

July 16, 2013

Dear Eleanor,

RE: Your open letter from 7/9/13

I am glad that you expressed some of your concerns, since I did not know that some of the things you mentioned are still issues for you. Your family loves you very much also, and we miss you and your previously cheerful ways.

We do not believe that you want to disown your family, but that you want to follow your own way and do "what feels good" to you. It appears to be a self-seeking path of discovery.

Last summer you were presented with three options, not just two as you suggest: a) follow some basic rules of consideration for the rest of the family, b) go to Bob Jones University all expenses paid and learn to be away from home and more independent without incurring debt. (you were allowed to choose your major and course of study, except that Bob Jones requires Bible classes to graduate), c) move out and pay your own way to continue to attend UCCS and be influenced more and more by the Secular Humanism that permeates the faculty and entire campus.

After asking you to meet certain deadlines during the week, for the consideration of the rest of the family and our rest and peace of mind, you consistently missed those times to be home, etc. When we asked you to help with dishes or laundry, it seemed to never happen. You never had time to pitch in and help with chores. You stayed very late at school studying with other students. Your grades are admirable, but coming in during the wee hours of the morning, and waking up your siblings, etc. just did not work for the family unit as a whole. Studying all day Sunday, due to poor time management and not participating in worship with the family, just does not lead to harmony. The example you were setting for your brother and sister became inexcusable. Your consistent lack of courtesy is why the first choice went away, and we realized that your continuing to stay at home was not an option any longer.

Your choice to stay at UCCS is definitely your choice, and we have released you to God, to have the relationship He wants to have with you. When we have asked you how you made your choice, or why Bob Jones or a Christian college would be a poor choice, your answer is how it "feels" or at least based on emotion. I have asked for Scripture or a solid foundation for how your choice was made, but it seems your "friend's" counsel and your feelings are the basis of your decision. I believe that God speaks directly to all His

children through Scripture and through those in authority over them. Peers do not have authority over you, and neither does Sara Doyle or Dianna Gay.

We did not barrage you with texts or calls. If someone tried to contact you besides Dad or me, they would have asked about you, and when we told them you no longer lived at home, and we had some disagreements, they would have asked for your number. I don't think you realized what you did to your parents and to your siblings, when you decided to leave abruptly, and throw your things out onto the porch in the rain, and wait for your friends to arrive to help you move. I am sorry that you experienced a crisis, but hurt goes both ways.

You asked for help last November, after we found out you were not in the apartment, and Annie was so dysfunctional that you were moving around and staying at friend's places or sleeping in the Science Center or your car. We made the deposit at Lisa's room to help you, and it was with your full knowledge. We were asking you about your decision to move in December, because we needed to know if we needed to borrow a truck to help you move, and we needed to know if it was necessary to pay rent at Lisa's for January. It was only courteous to let us know and Lisa know if you really intended to move out of your apartment or not. You cut off communication with us because you did not want to face that decision, and you let it go until the last minute, until you saw how it went with Annie. We were in Disneyland, during Christmas when you called us for help because your car had been towed. I was not even aware that you "cut-off" communication with us.

It is difficult to "hang out" with someone and laugh and have fun, when there has been such a huge difference of opinion, and when your professors believe your parents will try to kidnap you, etc. Really..., you think it is creepy when we try to bring you things, but we don't announce that we are coming ahead of time. It is equally creepy to be viewed as the evil kidnapper by your teachers and friends. To use your words, "Think about it".

Eleanor, you talk about moving out to be free from legalism and your bondage to sin, and self-injury, etc. Let me be clear that your darkness is your sin nature and not another's problem. We all have struggles with our old sin nature, even the apostle Paul did. Remember the verse, "But I buffet my body?" He wanted to run a good race and finish well, and not be in bondage to anything but Christ. Your Dad has struggles, and I do too. You know about Olivia's struggles and Will's struggles, but that does not mean that our family circle is unhealthy for you. Living with Annie was unhealthy for you. We are also not a legalistic family. You wanted to have definite rules and have definite yes and no's to what to wear and how to get to know boys, etc. We never told you about courtship, but you learned about that through church. As a family, we just want all our decisions to be pleasing to the Lord Jesus without blanket rules. I think you understand that. We did not impose legalism on you, and you know that rules do not bring salvation.

I firmly believe that we probably do many things daily that are not pleasing to the Lord, just because our society has come so far from an ethically and morally sound society. We do things that are acceptable to us, but not necessarily pleasing to God. Our God is immutable, and when He tells the Israelites, "Do not tattoo yourselves, as the Canaanites do.", He does not change His mind and decide it is okay in today's world. If it did not please Him then, I don't believe it will please Him now.

You told me that God has given us so many gray areas where we are supposed to decide for ourselves. I do not believe that. Some areas are not clear in Scripture, but again, if Jesus is standing beside you, and you ask Him, "Should I wear this?" I believe you will know the answer. The fact you had to ask, probably gives you your answer. I do not believe that you cannot effectively witness to your unsaved friends without embracing their dress, hairstyles, etc. We can be different and still love the unsaved and be a testimony to them. Your uncle Harvey was called "The Flying Rabbi" in college. They all knew he might want to be a missionary or preacher. I don't know why they called him Rabbi, except that his language and demeanor was different, and no, he didn't drink with his peers. They respected him very much, and would have held him accountable, if he slipped in his behavior. Just like Dr. Orr's story.

To answer your guidelines for visiting: I do not think it is creepy if we are coming by UCCS from a doctor's appt., and leave a gift for you in your bicycle sidebag. Sorry you took it that way. We are not checking up on you. We do not check to see if you stayed at your apt. the night before. Sometimes we have driven by your apartment after church, to see if you are there, just because we have something to give you, such as something of yours that we found at home or some of your mail. If this bothers you, we will forward your mail to you. We would also like consideration before you drop by the house without notice, and our doorbell rings after 9pm. Sometimes when you drop by it is dinnertime, and we feel rude not to feed you. We don't mind, but sometimes I have only prepared enough to feed four people.

I explained all the finances for your savings account that we gifted to you. As you know, I did not empty your account until it was below the amount we gave to you as a free gift when you became of age. You spent all the money that you earned working at the office, so about \$30,000 was gone in three years, and that was with Dad and I paying your tuition for five semesters and your living expenses at home. We only asked you to pay your tuition for the sixth semester, when we realized how quickly you were running through the money, and we were having disagreements about your failure to be considerate of the rest of the family. We emptied the account last summer 2012 when it was apparent that you were going to use that last \$10-12,000 for apt. deposit and moving out expenses, and we felt that using money we gifted to you to leave the family, seemed to be wrong. When you asked to use that money to buy a car, we agreed, and a full accounting was given to

you about how that last money was spent. If you need a repeat of that accounting, I can provide that, but we spent every penny on your car, and a spare tire, and maintenance and insurance for one year.

You don't want to discuss Bob Jones or Grace Bible Church. Your option to go to Bob Jones has also expired, as you would have to be in school a very long time now to satisfy the Bible course requirements. If you had gone one year ago, you could have still finished in 4 or 5 semesters, just like you are going to do now. It was up to you whether you took 4 full semesters or 5 light semesters.

We invite you to Grace when we feel you might be interested in the message Jeff is bringing, or when we want to have lunch with you. If you would rather not visit, and spend time with us on Sunday, that is your choice. Just meeting for "fun" somehow does not seem as meaningful as meeting for worship and fellowship. We seem to look at the past very differently, and you seem to blame Dad and me for many of your problems. If I am having an Eeyore day, that is my fault, and not Dad's fault, because he might be unhappy with me at the moment. My joy and fulfillment is based on my relationship with Christ, and not on my relationship with my husband or children. Yes, it can be discouraging to have conflict, but every relationship has some element of conflict, and some of that helps to sharpen us and mold us into Christ's image.

I am sorry if you feel I have been crushed, but most of what you are seeing at this time is that I am in my early 50's, and it is harder for me to juggle office work, and housework, and relating to my growing children. I am more tired than I was at 29 when you were born.

Love you still,