

Unrestrained boldness for Jesus,
Uncommon honesty about life
Indiscriminate passion for everyone
& Unusual relevance for today!



kathleen whitten
ministries exists to
manifest jesus
through living
encounters with
HIS word.©

DECEMBER 2008 ~ VOLUME I, NUMBER 3

LIVING JESUS

“DO NOT BE CONFORMED TO THIS WORLD, BUT BE
TRANSFORMED BY THE RENEWING OF YOUR MIND, THAT
YOU MAY PROVE THE WILL OF GOD, THAT WHICH IS GOOD,
ACCEPTABLE, AND PERFECT.” ROMANS 12:2



HOLIDAY shoppers, cell phones pressed against their ears, navigate package-crammed vehicles through the crowded streets, hurrying from store to mall. Traveling families, suitcases secured on top of their SUVs, are tailed by eighteen-wheelers, many of whose exhausted drivers haven't slept in 24 to 48 hours.

Joining the highway's sleep deprived, college students head for home, some joining the game of continually passing one another, as most just speed ahead, music vibrating their cars full of dirty clothes. Sprinkled through the teeming holiday highways and streets are also those drivers "celebrating" with excessive amounts of alcohol or worse...

It's not surprising that more wrecks happen during the Holiday Season than any other time of the year. However, this does NOT mean God wants us to fear, but to **PRAY** and **USE WISDOM**.

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PRAY Psalm 91, perhaps God's most powerful protection promises, over your family and yourself - replacing appropriate pronouns in the Scripture with the names of your loved ones. For example: "For He/God will command all His angels concerning (family member's name) to guard (family member's name) in all (his/her) ways..." Psalm 91:11

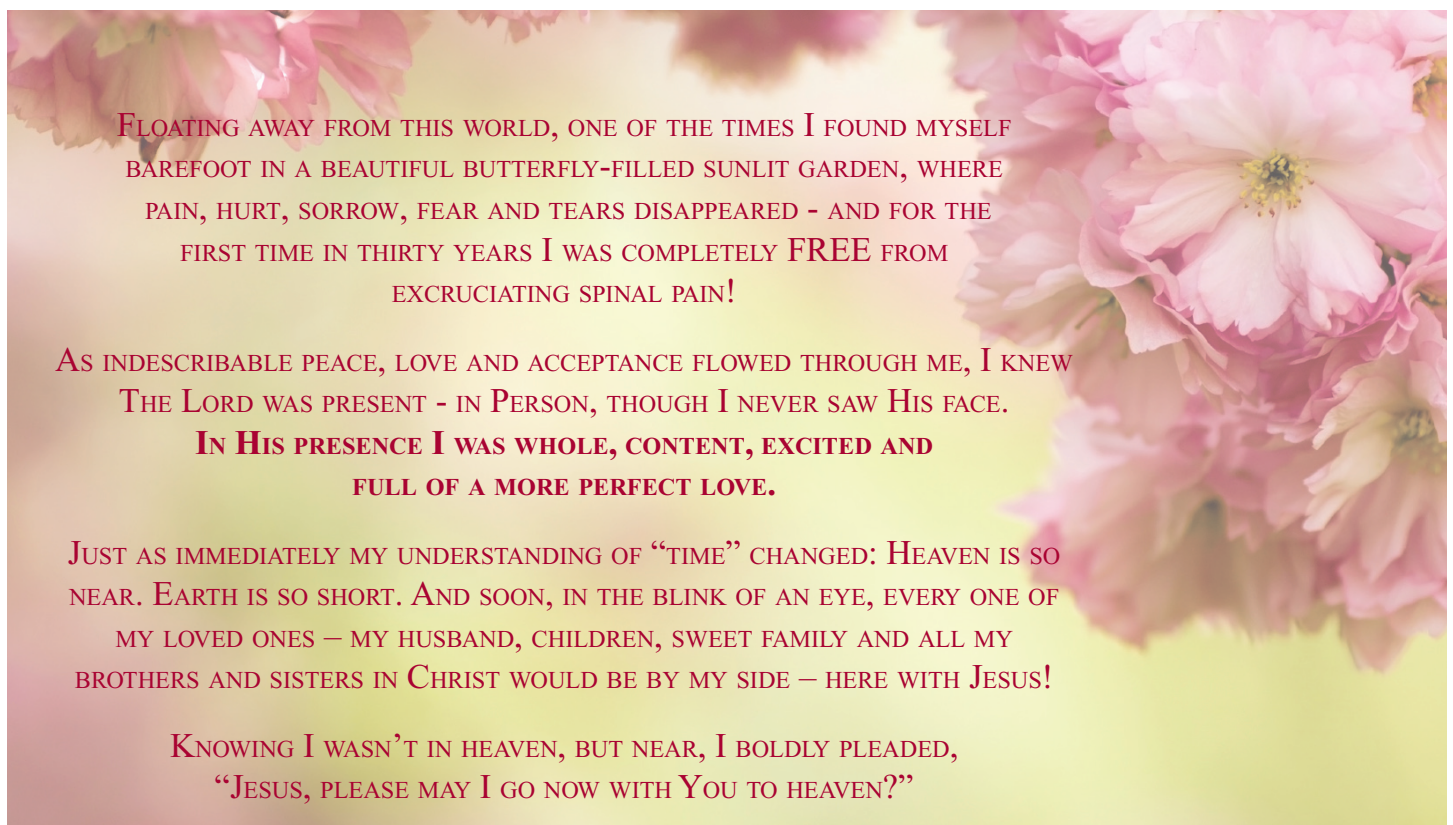
Pray and then rest. God's Word is true and God's plan is for each of us is always good. However, we do live in a "fallen world" where every person has a free will and evil abounds. Man's lack of knowledge and poor choices combined with a deceptive enemy whose goal is to "kill, steal and destroy" (John 10:10a) can create tragedies, such as deadly car wrecks, not caused by God, but for which we do not have complete explanation or understanding.

RECOGNIZE THAT FORGIVENESS
IS A DECISION TO OBEY GOD,
NOT A FEELING.

All of us have loved ones who have died as a result of car accidents or other causes. For those especially grieving this Holiday season, there is something I want to share.

Five months ago, in the hospital after a thirteen-hour reconstructive back surgery, my exhausted body (metal rods, screws and plates removed and then new ones added by operating through both stomach and back) rejected one of the eight blood transfusions, which resulted in respiratory failure. **For five days, some of the time in a drug induced coma, I lay in agony in intensive care - - except for the two times I left this world and met with Jesus.**

The first time I left my body was five days post back surgery, sometime in transition from my recovery room bed at the operating hospital to the ambulance, which took me to the emergency room of a larger hospital. Again, near the beginning of my unexpected I.C.U. stay, I left my body for the second time - suddenly apart from myself, yet seeing myself: respirator down my throat, hands padded and restrained as my mother gently stroked my hair, while my father and husband prayed.



FLOATING AWAY FROM THIS WORLD, ONE OF THE TIMES I FOUND MYSELF
BAREFOOT IN A BEAUTIFUL BUTTERFLY-FILLED SUNLIT GARDEN, WHERE
PAIN, HURT, SORROW, FEAR AND TEARS DISAPPEARED - AND FOR THE
FIRST TIME IN THIRTY YEARS I WAS COMPLETELY FREE FROM
EXCRUCIATING SPINAL PAIN!

AS INDESCRIBABLE PEACE, LOVE AND ACCEPTANCE FLOWED THROUGH ME, I KNEW
THE LORD WAS PRESENT - IN PERSON, THOUGH I NEVER SAW HIS FACE.
**IN HIS PRESENCE I WAS WHOLE, CONTENT, EXCITED AND
FULL OF A MORE PERFECT LOVE.**

JUST AS IMMEDIATELY MY UNDERSTANDING OF "TIME" CHANGED: HEAVEN IS SO
NEAR. EARTH IS SO SHORT. AND SOON, IN THE BLINK OF AN EYE, EVERY ONE OF
MY LOVED ONES - MY HUSBAND, CHILDREN, SWEET FAMILY AND ALL MY
BROTHERS AND SISTERS IN CHRIST WOULD BE BY MY SIDE - HERE WITH JESUS!

KNOWING I WASN'T IN HEAVEN, BUT NEAR, I BOLDLY PLEADED,
"JESUS, PLEASE MAY I GO NOW WITH YOU TO HEAVEN?"

The story is too long to continue for now. Obviously it is not time for me to be in heaven. But I am a living testimony that: **Jesus is Real. Dying is Life. Heaven is Home. And once you experience even just the “fringe” of it, you never want to leave!**

Even as I write, The Holy Spirit is compelling me to emphasize one of the truths I learned in the presence of Jesus – Our Living Truth. All of us on earth are confined by time and space. Therefore, it appears to us that months, years, and decades have separated us from our loved ones who have gone before us to heaven.

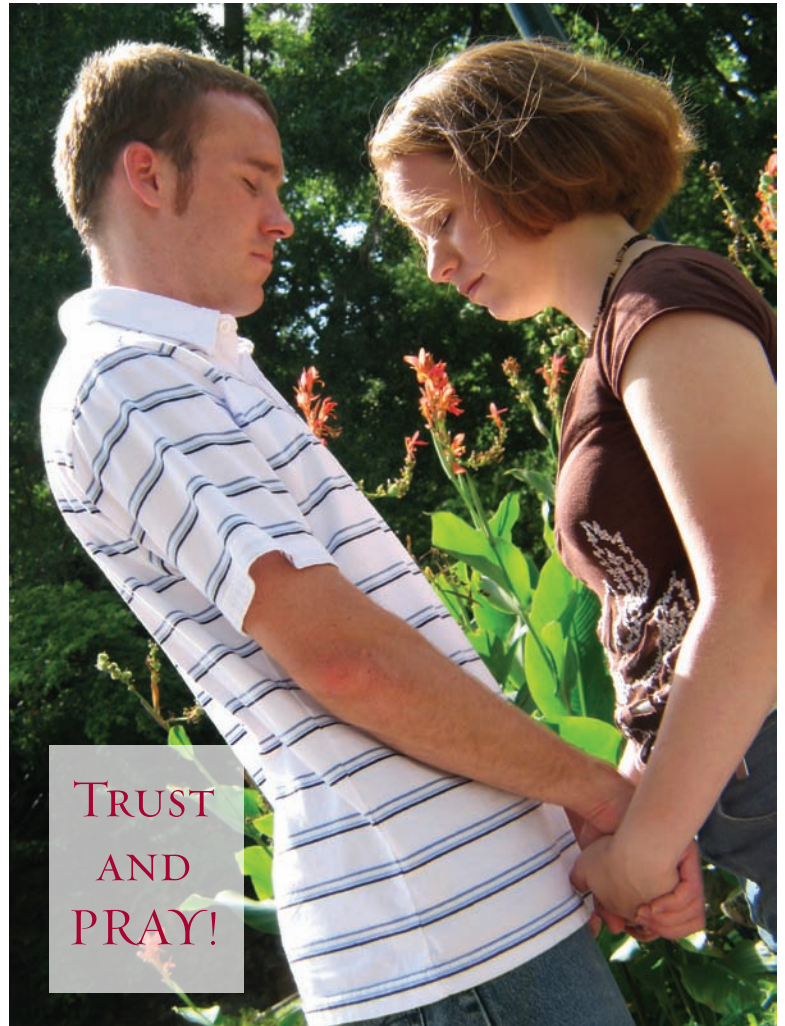
However, to those in heaven, time has no relevance and space has no restrictions. Joy continually abounds in the presence of God throughout eternity, as each of our loved ones looks (neither forward nor backward) to our arrival – yet sooner than we can understand! So trust and **PRAY!**

Secondly, to prevent wrecks, use WISDOM. To the best of your ability, avoid participation in the traffic hazards already mentioned. AND be aware of an overlooked, yet frequent cause of wrecks: **wrecks caused by wrecks.**

Distracted by bright flashing lights and the sight of people huddled together on the shoulder of the highway, persons driving by wrecks are often **tempted to stare at the wreck instead of the road, thus causing another wreck.**

Spiritually speaking, as we drive down the highway of life - **we’ve all wrecked – or sinned against God, others and ourselves.** But Jesus became sin and allowed Himself to be sacrificed in order to pay for every wreck/sin - past, present and future - for all people who believe and personally make Jesus, The Savior and Lord of their Lives.

As discussed, forgiven by God for all of our wrecks/sins, we are expected by God to forgive and forget the wrecks of others. Instead, throughout the highways of their lives, **many unwisely choose to meditate/stare at wrecks (un-forgiven sins and past hurts) by repeating details of the wrecks to others, while reliving them in their minds.** Of course this creates more wrecks, eventually making the person’s life a wreck.



**ALONG THE HIGHWAYS OF LIVES,
WE WILL ALL NEED TO HUMBLE
OURSELVES BY ASKING FOR
AND RECEIVING: HELP,
TEACHING, COUNSELING
AND PRAYER FROM OTHERS.**



**IF YOUR LIFE IS A WRECK RIGHT NOW – I HAVE AMAZINGLY
WONDERFUL NEWS FOR YOU! IT'S NEVER TOO LATE.**

Unable to forgive, forget and move on into God's wonderful plan for their lives, people can become depressed, angry, bitter, lonely and full of self-pity. Maybe you recognize this disparaging pattern. If your life is a wreck right now – I have amazingly wonderful news for you! It's never too late. No matter how long your life has been a wreck, you can have a new beginning today. With God's help you can have a literal "Happy New Year" and new life!

Because of Christmas (Our Savior's birth) you can start over. **Wisely choose to forgive and forget wrecks** so that you can move forward in the abundant life purpose Christ came to give you. Exactly HOW?

Saul (later named Paul) was a pious, religious man whose purpose in life was murdering Christians. Along the road, Paul encounters Jesus, Whom he had been persecuting, making it obvious to Paul that His entire life's work (so far) was a destructive wreck.

Yet, instead of mourning his life as a hopeless wreck, reviewing all the evil he had done and lamenting the years he wasted, Paul asks for forgiveness from God and others, gives God his wrecked life and forgives himself.

Wisely remaining undeterred by life's wrecks, Paul becomes the man, chosen by God, to write two-thirds of The New Testament. I personally believe it's because he learned the wise secret to moving forward in God's plan for his life, upholding it as the most important, one thing he does.

Paul shares his secret to success, **"...But one thing I do: Forgetting what is behind and straining toward what is ahead, I press on toward the goal to win the prize for which God has called me heavenward in Christ Jesus."** (Philippians 3:13b, 14 NIV)

Right now if you're stuck in a wreck, ask for God's forgiveness and then sincerely forgive others, naming each one. And like Paul, also forgive yourself and **forget** the past

.

Recognize that forgiveness is a decision to obey God, not a feeling. The decision to forgive includes **forgetting**, by refusing to repeat or re-live the wreck. As you do this, your feelings will eventually follow your decision.

Keep your eyes off the wrecks and onto Jesus. Reading His Word and learning His ways will renew your mind and change you to be more like Him. (Romans 12:2)

Lastly, reach out to other Believers, especially those more mature in their faith. God knit all Believers together as a body. So we will not always be able to maneuver through life by ourselves. **Along the highways of lives, we will all need to humble ourselves by asking for and receiving: help, teaching, counseling and prayer from others.**

If you are in need of help, contact your church or you may also contact [kwm prayer team](#) by calling 210-822-5500 or by emailing: prayer@kathleenwhitten.org.

[kathleen whitten](#) 11/08



P.S. In answer to our six-year-olds question, "Yes Storm, there is a Santa Claus. But talk with your sister too, because she already knows The Truth: Santa is just a 'puff of fluff' compared to the most generous and loving 'One True God', His Son - Our Lord Jesus Christ - and The Holy Spirit - - - Who will someday live and reign in your heart, just as He has in our family, generations before us."

MERRY CHRISTMAS AND HAPPY NEW YEAR EVERYONE!

THANK YOU FOR PROVIDING YOUR OWN RETURN ENVELOPE WHEN USING THE FORM BELOW.

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NEW YEAR'S

Can you imagine the very first New Year's Eve? Three celebrated that evening: The Father, The Son, and The Holy Spirit. (John 1:1-2)

What were They celebrating that first Eve in the Beginning? The creation of course! And what was God's crowning glory of all creation? The only ones created in His image—us!

Genesis 1:26: "And God said, 'Let Us make man in Our image, after Our likeness...'" So that first New Year's Eve, God celebrated us as the reflection of Himself—the crowning glory of His creation!

But did God know that we would not always choose to reflect Him in our lives? Yes. God is God of the past, present, and future. So the first New Year's Eve, God not only celebrated our creation, but also our restoration—God's love and mercy over our lives!

For God's greatest celebration is when we, His crowning glory, choose His Salvation, Jesus! God's absolute greatest celebration is when His crowning glory, us, chooses to reflect Him!

For those of us who confess Jesus as God's Son and receive His sacrifice for our sins, God celebrates and honors. Isaiah 61:10 says that God clothes us in "garments of salvation" and arrays us in "robes of righteousness!"

Why? Not so we can look down upon others, but so that others can look at us—fellow imperfect humans—and see the very image of God as we reflect His love and mercy!

This New Year may we be a clearer representation of God's mercy and love!