Activities:  A man that hath friends must shew himself friendly (Pr 18:24)
10-07  12:00 Noon    Lunch at Berean Baptist with our missionaries; Please bring your favorite dishes to share
10-17  08:30 A.M. - 04:00 P.M.  Our annual North Georgia Apple Excursion
11-11  12:00 Noon    Lunch-Out at Sonny’s B-B-Q in Lawrenceville; Bring your appetite for the best B-B-Q in town

Anniversaries:  What therefore God hath joined together, let not man put asunder (Mr 10:9)
10-01    Norm & Julie Grasser #37  10-16    Dick & Joan Beattie #49
10-01    Art & Jean Stercay #65   10-16    Mitch & Christine Jones #26
10-07    Bill & Marge Rygh #53   10-20    Kim & Dania Darnell #24
10-12    Ed & Rebecca Mills #23

Birthdays:  But strong meat belongeth to them that are of full age … to discern both good and evil (Heb 5:14)
10-02    Rick Brinson          10-20    Sam Mabry          10-26    Lawrence McLean
10-06    Chris Parks           10-21    Tim Franklin       10-26    Carolyn Phelps
10-13    Nick Martinelli       10-24    Harold Lindsey     10-30    Pastor Randy Hurst
10-18    Vickie Kelley          10-25    Priscilla Knezevich 10-31    Bill Lake
10-19    Dick Beattie           10-25    Bill Rygh          10-31    Pastor Danny Sweatt
10-20    Morris Kent            10-26    Bill Goff

This picture is of our Red Lobster Lunch-Out group. Individual pictures are on pages 3 and 4
Remember the sickle? I loved using one when I was a young teen. I could swing it and clear a path almost a foot deep into thick weeds with one sweep of my arm. In my enthusiasm, sometimes I would swing the cut weeds all the way up into the air, only to have the wind blow them down all over my head, neck and back! It only took a time or two before I learned to be a little less aggressive with the sickle! One hot summer day I remember being on my hands and knees, crawling through our garden between the vegetables. Green beans and corn, as I recall, were the six inch plants in rows on each side of me. My job was to pull up anything that was growing but was not going to be a stalk of corn or a bean plant. “Mom, wouldn’t it be easier to just take our sickle and chop them down? It would take a lot less time than pulling them each up by hand!” As I recall, my mother’s response was, “No, we have to get the roots out of the ground so they will die. If we leave the roots in the ground, the weed will come right back and we will have to do it all over again.” The sickle was not sufficient to get rid of the weeds completely.

That summer we spent a lot of time pulling weeds, but we did not make it to the back of the garden. By autumn, the weeds in the back of the garden were almost as high as my head. I walked back there once and was shocked to discover there were pumpkins and melons on the ground under all the weeds. The fruit was tiny and deformed, as the weeds had overgrown the plants and stolen the benefit of the sun and rain that make plants thrive.

When I read Hebrews 12:15 Looking diligently lest any man fail of the grace of God; lest any root of bitterness springing up trouble you, and thereby many be defiled; I think of that comment from my mother. In order to kill the weed, you have to kill the root.

It is so neat to see married couples remain together through thick and thin, celebrating anniversaries year after year. It reminds us of Christ’s faithfulness to the church. However, have you ever met that couple that lives under the same roof, but has little to no love? Even though they never divorced, they just put up with each other. Their conversation consists of fussing and fuming, instead of kindness and courtesy. Bitterness troubles them like the unchecked weeds in the back of our garden. They are married only in name, and are separated in their hearts. Their marriage is like the dwarfed, misshapen fruit I found under the weeds. It is still alive, but not in a healthy way. Counseling that couple to change their speech without addressing their heart attitudes is not enough. That would be like using the sickle to get rid of weeds, an insufficient cure for a deeply rooted problem.

Forgiveness is like the small hand trowel to dig up the root of bitterness. When we discover that we are harboring bitterness against our spouse, we must use forgiveness to get rid of bitterness. Bitterness always begins with a wound, an injury we perceive as being from someone else. Once we have identified that hurt, we must forgive. Forgiveness is to be given, even if our spouse never apologizes. This is the first step in healing. The kindness and tenderness can then replace the angry words or sullen silence. Love can flourish again!

Ephesians 4:31-32 Let all bitterness, and wrath, and anger, and clamour, and evil speaking, be put away from you, with all malice: and be ye kind one to another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, even as God for Christ's sake hath forgiven you.