

*Precious Pilgrim,*

*Finally, she's stopped. No, she's at it again. Lord, please help this precious dog. She licks her paw. This is the nonstop action that has been going on for the last forty-five minutes. It breaks my heart to see Daisy like this.*

*I spent the whole day home today, except going to church service at 7:30. She has been my shadow and I have been hers. I cannot get over the spunk of this dog. I've been spring-cleaning all day. In whichever room I've been working in, she'd come join me. There are three steps down to the kitchen and three steps up to the living room. I'd try to get her to stay situated in one spot, but she'd have none of this and would struggle up and down those stairs every time I did.*

*She ate well, took her medicine with ease. She even managed to walk outside three or four times. Her back legs sometimes work and other times don't. My husband and I have talked, have talked to our children, have talked to the vet. What do we do? I don't want to put her to sleep; none of us do, but we don't want her to suffer.*

*I thought she wasn't because she's still so much her old self, but now I realize she's pitiful. I just called the vet, even though it's 9 PM. He's a personal friend and Daisy's part of his family, too. I didn't see how she could make it through the night with this compulsive scratching and bleeding. It must be the tumor in her ear, which is causing the discomfort. The right side of her face and her right eyelid are swollen. Dr. Mac said if we had any kind of tranquilizer,*

*to give it to her so she could rest and sleep. Thank the dear Lord, we had some mild sleeping pills left from an overseas trip and I gave her one in some bread. Now she's sleeping.*

*I'm sorry I have to share this with you. It's awful and not inspirational. But I write to you each day about what's going on in my life. The last few days it's been totally Daisy.*

*This whole thing is such a struggle for me. I don't believe in capital punishment. I don't believe in abortion. I don't believe in euthanasia. I know people and pets aren't the same, but I don't want Daisy to suffer. Ugh! Awful. My husband is out of town. He stopped by to check on both of us before he left. One son has called twice. Another came by. I know I'm not alone in this. I was made poignantly of this after church service this morning. The preacher asked if I was OK, for I looked sad. There were only six of us, so he could notice, and this early morning weekly service is a very intimate, holy time. I told him about Daisy. He told everyone to wait a minute and we all held hands and prayed for Daisy. One dear man had tears rolling down his face when I opened my eyes - tears which I wish I could have shed. They have come lately and I'm sure will come again. These friends were the Christ for me.*

*I've felt a little guilty about feeling so sad about a dog, even if it is Daisy. I talked to a mother and a father today who are worried sick about their son who's suffering from depression. I've talked to another who was on the way to the doctor; he's suffering from high blood pressure. I've talked to another who's worried sick about his wife who's been sick with a fever for months and they can't find the*

*cause. I've talked to another who's worried about his wife who's suffering from a chronic foot disorder. And I've talked to another whose husband has recently died and whose father just had a quadruple bypass. And all I have is a dying dog.*

*One of my precious sons, the one who lives out of town, just called again to check on her. I could hear his tears as we talked.*

*Tears. I guess the gift of this day has been tears. Tears started the day. Tears ended the day. Both times they were shed by "gentle men," one a church parishioner, the other a son. There can be no greater gift given to another than to meet them in their pain - not take it on, just come alongside. Those tears made me feel the presence of Jesus and His compassion and His Love.*

*I am hurting because our fourteen-year-old friend and family member, Daisy, is dying. It might not rate high on the scale of possible losses. Many of the people I've talked to today had far greater problems with which they were having to cope. And you possibly do too, my precious pilgrim. But even so, Jesus came alongside of me through the tears of these two gentle men and I am humbly grateful.*

*Daisy sleeps now. So must I. Good night. God bless. Thank you, Lord Jesus for the gift of pets - and tears.*

*Peace.*

*Your sister in Christ,*

*Lucy*

*I'd like to end our time together today by reading John 11:24-35 about Lazarus.*

*Martha said to Him, "I know that he will rise again at the resurrection on the last day." Jesus said to her, "I am the resurrection and the life. He who believes in Me shall live, even if he dies. And everyone who lives and believes in Me shall never die. Do you believe this?" She said to Him, "Yes, Lord, I have believed that you are the Christ, the Son of God, even He who comes into the world." And when she had said this, she went away and called Mary, her sister, saying secretly, "The teacher is here and is calling for you." And when she heard it, she arose quickly and was coming to Him. Now Jesus had not yet come into the village, but was still in the place where Martha met Him. The Jews then, who were with her in the house and consoling her, when they saw that Mary arose up quickly, followed her, supposing that she was going to the tomb to weep there. Therefore, when Mary came where Jesus was, she saw Him and fell at his feet, saying to Him, "Lord, if you had been here my brother would not have died." When Jesus therefore saw her weeping and the Jews who came with her also weeping, He was deeply moved in spirit and was troubled and said, "Where have you laid him?" And they said to Him, "Lord, come and see." Jesus wept.*

*Precious pilgrim, there's more to this story, you know. And there's more to ours because of our compassionate Lord God. Peace.*