

LOOK WHAT'S INSIDE:

THE DYNAMICS OF FORGIVENESS

MY BELOVED

NCF IN ACTION

MENTAL HEALTH NEWS

## The Luxury of Giving

by Ruth Narramore

*Giving is a luxury  
 For there are those denied  
 The privilege of ownership  
 And must in want abide.*

*Giving is a luxury  
 And those with plenty blest  
 Have ample opportunity  
 For sharing with the rest.*

*Giving is a luxury  
 For even those with less:  
 A widow's mite...a small boy's lunch  
 When offered God, He'll bless.*

*Giving is a luxury  
 Allowed by Divine Grace,  
 For we have nothing not received—  
 A debt we can't erase.*

*Giving is a luxury  
 A bonus of God's love  
 That lets us share eternal joy  
 In treasures stored Above.*

## REMEMBERING

# Ruth Elliott Narramore



a child, Ruth placed her faith in Jesus Christ as her Savior and as an adult she faithfully served Him for more than 60 years!

In American schools, Ruth demonstrated exceptional ability and talent in both music and art. As a young adult she could play the piano, organ, trumpet and cello. She sang and travelled throughout the Eastern United States in a gospel team led by Jack Wyrzten, founder of Word of Life. During this time she met and married Lt. Clyde Narramore in New York City. She later learned to play and gave concerts playing the vibraharp, Swiss bells, harp and alpine horn (alpenhorn).

After attending King's College, Ruth enrolled at Columbia University where she received Bachelors and Masters degrees in Music Education. In 1949 Ruth and Clyde moved to Southern California where Clyde took a position as a consulting psychologist with the Los Angeles County Superintendent of Schools. Ruth served as Director of Christian Education and Music and organist at the Eagle Rock Baptist Church. Ruth also served part time as a public school music teacher in Pasadena and Glendale, California.

Although Ruth was an incredibly talented person in her own right, she ministered throughout the United States and abroad with her

**R**uth Elliott Narramore, the wife of NCF founder, Dr. Clyde Narramore, passed away May 30, 2010, after a lengthy illness. Ruth was born in Brooklyn, NY, on August 23, 1922, the first-born child of Edwin and Alice Elliott.

When Ruth was six months of age, her family sailed across the Pacific to China where they served as missionaries. By two years of age, Ruth was speaking both Mandarin Chinese and English. She maintained her love for China and its people, as well as for the sons and daughters of missionaries serving overseas, for her entire life. As

RUTH, continued from cover

husband and worked with him side by side in founding and developing the many ministries of the Narramore Christian Foundation. She co-hosted their national radio program, "Psychology for Living," for over forty years. She carefully edited each of her husband's books before they were sent to the publisher. And she served as the Director of Publications at NCF, where she edited the award-winning "Living" magazine.

Ruth was also a wonderful hostess. Each year for nearly forty years the Narramores entertained 8-10 groups of 25-70 pastors, educators, business and professional people, and sons and daughters of missionaries at their home in Pasadena. They estimate that nearly 5,000 people had been to their home! Ruth loved people and once remarked early in their ministry when several staff came to the basement of their home to work each day, that her

theme song was "Never Alone." She was also an excellent public speaker and in her retirement years authored a book of poems she had written throughout her life entitled "Come Share My Joy."

Ruth was a devoted mother of her children, Melodie Narramore Yocum, and Kevin Narramore. She saw to it that there were times for family vacations and trips to Disneyland, Knott's Berry Farm and a variety of musical and dramatic productions. The Narramores often sang together, accompanied by Ruth at the piano, at their home in Pasadena and at conferences where Clyde was speaking. Not surprisingly both of their children were musically talented and excellent public communicators.

Ruth lived a full and vibrant life dedicated to serving the Lord, her family, and others. She is survived by her husband of 64 years, her son Dr. Kevin Narramore and his wife Barbara, her son-in law and grandson,



Ruth and her brother, Gordon Elliott as young adults

Paul and Byron Yocum, and her brother and sister-in law, Dr. Gordon and Othella Elliott. "Well done thou good and faithful servant" (Matthew 25:21). †

LAST LAUGH



"I'm hoping someone will steal my identity.  
I'm tired of taking responsibility for my own life!"

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# The Dynamics of Forgiveness

by Dr. Bruce Narramore

A few years ago my wife Kathy and our daughter Debbie and her two children were taking a little road trip to Yosemite National Park. Debbie was driving. Kathy was in the front seat on the passenger side and Ethan, then not quite three years of age, was sitting in the backseat directly behind Kathy.

"Ethan", Kathy asked, "Would you please put up your window?"

"Nope", Ethan replied.

"But Grandma is cold." Kathy responded, "You don't want Grandma to be cold do you?"

"I would be hot." Ethan replied bluntly!

Turning to Debbie, Kathy said "I am trying to teach your son some empathy but it's not working".

"Nope" Ethan piped up from the backseat, "Not workin'!"

"Not workin'" is a great description of what happens when we fail to let go of a grudge or forgive someone. Although it may seem natural at the time, unforgiveness doesn't work. As one Eastern sage put it "He who harbors a grudge should dig two graves." (One for the person you would like to get even with and one for yourself since resentments can kill you!).

Forgiveness is necessary because we are all sinned against: harsh words from a friend or family member, drivers who cut us off, accidents that wound or kill, genocide, parents or other adults that abuse, friends or spouses who abandon, people who steal, take advantage of us in a business deal, or take credit for what we have done, and churches or organizations that wound or fail us. We all have grievances toward others from

time to time. Persistent grievances harden into unhealthy unforgiveness, keep wounds open, disrupt relationships, hurt ourselves and others, and are a violation of the way God created us to be.

The Bible tells us, "Get rid of all bitterness, rage, and anger, brawling and slander, along with every form of malice. Be kind and compassionate to one another forgiving each other just as in Christ God forgave you." (*Ephesians 4:31-32 NIV*).

## What Forgiveness Is Not

There is a lot of confusion about the nature of forgiveness. Here are some common misconceptions. It means:

- denying that we hurt,
- excusing the one who hurt us,
- making ourselves vulnerable so we may be hurt again,
- letting others avoid the consequences of their misdeeds,
- condoning the behavior or tolerating mistreatment,
- reconciling with the person who hurt us (it may or may not),
- faking kindness whether we feel that way or not.

Mark Twain, for example, wrote in his autobiography about a publisher who had swindled him in business. The publisher was dead by then and Twain wrote "I have forgiven him for the wretched and deceitful things he did to me. In fact, I wish him well and if I could I would send him a fan!"

Apparently Twain hadn't quite reached the point of forgiveness. Even though the publisher was dead he was still stewing over it!

## Forgiveness Is

By contrast, biblical forgiveness involves giving up our desire for revenge or getting even and letting

God settle issues of justice. As the Apostle Paul puts it "Do not take revenge, my friends, but leave room for God's wrath, for it is written: 'It is mine to avenge. I will repay' says the Lord." (*Romans 12:19 NIV*). It isn't up to us to try to make others suffer for their mistreatment of us. God will handle that. Ultimately we have to release our offenders to God's justice. We should protect ourselves and avoid further harm, but it is not up to us to get revenge.

Although we may immediately know that we should forgive, it can take a good while to work through our resentments. That's because true forgiveness requires a changed attitude toward ourselves, God, and our offender. To forgive we must grow to the point that we have processed our hurts and anger fully, acknowledged how painful or detrimental someone's ill treatment of us has been, and then decide to move beyond the victim stage.

A little time in the victim stage is normal and perhaps even necessary. It can help us realize how deeply we have been hurt and face the pain of our hurts and losses. Realizing that we were victimized may also help put the blame for our original wounds where it belongs. If someone has hurt us it does no good to excuse them or act like it didn't matter. The victim stage can help us honestly face our anger at the offender or those who didn't protect us, or even at God. But we must be careful not to become stuck in a victim mentality. If we do, we are likely to carry negative emotions and attitudes towards others and ourselves throughout our life. We will keep blaming others, fail to develop personal responsibility, stay stuck, and continually re-live the past in new situations and relationships.

FORGIVENESS continued on page 5 ►

# My Beloved

by Clyde M. Narramore

When Ruth walked down the aisle at our wedding in New York City and we said our vows, little did we know how the Lord would lead us the next 64 years.

During our dating days it was apparent that she was bright, sensitive to others, attractive and multi-talented. Such things as music, long distance swimming, speaking, writing and art seemed to be done with little effort. But most important was her spiritual commitment. She believed and had a good knowledge of the Bible and she loved the Lord. This affected almost every decision and action during the rest of her life.

Along with her spiritual commitment was her commitment to our marriage. She loved me deeply, and of course it was mutual! This permeated our lives until the day that she went home to be with the Lord.

Ruth was very encouraging to me and to others. She cared for people and saw their good points. Hardly a day passed without her encouraging me. When I traveled alone to speak in Boston or New York or elsewhere, I would find little love notes scattered throughout my suitcase. I always felt loved and encouraged and looked forward to returning home.

From the time I met her Ruth loved beauty. She enjoyed God's creation and was always doing little things to make our home a place of beauty, restoration and enjoyment.

A few years after marriage our two children came along and I marveled at Ruth's ability to talk quietly with our

children, listen to them, pray about matters and move along with much love for each other. I couldn't imagine a better mother.

As our unique national ministries began to develop we learned the importance of a sacrificial attitude. For example when we launched our Christian

Psychology radio broadcast we were determined to follow the policies and requirements of the American Psychological Association. That meant we could never mention finances on the radio. Because this ministry was so desperately needed, people by thousands wrote and phoned us for help. This required a larger staff, offices, equipment and the like. And it meant we often had to choose between getting or doing some nicer things for ourselves and investing in the ministries. Ruth had a very sacrificial attitude and never complained. She loved to serve and give to others.

Ruth liked humor. She laughed a lot and told funny stories. This created a good environment both at home and as we worked together in our ministries. Because of the heavy responsibilities of our ministry, including taking phone calls all hours of the day at home, we could have felt a lot of stress or pressure. But Ruth took it all in stride and her ability to laugh and see the humorous side of things helped us keep a good balance in our lives.



One day an especially humorous thing happened. A regular radio listener wrote me about how badly she wanted to get married. She said she was pleasant looking, affectionate and could make the right man a wonderful wife. I suggested to Ruth that we use that letter on the radio by taking a few sentences of it, and then I would discuss it. So I explained on the radio that I received this letter and I was going to ask Ruth to read part of it and I would discuss it.

About a week later a wealthy farmer in Iowa wrote and said he had just heard that woman say how much she wanted to be married. He said that she had a beautiful voice, seemed to be bright and was just the type of woman he had been looking for since his wife had died. He also said that together they would be able to travel throughout the world.

I wrote him back explaining that Ruth was not the person who wanted to get married—but that she had been reading a letter which a lady had sent us. Evidently he had missed the first

part of the broadcast when I explained that Ruth was going to read part of a letter that we had just received. He wrote back insisting that he had heard this lady with his own ears and that he wanted her name and phone number. I wrote him a second letter and eventually the matter subsided. Then one day Ruth smiled and said, "See, you better be nice to me because there is that wealthy farmer in Iowa!"

Another of Ruth's attributes was her desire to try new things and tackle a challenge. So one day we bought a beautiful harp which she soon learned to play at home and later for various concerts. Before long we bought a complete set of Swiss bells which she mastered and played around the nation. In time we purchased a 12 foot long Alpenhorn which she played with an orchestral tape background. And not long ago she published a book of 70 poems entitled "Come Share My Joy". Whether it was swimming across a lake, climbing a steep mountain trail, or mastering a new musical instrument, she was always ready for a new experience or challenge.

When people get married they bring along a world of thoughts and feelings and actions – some good and some devastating. Some people struggle with personality deficits such as a high level of anger, insecurity, paranoia and the like. I am grateful that Ruth grew up in a loving and encouraging Christian home and that she was free from this type of personality maladjustment. She loved life and she loved people.

If I were to describe my sweetheart, Ruth, I would use the word, OTHERS. In nearly everything she did she was thinking of how she could be a blessing to others. Our home was open to friends and relatives for periods of weeks or a year. Even just a few hours before she went to be with the Lord, she asked about a personal friend who had injured her foot. Her "other" attitude was expressed mostly in her desire to lead others to Christ.

Our family is now in the initial stages of bereavement. But we praise God for His comforting Word. "Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of His saints" (*Psalms 116:15*).



We will also fail to develop deep feelings of gratitude to God and others. A lack of gratitude robs us of enjoyment in life.

### Growing Toward Forgiveness

There are four keys to resolving unforgiveness. *The first is agreeing with God that it is His prerogative, not ours, to resolve issues of justice.* As finite and sinful people, we have a limited and biased perspective, and we don't tend to be patient or caring with those who wound us. We want justice and we want it now. God, by contrast, is loving and patient as well as just. He knows we are all sinners and need to grow and be forgiven. Only He is completely fair and just, so we must leave those issues in His hands. In fact, Christ has already paid for humanity's sins. To hold on to a grudge is to try to play God in someone else's life.

*Growing is the next step in overcoming unforgiveness.* We need to grow to overcome unforgiveness because unforgiveness results from feeling like we are weak and vulnerable. Since children are weak and helpless, it is natural that they feel like victims and resent those who wound them. But adults with realistic feelings about themselves are generally able to protect themselves from further hurt by setting boundaries and avoiding dangerous people. Until we are strong enough to do that, however, it is dangerous to attempt to forgive.

Consider, for example, a woman in an abusive relationship who has known nothing but abuse since she was a child. To ask her to forgive an abusive man before she knows that she does not deserve to be treated that way and is strong enough to live without him, doesn't help. He will likely just abuse her again. Only when she is strong enough to tell him to stop or she

will walk away is she moving toward a time that she may forgive him. But first the abuse has to stop and she has to take charge of her life. That can be a lengthy and difficult process but it must happen if she is ever going to reach a point of forgiveness.

In fact, it helps to remember that forgiveness is not simply something we do. Forgiveness is an expression of our character. We can be people

who want to settle scores, hold on to our hurts, and resent others. Or we can become, like Christ, people who are secure and emotionally mature and loving and consequently don't need to harbor resentments. When we are hurt or offended we deal kindly yet firmly or decisively with the

issues, give ourselves time to process our experience and recover, and then move on.

*The third step in the process of forgiveness is to fully experience our wounds, losses and hurts and then to mourn both the negative things that have happened to us and the positive things (love, protection, security, etc.) that we did not receive.* These things are sad and often tragic. We need to cry over them and feel our sadness. Until we have fully faced the pain we cannot begin to let it go. The Bible says "Blessed are those who mourn for they shall be comforted." (*Matthew 15:4 NIV*). Grieving painful experiences, even though belatedly, helps us gain mastery over them.

In the process of grieving we realize "I know exactly what happened and how painful it was and that I can never undo it. I cannot go back and force my parents to not divorce or to not abuse me or not prefer my siblings or to wipe out any other painful experience. And I cannot undo my previous weaknesses, or bad choices or naivety that made me vulnerable to being betrayed or hurt. But I am now strong enough to face and admit

***"We need to grow to overcome unforgiveness because unforgiveness results from feeling like we are weak and vulnerable."***

# MKs Complete 2010 Reentry Program!

In July the Narramore Christian Foundation held its 31st Annual Reentry Program for the sons and daughters of missionaries (MKs) returning to the United States for college. This year's students came from 22 countries where their parents are serving as missionaries, church planters, Bible translators, medical personnel and educators with 16 different mission agencies. The students arrived from as far away as Africa, France, Venezuela, and China. They will soon be starting college at Christian colleges and universities including Biola, Calvin, Indiana Wesleyan, Liberty, Messiah, Taylor, and Wheaton, as well as public universities like the Universities of Arizona, California, North Carolina and Texas.

Each day of the two-week reentry program began with a time of worship followed by lectures, discussion times and social and recreational activities. Topics included "Understanding Yourself and Others," "Handling Transitions," "Understanding U.S. Culture," "Coping Successfully with Trauma and Hardship," "Learning from the Emotional Life of Jesus," "Dating

Relationships," "Grief and Loss," "Dealing with Depression," and "Setting Realistic Boundaries."

The students took two personality inventories which helped them look at their personality styles and some of their strengths and weaknesses. They each met with a staff counselor and participated in a daily confidential small group where they could process any dif-

ficult experiences they have had and any anxiety about beginning life back in the United States. Their recreation included an afternoon picnic and swimming party at the home of Bruce and Kathy Narramore, a late afternoon and evening at a Southern California beach, and Saturday at Knott's Berry Farm amusement park.

Perhaps the main highlight of



2010 MK Reentry Participants



MKs listening attentively to Dr. Bruce Narramore and Seminar Director, Mr. Perry Bradford.



MKs interacting during a morning discussion time.

the two-week seminar was the opportunity to make friends with other missionary kids and to share their similar life experiences. As one participant put it “Now I know I’m not alone.”

At the end of the program the students said their goodbyes with deep appreciation and much greater confidence in their ability to adapt to a strange new country,

the United States of America. In fact, a recently completed research study that tested the MKs who took this program last year, showed that as a group, after completing the program, they were statistically less stressed, less prone to depression, and more confident. We have known this for many years from the students’ comments but it is nice to have a carefully

done research study that objectively demonstrates the impact of this reentry program.

Please pray for these fine young men and women as they begin the next important phase of their lives, and for their parents, most of whom are serving the Lord in countries thousands of miles away.



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MENTAL  
HEALTH NEWS

## Medication Helps ADHD Children



Researchers from the University of California at Berkeley recently completed a study of nearly 600 children suffering from attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD). The research

team, led by Dr. Richard Scheffler, followed the school performance of the children from kindergarten through the fifth grade. Although the ADHD children still underperformed their peers without ADHD, those

who received medication scored several months ahead of those with ADHD who did not receive medication, in both reading and math. The article was published in the May 2009, vol 123 of *Pediatrics*. †

## Ask Me Not To Write A Poem

by Ruth Narramore

*"Please write a poem for Mother's Day,"  
Asked Mrs. Thus-and-so.*

*I tried – I toiled – I labored on  
But words refused to flow!*

*I struggled to write something down—  
'Twas maudlin and 'twas trite.  
I wore a dozen pencils out,  
But nothing came out right.*

*The topic wasn't what was wrong:  
(The books are on my shelf).  
It's hard to pen a mother's praise  
When I am one myself.*

*I'm surely not the heroine  
A poem would make of me,  
And many mothers have their flaws  
If truth be known – and free.*

*Yet motherhood I do adore,  
And I, for one, am for it.  
But ask me not to write a poem.  
Good heavens, I deplore it!*

### FORGIVENESS, continued from page 5

these things and to give up belatedly trying to punish myself or another or hoping that someone else will finally fix it. I must accept that these things happened and decide to move ahead with my life. Only when we have done that are we ready to move beyond the victim stage and come closer to a point of forgiveness.

*The final step in forgiveness is developing an attitude of gratitude.* We hold grudges because we believe we have received a rotten deal in life (and we may have!). But even when we have, that's only one part of the story. God has done great

things in our lives. He has given us life. He has redeemed us from our sins. His Holy Spirit indwells us. He has most likely provided us with friends and all sorts of earthly blessings. He has revealed His Word to us in the Bible. He is preparing a place for us in eternity. And, according to *Romans 8:28-34*, He is working in even the most difficult and painful situations to bring good for us so that we can become more Christ-like in character. As we increasingly appreciate the incredible things God has done for us, our resentments melt and gratitude increasingly replaces unforgiveness.

Christians have an incredible resource in this process of learning to

forgive because we know that Jesus himself suffered innocently, but was able to say on the cross "Father forgive them." (*Luke 23:34 NIV*). We know that God promised that we would all experience some measure of suffering. "In this world you will have trouble." (*John 16:33 NIV*). We are aware that we too have often sinned and perhaps hurt others and that we too are constantly in need of forgiveness. And as we mourn our losses and painful experiences we know that God is by our side, and that He will ultimately and perfectly deal with all injustices. We know that vengeance is ultimately up to God (*Romans 12:19*) and we can decide to leave it with Him. †