

SPIRIT OF GLORY MINISTRIES, INC.



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WORD 2006

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12/07/2006: This was a precious message sent by a friend of ours and I believe it touches on what Christmas should be about and bring to our children.

Jesus is the reason for all seasons...

THE WHITE ENVELOPE

It's just a small white envelope stuck among the branches of our Christmas tree. No name, no identification, no inscription. It has peeked through the branches of our tree for the past 10 years or so.

It all began because my husband Mike hated Christmas -- oh, not the true meaning of Christmas, but the commercial aspects of it -- the overspending, the frantic running around at the last minute to get a tie for Uncle Harry and the dusting powder for Grandma -- the gifts given in desperation because you couldn't think of anything else.

Knowing he felt this way, I decided one year to bypass the usual shirts, sweaters, ties, and so forth. I reached for something special just for Mike. The inspiration came in an unusual way. Our son Kevin, who was 12 that year, was wrestling at the junior level at the school he attended.

Shortly before Christmas, there was a non-league match against a team sponsored by an inner-city church.

These youngsters, dressed in sneakers so ragged that shoestrings seemed to be the only thing holding them together, presented a sharp contrast to our boys in their spiffy blue and gold uniforms and sparkling new wrestling shoes. As the match began, I was alarmed to see that the other team was wrestling without headgear, a kind of light helmet designed to protect a wrestler's ears. It was a luxury the ragtag team obviously could not afford.

Well, we ended up walloping them. We took every weight class. And as each of their boys got up from the mat, he swaggered around in his tatters with false bravado, a kind of street pride that couldn't acknowledge defeat.

Mike, seated beside me, shook his head sadly, "I wish just one of them could have won," he said. "They have a lot of potential, but losing like this could take the heart right out of them." Mike loved kids -- all kids-- and he knew them, having coached little league football, baseball, and lacrosse.

That's when the idea for his present came. That afternoon, I went to a local sporting goods store and bought an assortment of wrestling headgear and shoes and sent them anonymously to the inner-city church. On Christmas Eve, I placed the envelope on the tree, the note inside telling Mike what I had done and that this was his gift from me. His smile was the brightest thing about Christmas that year and in succeeding years. For each Christmas, I followed the tradition -- one year sending a group of mentally handicapped youngsters to a hockey game, another year a check to a pair of elderly brothers whose home had burned to the ground the week before Christmas, and on and on. The envelope became the highlight of our Christmas. It was always the last thing opened on Christmas morning, and our children, ignoring their new toys, would stand with wide-eyed anticipation as their dad lifted the envelope from the tree to reveal its contents.

As the children grew, the toys gave way to more practical presents, but the envelope never lost its allure. The story doesn't end there. You see, we lost Mike last year due to cancer. When Christmas rolled around, I was still so wrapped in grief that I barely got the tree up. But Christmas Eve found me placing an envelope on the tree, and in the morning it was joined by three more. Each of our children, unbeknownst to the others, had placed an envelope on the tree for their dad. The tradition has grown and someday will expand even further with our grandchildren standing around the tree with wide-eyed anticipation watching as their fathers take down the envelope.

Mike's spirit, like the Christmas spirit, will always be with us.

May we all remember Christ, who is the reason for the season, and the true Christmas spirit this year and always.

- "Love the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind. This is the first and greatest commandment, and the second is like the first: Love your neighbor as yourself." Matthew 22:37-39
- "My command is this says Jesus; "Love each other as I have loved you." John 15:12

God Bless!

12/06: The LORD showed me doors closing as we come to the close of 2006; doors to depression, doors to dissension, doors to disease, doors to divorce, doors to debt, doors to division, doors to deception. He is closing these doors to His children. All that the enemy has taunted them with, tormented them with, God is going to bring to an end. 2007, 7 being the number which represents perfection, will be a year of restoration, restoring families, restoring health, restoring relationships, restoring finances, restoring those things the enemy has taken from them. It will be a year

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of Victory for those whose hearts have cried out for the lost souls. Many will be saved this coming year. The House of the LORD will be filled with hunger for His word. True hunger! Praise and Worship our LORD, GOD for He is Good!

10/06: I was recently contemplating all the harsh words I hear spoken on TV and in public against our government and against this war and the many enemies the USA seems to have. As I was speaking to the LORD about this, He reminded me of a Scripture He gave us in Philippians 4:4-9. I used it in an email message I sent to a few people but as I wrote the email, I realized there was so much more to this Scripture. I know this message was written to the Philippians from Paul, but it was God speaking through Paul by the presence of the Holy Spirit for each one of us. So I want to share with you what God has shown me. First I will give you the Scripture in total..."Rejoice in the Lord always. I will say it again: Rejoice! Let your gentleness be evident to all. The Lord is near. Do not be anxious about anything, but in everything, by prayer and petition with thanksgiving, present your request to God. And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus. Finally, brothers, whatever is true, whatever is noble, whatever is right, whatever is pure, whatever is admirable - if anything is excellent or praiseworthy - think about such things. Whatever you have learned or received or heard from me, or seen in me - put it into practice." The LORD shared with me that HIS light is brighter than any darkness we have ever seen. HIS light snuffs out the darkness. As I started looking at the Scripture, I saw, "Let your gentleness be evident" Gentleness is one of the Fruits of the Spirit. Galatians 5:22-23. Gentleness is being fair minded, charitable, not seeking revenge, not being overly vocal about our personal rights. Interesting!!! Then I see that the LORD is near. Is HE not? HE is not the Omnipresent LORD GOD Almighty? HE tells us over and over to seek HIS Kingdom first. To seek HIM first. Would probably solve a whole lot of issues if we'd listen to HIM. HE then tells us "Do not be anxious". Anxious...uneasiness of mind or brooding fear. Anxiousness causes all sorts of problems; anger, greed, fear, illnesses. "but in **everything**" I do not think HE meant for us to leave out anything, when HE says everything, that is just what HE means. "by prayer and petition" Prayer: a holy conversation with our Father God, earnestly, humbly worshipping HIM, seeking HIM, interceding. Petition: an earnest, formal request. "with THANKSGIVING" that is for all the tough or bad stuff in our lives as well as the good. Praising God for everything that we go through, that we have, that we need, that we desire. Nothing comes to us that HE does not know about. We are to present all these things to HIM, our heavenly Father God. Then HE tells us that "the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus." Wow! Wow! HIS peace, God's peace will be with us, will guard our hearts and our minds. This kind of peace is so different from anything we know. It is a peace of knowing God is in control of all things. This kind of peace

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does not come from everything going right. It is available to us when things are at their worst. It comes from knowing that no matter what comes against us as HIS Word says, "No weapon formed against us shall prosper" we have the victory, we are more than conquerors. And with this peace our hearts and minds are guarded against the things this world can throw at us. It will protect us from moving outside of God's will to force things to happen as we think they should. It will provide us with the patience in waiting on the LORD. Then HE says, "Finally, brothers, whatever is true, noble, right, pure, lovely, admirable, excellent, or praiseworthy, think about such things." With HIS peace our minds can be focused on the positives of the Kingdom of God. I heard a Pastor recently present a message about spoken words. He said "Words produce thinking, thinking produces emotions, emotions produce decisions, decisions produce action, action produces habits, habits produce character and character produces destiny." I can see where God is going with this. What goes in our minds determines what comes out of our hearts and that is seen through our words and our actions. If we want to produce within ourselves and our families and our communities a Godly destiny it must start with what we allow into our minds. Godly thinking from the Word of God, from the things mentioned above: pure (spotless, clean) right (good, proper), noble (outstanding qualities), true (truth), lovely (beauty, harmony, grace), admirable (deserving highest esteem, exciting wonder), excellent (eminently good, first class), and praiseworthy (merits value...God our Father, Jesus our Lord and Savior, and the Holy Spirit our guide and comforter). These are not suggestions by our Father, but commands. He tells us to be gentle and to let that gentleness be evident, HE tells us not to be anxious, HE tells us to come to HIM for everything and with everything and HE tells us to keep our minds pure and focused on the things of HIS Kingdom. What a wonderful place it is to live like this. I hear many say; that is not attainable. I say YES it is. Our Lord, Jesus Christ came to this earth and lived as a human man. He lived like you and me to show us that we can obtain this life. We can have heaven living here on earth. "Thy Kingdom come, Thy will be done, on earth AS IT IS IN HEAVEN." It is possible! It is obtainable! Think about it, no anxieties, no fears, no anger, no hatred. Beautiful!!! Praise you LORD!!!

All definitions are from the Webster's Ninth New Collegiate Dictionary and the King James New Strong's Exhaustive Concordance. Scripture is from Life Application Study Bible New International Version

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09/06: Remember being truly in love with someone. Not lustful, but IN LOVE!
Maybe you are there right now. Wanting to be with that person every minute, missing them so much that when you are apart you ache inside, wanting to know all there is about them, what they have done all day, what their dreams are, you love that person so much you just want to be attached to them physically, emotionally and spiritually. Remember how enormous and wonderfully overwhelming that felt or may feel.

Well, that is just a small picture of how great God's love is for you. Romans 5:5 tells us "God has poured out His love into our hearts by the Holy Spirit, whom He has given us." The Holy Spirit, yes, God's Spirit, He poured Himself into each one of us. Poured, not measured, and not held back. He loves us so very much!

Sometimes when we memorize scripture, it is in our head but not always in our heart. Such as John 3:16 "For God so loved the world (that's all of us) that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever (that is any of us) believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life." He, God, loves the world. Enormous in itself that He would love us. Think about it...being in love, loving someone with all your heart, with everything you have; then remember what it is like to be rejected by the one you love. You would have done anything for that person, you gave him/her all that you had to give, yet for them it was not enough. Remember the hurt, the heartache, the pain, the anger. Sometimes even the torment by seeing that person with someone else. It is awful; it feels as though you'll never get past it, the worst time in your life, at that moment.

Well now, think of our Father God and our Savior, Jesus Christ. God loves us so much, so much, yet daily we reject Him. We tell Him what He has given us is not enough. Worse, that who He is is not enough! He pours His love into our hearts; yet we turn to another. He loves us so much that He sent His Son to die for us so that we can be with Him. The Son in whom He loves and is well pleased. The Son, the one and only, who never rejected God, never sinned in any way. That Son is whom He placed here on earth and on the cross to die for us; to cleanse us from sin so that we may enter the gates of heaven; to redeem us from the enemy; to heal us from all disease and sickness; to protect us. Yet we tell Him it is not enough. And this Son, Jesus Christ, went along with this plan. He came, he walked, he taught, he healed, he redeemed, he brought to life those who were dead; physically and spiritually. Jesus was in the beginning with God. John 1:1-3 "In the beginning was the Word and the Word was with God and the Word was God. He was in the beginning with God. Through him all things were made; without him nothing was made that has been made." John 1:14a "The Word became flesh and made his dwelling among us." Jesus loves the world so much that he made his dwelling among us and then he let them nail him to the cross. He did this even after being in the Garden of Gethsemane where he underwent great stress as to what was about to take place. Some think his thoughts were of the beatings, the humility, the pain, the suffering, death, but it was much deeper than that. Imagine how you feel when you have sinned and God sheds light on that sin. You feel shame, disappointment in self, the acknowledgement of how it hurt someone or a situation, how it disappointed them. It felt miserable! Jesus took ALL our sins, every last stinking one of them and he felt it all, the weight of the sins of the world. Yet even worse than that, worse than the physical pain, worse than the emotional pain was the spiritual pain of being

separated from his Father, God. Remember the heartache of being separated from the one you love. Jesus did all this for us. Jesus took all our sins upon himself, allowed himself to be apart from God, so that we can come to the Father as pure, sinless, righteous heirs. Yes, sons and daughters of the Most High God. Yes, he came to die, to be the blood atonement; the requirement of God for forgiveness. Life is in the blood, you give life to receive life. One life for many lives. Jesus did this because he loves the Father and also because he loves us. How, how, how can we love another? How can we turn from Him? How can we not look to Him first and in all we do? Why are we not running into His arms with a heart that says "I cannot get enough of you!"?

God says, "Turn to me, run to me, my child. I am here, I am waiting for you! I love you!"