

Happy Holidays

Fall/Christmas, 2023

Dear Prayer Partner:

We normally do not use the "Happy Holiday" greeting at Christmas time but because of the timing of the correspondence, we feel it to be most appropriate. We have just finished Thanksgiving (yesterday) and now we have plunged headlong into the Christmas season. This came to life with me the other day as I was meditating on 2 Corinthians 9:15 "Thanks be unto God for His unspeakable Gift." We see embodied in this verse both Thanksgiving ("Thanks be unto God") and Christmas ("for His unspeakable Gift"). We call it **The Great Transition!** We love these two seasons. Some like Thanksgiving better and others prefer the Christmas season. I love them both but have to admit that I'm a little partial to Christmas. I love the lights, music, traditions, trees, gift-giving (and receiving), the good food, etc. But most of all I love what it stands for – the celebration of our Savior coming into this world to die for sinners (Galatians 4:4-6). So, Happy Thanksgiving and Merry Christmas. We hope yours is the best ever.

Joyce and I have just concluded one of the busiest fall schedules in a long time. We traveled more than 29,000 miles since the first of September and saw hundreds

of thousands of dollars committed to missions. Thank you for your prayers on our behalf. We are well aware of the importance of God's people and churches praying for us. The Apostle Paul said on one occasion that he was pressed out of measure and even despaired of life, having the sentence of death on him and his missionary companions (2 Corinthians 1:8-9), BUT... the church at Corinth was praying for them and God delivered them (verse 10-11). Only Eternity will reveal fully the mighty impact that prayer has had on missions, missionaries and mission projects around the world. *Take* those missionary prayer cards and *use* them!

One most notable event this fall took place in Holland, Michigan, on November 11. The Lighthouse Baptist Church sponsors each year a unique Veterans Banquet and invites the veterans in the area for a special time of food and fellowship. I had the joyous privilege of speaking to more than 160 in the Holland Civic Center. What a great honor! There were many Viet Nam as well as Korean veterans present. One special guest was a 96-year-old WWII vet. It was, indeed, a very patriotic service, right up my alley! I love my country!

Please remember to pray for our military and their families, many of whom will be away from home during this time of year. It is most difficult, especially for those serving overseas. Probably the loneliest time of my life was Christmas Eve, 1967 in Viet Nam, my first Christmas away from home. Also, please pray for our military missionaries as they, too, are away from family and friends.

Joyce and I would like to take this opportunity to wish you all a very Merry Christmas and a most joyous New Year in JESUS. May each of our traditions, food, fun, fellowship during the season reflect and magnify Him. We hear it often but, indeed, **He is the reason for the season!**

We want to thank you again for your faithful prayers and financial support of our ministry throughout the 2023 year. If any of our supporting churches would want us to come and give a personal report on the ministry this coming year, please let us know and we will work it out. May God richly bless you as you continue serving Him. We love you all and remain...

In Christ's Service,



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