

There's nothing like Family Secrets Revealed.



*Family Heirlooms;
Pearls of Knowledge from Wise Women of God.*

This is a gift from grandmothers, mothers and aunts from a bygone time. A time when women did everything in their power to be treated as a gift from God to mankind, and now they have passed on their pearls of wisdom to the 21st century generation of women. This is love, old school style.

By Lynda Starks

Family Heirlooms: Pearls of Knowledge From Wise Women Of God

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LIBBY BELCHER, you are hilarious. Stay that way.

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For more tips on being a lady, a friend and a Christian

I sat on the bottom step. A great sadness hovered over the whole house but with everyone laughing I was afraid to cry. This stern, formal and always composed group of ladies didn't allow crying. I often wondered if maybe so many hurtful things had happened in their past that they had long since stopped crying. These ladies did not like public displays of emotion of any kind other than a smile. I am still trying to decide if the determination to avoid emotions was a good coping mechanism. Who was this group? It was my mother, her sister- my aunt, their mother and my maternal grandmother and then my grandmothers' sister - my great aunt.

Although the sounds of laughter did its best to drown the sorrow, I could still feel the pain. It was palatable. I knew something extremely final had occurred that would change our lives forever.

My father had died suddenly. No warning. No short term or long term illness. He went to work after having lunch at home and had a massive heart attack while telling a joke to his friends at the local Coca Cola bottling plant.

I watched people I had seen all my life but actually didn't know come and go. They came with plates of food, cards with money I hoped, and hugs. They all blamed God. I heard various tales of how he was resting with God; how God had decided that daddy should return to heaven. I listened but it all seemed crazy considering he had a family who needed him more. I remembered thinking "if he's resting who is going to work and take care of us." If you grew up in this family anyone who didn't work was openly called lazy to their face.

In between people coming and going, the matriarchs and now heads of the family would go back to their tales full of funny little

quips about men, marriage and life in general. I studied them closely. I was looking for some sign of grief. The same grief I was feeling. Under normal circumstances I would have been asked or made to leave the room. Children were not allowed to listen to adults talk. It was an unspoken rule. That generation of women strongly believed that there were some things children should not hear. I agreed then and now.

After a few hours of listening to them I concluded that the antidote of choice for pain was laughter. As people came in to pay their respects they all told a funny daddy story. Everyone laughed and promised to be there for us if we needed anything. We did but no one would ever know it. These old girls had too much pride. They would never ask.

No one would be affected long term quite like we would be and it was obvious that the women who came to visit understood that concept seemingly more than the women in my family. They always left the house quickly with a look of relief in their eyes. I could read their thoughts, "I'm glad it's not my husband." They could feel that life would never be the same for us. But what they didn't know was that our bloodline was full of strong women who possessed a devout and unshakeable confidence in God. Their faith in God coupled with an extremely high moral code placed closely alongside a great demand to be educated gave us an edge that most would never understand. These women despised ignorance on any level. Laziness and ignorance were cardinal sins.

I often wondered why I sat for so long listening to their conversation. I couldn't move although I wanted to leave their space but they had a way of telling stories that held you frozen in place. I now believe God placed me in that position at that time so that he could later bring their conversation among many others to

my remembrance. These women drew you in. It was something special about them. I guess it was what they knew and understood that I now share with you. I, among many others, liked listening to their funny quips. They had the uncanny ability of being insulting but still funny. Etiquette and politeness were extremely important but they were able to do it with a hint of sarcasm that made you laugh. That's a gift.

I sat and watched them closely. I studied them. A part of me was fascinated by them because I always felt like they had secrets. Dark ones they never told. I still believe that to this day. God, although I didn't know it when I was younger, showed me things. He gave me insight into situations, eyes, souls and people's thoughts. I used to find it scary.

I will never forget looking at my great aunt, who was always perfectly polished from head to toe, and thinking "how does she know anything about the subject of marriage and men?" She had never married and had no children to her credit. I was only six years old when I had this revelation that she should never discuss marriage. Later in life I realized she provided all the details in this book on how an unmarried woman destroys a marriage - A big hint.

A part of me felt betrayed when my mother and grandmother would discuss my sisters with these two women whom we only saw during the Christmas holidays, summer vacations, and the dreaded funerals. So, instead of crying over Daddy's death they discussed the family and men but nothing about daddy.

I watched these women closely. They were clones of each other in appearance. They each had their legs crossed at the ankle, red fingernails, red lipstick and shiny black coiffure hair with a single strand of white pearls around their perfectly taut necks. A box of Knox gelatin and three small white jars of Ponds Cold Cream sat on the table with a large glass of ice water for each. They only

drank water. It was good for the complexion. This was a nightly ritual and although Dad had just died, nothing hindered this routine. Looking your best regardless of the situation or circumstance was a rule of thumb.

They could have had a stroke or been on oxygen and they would request a tube of lipstick and a brush. They did everything in their power to prolong the inevitable. You were never to look like you were growing older although they wanted to live forever.

I often think of these mannequins of sort, who never revealed to any of us who they really were or what they had gone through in life, and I wondered if they ever found true love outside of God. With the exception of my grandmother, I am not sure they truly understood how much God loved them.

Of all of the women in my family, I spent the most quality time with my grandmother. I shared a “special bond “with her. I loved working in the garden pulling up weeds between the mounds of four o’clock flowers that bloomed in front of the five steps that it took to climb onto her porch. I loved sitting on her porch in the swing listening to her stories which I later found out were men and women who had actually lived. I had heard of Jacob and Rachel, Ruth, Boaz, Esther, Moses, Bathsheba, David and Insecure Saul long before I ever read the Bible. Grandma loved Rachel. Her mother’s name had been Rachel so I always thought that was why she liked the name but I now know that Rachel was special and it had nothing to do with her name. It was the effort that Jacob put forth to have Rachel as his wife that made her special.

I remember being surprised when I found the stories in the big Catholic Bible that sat in a prominent place in our home. Only my mother read from the Bible to us when we were unable to attend church but she usually read from the Psalms or Proverbs. I was so

happy to learn that I could now read about these special people without having to make the two mile walk to my grandmother's porch. I fell in love all over again and it would be a lifetime love affair with the Bible and its truths.

Before the discovery of my role models in our Bible I had only thumbed through our Bible to look at important dates; our births, weddings, graduations and now a death date was being added. This was exciting.

Many years later I concluded that my grandmother and mother had their special times with each of us. Imparting to each of us what they thought was important. I now filter everything they said through the word of God because everything they did and said was not of God but they did a good job.

Over the years God has placed many older women in my life to add to this book. This book contains all the wisdom they poured into me. Because I have studied the word for myself I have only placed Holy Spirit inspired items in this book. But of all the women in my life my grandmother and mother have obviously had the biggest impact. My grandmother gave us the word of God and my mother gave us the desire to avoid ignorance at all cost, read, study, open a book, make something of yourself, and for God sake don't ruin your name.

There have been many older women who became surrogate moms pouring the wisdom of their years into me and I have always sat and listened like a pitcher eager to hold onto everything they gave me. This book is full of funny quips but they did not all come from my family or friends. I must give the Holy

Spirit credit for speaking to me throughout this writing process. God gets all the glory for this project of love.

All of the women that God placed in my life through His Holy Spirit gave me the foundation for this guide to the male –female relationships.

I have listened and listened intently and now many years later I am chuckling and silently giggling just like my family matriarchs did on that dreadful cold December 19th – the day daddy died.

Maybe laughing when you think your life appears to be falling apart is therapeutic after all. It's better to look back and know that you didn't make a complete idiot of yourself or show that you didn't trust God to carry you by falling out crying, throwing yourself into coffins, and fainting. If they did cry it was all hidden behind the huge black sunglasses they often wore. I was always told that the glasses were used to prevent the suns' glare from making you frown and frowning was forbidden. It placed lines in your forehead.

I now know that God had me in that place at that time instead of crying in my room over Daddy's death because his 21st century daughters would need an instructional guide. God knew that his daughters would devalue themselves. I could do nothing more for Daddy. I recall Jesus saying "let the dead bury the dead." I was on assignment that day but totally unaware.

Years after that day I had gone home to visit mom and we were riding in the car to get her a Pepsi and I remember her saying as she looked out of the window she said, "men always look for a cheap deal – don't be one. Be the one he saves up for, clears

space in his life for, dreams about, longs for and marries.” While listening to her I immediately thought about a male friend I had in college who wanted a new car. He talked about it constantly. He started to make preparations for its arrival. He stopped eating out to have enough money for the car, the insurance and its care.

My friend made all these preparations for a new car but not for a woman he had been dating in college for 4 years. He not only changed his life to purchase the car, he kept it clean once it arrived, polished it often, parked it in a safe space on campus and then paid for it for five years as it depreciated in value. He did so much for this car but nothing special for her.

My mind then wandered to Jacob. He worked seven years for Rachel and then seven more years to pay for her after being tricked into a loveless marriage with her older sister, Leah (Genesis 29).

Have you ever wondered why the “new 21st century woman” does not feel worthy of special treatment? She doesn’t expect it and would never demand it. This new woman would rather work alongside Jacob or work for him and allow him to go home and rest or hang with his friends while she worked to pay off the debt. This same type of woman would probably justify her working instead of Jacob who should work for her.

Many women will accept temporary menial amounts of money for such things as a rent payment which is due again in 30 days, money for a nail and hair salon appointment which they will need to rebook in two weeks and feel as if they have a good man. This is the behavior of a harlot. This book will teach you the difference.

Jacob valued Rachel. Jacob said by any means necessary. "I will have her as my own". It's sad to see women who aren't aware of their value anymore. So many women accept mistreatment as common and permissible. What happened to Gods' gift to man?

The most vital thing for you to understand is that you have allowed yourself to be mistreated. You are there. It's not being done to you without your participation. Own it. Take part in your own rescue.

Stop blaming men. They are still doing the same thing they did when God created them. They see a woman and they want to sleep with her. They only marry the ones who refuse to be treated like harlots, whores, concubines etc.

Women have changed. Yes, you have changed. Your value system is gone. You have compromised. Satan is still deceiving you like he did Eve thousands of years ago. "Will he really dump you after he has used your body and all your assets and resources?" Yes!!! He won't keep you or marry you because you give everything you have to him before he marries you. You give after you are married.

Ezekiel 23:29 New King James Version (NKJV)

²⁹ They will deal hatefully with you, take away all you have worked for, and leave you naked and bare. The nakedness of your harlotry shall be uncovered, both your lewdness and your harlotry.

God's desire is not for His daughters to perish. Your perishing is painful for Him to watch. Your cries in the night are heard but His daughters' actions prevent Him from moving on their behalf.

Jeremiah 30:15 New King James Version (NKJV)

¹⁵ Why do you cry about your affliction?
Your sorrow *is* incurable.
Because of the multitude of your iniquities,
Because your sins have increased,
I have allowed these things to come upon you.

He does not like watching you struggle as single mothers but He is also not happy with your clothing choices that reveal the most precious gifts He has given you. You expose yourself for salon money, for rent on cheap apartments in bad neighborhoods, to be in lewd videos, to get stares and demeaning comments from men who don't think you are special enough to marry. You are found in clubs swinging on poles, dancing in strange men's laps, cursing, drinking, smoking, laughing loud and playing the harlot role.

When you are alone and lonely oddly enough you are often sad and you don't know why. Your spirit is grieved and saddened. The person inside of your corrupt flesh is grieved. The world calls it depression. It's the royal priest inside of you that wants to be treated like royalty.

Ezekiel 20:43-44 New King James Version (NKJV)

⁴³ And there you shall remember your ways and all your doings with which you were defiled; and you shall loathe yourselves in your own sight because of all the evils that you have committed. ⁴⁴ Then you shall know that I *am* the LORD, when I have dealt with you for My name's sake, not according to your wicked ways nor according to your corrupt doings,

Satan has blinded you so that you don't see that you are being prostituted even if you aren't on a nightly track. Your fathers and your brothers sit by and watch you defile yourself because they are either too lazy or too dumb to recognize that the sins you are heaping upon yourself will have a payday. Lazy and uninvolved fathers who won't fight for their daughters will answer to God.

Our fathers, brothers, and uncles were ordained to protect us until we married and then it becomes the responsibility of our husbands to protect us. Because protecting us is work, the men in our lives have abandoned their post and simply said, "This is a new generation-things are different now."

God never changes. He is the same yesterday, today and forevermore. (Hebrews 13:8) Fathers and Brothers, your assignment has not changed.

In the book of Genesis 34:1-30 you will see the example of brothers who demanded that their sister who was defiled be vindicated. How many brothers and fathers have sat by and watched the defiling of their sisters and daughters.

Now Dinah the daughter of Leah, whom she had borne to Jacob, went out to see the daughters of the land. ² And when Shechem the son of Hamor the Hivite, prince of the country, saw her, he took her and lay with her, and violated her. ³ And Jacob heard that he had defiled Dinah his daughter. Now his sons were with his livestock in the field; so Jacob held his peace until they came. ⁶ Then Hamor the father of Shechem went out to Jacob to speak with him. ⁷ And the sons of Jacob came in from the field when they heard *it*; and the men were grieved and very angry, because he had done a disgraceful thing in Israel by lying with Jacob's daughter, a thing which ought not to be done.

The sons of Jacob, Simeon and Levi, Dinah's brothers, each took his sword and came boldly upon the city and killed all the males.²⁶ And they killed Hamor and Shechem his son with the edge of the sword, and took Dinah from Shechem's house, and went out.²⁷ The sons of Jacob came upon the slain, and plundered the city, because their sister had been defiled.²⁸ They took their sheep, their oxen, and their donkeys, what *was* in the city and what *was* in the field,²⁹ and all their wealth. All their little ones and their wives they took captive; and they plundered even all that *was* in the houses.

The brothers felt violated because of what was done to their sister. They avenged her. Although what they did may have been wrong, the principle of protection was in full force. Another example in the Bible of the men in a family protecting a sister is Tamar.

¹ After this Absalom the son of David had a lovely sister, whose name *was* Tamar; and Amnon the son of David loved her.² Amnon was so distressed over his sister Tamar that he became sick; for she *was* a virgin. And it was improper for Amnon to do anything to her.

Then Amnon said, "Have everyone go out from me." And they all went out from him.¹⁰ Then Amnon said to Tamar, "Bring the food into the bedroom, that I may eat from your hand." And Tamar took the cakes which she had made, and brought *them* to Amnon her brother in the bedroom.¹¹ Now when she had brought *them* to him to eat, he took hold of her and said to her, "Come, lie with me, my sister."

¹² But she answered him, "No, my brother, do not force me, for no such thing should be done in Israel. Do not do this disgraceful thing!"¹³ And I, where could I take my shame? And as for you, you would be like one of the fools in Israel. Now therefore, please

14 speak to the king; for he will not withhold me from you.”¹⁴ However, he would not heed her voice; and being stronger than she, he forced her and lay with her.¹⁵ Then Amnon hated her exceedingly, so that the hatred with which he hated her *was* greater than the love with which he had loved her. And Amnon said to her, “Arise, be gone!”

¹⁶ So she said to him, “No, indeed! This evil of sending me away *is* worse than the other that you did to me.”

But he would not listen to her.¹⁷ Then he called his servant who attended him, and said, “Here! Put this *woman* out, away from me, and bolt the door behind her.”¹⁸ Now she had on a robe of many colors, for the king’s virgin daughters wore such apparel. And his servant put her out and bolted the door behind her.

¹⁹ Then Tamar put ashes on her head, and tore her robe of many colors that *was* on her, and laid her hand on her head and went away crying bitterly.²⁰ And Absalom her brother said to her, “Has Amnon your brother been with you? But now hold your peace, my sister. He *is* your brother; do not take this thing to heart.” So Tamar remained desolate in her brother Absalom’s house.

²¹ But when King David heard of all these things, he was very angry.²² And Absalom spoke to his brother Amnon neither good nor bad. For Absalom hated Amnon, because he had forced his sister Tamar. And it came to pass, after two full years, that Absalom

²⁸ had commanded his servants, saying, “Watch now, when Amnon’s heart is merry with wine, and when I say to you, ‘Strike Amnon!’ then kill him. Do not be afraid. Have I not commanded you? Be courageous and valiant.”²⁹ So the servants of Absalom did to Amnon as Absalom had commanded. Then all the king’s sons arose, and each one got on his mule and fled.

³⁰ And it came to pass, while they were on the way, that news came to David, saying, “Absalom has killed all the king’s sons, and not one of them is left!”

In today's society women are not quietly held in the house but we are free to move about as we please. So as women, we have to resist the devil and only then will he flee. If you don't consistently fight; for your sanity, for your piece of mind, for your safety, for your protection and finally for your respect, the devil will continue to drag you through the gutters of life. He will devour men, women and children. He cares about no one and will use everyone.

Many women feel that they have beaten "men" at their own game by taking their money for basic needs, rent, car payments etc. Let me be the first to tell you, winning is not getting your rent paid or the occasional gift. It's better if he loves you enough to give you his name, a title deed and a legacy. This is what Jacob gave Rachel. Without Jacob's love and commitment to Rachel we would have never heard of Rachel. Jacob and Rachel are still being talked about today as a love that many women want to experience. This God ordained union birthed a king. Jesus was born in this royal legacy of love.

So as women we must stop placing the blame for our aching hearts on others and accept responsibility for our own role in life. I do realize that many of you have been taken advantage of by men who are selfish and self absorbed. This book will hopefully help you to limit the amount of time you allow your heart to be broken or you may avoid a heartache all together. Wouldn't that be great?

God demands that we make an inquiry of who we really are so that he can help us. God forces us to participate in our own rescue. Unfortunately, any man that has mistreated a woman for any length of time must accept that she allowed it to continue.

Dr. Mike Murdock, one of my husbands' many mentors, says that we should never complain about what we permit or have permitted.

If you know he is not good for you then why have you allowed him in your life, in your bed, in your head, and for some in their purse and for all, in your purpose?

Counseling in the church I have met many young men who openly admit that they have no desire to marry because they don't have to marry anymore. This man has basically told you that you aren't good enough to marry. A man that never wants to marry should be a virgin. No decent woman should give him anything but a conversation.

My husband, Pastor Terry as he is affectionately known by all of us, who sit under him as our shepherd from God, says and demonstrates to us that we must seek God first and then all things will be added unto us. If you are truly seeking God through prayer you will know the caution signs in a relationship that are there to help you make an informed decision. God aids us in this way so that we can make better choices for our lives as well as we will understand how special and unique we really are to Him. He loves us and wants the best for each of us, male and female. Without the knowledge of how God views each of us we can never set a standard for ourselves. If you set a high standard without the knowledge of God, people will come along and talk you out of your convictions. Without a firm foundation in Christ you can never truly understand the peace, joy, and good health (mentally and physically) that are immediate benefits of receiving Jesus Christ. It's a package deal. Each person needs a vision for their life from an early age. The best thing we can do for our daughters and sons while young is allow them to see life

(exposure to neighborhoods, restaurants, travel, etc.) and remind them that bad choices will hinder dreams.

As the years have flown by and I watched similar memorials and gatherings of love for each of the matriarchs in my family, except my Mother- Praise God – she is still very much alive at 86, I think back over all the advice I got from each of them and I decided it was finally time to put this wisdom to print so that many more women could set a standard for themselves and never settle for less but also keep in mind that as women we have responsibilities given to us by God and we should not allow the times that we live in to change those responsibilities. God never changes. He is the same, today, yesterday and forever. (Hebrews 13:8)

While on the phone with one of my sisters, I listened to her recant an incident she encountered with a niece that made us both sad. I was angry and hurt. It was in that moment I realized I had to write. I felt an urgency to write Heirlooms. I was witnessing personally the signs of the 21st century woman falling victim to a lack “pride” in who they are and the family bloodline which is God through the blood of Jesus. I remembered my sister saying repeatedly in our conversation, “ what is wrong with them?”

I recognized that this generation which included my own family members had not sat under the standards of decorum that we lived with. Although my grandmother had been hard, I suddenly saw that what she taught had been necessary. My sisters nor I, are by no means perfect and we have not lived perfect lives, but there were some things we just would not do. At our core, self respect for who we were and our belief in the Lord wouldn't allow us to do everything.

I wondered how I could help them to see that they were missing the mark because they had lost their moral code. They avoided the older family members because they thought our methods and standards were outdated and no longer applied. They wanted to have fun much longer than it should have been fun.

Going to clubs, bars, and parties are understandable while young and finally free from parental rules, college age and throughout your twenties, but it should become passé once you reach your early thirties and even before then you should have a limit for your fun. Fun should never cause you to be embarrassed later in your life.

I began to wonder what did my sisters and I not do? I became concerned. I had questions. Had I given my own daughter the tools to have enough self-respect that she would never allow “fun” or even love to cause her to degrade her body, her mind, her good name and her image? What did we fail to pass on? I remembered growing up and being afraid if the matriarchs of the family heard or even thought that we had done something that disrespected them or us.

I wondered why the men in our family weren't speaking up and speaking out against these destructive behaviors. Why did we fear hurting feelings? Why did it suddenly matter to us if they were angry with us for telling them the truth? Should we sit and watch them destroy themselves?

Our Feelings never mattered to Mom, our Grandmother, Aunt Magnolia or our Great Aunt Mattie. They told you the truth as they saw it and you accepted it and never talked back. The