

*Come Holy Spirit  
Use me to Your glory*

*Precious Pilgrim,*

*“On the Road Again” is the Willie Nelson song that just ran through my brain as we’re taxiing out onto the runway. I was home for less than sixteen hours, eight of which were spent sleeping. Now it’s off to jolly old England for a week. I’ll be joining my sister-in-law, Kay, who has recently bought a 17<sup>th</sup> century converted barn in the Cotswolds. I declined her initial invitation, thinking I would have traveled enough. On reconsideration, however, I realized there’s nothing to do about our house fire until the insurance is settled and that my husband would be out of town most of the week. So, with his encouragement, for he knows how I love this place, I accepted.*

*For me, the barn is one of my most favorite places in the whole wide world. Kay and I originally rented it for a month in 1991, while we attended the C.S. Lewis Institute’s Conference on Creativity. It was held at Keble College in Oxford. The well-known Christian author, Madeleine L’Engle, was our creative writing teacher. I’d just finished writing my first book so I was cocky as could be. We’d have assigned homework each night and Kay and I would enthusiastically work away. On completion, we’d share our little literary jewels. Fun? Yes! It was here that I learned how to really appreciate “being” instead of “doing,” to just sit and enjoy and soak up the world around. It was here that I learned that less is often more. It*

*was here, lying on a blanket in the walled-in garden, that I first understood the lyrics of the mourning dove's song, "I praise you, Lord God. I praise you, Lord God." The balance, ah, the balance... It is here like no other place that I can sense the balance that life can have, should have, was meant to have. There is a rhythm, a daily rhythm, not a rushed, frantic busyness in which we so easily fall. I tried to remember and remain in and retain that balance even back home. Ah, and that's so-o-o difficult in the real world. But might the "real" world, the one we are to live out, afford such a calm, that deep down center where Love abides?*

*"The fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control." That's in Galatians 5:22. I think it's not the external environment that determines the atmosphere in which we live, but rather the internal one. I can't decide, "OK, today I'm going to live a balanced life." I know I've tried and failed miserably. Oh sure, I can eat right, sleep right, work right, play right, do ministry right, but then the inevitable happens - the fall. Do you hear the control, my control in such a scenario? I could even have a pretend Barn day, eat crumpets and sip tea, but that wouldn't bring on the balance, the calm. No, only the Holy Spirit works. We just have to be available and surrender.*

*This morning, my husband and I were awakened at 5 AM by a phone call from the airlines saying my flight from*

*Montgomery to Atlanta had been canceled. I was rescheduled on an earlier flight. Instead of 2 PM, I was to leave at 10 AM. The day had to be totally reworked, rethought out, re-planned. Morning schedules had to be canceled. I had to kick into the "go gear" earlier than anticipated. It all worked out OK. Instead of buying a new suitcase to replace the one which was broken on last night's flight, I just taped it up. All was well. I made it, only to realize on the short thirty-minute flight to Atlanta that I had mistakenly left all my travelers checks. I had placed them in one purse and had taken another - but all is well. They will be Fed Ex'd and hopefully arrive before I come home, or if not, I can change the book I'm working on from a devotional book to a documentary book on how to do England on \$35.27 a week. "Consider the lilies of the field..."*

*My friend in Christ, right now I'm living out of the calm. I know it has nothing to do with me, but rather Him, our Lord. Instead of trying to rush and reach all my goals today, I went into triage, and only did the absolute essentials. I think all crises demand slowing down instead of speeding up. I knew from that early morning phone call, it was going to be a challenging day, and it has been, and on such days, I need my focus on the Lord to be even more intense. Halt! Stop! Cancel appointments. I need the quiet time, the Morning Prayer time, rather than the ring-a-round the roses marathon I originally planned. Please understand. It's not about me, but rather the Lord. He is available at all times. We can give*

*Him an inward gaze anytime and in any place. He never changes. I'm the one who's constantly giving Him the roundabout.*

*This morning, I didn't. I drew near. The calm came and it continues. Thank You, Lord. Now I'm going to settle back and enjoy the rest of the trip to merry old England. Don't worry. You'll be hearing from me. Now where is that most wonderful of all scriptures that helps me balance my act and realign my time. Ah, here it is... Luke 12:22-34. Then Jesus said to his disciples, "Therefore, I tell you, do not worry about your life, what you will eat or about your body, what you will wear. Life is more than food and the body more than clothes. Consider the ravens. They do not sow or reap. They have no storeroom or barn. Yet God feeds them. And how much more valuable you are than birds. Who of you by worrying can add a single hour to his life? Since you cannot do this very little thing, why do you worry about the rest? Consider how the lilies grow. They do not labor or spin yet I tell you, not even Solomon in all his splendor was dressed like one of these. If that is how God clothes the grass of the field which is here today and tomorrow is thrown in the fire, how much more will He clothe you? Oh, you of little faith. And do not set your heart on what you will eat or drink. Do not worry about it for the pagan world runs after all such things and your Father knows that you need them, but seek His kingdom and these things will be given to you as well. Do not be afraid, little*

*flock, for your Father has been pleased to give you the kingdom. Sell your possessions and give to the poor. Provide purses for yourselves that will not wear out, a treasure in heaven that will not be exhausted where no thief comes near and no moth destroys, for where your treasure is, there your heart will be also."*

*Precious Pilgrim, my heart's treasure is my Lord and Savior Jesus Christ and His love for me. What is yours? Yes, I think \$35.27 will do quite nicely for this weeklong jaunt. All is well as long as I rest in the Lord Jesus. Tally ho!*

*With love, I am your sister in Christ,  
Lucy*