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## LEARNING FROM ALICE

It was one of those rare events where nothing prevented me from accepting an invitation to an out-of-town family celebration. In fact, it was as if circumstances came together to urge me on: fares for the flights I booked on our regional airline were on sale (both ways), interviewees I'd contacted opted for Monday and Tuesday instead of the usual Friday afternoon and I found myself closer than usual to being caught up on other chores. It was with excitement, then, that I boarded the plane and headed for the big city. A niece picked me up from the airport and like a couple of kids we opted for an ice cream cone on the way home. It was delicious in more ways than one.

As part of the luxury of this carefree weekend I purchased a book to read at the airport. On the recommendation of a friend I chose "*Still Alice*". In stark contrast to the happy-go-lucky time spent with family, I was drawn into the dark world of early onset Alzheimer's disease. I wanted to toss out the book but I couldn't and I can't. It's everything I don't want to hear but I can't put it down. I'm not going to tell you any more about the story but this heart wrenching account celebrated my weekend indulgence and supported Alice's conclusion: treasure family and friends, make them a priority and schedule as much time together as possible. You never know when it will be taken away.

Family is God's idea; loving one other, His command. Nothing breaks His heart nor ravages our inner life more than broken relationships. While loving is not always easy and not always convenient, that one difficult opportunity might be the last.

"The commandment that God has given us is: 'Love God and love each other!'"