:15](#))

✉ Receive the 'I Do Everyday' email daily <[link](#)>

It's not "Happy Wife,
Happy Life ..

It's "Happy Spouse,
Happy House"

-- You BOTH matter --



- Husband Hack -

We hurt each other. Yes, even in marriage.
(even *The Carpenters* knew this)

If you read Laurie's Life-Lessons, you know she broke her arm .. I accidentally bumped her elbow and **immediately** checked to make sure she was okay.

Why am I not as concerned about hurting her when she's *not* wearing a cast?