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#### What we're all about

*Reach Out, Columbia* is committed to presenting the heart and works of Jesus Christ in clarity and purity. We strive to encourage a deeper, more steadfast love toward others as well as provide a vehicle for the body of Christ to come together as one voice in corporate agreement and expression of faith.

## Letter from the Editor

Last summer I received a letter from a new reader named Jessica. She was responding to my June editor's letter celebrating families. In it, I described a family as "an incredibly complex organism. People joined by blood and shared history."

This was Jessica's response:

*Hi. I've never read your magazine, but I picked it up just the other day and started with your "Letter from the Editor." Within the first two lines, I find it offensive and insensitive. The line "people joined by blood..." discounts many, many families. While I was married I had a stepdaughter who I raised from the age of 2. She calls me mommy and has known only me as her mom. I am "not joined by blood," and she does not have my mom's eyes, but she's just as much my daughter as her bio(logical) sister.*

*In September, my brother and my sister-in-law are adopting a little girl. I'm so excited by her arrival, and she's already my niece, blood or not. I have a friend who has three adopted children. In this entire beautiful family of five, not one of them is "joined by blood," but they certainly share history, they share the trips to foreign countries to meet and pick up their wonderful children, and they share 12 years of making memories.*

*In today's day and age, I am surprised that in writing this letter Lori did not think of and include the many different kinds of families that exist. In the future, please take the time to think about the fact that we can't all easily have children and that adopted children are our family too.*

This was my response:

"Jessica, you are absolutely right. Families are so much more than those who share the same DNA. As your letter beautifully illustrates, the families God joins together through means other than physical reproduction are no less special, treasured, and worthy of recognition and honor.

"Unlike you, I've not had the opportunity to welcome non-biological children into my family, but I have friends who have. A much-prayed-for adopted daughter from China, a bi-racial baby from Haiti, and a foster child who loved his way into his family's hearts—all these precious children stand in glorious affirmation of the points you make in your email.

I trust you know I did not intentionally omit these treasured family members in my letter to the editor. It was simply an oversight, and I ask your forgiveness for the hurt and offense it caused you. I'm thankful for your email and the reminder to consider the diversity of non-traditional families as I write. Just because my perspective is limited doesn't mean the world is, and we are all wise to keep this in mind."

I think Jessica will be pleased with this month's issue of *Reach Out, Columbia*. In it we share one family's miracle of adopting and carrying to term a frozen embryo baby. We learn about the 22-member Badeau family's heart for foster children. And we read Mike Turner's wise piece "5 Ways to Help our Adult Children Stay Faithful to Jesus." It's a marvelous issue that celebrates the many ways God unites people together in physical and spiritual families.

Lori

