

# **“I Gave My Child Away 11 Years Ago”**

## **When through guilt and shame Sharon surrendered her child, she never realized God would give her a second chance at being her mother.**

Sean and Sharon contacted us about their marriage and requested counseling sessions. Sharon had given birth to a child prior to meeting her husband and never told him about it.



The child was born when Sharon was twenty years old in her third year of college. She took a semester off from school, had the child and returned to complete her education without telling her family. She decided to allow the father of the child to have full custody, but she would have no contact with the child, ever. Her parents never knew the child existed nor did her family or friends.

Sharon moved ahead automatically for more than ten years afterwards. One day a letter notified her that the child's father had become very ill. He wanted her take custody of their child, had scheduled a court hearing, and hoped to relinquish full custody to Sharon.

### **The Court Date**

Sharon became very fearful. This child was now 11 and it looked as if her old secret could destroy her marriage, she thought. Further, her entire family could reject her.

In spite of her anxiety, Sharon agreed to meet with her child's father, but first she had to tell her husband about the situation. Sean was in total disbelief. "How do you keep a secret like this from your husband?"

As the history unraveled, Sharon explained that she did not want to have an abortion or give the child away for adoption to strangers. The right thing to do, as she thought at the time, was to let the father know and give him an opportunity to raise the baby in a good and spiritual environment.

"The condition of not seeing her was mine not Kevin's," she said. "He never wanted me out of her life. I did not have room in my life for a child. Call me selfish or heartless but I felt it was the right thing to do for her."

Sean got up and left the room, hurt and frustrated. Sharon sat there, crying alone. She composed herself and then called her parents and asked to meet with them immediately. As she prepared to pull out of the driveway Sean jumped in the car with her. "I'll be in court with you and I look forward to bringing her home," he said

Sean had no reservations about this situation and he knew God was working things out. He knew something stood in the way whenever he would discuss

having a child with Sharon. Sharon became so emotional that Sean had to drive.

"What kind of mother gives her child away?" Sharon asked sobbing. "I just could not bear the shame or guilt, so it was easier to avoid it at all cost."

## When You Hold The Family Secret

While walking into her parents' home Sharon realized that her two brothers and three sisters were all there. Sharon's parents called them to come over right away and they all thought that the couple was either expecting or adopting a child. All the other siblings had children except for Sharon. Tears of shame began to sneak down Sharon's face. The sight of everyone overwhelmed her and she just didn't have the courage to tell them all so she asked to speak to her parents privately and they agreed. Her parents had always been supportive towards her and all their other children. Sean with her as she told her parents the truth.

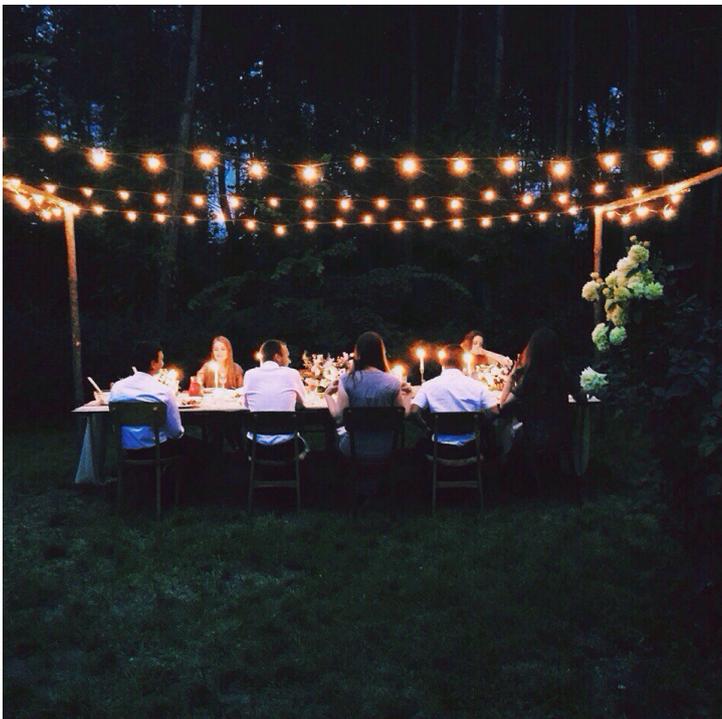
"We have a granddaughter and you never told us?" her father asked.

"You had sacrificed so much for me to attend college" Sharon explained. "I was so ashamed and I made a decision to have the child alone."

"I remember you taking a semester off and you couldn't come home," her father said. "Now I know why." Sharon's mother reached out and held her, asking for no explanation. She only told her that she loved her and she wanted to meet her grandchild.

When after an hour Sharon went back into the other room and told her siblings, they held her with unconditional love and laughed. "We have a new addition to the family!"

## Instant Family



*"We have a new addition to the family!"  
Sharon's family instantly "blended" to  
surround Elise with love.*

Three days later the entire family attended the custody hearing. Sharon had

not spoken to Kevin in 11 years but when they greeted each other she knew everything would be fine.

Sharon and Sean signed the papers and promised Kevin that they would be good parents to *Elise*. Sharon shot a glance at Kevin when he said the child's name.

"Is something wrong?" Sean asked her.

"No, it's just that Elise was my grandmother's name," Sharon said.

"I knew how much you loved your grandmother and I prayed someday you would meet your daughter," Kevin said. He had only one request for them: "please raise her continually in the will of God."

They all agreed.

Two days later Sharon, Sean, Kevin, and Elise met for dinner. Elise was the reflection of Sharon they could have been twins. Sharon extended her hand to greet Elise and after a few silent moments Elise said "I have waited eleven years to meet you and my father gave me a picture of you and I prayed to meet you and God answered my prayers".

She then gave her mother a huge hug and kiss and there was not a dry eye in the group, especially not Sharon's. They spent the next few hours and many days ahead getting acquainted.

## **Kevin's House Was In Order**

Elise was made aware of her father's illness two years prior to this. Doctors diagnosed Kevin with leukemia and his prognosis wasn't good. He knew he had to find Sharon and reconnect Elise with her. Kevin had a very successful law practice and he made wise choices regarding Elise's financial stability and future education requirements. He also knew of Sharon's and Sean's success and knew his daughter would continue to excel.

Sharon's parents gave Elise a welcome home party and she met all her mother's family and Sean's family also. Kevin had always told Elise that her mother loved her very much but needed him to care for her until the day came they would be reunited as mother and daughter.

Kevin made sure, through God's guidance, to secure a safe and godly environment for their child. Elise had moved in with Sean and Sharon and they began a new journey together. The couple repeatedly thanked Kevin for his kindness and love for God that showed them that God never stops loving or forgiving us and they helped him in his final months until he passed away. Elise was by her father's bedside the evening he died when she told him, "I'll see you in the morning; rest daddy, just rest."

## **Restoration Eased the Guilt and Shame**

The family was so moved by her love for her father and God. Kevin had raised his daughter to fear and love God as he was raised by his parents who had passed away several years ago. That witness lead Sean and Sharon to accept Jesus Christ as their personal Savior.

Today, Sean, Sharon and Elise attend family counseling with Arthur and me and they are blending, adjusting, and growing well together.

Sharon has said that she allowed fear, selfishness and disappointment to interfere with God's plan for her life. She had to work through her personal pain—the knowledge that she missed eleven years of her daughter's life. But, overriding that was the unselfish, forgiving love of her child's

father, a dear friend, who restored a mother and daughter together once again.

The names have been changed to protect the innocent.