

## **FAMILY MATTERS - Stephanie Wolfe** **“Photographs and Memories”**

My daughter-in-law just emailed me about my grandson’s first day at preschool:

“I just dropped Caleb off at school. He did great! I love the fact that they had us come there yesterday so he could meet his teachers and get acquainted with his classroom. It made today a breeze! He was very happy and excited! Me, well, I am both happy and sad of course. So please pray for me today!”

FAMILY – what a powerful topic. What a powerful word. It brings so many **memories** out of my vast storehouse. I’ve been collecting memories for 46 years, some that I can physically hold in my hand while telling the story behind the treasure (if I’ve taken my Ginko) and others that I hold in my heart while tears well up in my eyes as I recall the details of each meaningful event.

In the storage room of our house there are boxes where our life is stored for those moments of recollection. A virtual “treasure chest” of priceless photos, keepsakes, souvenirs, pint-size t-shirts, and relics of all kinds. I can’t part with them. We have added to those boxes over the years, and carefully moved them along with us from house to house throughout our 3 decades of life as the Wolfe family. From our hometown of Leo, Indiana through our marriage and life in Auburn, Indiana to our journey to Atlanta, Georgia – it’s all there.

Jeremy, our oldest, just turned 30, and Chad, our baby, is now 26. I want to say, where did all the time go, but then I stop myself and remember, I know exactly where it went! I have the details of our life etched in my brain – the good, the bad, and the ugly. All there. I recall the paper route – The Evening Star. I helped Jeremy win contests, earn awards, often delivering papers from the car to keep my son from the cold, wet, winters or standing with him as he knocked on doors to collect past-due balances.

I recall helping Chad prepare for his lead roll in our church’s production of “Arch the Angel”. Learning his lines, developing his expression, creating his costume, and hiring his agent . . . (just kidding on that last one). He was amazing. We were so proud.

You know what I’m talking about! You have memories like this of your own. Go back in time – maybe yours won’t be so far back, but open up your treasure chest of memories and remember why your family is so great! Go on a virtual retreat from the challenges or conflict facing your family today, or even just the day-to-day hustle and bustle of life that seeks to steal those precious memories you have spent a life-time collecting! Recall a life – your life. Reclaim a marriage – your marriage. Restore a family - your family.

Not all of my memories are wonderful, but those I choose to hold on to are! The rest I have given to God, allowing Him to heal, forgive, and to cleanse my heart of the residue of them – while learning something from each one, and moving on. Treasured memories - that is what family is to me. I have boxes of them, but I don’t need my boxes to tell you about them. Just ask me about the time we went to King’s Island, or the stitches both my boys have in the same places, or the Chickenpox, or their graduation day, or the daughters-in-laws they chose for me, or my grandson, or . . .

Because Family Matters!  
Stephanie Wolfe