



A Brother Like That

A friend of mine named Paul received a new car from his brother as a pre-Christmas present. On Christmas Eve, when Paul came out of his office, a street urchin was walking around the shiny new car, admiring it.

"Is this your car, mister?" he asked.

Paul nodded. "My brother gave it to me for Christmas."

The boy looked astounded. "You mean your brother gave it to you, and it didn't cost you anything? Gosh, I wish....."

He hesitated, and Paul knew what he was going to wish. He was going to wish he had a brother like that. But what the lad said jarred Paul all the way down to his heels.

"I wish," the boy went on, "that I could be a brother like that."

Paul looked at the boy in astonishment, then impulsively added, "Would you like a ride in my new car?"

"Oh, yes, I'd love that!"

After a short ride the urchin turned, and with his eyes aglow said, "Mister, would you mind driving in front of my house?"

Paul smiled a little. He thought he knew what the lad wanted. He wanted to show his neighbors that he could ride home in a big automobile. But Paul was wrong again.

"Will you stop right where those steps are?" the boy asked. He ran up the steps. Then in a little while, Paul heard him coming back, but he was not coming fast. He was carrying his little poliocrippled brother. He sat down on the bottom step, then sort of squeezed up right against him and pointed to the car.

"There she is, Buddy, just like I told you upstairs. His brother gave it to him for Christmas and it didn't cost him a cent, and someday I'm gonna give you one just like it; then you can see for yourself all the pretty things in the Christmas windows that I've been trying to tell you about."

Paul got out and lifted the little lad into the front seat of his car. The shining-eyed older brother climbed in beside him and the three of them began a memorable holiday ride.

That Christmas Eve, Paul learned what Jesus meant when He said, "It is more blessed to give....."



Spiritual Nugget

By

Pastor Drew

"Good Tidings of Great Joy"

Hello Church Family,

It's the most wonderful time of the year!

I hope everyone had a great fall season! We're now moving into the Christmas season in which many people are thinking about the birth of the Savior.

For many people, this is one of two times in a year they attend church.

While we know Jesus was likely born in the fall, I don't get too caught up in the literal date, but more so encouraging people in their thoughts of Jesus and His birth.

It's a time of year to spend with family and friends. For many it may be the only time during the year that they see each other. Time with family and friends is always a great blessing this time of year. The sharing of gifts and meals together are occasions that many cherish.

In the busyness of the holiday season, sharing time and gifts with one another, I pray that it is a special time of reflection upon the birth of the Savior.

The time in history in which God came down to dwell among us, to physically touch humanity, God became acquainted with our sorrows and grief. God came down as a human being, and He is not ashamed to call us brethren.

The Savior for whom the Jewish people had waited so long, was born.

As if His miraculous birth was not enough to make Him the most unique person in history, angels of God came announcing His birth to humanity.

Luke 2 records the story.

(8) Now there were in the same country shepherds living out in the fields, keeping watch over their flock by night. (9) And behold, an angel of the Lord stood before them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were greatly afraid. (10) Then the angel said to them, "Do not be afraid, for behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy which will be to all people. (11) For there is born to you this day in the city of David a Savior, who is Christ the Lord. (12) And this will be the sign to you: You will find a Babe wrapped in swaddling clothes, lying in a manger." (13) And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host praising God and saying: (14) "Glory to God in the highest, And on earth peace, goodwill toward men!"

The angels came announcing the greatest gift that God could have given, a Savior. Jesus is the expression of God's good will toward men and His desire to save. The angel said he brought, "... good tidings of great joy which will be to all people. "Because of God's divine act, all of humanity may come to Jesus as their Savior for the remission of sins. Because of His birth, life, death, and resurrection we can now come boldly to the throne of grace for help and forgiveness in our time of need.

He takes away the sin of the world and all who come to Him by faith are freely justified by His grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus.

Go and tell the world about God's unspeakable gift!!

"...born to you this day... a Savior"



No Place Like Home

Enjoy the Process! ❤️

Homemade Dish Detergent By Ana Jackson

“...for He is like a refiner's fire, and like fullers' soap.” Malachi 3:2

Since we moved into our home a year ago, I've been on a mission to make more than just our meals from scratch. For some reason, though, finding this particular recipe suitable for dishwashers intimidated me. I pictured myself like Lucille Ball in one of her half-baked schemes—bubbles pouring across the kitchen floor! Fortunately, my fears were unfounded. This detergent is quick, affordable, and wonderfully simple to make.

Optional: For a scented version or extra grease-cutting power, add 10–15 drops of lemon essential oil.

Homemade Dish Detergent Recipe

Ingredients

- 1 cup washing soda — Cleans and degreases.
- ½ cup citric acid — Breaks down hard water spots and helps with rinsing.
- ½ cup salt (kosher or non-iodized sea salt) — Softens water and is gentler on the dishwasher's mechanisms than table salt.
- ½ cup baking soda
- *(Optional)* 10–15 drops lemon essential oil — Adds a fresh scent and boosts grease-cutting power.

Instructions

Combine all ingredients in a large glass jar or airtight container.

Shake or stir until evenly mixed.

Use 1 tablespoon per load, placed in the detergent compartment.

For a natural rinse aid, fill your rinse aid compartment with white vinegar.

Notes

This is a low-suds formula that won't overflow or damage your dishwasher's seals or pump. It contains no bleach or phosphates, and the citric acid helps prevent mineral buildup in jets and spray arms.



ANIMAL WORLD



By Rebecca Ramirez

My family and I are fortunate to live in an area with wild turkeys. They have amused us and kept things interesting over the years, from the time an angry tom scared us by banging on one of the windows of my house, to the time I found a row of little turkeys were hopping up and down eating my grapes while their mother reclined on a bed of chives.

The return of turkeys to Wisconsin is one of the greatest wildlife management success stories in the state.

Wild turkeys were originally native to Wisconsin, but unfortunately, by 1881 they were all gone. Farming and logging had destroyed the state's oak forests. Domestic birds spread diseases to the wild turkeys and unregulated hunting also took a terrible toll. The last turkey sighting in Wisconsin was in 1881 and they did not return for almost a hundred years.



In 1976, the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources traded with the state of Missouri- our ruffed grouse for their wild turkeys. The first 29 wild Missouri turkeys were released in Vernon County, WI. The turkeys thrived in their new home. As their numbers increased, the DNR began to move them to other good habitat areas. They also moved into nearby counties on their own.

Wild turkeys (*Meleagris gallopavo*) are Wisconsin's largest birds. Males weigh about 21 pounds, though females weigh only 12.

Turkeys eat a wide variety of foods. During the spring and summer, they feed on insects, berries, flowers, green leaves, and grass seeds. Grasshoppers, beetles, and ants are favorite insects. They will also eat dogwood fruits, wild grapes, cherries, blue grasses, sedges, viburnums, blueberries, blackberries, buttercups and violets. During the fall and winter, turkeys seek out acorns and fruits of trees like hop hornbeam, maple, ash, pine, and beech. Turkeys will also happily eat corn, wheat, oats, and other grains in farm fields. In late winter they are trying to store up food reserves for the breeding season. Hens look for snails and other sources of calcium and minerals to help them produce eggs.

The wild turkey spends most of its time in the woods. They need large trees, especially oaks, which provide a dependable food source and safe sleeping areas. During the evening, turkeys always fly up to roost in the trees of heavily forested areas. It is always kind of a surprise to see these large birds sitting up in trees.

Now for some more fun turkey facts.

Males also have a fleshy growth, called a "wattle," that hangs from underneath the chin. In addition, gobblers have growths called "caruncles" located on the side and back of the neck. The "snood" or "dew bill" is the fleshy thing growing above and resting across the bill. (Continued on next page)

In areas where they have become accustomed to people, turkeys can perceive human beings to be part of the “flock” and, therefore, the pecking order. If a human is viewed as dominant, the turkey will act passively or fearfully toward them. If the human is viewed as a subordinate, the turkey may attempt to dominate. Humans seen as “male” may be challenged by adult males or followed by hens, especially in spring. Humans seen as “female” could be displayed to or followed by toms. Aggressive toms may also attack items in which they can see their reflections.

Turkeys are sometimes blamed for crop damage during the growing season, but research conducted in Wisconsin indicated that turkeys were actually responsible for only 18 percent of the reported crop damage incidents. The real culprits were often raccoons and deer.

By the way, if turkeys really are a problem, methyl anthranilate, a nontoxic, biodegradable food ingredient, can be sprayed on crops, grass or other areas to keep all sorts of birds away. Birds find it highly irritating, but to humans it simply smells like grapes.

I am always thankful for the wide variety of animals that God has blessed us with.



GRATEFUL AND BLESSED

By Emily Thurman

Came home the other day after a tough day, the sort that screams hard in every single minute. The kind that ends in tears and promises that you don't EVER want to live through another like it. As the memories washed over me and the tears flowed, I realized that I was at an important juncture. I would have to decide what would be my narrative and my story going forward. Yes, things were challenging on an unexpected level, but is that the only factor to be considered? Is that the thing I want to convey to others and to carry in my heart? It's not the events themselves, but our interpretation of them, that gives them power to hurt us. Clearly my interpretation was in need of readjusting.

So, I sat down and thought about what I could praise God for. Honestly in the beginning, the pain of the day screamed from all angles, and nothing came to mind. I persisted in prayer, asking God to show me what I could be praising him for. I've learned that a problem is simply an opportunity for a miracle and God's not out of those. Sometimes it is the miracle we crave - take this thing away - this cancer, this toxic relationship, this financial hardship, this stressful entity. But mostly it's the reality of learning that God's presence is readily available at the banquet table with the King of the universe, IN THE PRESENCE of the enemies. Enemies can show up in a variety of ways. Enemies to our peace, our finances, our trust, they're lurking everywhere. The enemy of our peace can sound like anxious thoughts and worries, or guilt and shame, or anything else he wants to use to distract, distress, or annoy. Charges against us. The reality is that God doesn't promise to take the hard away. He tells us that in this world we WILL HAVE trouble. But then he tells us not to be dismayed. Because even in, especially in the middle of the deepest valleys, he's right there THROUGH. He didn't say around, after, over, or there's an exception. He promised to go THROUGH. Meaning, we'll make it with him by our side. Whatever we have to face, he's there too.

So, as I sat there, thinking about what could possibly be praiseworthy, I remembered that one of the car doors actually did open on the car. Hallelujah, I didn't have to stand in the freezing wind. To top that off the heater worked on the car, and it started, the faith mobile, that top 10 worst cars in America, the one that is still running while my reliable car sits in the repair shop. It might have no dash lights, and only one working door, but it is warm, and paid for, and comfortable. The fact that I only signed up for the 8 hours (stretched out to 11) what a wonderful blessing. You got the idea. There's actually a whole host of blessings, too many to count!!

As I prayed through the aspects of my hard, to figure out how I could interpret it differently, God showed me my own heart. Y'all, the heart can be deceitful. It can hide things from us. I love how God can gently remind me that my value is not based on the evaluation of other people, but on the validation, he speaks over me. How he gently reminds me that there's a story behind the words and behaviors of another, that the one who causes trouble, is troubled- they've walked through some hard things themselves. I don't have to defend myself. I don't have to feel diminished, or less than, simply on the opinion of another. I can recognize that we both come to the table with different viewpoints but that can lend to broader vision. I can allow the memories to be just that. Pieces of History. Facts about what happened, but not hijacking my thoughts, and reflections, thereby hijacking my emotions and feelings and behaviors. Jesus Christ came that we might have life, more abundant life. I had thought that to be abundance how I see the thanksgiving table - loaded with the abundance of things - material things, money, food, etc. - things that by the way, can be snatched away in a second.

(Continued on page 16)



Activated Charcoal

Activated charcoal is a fine, odorless, black powder often used in Emergency Rooms to treat overdoses. It is not the same as the black chunks left after campfires, nor charcoal bricks or burned pieces of food. Making activated charcoal involves heating carbon-rich materials, such as wood, peat, coconut shells, or sawdust, to very high temperatures in a low oxygen environment, often with steam. This increases its surface area dramatically and makes it extremely absorbent (actually, adsorbent). As a result, one teaspoon of activated charcoal has about the same surface area as a football field. This allows it to bind to molecules, ions, or atoms and remove them from dissolved substances.

Activated Charcoal uses:

1. Kidney Support – Charcoal filters out toxins and drugs that cause damage and inflammation.

2. Alleviating Stomach and Intestinal Issues – Charcoal is effective in reducing intestinal gas and diarrhea. It is also used as a gastrointestinal absorbent in overdoses and poisonings. An individual must take activated charcoal within 1 to 4 hours of consuming a toxin for it to work.



3. Water Filtration – Activated charcoal has long been used as a natural water filter. As in the intestines and stomach, it absorbs a wide range of toxins, drugs, viruses, bacteria, fungus, and chemicals.

4. Teeth whitening and oral health - Many teeth-whitening products contain activated charcoal.

5. Deodorant - Charcoal may absorb smells and harmful gases, making it ideal as an underarm, shoe, and refrigerator deodorant.

6. Resolving Skin infections - Around the world, many different traditional medicine practitioners use activated charcoal powder to treat soft tissue conditions. A poultice can heal skin infections. It absorbs harmful microbes from wounds. Charcoal poultices have also been successfully used on insect bites- and even wounds caused by Brown Recluse Spiders.

Look out for more on charcoal next month! Learn more ways to use Activated Charcoal, how to make a poultice, and even some precautions. Charcoal is just another example of the natural medicines the Lord provided for our health and healing.

Church Memories- A Glance into the Past

The St. Helena SDA Church in California in the late 1970's

By Rebecca, based on a conversational interview with Sam Ramirez

The 1970's is a long time ago and some of the details are getting hazy now.

I attended the Robert Louis Stevenson Middle School when I was a child, but didn't pay much attention to the church behind it until many years later when a friend invited me to visit on Saturday.

The St. Helena Seventh-day Adventist Church was a big church with tall stained-glass windows on each side. It was built on a hill and had a deep walkout basement. The parking lot could not accommodate all the members then, so it was not unusual to have to park under the tall shade trees along the Elmhurst Street or Main Street.

There weren't large potlucks like we have here in Wisconsin Rapids, since most members lived quite close to the church and went home to eat. Instead, groups of names were placed on a schedule and on their respective days, these members brought food for the visitors. I also encountered dishes I had never heard of before, such as alfalfa sprouts and "haystacks."

I used to go to the Youth Chapel, a sabbath school class held in the building across the carport. We would probably call it the Young Adult class these days. Like many in that age group, I was also keeping an eye out for a potential Christian partner. In time, I did indeed meet someone.

It is not easy becoming an Adventist sometimes. One Saturday I was in my work clothes driving to my job and thought "I should go to church." So, I turned around and went to church instead.

Robert Mondavi Winery offered me the position of head mechanic, as long as I was willing to work the occasional Saturday. It was tempting, but I turned it down and went to work at Wilcox Tractor.

Looking back, life has had its twists and turns, but God is in control. I'm thankful that I kept going to church.





Pathfinder News

For the M+A+S+H Pathfinder club, it was all about service for the Month of November 2025.

The Pathfinders continued the campfire area cleanup from the previous Sunday and worked to complete the tasks of moving the mulch pile and spreading it, also moving and stacking all the cut-up firewood, and planting a few Spruce trees in the area. We had a warm campfire burning and the weather was perfect for working outside. They really worked hard so that we could safely use the campfire area this winter, without tripping hazards buried beneath the snow. We all worked up an appetite and Subway was on the menu. Lunch by the campfire...food always tastes better when eaten outside with friends, it was a really good meeting.

At our November 8th meeting we did and completed the Nutrition Honor. There was good information to be learned from this honor.

We served in full dress uniform for church service on November 22nd, with a meeting scheduled for later in the day at 4:30p.m. M+A+S+H peeled, cooked and 'mashed' 25# of potatoes and made a few dozen dinner rolls in preparation of the Harvest Dinner to be held the next day, Sun November 23rd. This was an evening of fun, laughter and diligent work. They are a great team! Thank a Pathfinder, if you enjoyed a dinner roll and 'mashed' potatoes at the Harvest Dinner!

A meeting was planned for Sunday November 30, unfortunately we had to reschedule because of the snowstorm.

We are planning a meeting for Sunday Dec 7th to work on a number of different skills.

Thank you for your continued prayers and support of the M+A+S+H Pathfinder Club. We are blessed by our church family and by our youth of the church.

"Praise God from whom all blessings flow."



Christmas Carol

BY EDWIN WAUGH

(JANUARY 29, 1817 - APRIL 30, 1890)

Long time ago, in Palestine,
Upon a wintry morn.
All in a lowly cattle shed,
The Prince of Peace was born.

The clouds fled from the gloomy sky;
The winds in silence lay;
And the stars shone bright, with strange delight,
To welcome in that day.

His parents they were simple folk,
And simple lives they led;
And in the ways of righteousness
This little Child was bred.

In gentle thought, and gentle deed,
His early days went by;
And the light His youthful steps did lead
Came down from heaven on high.

He was the friend of all the poor
That wander here below;
It was His only joy on earth
To ease them of their woe.

In vain He trod His holy path,
By sorrow sorely tried;
It was for all mankind He lived,
And for mankind He died.

Like Him, let us be just and pure,
Like Him, be true alway;
That we may find the peace of mind
That never fades away.





So many cookies, bars and fudge... Oh My!!! The donations that came in from church members at the Harvest Dinner Sunday November 23rd, were so amazingly abundant along with the many dozens of treats made by the Women's Ministry ladies for the cookie trays and boxes to be assembled for the purpose of giving them away! It is our small way of saying Thank You to all our community servants.

Cookies went to: Wis Rapids Police Dept, Fire stations #1 & #2 WR, Grand Rapids Police and Fire house, Rudolph fire house (did you know the Rudolph Fire Department has '5' fire houses?) they cover a large area of need, Biron Municipality, Nekoosa Police & Fire

station, Wood County Sheriffs Dept, United Emergency Medical Services, the Family Center, Waterford Assisted Living, Aspirus nurses station in Wausau, the Dialysis unit of WR, the Animal Medical Surgical staff, and a few members of our church family who are unable to get out much We made up 48 boxes, 11 large trays, and 2 buckets with cookies leftover!

A few years back this Cookie Tray of Thanks, was the loving idea of Trudy Stephenson, when she was heading up the Women's Ministry, we've continued the tradition year after year. We want to thank you Trudy for your idea, your caring, and generous heart and for your cookies and bars donated to this year's trays!

The cookie delivery was the next day Tuesday November 25th. This was a fun part, seeing the response of groups receiving the trays and boxes. Every visit made was so appreciated.

So thank you to all our church family for generously baking and donating, to make this an extra special project for the Women's Ministry.

A special thank you to Stephanie Kasner for creating the lovely gift cards to attach to the cookie trays!

Our Cookie Trays went far and wide this year, to spread our heartfelt gratitude for the men and women in uniform, who are serving our communities, to keep us safe and healthy.

May God watch over and protect, Bless all those who serve!

Merry Christmas to you submitted by Anne Whetstone





come join the
Togetherhness Collage



By Stephanie Kasner

The holidays are upon us! And with them comes a spirit of thankfulness and joy that seems to bring people together in a special way. More than gifts and decorations, is the treasure of *togetherness*. Think about the joy and unity of our soon-coming heavenly home. While eye hath not seen nor ear heard, nor has entered into the heart of man what wonders God has prepared for us, one of those wonders we can cherish right here and now is one another!

Take a moment during the month of December to celebrate togetherness by doing a little photography! **Find another church member or even a couple of them and take a 'selfie' together. Text your pictures to 608-547-9372 and I will make a collage out of all the submitted pictures for the January newsletter!** In this way we can start our new year with a renewed sense of the family of God.

Behind the
Music



Hark! The Herald Angels Sing 1739

Then the angel said to them, “Do not be afraid, for behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy which will be to all people.” Luke 2:10

Upon his conversion, Charles Wesley immediately began writing hymns, each one packed with doctrine, all of them exhibiting strength and sensitivity, both beauty and theological brawn. He wrote constantly, and even on horseback his mind was flooded with new songs. He often stopped at houses along the road and ran in asking for “pen and ink.”

He wrote over 6,000 hymns during his life, and he didn’t like people tinkering with the words. In one of his hymnals, he wrote: “I beg leave to mention a thought which has been long upon my mind, and which I should long ago have inserted in the public papers, had I not been unwilling to stir up a nest of hornets. Many gentlemen have done my brother and me (though without naming us) the honor to reprint many of our hymns. Now they are perfectly welcome to do so, provided they print them just as they are. But I desire they would not attempt to mend them, for they are really not able. None of them is able to mend either the sense or the verse. Therefore, I must beg of them these two favors: either to let them stand just as they are, to take things for better or worse, or to add the true reading in the margin, or at the bottom of the page, that we may no longer be accountable either for the nonsense or for the doggerel of other men.”

But one man did the church a great favor by polishing up one of Charles’ best-loved hymns. When Charles was 32, he wrote a Christmas hymn that began: Hark, how all the welkin rings,

“Glory to the King of kings;

Peace on earth, and mercy mild,

God and sinners reconciled!”

Joyful, all ye nations, rise,

Join the triumph of the skies;

Universal nature say,

“Christ the Lord is born to-day!”

The word “welkin” was an old English term for “the vault of heaven.” It was Charles’ friend, evangelist George Whitefield, who, when he published this carol in his collection of hymns in 1753, changed the words to the now-beloved, “Hark! The Herald Angels Sing.”

Morgan, Robert J.. Then Sings My Soul Special Edition: 150 of the World's Greatest Hymns Stories (Function). Kindle Edition.

Hark! the Herald Angels Sing

Luke 2:14
Charles Wesley, 1739 (1707-1788)

MENDELSSOHN 7.7.7.D.Ref.
Arr. from Mendelssohn, 1840 (1809-1847)
By William H. Cummings, 1856 (1831-1915)

1. Hark! the her - ald an - gels sing, "Glo - ry to the new - born King;
2. Christ, by high - est heaven a - dored; Christ, the ev - er - last - ing Lord!
3. Hail, the heaven - born Prince of Peace! Hail, the Sun of Righ - teous - ness!

Peace on earth, and mer - cy mild, God and sin - ners rec - on - ciled!"
In the man - ger born a king, While a - dor - ing an - gels sing,
Life and light to all He brings, Risen with heal - ing in His wings.

Joy - ful, all ye na - tions, rise, Join the tri - umph of the skies;
"Peace on earth, to men good will;" Bid the trem - bling soul be still,
Mild He lays His glo - ry by, Born that man no more may die,

With th'an - gel - ic host pro - claim, "Christ is born in Beth - le - hem!"
Christ on earth has come to dwell, Je - sus, our Im - man - u - el!
Born to raise the sons of earth, Born to give them sec - ond birth.

BIRTH



Mornings With Jesus

By Barb Tesser

This season is so precious for those of us who call ourselves Christians. I suppose it is also special to those who only see the colored lights, sing Jingle Bells and count the names on the presents beneath the Christmas tree. But we see it differently, don't we? We see the couple who are traveling to the home of their ancestors, the young woman pregnant, riding a donkey and we imagine how difficult that journey must have been for her. But what about Joseph? He was a man in charge of the soon-to-be born, baby Messiah! Was he worried about his young betrothed? Did he pray for guidance in the days ahead when she would probably be the talk of the kibbutz? Was he hoping that they would get back home before the baby came?

You know the rest of the story...They were making the journey because the government, in the person of Caesar, made a law that everyone had to be counted and to pay a tax but also that they had to travel to the home of their birth to do it! Joseph and Mary had no choice. The journey had to be taken, and they had to trust that God would work it all out. After all, they'd both been visited by angels! The weary couple arrived in Bethlehem and found "no room for them in the inn." But there was a stable, a shelter of a sort, maybe a warm corner that could be swept out. A place to rest, but not the ideal place to give birth! And yet, we're told in Luke 2 verse 7 that she "brought forth her firstborn son, wrapped Him in swaddling clothes, and laid Him in a manger." And finally...rest.

In verse 8 the story picks-up with my favorite part. "Now there were in that same country, Shepherds abiding in the fields, keeping watch over their flocks by night." The Bible has so many references to shepherds. The first that comes to my mind is Jacob, who worked as a shepherd for Laban, his father-in-law as the bride-price for his beloved Rachel. Genesis 29:9 says that Rachel, herself, was a shepherdess. In my imagination, shepherds always seem to me to be of people whose characters were caring, kind, gentle yet strong, protective and faithful! Young David was capable of great tenderness and yet able to defend his flocks against fierce predators.

And then there's Jesus. In Luke 15:3-7 Jesus spoke a parable to the scribes and Pharisees who were criticizing Him for sharing a meal with tax collectors. We know it as the Parable of the Lost Sheep. We see in that story a picture of the deep, undying love of Jesus the Shepherd, for us, His sheep. Verse 4: "What man of you, having a hundred sheep, if he loses one of them, does not leave the ninety and nine and go after the one which is lost until he finds it?" In verses 5-7 the picture is so tender; when the shepherd finds the sheep, he doesn't scold it and drive it ahead of Him. He puts it on His shoulders and carries it home and then he throws a party! And he invites all his friends to the celebration. Not for the flock; for that one sheep! Verse 7 leaves no doubt whom that lost sheep represents. It's you and me! Jesus said, "I say to you that there will be more joy in heaven over one sinner who repents than over the ninety and nine who need no repentance." Friends, we are not too lost, the trail is not too treacherous, our sins are not too great for our Shepherd to find us, forgive us and celebrate our homecoming. Blessings, Barb

(Grateful and Blessed - continued)

That's not the abundance he's talking about. The abundance I'm finding is that even in the middle of the battle, in the presence of the enemy, I can rest IN THE PRESENCE of the King! I don't have to allow the opinions, judgements, criticisms, etc. take away my communication and comfort and security, of being with the king of the universe, right here, right now, IN THE PRESENCE - IN THE MIDDLE, right smack dab in the thick of the hard. The same power available to Jesus Christ is available to you and me. Think on that second. Nothing can separate us from the love of Christ. Nothing. Nada. Zip. Zero. Not the threats, not the financial crisis, not the health loss, or the loved ones lost, not the accusations, like right here in the middle of being accused, right here in the health challenges, right here in..... Right now, I can live abundantly. As can you. Thanksgiving. It is giving of thanks The Bible called it the sacrifice of praise. Honestly in the heat of the moment, it truly felt like a sacrifice. But y'all, thoughts and reflections are powerful for changing the feelings and desires. Thanksgiving might not look like the abundance you hoped for but look deeper. Taste and see that the Lord is Good.

A BIBLE MINUTE

ACCEPTING THE LORD'S GUIDANCE

The Lord says, "I will make you wise and show you where to go. I will guide you and watch over you." Psalm 32:8 NCV

When you are close to God, regularly praying, studying the Scriptures, and seeking his counsel, you are primed and attuned to the guidance he is offering for your life. As you are paying attention to him, you notice that he is paying attention to you. You begin to experience a calming of your anxieties and an understanding that you don't have to solve your problems alone. You're not in this life alone.

Your thoughts and feelings are honed to pick up his direction and advice in your everyday activities as well as in major decisions and challenges. God's Spirit whispers to you throughout the day, inspiring you to choose wisely and behave properly. Your emotions are at peace, and you are open to receive blessings in your work and family.

You will keep on guiding me with your counsel, leading me to a glorious destiny. Whom have I in heaven but you? I desire you more than anything on earth. Psalm 73:24-25 NLT



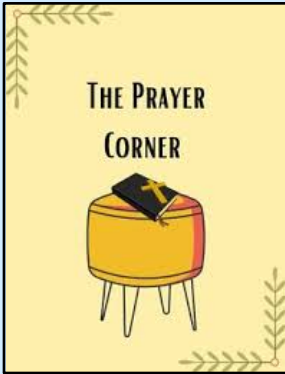
Modern Jesus	Biblical Jesus
Preaches only on love	Preaches God's righteousness
Gives you health & wealth	Gives salvation, hope, peace & joy
Never says anything negative	Warns of sin, judgement & hell
Loved & accepted by the world	Hated & despised by the world <small>@getdatfaith</small>
Serves your will, not God's will	Exalts God the Father's will
Hates to offend you or others	Offends the world with the truth

Just So We're Clear...

Make sure you test positive for Faith. Keep your distance from Doubt, and isolate yourself from Fear. Trust in God through it all. Amen
heavensoul

Gratitude
is one of the simplest but most powerful feelings in life. It's not just about saying thank you; it's about noticing the good in every day. When you start appreciating even the small, ordinary moments, life begins to feel lighter, happier, and full of quiet blessings.

@UsefulGen



Friends, the year 2025 is nearly over. We're one year closer to Jesus' return. Might we see Him coming in the clouds with thousands upon thousands and thousands of thousands of His angels in 2026?! Let's make that our daily prayer.

John and I were reading from Matthew chapter 9 this morning. It's verse 36 that spoke to my heart and prompted me to write this essay. "But when He saw the multitudes, He was moved with compassion for them, because they were weary and scattered, like sheep without a shepherd."

I can relate to being weary and scattered, and I'll bet you can too. Our lives are so busy, often exhausting. As I grow older and the news and cares of this world weigh me down, I find my thoughts scattered and my reactions to them not as Christ-like as I would like them to be.

Every year, since 2020, I've asked the Holy Spirit to give me a word or phrase that will guide my faith-walk for the coming year. Last year, it was 2 words; Manifest Grace. Those words came to me over and over throughout the year whenever I was met with a challenge to my faith or my time or my patience. I hope they will be an on-going reminder that God's grace calls me to gracious to the people around me-not always an easy task.

This year, I believe the Holy Spirit has already whispered a word to my heart that will continue to guide my growth as a Christian, and to His call to lead others to Him. My word for 2026 is **Reflect**. In pondering this word, I thought about a little chorus I was humming while preparing a list of songs for our banquet. "Lord, I want to be a Christian, in my heart, in my heart. Lord I want to be a Christian in my heart. Lord I want to be more like Him in my heart, in my heart. Lord I want to be like Jesus in my heart." To truly reflect Jesus means to live your life in such a way that others see Jesus in you. Things that make you angry, no longer set you off because you've spent time with Him that day. People who try your patience you now see as children of the King who deserve your grace. Somebody cut you off in traffic? Irritations don't send you into a rage, instead, they are a call to prayer for that brother or sister who truly doesn't know how to drive.

I digress.

But we, you and I, can't reflect Jesus if we don't know Him as our Brother, our dearest Friend, our Saviour, our guide. How do I reflect Jesus? Our Sister Ellie has a quote from Steps to Christ page 67 that I believe guides her life..."By beholding, we become changed." Sister White may have taken that thought from 2 Corinthians 3:18..."But we all, beholding as in a mirror the glory of the Lord, are being transformed into the same image from glory to glory just as by the Spirit of the Lord." Good words to live by.

My prayer for us in 2026 is that we will make it our daily practice to study Jesus' life from Bethlehem, to Calvary, to the tomb, to Glory. Walk those dusty roads with Him. Sit at His feet. Ponder His sacrifice on the cross. Spend time in His Word and in prayer. Ask Him to guide us and to make David's prayer in Psalm 51:10 our own: "Create in me a clean heart O God, and renew a right spirit within me." *Lord, I want to be a Christian in my heart.*

Blessings! Barb



January 2 - Vespers, 4:30 - 7:00 p.m.

January 11 - Roller Skating, 6:30 - 8:00 p.m.

January 25 - Men's Prayer Breakfast, 9:30 - noon

Word Search

Find the following words in the puzzle. Words are hidden ↑, ↓, →, ←, and ↘.

R D N P J O H N O I O L O U D T S A E B T N X
 S R I A C A F C I S S E N T I W W I N E Y X M
 T A N T U Y N O I T A D N U O F H A N D E F A
 N G S I T E S T I M O N Y B M A L I E Y B A R
 E O P E R U L I J D Y R O T S I H E J F O I K
 M N I N D R O W S A S N K M V S A I N T S T O
 D D R C F H X Y B N P I H S R O W K X Y V H V
 N E A E K W A C V I N A T I O N T Y X O J L E
 A C T Z F O R E H E A D P O W E R H T A R W R
 M E I H Y L N H N L M K Z M G L O B M Y S H C
 M I O D P Z O P D N O R E V E L A T I O N A O
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 C E R U T P I R C S A E G A S S E M E N B H E
 J S T O Y J G P T S A E B H P D E R D N I K L
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 H U E U G N O T R L E G N A Z R U I M A G E U

- | | | | | |
|--------------|-------------|---------|------------|-----------|
| ANGEL | FAITH | KINDRED | OVERCOME | SYMBOL |
| BEAST | FOREHEAD | LAMB | PATIENCE | TESTIMONY |
| BOOK | FOUNDATION | LOUD | POWER | TONGUE |
| COMMANDMENTS | HAND | MARK | PROPHECY | WINE |
| DANIEL | HISTORY | MESSAGE | REVELATION | WITNESS |
| DECEIVE | IMAGE | MIXTURE | SAINTS | WORSHIP |
| DRAGON | INSPIRATION | NATION | SCRIPTURE | WOUND |
| DRINK | JOHN | OBEY | SWORD | WRATH |

