

...and the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we saw His glory, glory as of the only begotten from the Father, full of grace and truth.

Dear Friends, far and near,

The marvel of Christmas is that God became man, came to earth as a baby to grow up, learn obedience and because of the joy that was set before him, obeyed the Father, went to the cross in our place and made possible salvation for all those who would believe, Blessed assurance to know we belong to Him and await His coming again to take us unto Himself.

I think of you all so often and lift my heart with thanksgiving for Friends who have continued to remember me in so many ways. Thank you for your continued love and friendship that, for so many, has been for many years.

In many ways this year has been uneventful and yet in other ways it was filled with blessings that could only have come from God.

We have all celebrated birthdays this year and I had my 89th! God has granted me a long life for some reason. For everything He has a purpose and His purposes cannot be thwarted. The book of Proverbs talks about gray hair and old age a lot. It seems to say they are blessings so I am thankful for my gray hair and the years He has graciously given me.

Our daughter and her husband, Jim, pick me up and take me to church with them. I am fed spiritually by men of the Word who know how to feed the flock. We are in the book of Luke in the AM and Philipians in the evening. I love Philipians and I carry in my purse a paper with Chapter 4 and verse 8 printed on it...just to remind me how I should be thinking and how best to please Him. Cherry and I attend a ladies' Bible study and we also attend a group of seniors that are 60 and over. We are studying Genesis in the Bible study and Randy Alcorn's book on HEAVEN in the seniors group.

You will remember that our son, Ken and his wife Susan came home from Brazil after 25 years with Word of Life because he had known for five years that God was leading him into a full time pastorate. Word of Life was told but he had some goals which he wanted to accomplish first in Brazil. They moved into a house provided them by the church where Susan has been a member and began to send out resumes. God opened a door just forty miles from where they were and they are settled in Grace Church and meeting the challenges of a pastorate. Ken is loving his work and the people seem to love him. He is an expository preacher and will finish II Timothy the last Sunday of the year. In January he will begin Colossians verse by verse.

A very special blessing for me was to be with my two brothers and sister for a mini reunion in Ann Arbor, Michigan. It was the first time we had all been together in many years. We traced our childhoods...homes, schools and favorite places. I would be unable to travel alone so Renata came to Florida and flew up with me and helped me when I needed it. She flew me back home and finally went home to Knoxville. I had a memorable time which I will never forget. That took place in July.

You may recall I had A fib and was able to live with it but it began to be constant...day and night...and it was exhausting. there was only one other thing...beside the medication I was taking...that could be done, cardio version. I was apprehensive but knew I was in God's hands. I went in the hospital after numerous tests and my cardiologist shocked my heart back into rhythm and praise the Lord it continues in sinus rhythm, they call it. I feel so much better, have more energy and sleep better. Thank the Lord. I am so grateful.

For Thanksgiving, we were 19 people at Cherry's home. Only Ken and Susan and family were unable to be with us. It was a wonderful family time. Only problem was the time was too short but I have learned to be content with any time I have with family.

I have had ablation on three veins in my legs and have one more to do. I will be glad when it is over.

For my lady friends I recommend any book written by Elizabeth Elliot. At present I am reading two of hers but the one I am really enjoying is KEEP A QUIET HEART. Would like to read again DISCIPLINE, THE GLAD SURRENDER. She closes one chapter with "Those who follow the Lamb leave self behind, and put on the new self, created to be like God in true righteousness and holiness".

We will soon be entering a new year in a world so full of turmoil and living in a country so far from the one in which we grew up. We serve a sovereign Lord who knows all about it and all about us. EVEN SO COME, LORD JESUS.

A very wonderful advent season to each of you.....Christmas 2012

In His care,

Julie Collins