Dear Mom and Dad,

First of all, I love you.

Thank you for investing so much in raising me. Thank you for all the many, many happy memories. Thank you for the days spent romping outside, the weekend camping trips, and the sewing projects that went into the late hours of the night. Thank you for the evenings spent reading aloud, and for the map games we played at the dinner table. Thank you for always making an effort to involve us kids in your lives, dreams, and projects. There is a lot I am grateful to you for.

I know that when you find my blog what you read will likely cause you pain. I am truly sorry about that. You may wonder why I started this blog, and why I write on a public platform like this. Let me see if I can explain.

I blog because some of the things that happened between us left me broken and hurt. Shortly before I started this blog, I came upon a number of bloggers writing about the fallout of the ideas promoted by organizations like Vision Forum and No Greater Joy. I saw myself in that writing, and I began healing. I joined those bloggers in writing about my experiences, and as I did I began to reach closure and a place of peace. I went into therapy to work through what happened between us, and I’ve laughed and cried and made new friends. It has taken me years to sort through everything, but over time I’ve healed, grown, and found myself. This blog has been a vital part of that process.

I blog because I want to help others avoid the pain I have felt—and the pain you have felt. I see problems with some of the beliefs and ideologies you hold. I blog against ideas I see as harmful, ideas I have seen cause people pain, whether myself, you, or others around us. I blog not out of bitterness, but rather out of sadness for what might have been, what could have been, but wasn’t. I’m angryabout some of what happened, but mostly I’m sad. I blog in the hopes that others can avoid the problems I’ve seen and experienced. You taught me to be passionate about what I believe and to have a heart to help others. Well, I am, and I do.

You may wonder why I have kept this blog a secret from you. The truth is that at first it was because I was not strong enough to say these things without anonymity. Later I was simply afraid you might cut me off if you knew that I was speaking openly against the beliefs you hold so dearly. As I remember it, there was some question regarding whether I would be allowed to visit home after marrying against your wishes. Perhaps keeping this blog from you was wrong, but what’s done is done.

Soon after I began blogging I wrote an account of growing up, and of how I experienced the trouble that occurred between us when I was in college. I know that you have your own understanding of these events, and that I never really told you my perspective. Please read it with an open mind.

With all the love in the world,

Your Eldest Daughter