

## The President's Message

### Prayer Requests



*Jerusalem & Israel*



*Our military overseas and at home*



*Faith Fellowship Ministerial Association and it's Ministers*



*Our country and leaders*

### Isaiah 9:6:

“For to us a child is born,  
to us a son is given,  
and the government will be  
on his shoulders.  
And he will be called  
Wonderful Counselor,  
Mighty God,  
Everlasting Father,  
Prince of Peace.”

Greetings in the Name of Our Lord,

As this newsletter comes to you, we are on the brink of the official holiday season. In just a few days, it will be Thanksgiving, and since this holiday is so late this year, Christmas will be here less than a month afterwards. It seems more and more, Christmas season celebration begins a little earlier each year. Pretty soon we will be shooting fireworks on the Fourth of July one day and seeing Christmas decorations in the store the next. As much as I enjoy the holidays, both Thanksgiving and the entire Christmas season, I don't really want to think about celebrating Christmas that early. As children of God, we should celebrate the reason for the season all year long anyway. What a gift we were sent on that night in that little town. A plan that had been foreordained from the foundation of the world finally came to fruition. All the prophecies had finally been fulfilled. Thank you, God, for sending Your Son, so that we could have abundant life here and eternal life in heaven.

We enjoyed a time of revival back in October with Bro Greg and Sister Diane DeGrave at Indian Ford Victory Fellowship. The Lord moved in a powerful way through each of our services, and lives and hearts were touched and changed. On behalf of the FFMA executive board, I want to thank those of you that have been consistent with paying your dues. This is what helps to ensure the Fellowship can continue, and that we are able to host our annual Campmeeting in June. Everything received goes into the Fellowship; no one receives any sort of salary or compensation in any form.

Sister Conni and I pray that you will have a blessed and safe Thanksgiving and Christmas, and that the new year finds you prospering even as your soul prospers.

*Looking for That Blessed Hope,  
Brother Danny Carnley*



† **There's only been one Christmas (the rest are anniversaries), and it is not over yet.**

**—W.J. Cameron**

† **Nothing during the year is so impressively convincing as the vision Christmas brings of what this world would be if love became the daily practice of humans beings.**

**— Norman Vincent Peale**

# Letters



**D**ear Fellow Believer,

As we enter this time of Thanksgiving and Christmas, I want to share with you what is on my heart today. Initially, I had thought of sharing a message I had previously preached, but instead I want to talk a little about Christmas. I've not really thought this through completely, so I am not sure exactly which path we will end up following. Christmas does not mean the same to everyone. At the very thought or mention of Christmas, some people are immediately filled with joy, excitement, and anticipation. I think it all depends on one's current situation in life as to how the idea of Christmas is accepted. To the man who has just lost his job a month or so before Christmas, he is not filled with joy, nor is he excited that Christmas is approaching. He is thinking about how he will have to explain to his wife and children how that Christmas would be different this year than in years past. The gifts provided, if any at all, would be minimal. No... joy is about the last thing on his mind as he gazes upon the little disappointed faces. We all know that Christmas is not all about gift getting, but let's face it, generally, children have come to expect to receive gifts at Christmas. Think of all the gifts and toy drives this time of the year. Organizations and businesses will collect thousands of gifts to be distributed to those children who would otherwise receive nothing at Christmas-time.

What about all those families that will be experiencing their first Christmas with a newborn baby? Everything is about how to celebrate the baby's first Christmas! Indeed, this is a house filled with joy, excitement, anticipation, and probably even a little fatigue. If finances are available,

gifts will be showered upon a baby that will literally have no idea of what Christmas even means. For the parents, however, it is sure to be a Christmas to remember.

Then there are those that this will be the first Christmas they will experience without that special someone in their lives. Someone close to them left this earth during the year, and this is the first Christmas that this person is not celebrating Christmas with them. For these, there are all kinds of emotions, but sadness tends to find its way to the top. Although I have lost aunts and uncles and grandparents, I've not lost anyone in my immediate family yet in this life. I know that if the Lord tarries, it is highly likely that one day I will, and I'll have that experience of being without that person at Christmas for the first time. That is definitely not a day to which I am looking forward. I have watched a person that is very special and close to me have this experience though. I've seen my wife lose her sister, her father and another sister over the past 14 years. Her mother is still alive at almost 99 years of age, but due to stroke-induced dementia, she has not been able to spend any meaningful Christmases with her mother for nearly seven years. Although the years of separation from the dates of loss increase every year, each holiday season presents opportunities for memories of past Thanksgivings and Christmases when all were present at the family celebrations. Even simple things like crocheted table doilies or a small Santa face doorknob hanger can flood her heart and mind with memories of the ones that are no longer here to celebrate the joys of Christmas. She still definitely enjoys the holidays, but regardless of how many years have passed, the sadness from still missing those no longer with her sits in the back of

her mind as each Christmas day arrives. It is also about this time of year that children and even adults alike gather to begin practicing or continue practicing for the annual Christmas play in the local churches. Sometimes the plays are about the traditional first Christmas, including the story of the birth of Jesus with towels for head coverings and bathrobes worn by the shepherds. Isn't it something how baby Jesus is most always placed in a nice wooden and likely either newly constructed or constructed in the past but stored in a place away from the elements and kept in pristine condition, feeding trough which doubles as a manger? There also is nearly always some nice soft straw on which Mary lays the baby. Then others who are not characters in the play, if even an animal, are tasked with singing in the Christmas choir as the play is acted out. Sometimes stories other than the nativity are used. Each message is designed to portray the real meaning of Christmas. It really doesn't matter what the play is about, within this group one can find a myriad of emotions. The younger children are both excited and frightened at the same time thinking about performing in front of mama and daddy and grandparents and all those people in the congregation. The director is anxious to get the play started and nervous that something is going to go wrong with the props, or someone is going to forget his lines or is not going to be able to perform at the last minute. Then there are the parents and grandparents feeling proud that their child or grandchild is on the stage or platform. Although usually not happening on Christmas Day, all these emotions and feelings exist strictly because of the Christmas season.

***Continued on page 3...***



*Continued from page 2...*

When we think of Christmas, we think of being together and close to those we love. This Christmas as in Christmases past, there will be several husbands and wives, parents and children, fiancées and fiancés and close friends separated from one another because of many reasons. One primary reason will be because one of them is in another country serving in the military. For those unable to be with the ones they love, Christmas will bring a time of loneliness and sadness, but also a time of hope and anticipation thinking that perhaps the next Christmas they will spend together.

I truly could give example after example of how people view Christmas differently. Look at the story by Charles Dickens, "A Christmas Carol." Within that story alone we can see several different people and how they each see Christmas differently. Some are glad and happy to see Christmas come even though they may not be blessed with the things of this world, while Scrooge sees it as a day of financial irresponsibility where people spend money they don't have, and he

resents giving his clerk a paid day off work. Even though this is a work of fiction, how many real Scrooges are alive and well today?

Yet with every emotion that can be had at Christmas, and however one may view this day, Christmas is still about the love and joy shed upon this world when Jesus came. It's also about hope. Before Jesus came to be born in that stable, the world was in dire need. The world hoped for the coming of the Messiah, but in essence, the world had no real hope. With His birth, hope became a reality. Whatever circumstance one may find himself in this Christmas, that hope still exists today. Jesus was not only born in a stable, but He also died, was buried and rose again, so that we could continue to have hope in Him. He has come to give hope not only on Christmas but every day to those who are experiencing hopelessness. This Christmas season, let us as children of God who have received His light let this light shine in us, so that we may point others to Christ where they can also experience this same hope in Him. We have the answer. Let us not get so caught up in the celebration of the season that we forget to share this hope with others. I leave you with a

scripture from Romans 15:4, "For whatsoever things were written aforetime were written for our learning, that we through patience and comfort of the scriptures might have hope." I also want to share with you this poem by Benjamin H. Kennedy that I thought put a real emphasis on how important it is to have this hope.

### **Around In Hope**

Hope, Christian soul! in every stage  
Of this thine earthly pilgrimage,  
Let heavenly joy thy thoughts engage;  
Abound in hope.  
Hope through the watches of the night;  
Hope till the morrow brings the light;  
Hope till thy faith be lost in sight;  
Abound in hope.

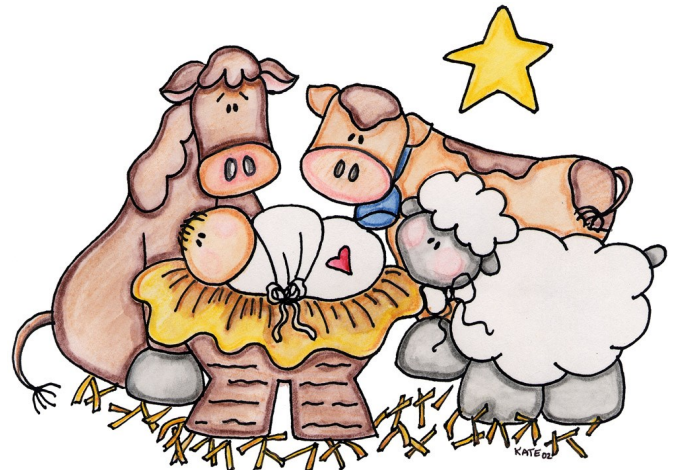
Jesus is not only our hope  
but the hope of the entire world!  
May your Christmas be filled with  
love and joy; but may it also be  
filled with hope.

*Brother Danny  
Indian Ford Victory  
Fellowship  
Milton, FL*



### **WHOSE BIRTHDAY?**

**After unwrapping all of her presents,  
a little girl was asked,  
"Did you get everything you wanted  
for Christmas?"  
She thought for a moment and said,  
"No. But then, it's not my birthday."**





## A Thanksgiving Message

Some families have a Thanksgiving tradition, and you may have it as well: they go around the table and each person says one thing that they're thankful for. Usually someone states that they are thankful for spouses and kids, for jobs and for health; they are thankful for new babies celebrating their first Thanksgiving, and thankful for another year with an aging family member; thankful for a country with freedoms and thankful for a church.

I think it's a good tradition. Yes, there's always one person who can't take anything seriously and yes, there's always another person who takes everything way too seriously. But there is something powerful about group gratitude. Not only do we learn a little bit more about the people we're related to by blood and marriage, but it also has the power to shift the dynamic of the room. Everyone stops. Everyone listens. Everyone shares in the thankfulness of the other.

The Apostle Paul wrote this: "Thanks be to God for his indescribable gift!" (2 Corinthians 9:15). We have a lot to be thankful for this year, and it is good and right for us to thank God for spouses, kids, jobs, and health. But when Paul says, "We thank God for his indescribable gift!" he's talking about something specific. Actually, someone specific. He isn't thanking God for things (though he could, and in other places in the New Testament, he did); rather, he is thanking God for Jesus. Or to say it another way, Paul is thanking God for God.

The greatest gift that God ever gave the world was His Son, Jesus Christ – who was (and is) God in the flesh. This is really what Christmas is about: the idea that God became a man (this is what theologians call "the incarnation"). As C.S. Lewis put it in *Mere Christianity*, "The Son of God became a man to enable men to become sons of God." And although Paul knew nothing of our American holiday on the fourth Thursday of November, I think it's right for us to talk about Christmas at Thanksgiving. Not because I'm trying to rush past this holiday and get on to the next one; but because our gratitude on this holiday is informed by the next one.

This Thanksgiving, I encourage you to thank God for all of the people and things you can think of. Be specific in your gratitude; articulate and enumerate all of the blessings in your life, because, "Every good and perfect gift is from above" (James 1:17a). But I also encourage you this Thanksgiving to thank God for God. Don't just thank Him for what He's given you; thank Him for who He is. The purpose of all of these earthly blessings is not that we become infatuated with the gift as an end to itself, but rather, to draw our eyes up to the Giver. He was the one who gave His Son so that you and I could be rescued from sin and restored to a reconciled relationship with Him. God did all of this to reach us.

We have so much to be thankful for.

Happy Thanksgiving



*For newsletter comments , contributions,  
or if you would like to join  
our mailing list, please contact*  
  
*Bro. Danny Carnley at:  
Carnleydc@gmail.com*



**The steadfast love of the LORD never ceases; his mercies never come to an end; they are new every morning; great is your faithfulness.**

**Lamentations 2: 22-23**



## **Unto Us A Child Is Born...**



During this cherished season of the year when we celebrate the birth of Christ, I love to turn to the enduring words of prophecy laid down by the venerable prophet Isaiah. Speaking more than seven centuries before the King of Kings made His entry into the world, Isaiah described the reason for the birth of Jesus Christ.

"For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given: and the government shall be upon his shoulder: and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace." (Isaiah 9:6)

Let's review each phrase and listen anew for what we can learn from this revelation.

### **For unto us a child is born**

This phrase could be translated from the Hebrew as "A child is born for us!" This was no ordinary child. Every day across the earth unnumbered souls enter into the world. Each is a beloved son or daughter of God and of earthy parents. But only one child was born for all of us—Jesus Christ. He was born on our behalf. He did not come simply to fulfill His own will or to meet His own needs. Jesus was born that our most sacred and personal needs would be met. He was born that He might live, teach, die, and live again to mark the path that we might follow.

### **Unto us a son is given**

From the Hebrew, we could render this phrase as "for unto us a son is given." The one doing the giving is God the Father offering His only begotten son to us. Indeed, the word "begotten" means "fully given" or "fully handed over" or "fully delivered." God held nothing back. In His Son He gave us 100%. He gave us everything. Isaiah in his proficient poetic style paired the phrases "For unto us a child is born" and "Unto us a son is given" to be mutually enhancing in their meaning.

### **And the government shall be upon his shoulder**

The original Hebrew allows for this phrase to be read as "and He will carry the yoke of leadership and princely command." The word for "government" here is related to the Hebrew word sar, which means prince, commander, or leader—one who has the power to deliver people as He overcomes all enemies. And isn't that what Jesus came to do?

### **And his name shall be called**

The Man of many names receives four revealing titles in the remaining portion of this verse. Who calls Him these things? We do!

#### **Wonderful Counsellor**

Jesus is wonderful and He is a counsellor. But more significantly, Jesus is a Wonderful Counsellor. The word for "wonder" comes from the Hebrew word that also describes God's mighty and miraculous acts of salvation wrought on behalf of the Israelites when He saved them from the doom of Egyptian bondage. And "counsellor" could also be meaningfully translated as "advisor, minister, commander, or leader."

#### **The Mighty God**

In some ways Isaiah's descriptor of God as mighty is repetitious. How so? The word for "God" in Hebrew is "El or Elohim", which in its most ancient meaning is "strong" or "the strong one." Isaiah is multiplying verbally in an attempt to encompass the unencompassable—God's enduring strength.

#### **The Everlasting Father**

As our spiritual Father, Jesus will provide all of our needs, as we seek Him. His love and promises never end. If we can count the stars in the heaven or every grain of sand strewn across this vast earth, we will have not even begun to fathom the everlasting nature of Jesus' role as our Father who will gather us, protect us, and nurture us.

#### **The Prince of Peace**



Isaiah concludes His disclosure of the identity of Jesus with this hopeful title of "the Prince of Peace." Hushing all fears, calming all storms, destroying all enemies, removing all obstacles, pathing the covenant path. Jesus is all these things. Is life difficult? Yes. Unexpected? Without a doubt. Is our life full of "learning experiences" those painful life moments where our plan does not quite work out as well as we had expected? Certainly. With Jesus, who was born for us and for our good, all of these things can work to our salvation, joy, and ultimate peace.

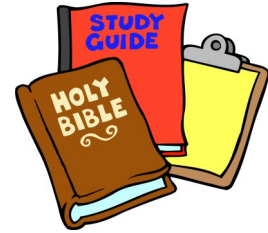
## *New Year's Thoughts from Billy Graham*

- † "The most important resolution you can make as another year approaches is this: to open your heart and life to Jesus Christ, and commit your life to Him. Don't waste your time on resolutions that don't ultimately matter; resolve instead to live for Christ."
- † "A new year is only a mark of time, a turning of the page. Mankind was not established on earth just to be preoccupied with self, our own problems and pleasures... If this is all there is to life, then it truly is 'meaningless' (Ecclesiastes 1:14, NIV). Man was not made for himself, but for God. The Great Designer planned that we would know Him forever."
- † "People by nature build, tear down, and rebuild. We build our hopes, get disappointed, and then search for renewed hope. That is why we are fond of New Year's resolutions... Faith in God calls for building from the inside out. There is no sense in working on the outside if the inside is rotten."
- † "Start the new year off with a sure thing—God's promise to give you a hope and a future (Jeremiah 29:11)."
- † "It's really wonderful to enter the new year with Jesus Christ... all through the year to be going along with Christ and have Christ going along with you. No matter what the problems, many of them uncertain, many mysteries out there in the future, but Christ is with you. Whether we know the future or not, we know the one who holds the future."

Happy New Year!



**BIBLE TEASERS QUIZ**



1. Other than the Psalms, which is the only other Old Testament book that begins with the letter "P"?
2. How many books of the Bible begin with the letter "N"?
3. Which is the only book of the Bible that is three letters long?
4. Which is the only book of the Bible to contain the letter "X"?
5. How many of the Old Testament books have four letters?
6. Which is the only New Testament book with six letters?
7. Which is the only book that ends with the letter "M"?
8. Other than Galatians, which book begins with the letter "G"?
9. Which book title is the only book to start and end with a vowel?
10. How many books of the Bible begin with the letter "L"?

Answers: 1. Proverbs, 2. Three, 3. Job, 4. Exodus, 5. Four, 6. Romans, 7. Nahum, 8, Genesis, 9. Ezra 10. Three.

**FRUIT OF THE SPIRIT**

- FAITHFULNESS
- GENTLENESS
- GOODNESS
- JOY
- KINDNESS
- LOVE
- PATIENCE
- PEACE
- SELF-CONTROL

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

*Faith Fellowship Ministerial Association, Inc.*

8145 Whiting Field Circle

Milton, FL 32570

Phone: 850-336-0063

### **GRAPE SALAD**

"This is a wonderful festive dessert salad that never failed to be a hit. Made the day before the brown sugar makes the sauce taste like caramel. You can use less brown sugar, if you wish."



8 servings  
Ingredients:

- 4 pounds seedless green and red grapes
- 1 (8 ounce) package cream cheese
- 1 (8 ounce) container sour cream
- 1/2 cup white sugar
- 1 teaspoon vanilla extract
- 4 ounces chopped pecans
- 2 tablespoons brown sugar

Directions:

Wash and dry grapes. In a large bowl, mix together the cream cheese, sour cream, sugar and vanilla. Add grapes and mix until evenly incorporated. Sprinkle with brown sugar and pecans, mix again and refrigerate until serving.