

# STOTHERS' PRAISE & PRAYER

DECEMBER 2020

## Shepherds, a Baby, & a Manger

*"And there were shepherds living out in the fields nearby, keeping watch over their flocks at night. An angel of the Lord appeared to them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were terrified. But the angel said to them, "Do not be afraid. I bring you good news that will cause great joy for all the people. Today in the town of David a Savior has been born to you; he is the Messiah, the Lord. This will be a sign to you: You will find a baby wrapped in cloths and lying in a manger. Suddenly a great company of the heavenly host appeared with the angel, praising God and saying, "Glory to God in the highest heaven, and on earth peace to those on whom his favor rests." When the angels had left them and gone into heaven, the shepherds said to one another, "Let's go to Bethlehem and see this thing that has happened, which the Lord has told us about." Luke 2: 8-15*

Enjoying, with our grandsons, this well loved story as our Advent Calendar reading, we imagined what it must have been like for that motley crew of trembling shepherds, overwhelmed by the most spectacular, glorious, host of angels choir that the world had ever witnessed! Truly it was an announcement befitting the birth of the Prince of glory! I wonder if the shepherds were shocked when the shining angel explained that the sign of the baby, the Messiah, the Savior, was that He would be *"the baby wrapped in cloths and lying in a manger"*. Did they think, "No kidding? A manger is the only bed the King of the universe has provided for His Son? A feeding box?!" I imagine they didn't look long to find baby Jesus that night, for there was only one newborn asleep in a straw-filled manger among the stables of Bethlehem.

Question: So what do Shepherds, a Baby, and a Manger all share in common? Answer: They are all easily overlooked and are unimportant and insignificant in the eyes of the world. In our heavenly Father's unsearchable wisdom, that was, and continues to be, His plan and method: *"But God chose the foolish things of the world to shame the wise. He chose the weak things of the world to shame the strong. And God chose what the world thinks is not important—what the world hates and thinks is nothing. He chose these to destroy what the world thinks is important."* 1 Cor. 1:27,28. This season as we join the angels, the shepherds and generations of Christ-followers in celebration, we remember that He gave His BEST to the least of these, among whom we are one! We rejoice that our Father delights in transforming the simple, the mundane, and the seemingly insignificant things and events in our lives into surprises of His grace, turning them into divine moments and opportunities! Our prayer for you is that you too will be encouraged as you experience His loving grace at work in your life! A very blessed Christmas to you!



In Emmanuel's Love,  
*Bill & Priscilla*

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**PRAISE:** Through phone calls, WhatsApp, and Zoom we are still staying connected with the people and ministries in the Dominican Republic that we love. The believers remain faithful to the Lord despite the many hardships they are facing. The new church plant in San Pedro is continuing to grow.

**PRAY:** The virus has been economically devastating to the DR. Pray for His provision for our Dominican brothers and sisters. The Conference Center in La Vega continues to pay their bills though still not able to host groups. Pray that groups will be able to return in the next months. Pray also, that Bill will soon return to in-person involvement with ball players in Florida and the Caribbean.

**PRAISE:** We are grateful to the Father for our faithful prayer/support team: you, our friends and family that have been our team-mates during this 38-year-long chapter of our lives, as we served with World Team in the DR. We look forward to the day when we can freely travel, without risk, and spend time with you in person, catching up and enjoying together the stories of His goodness and grace in our lives. **PRAY:** February 1, 2021 we officially begin a new chapter in our lives as "volunteers" instead of employees of WorldTeam. We are presently living in Bradenton, Florida, but plan to move permanently to West Palm Beach, Fl. in February. Pray for our continued readjustment to living in the US, soon settling into a new community, and wisdom to recognize opportunities to serve for His kingdom sake. Pray for a new opportunity for Priscilla to volunteer with the Teen Mom Program of Youth For Christ, a ministry that Katy leads in Bradenton, Florida.

**PRAISE:** We recently experienced the Lord's provision as, in a week's time, we got an offer on our 2-story condo in West Palm Beach, where Greg and Kelly had been living, and put an offer on a one-story home! Though it felt overwhelming at times, we sensed our Father's guidance in the many details that the selling and buying of a house entails. Now we are facing the work and fun of fixing, painting, and furnishing a home from top to bottom! You can probably guess what's under our Christmas tree this year: pots & pans, coffee maker, and bedding! We are grateful for loving donations of furniture and furnishings from family and friends as we make this house our home. **PRAYER:** Our new community is filled with retired folks needing to meet the Savior. Pray that we will establish friendships with our new neighbors and have many opportunities to share the Good News.

**PRAISE:** For three, sweet, grand-baby girls born in the last 4 months: "Anastasia" to Julia and Chris, "Grace" to Katy and Mark and "Isla Marie", to Greg and Kelly. These little ones have brought great joy to our family (and lots of photos)! All three daughters, at the last minute, had complicated deliveries, so we are extra grateful for the Lord's care of them, and their babies, during some scary, difficult moments. **PRAY:** That our children will be given wisdom as they guide these precious, little girls and our dear grandsons in the ways of the Lord.

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