



Mission Molokai

Manley Newsletter - Christmas '2000



Dear Friends & Family,

Indeed, the blessed commemoration of the birth of our Savior is now upon us! What a joyous time of year: a time of reflecting, a time of giving, and a time of sharing the love that originates from the Father Himself, "Beloved, let us love one another for love is from God." (1 John 4:7) Oh, may that love permeate our every thought, feeling, and action as we engage in the hustle and bustle of the Christmas Season of the millennium.



In the well-known and well-loved holiday classic *The Christmas Carol* by Charles Dickens, Mr. Scrooge through a series of events is forced to reflect on his past, ponder the present, and speculate on his future. In keeping with this outline, we would like to recall what God has done, consider what He is currently doing and contemplate what we believe He will yet do in our lives in the days to come. May we invite you to join us in this little jaunt through time?



THE PAST

Alive and Well

We thank you so much for faithfully praying for Louise during her first trimester of pregnancy. We are just ecstatic to report that at about the 16th week, the Lord granted her some much desired (and begged for) physical relief! It was a remarkable turn of events. While vacationing with the family in Kauai, Louise went to bed early on a Monday night due to nausea and fatigue, and awakened Tuesday morning a transformed woman! Although she still requires additional sleep, her appetite, her energy, and her stamina have, for the most part, returned in full (especially the appetite part! Ha! Ha!) Thank you so much for your prayers on her behalf.

The Precious Gift of Time Away

We are also delighted to report that our family vacation was a dream come true! The home that the Lord provided was above and beyond our greatest expectations. With three full bathrooms and 4+ bedrooms at our disposal, all waiting in line and fighting for space was completely dissipated. Clinton claimed the loft bedroom, set up his kingdom and "reigned" from "on high." It actually was a pleasure to watch the Lord provide for this child in a very personal way! We recognized that he needed some "space" of his own, and for 7 full days he wallowed in this nicety, perched up there in his "lofty" nest! PTL!

It was also such a blessing for all of us to have Mom restored to health. Because of her radical recovery we were able to fill our days with sight-seeing, beach hopping, body surfing, visiting friends, bike riding and even hiking a 4-mile trek that led us across the ridge of a spectacular tropical valley. As we turned off the cell phone and flew away from the demands of ministry in Molokai, God nurtured us and provided the fertile soil for family intimacy to flourish and grow. We did so cherish the time together, and we look forward with great anticipation to many more of those precious moments.

A Providential Reunion

Another extraordinary outcome of our vacation was the reunion of Louise with a dear friend who lives in Kauai, Donna Kirkpatrick. Their communication has been steady over the years, and here was the opportunity for Louise to converse heart-to-heart with this seasoned Christian woman. As iron sharpeneth iron, so God used Donna's testimony to impact Louise's spirit in such a positive way. As highlights of their conversation and visions of Donna's ministry drifted through Louise's mind, a great sense of encouragement, coupled with challenge, began to mold Louise's thinking. It was soon evident that Donna needed to reach not only Louise, but also other women of Molokai . . . by speaking at the women's retreat! Upon invitation and prayerful consideration, Donna

graciously accepted the responsibility. What a blessing to be able to sit at the feet of one who sits at His feet!

A Wonderful Retreat

The women's retreat was another evidence of God at work. It was wild to watch as He developed the theme, "You are the salt of the earth," in such intricate detail. Have you ever contemplated the uses of salt? Salt is used to season; to preserve or perpetuate as it hinders the decaying process; to purify as it is counteractive to corruption; to aid in the healing process (although it may sting at first); and smelling salts are used to wake an individual abruptly, or to bring one back to consciousness. Now, knowing that God commands you to be salt, the challenging question, from a spiritual standpoint, becomes "What would those salty characteristics look like in my Christian life?" We spent 24 hours at the retreat deliberating over just that! What a venture through His Word!



Although the end results proved His undeniable faithfulness, there were moments when doubt engulfed me like a dark cloud, crushing my spirit. The Friday morning of the retreat torrential rains flooded that end of the island leaving impassible "lakes" in the only road to the retreat center. As the phone calls inundated my answering machine inquiring of possible cancellation, my heart prayed, "Lord, what are you doing?"

Through prayer, godly counsel, and embracing His promises, we stepped out in faith. We became convinced that no matter how many came, they would be the very souls God wished to minister to! Who am I to interfere? The afternoon progressed, the rain subsided, and by 6:30 P.M. we had 37 women present and waiting on what God had planned. By Saturday morning we had a total of 43 women, enjoying the ambiance, embracing the fellowship, and rising to meet the spiritual challenge. We give our heavenly Father all the glory and honor for all that transpired through that event! Again we must testify to the fact that God is good all the time!

A Day of Giving Thanks

This year's journey through the holiday season opened with a glorious Thanksgiving Dinner. Though most join their immediate families for the occasion, our location in the mid-Pacific negates such an opportunity. Thus, we joined our other "family", our church family. With the Christmas tree twinkling in the corner, and the tables dressed with candles, homemade corn husk dolls, and loaves of bread made to look like real pumpkins, we sat down with about 40 dear friends to a magnificent meal of plenty! As we considered how needy many in our congregation truly are, we were so moved by the abundance God had prepared for us. The precious testimonies, the endearing friendships and the evidences of plenty made us all unanimously agree that this day was truly a day of giving thanks.

THE PRESENT

Molokai Christian Academy Update

You may remember that in our last letter we shared with you about the ministry of Molokai Christian Academy. With 70 students and a full staff, God has truly given us an amazing opportunity. As we look over the families represented by our student body, we praise God for those He brought our way. Many families who would never step foot in a worship service, will place their children under the watch care of the academy because there is no other alternative to the public schools on our island.

As a result, these unchurched children are exposed daily to God's Word and many have trusted Jesus as Lord and Savior. God is at work at MCA!

The testing of our faith with regards to this ministry has come by way of the finances. We have enclosed a copy of a



letter that Randy recently composed that explains briefly the tremendous financial need of the academy. Normally, we reserve our mailing list for our own personal newsletter; however, due to the urgency and the immensity of this situation we ask that you allow us to share with you this towering need. Won't you take but a moment to ask the Lord what may be your role in ministering to the children of Molokai?



Feasting, Fellowship, and Plain Old Fun

In just a few days we will have our annual women's Christmas Dinner. Louise is currently planning and preparing for this festive event. We use this opportunity to invite our unsaved friends and relatives to join us as we celebrate the birth of our Savior in a warm, friendly (and non-threatening) atmosphere. We also take advantage of this get-together to reveal our secret sisters from the past 6-month interim. It is such a trip to watch the reaction of each woman as she finally discovers who has been interceding for her in prayer, showering her with little notes of encouragement, and blessing her with a small keepsake now and then. It truly is a privilege to see the outpouring of love and gratitude among the women at such a time of blessing. This will no doubt be the beginning of a very Merry Christmas!

THE FUTURE

On a very personal note, may we share with you our thoughts and concerns for the future. So often in our newsletter we entrust to you, our partners in ministry, the many blessing and benefits of being in the midst of a mission ministry. We are keenly aware of God's command to give thanks in all things, and we strive to imitate David's example of praising God in the midst of even the most difficult of circumstances. It has become our focus to "count our blessings and name them one by one". Yet, we would be irresponsible—bordering on the dishonest if we did not at times acknowledge to you that this journey of ministry can be grueling, and that this mission which we've entitled Mission: Molokai is like endeavoring to scale a gigantic mountain, where the climb is often steep, the path rocky, and the "unknowns" (trials that lie ahead) are downright frightening. During those time of discouragement, the sure sense of knowing that we are in the center of God's will propels us forward and motivates us to push onward and upward. As long as that vision has clarity, the peace that passes understanding sustains us through many a trial. In fact, God's Word says in Proverbs 29:18 that without that vision the people perish. As we, the Manley family, come face-to-face with our future, we are beseeching God to renew our vision for what He has for us, personally. David prays very specifically in Psalm 143:8, "Teach me the way in which I should walk, for to Thee I lift up my soul." We know that God has a specific path for us to walk in, and we want nothing less. As we consider the size of our family and the needs of each individual member we know that some change is inevitable. We come to you, our precious friends and our endeared family members, to ask you to join us in this specific prayer. May God be faithful to give us the vision that we desire; so we, too, do not perish or run astray!

Praises:

A Whirlwind of Excitement

As we previously shared, the women's retreat proved to be 24 hours of fun, fellowship and spiritual refreshing, despite the initial torrential rains. We praise the Lord for the whirlwind of excitement that began at the retreat and has spiraled upward and outward as the women have taken seriously the task of being *the salt of the earth*.

Warriors Preparing for Battle

As we look at the teenagers of this generation, we could so easily become discouraged as we see the enemy apparently winning the battle for their hearts and minds. Praise God, He still has a remnant! In fact this past Tuesday night a group of teenagers, the majority being from the public school, met in our home to begin a Bible study on the books of I & II Corinthians. What an encouragement to see young people desiring to put on the full armor of God. Please pray that God will multiply this initial group and grow them as they seek to make a difference in the lives of their friends.

Waiting on the Lord

As we have shared the teachers at *Molokai Christian Academy* have remained faithful to their call, despite the financial crunch that has

affected their paychecks. They continue to walk in obedience, claiming His promises of provision and protection, and waiting patiently to see what mighty work God is going to complete through this ministry of faith. We are so grateful for this precious group. Please pray God will indeed provide soon.

Without Want

We praise the Lord for the unmistakable incredible abundance provided by His hand at our Thanksgiving meal together. We did not have want of any good thing! We had it all! PTL!

A Welcomed Visitor

For the past two Sundays to our great surprise a gentleman to whom Randy has witnessed numerous times made his way through the doors to our morning service. What a blessing to have Lester with us. Please pray He will make the commitment to turn his life completely over to the watch care of our Heavenly Father.

Wonderful Friends from under the Lone Star

This past Saturday friends with whom Randy and Louise had gone to college came to visit Molokai all the way from the state of Texas. Although the visit was but brief, the reunion was precious. God so graciously used Jim & Sharon to minister to our souls. We are so grateful to this dear couple for venturing off the beaten path in obedience to God's leading. We are always amazed how God gives just what is needed in just the nick of time!

An Alternate Way

As in the past *Molokai Baptist Church* chose to participate in an island-wide effort to provide a Christian alternative to Halloween, entitled Hallow Him. This year it was reported that over 400 gospel tracks were passed out to the many children and parents who chose to stay off the streets and join the festivities surrounding Hallow Him. May God take His Word and reach the lost souls of our dear island of Molokai.

Prayer Requests

Faithful to Provide Finances

We urge you to fervently pray that God will provide in a mighty way for the financial needs of *Molokai Christian Academy*. The need is great and the time is now!

The Feminine Factor

Although the Lord so magnificently granted to Louise physical relief from the illness brought on by pregnancy, she has found that the fluctuation of hormone levels have greatly impaired her emotional stability. In other words, the daily demands of a wife, a mother, and a Christian have proven to be even overwhelming at times because of physical changes in her body. This no doubts affects all those closest to her. The good news is the midwives assure her that in time this too will pass, but in the meantime we pray for God's sustaining provision to carry us all through this time of waiting.

The Family Circle

We ask you to continue to pray for our personal family, especially Clinton. As we shared in the last newsletter, he finds coping with life and its accompanying challenges to be difficult. As ripples in the water so the entire family experiences the effects of his struggles. With Mom somewhat out of normal character, the ripples increase. We trust that God will sustain us with His grace through both the good and the not so good times!

Forever Friends

We cannot tell you how very much we appreciate you, our supporters. You are not only our lifeline, but you are our encouragement and a source of great comfort. Thank you for being faithful to pray and sacrifice on our behalf. Thank for your obedience to God's direction that is demonstrated in your generous giving, even when it hurts. We do thank our God on every remembrance of you! We covet your prayer, dear friends, for it is through your partnership to this ministry that it is able to continue!

And so we wish you all a most blessed Christmas and a happy new year!

