

CHRISTMAS 2007

Dear friends and family,

I had a long conversation with a musician friend the other day. "Jo, I respect you for your faith, but I do not need God." "...so, you are your own God?" "No, I do not believe in any God, but I do believe in myself. Christianity makes no sense to me. I think other religions have as much to offer, but you say you are right and all the rest are wrong. I don't believe that." Quoting scripture would have been futile, so I continued to reason with him regarding creation and subsequent order. He admitted: "Yes there had to be someone or many someones who thought it all through." I left and returned later with a copy of C.S. Lewis' "Mere Christianity". Lewis, a long-time atheist, struggled for many years over these exact issues, but ultimately laid them down at Jesus' feet. Right now, my friend is closed but our faith does not rest in human resources but in God who raises the dead.

Writing, teaching and sending lessons in Colossians, Romans and Acts to women across this nation has been the highlight of my year. In the midst of many musical performances, my favorite is that of producing every three or four months an old fashioned Gospel Singalong for the surrounding communities. The crowd increases and last time represented fifteen churches. My dear M., new Christian, sang her very first Christian composition. Our recently widowed niece from Wichita flew out for this event. Both were greatly encouraged by believers they had never before met.

We are energized by God's amazing activity. Ted is energized by meeting with many pastors on Wednesdays, by counseling and reconciling couples and discipling young business men. In January we will begin yet another discipleship evening here in Bear Valley with couples He is gathering to Himself.

Into our home and arms, we have received our own family, professional musicians, sorrowing widows, exhausted missionaries, fractured families, recovering cultists, assorted others plus new and old Christians. We do not know how long it will be before our Lord gets fed up with America's entitlement demands. Maybe our Messiah will come back to fetch us out of this mess this year and maybe He won't. Somewhere on this Planet, one last lost sheep will fall into His gentle arms and that will signal His return for His Church. Maybe that last sheep will be my friend who says he does not need God.

"He was delivered over to death for our sins and was raised to **Life** for our justification".
Romans 4:25.

— *Jo and Ted*