

*Come Holy Spirit
Use me to Your glory*

Precious Pilgrim,

“Lucy, you didn’t say goodbye!”

That was the distraught comment I received from Bruce, the TV production manager, on completion of the last TV taping. Usually, we tape two shows every other week. This day, we had taped three; reason being, my husband and I are going on a two-week hike in celebration of his retirement.

I was pleased as punch that we had completed the third. I had warned Bruce that I was going to have to wing the last one - just a little. It was based on a talk I’d recently given to a group. One of the comments I’d received on its completion was that it had been like attending a “mini-retreat.”

“Mini-retreat?” Compliment or condemnation? Who knows? I just pray that the Lord was glorified and the ladies were encouraged.

Previously, I’d spoken to this very same professional women’s group twelve years ago. They’d asked for an update on my life and ministry. Update? Ministry? Mini-retreat! Now that I think about it, they were lucky they got off with minutes, instead of hours or even days! For there’s been some strong living during this time.

As professionals, they were on their scheduled lunch break. I can just imagine them returning to work after a three-day talk with them saying, “We don’t have a clue what

happened! We were just going for our usual monthly meeting. It was special, in that we were celebrating the 20th anniversary of our organization. But goodness, gracious, what happened to the time?" It was like a marathon talk or a Rip Van Winkle sleep. The time just flew by - at least I hope it did, as opposed to drag. They'd asked for a 30-40 minute-talk. They got their money's worth (which isn't any, of course).

God is so good. His timing is oh so perfect, even if mine isn't! For you see, this was the first talk I'd given in over five years. Pilgrim, as you've gathered from some of your previous letters, the last few years have been quite a whirlwind. I don't think I could have given a testimony earlier. By God's grace, I was trying to live a testimony, as I'm sure you are.

Writing you letters, Pilgrim, helped and does help me focus on the gift of each day, but having the ability to pull back and look at the whole objectively, I don't think I could have done that any earlier. What is that saying, "You can't see the forest for the trees" - not Biblical, but I think sometimes a truth. Some seasons, you just have to live day by day, or even moment by moment, or even breath by breath.

Have you, Precious Pilgrim, ever had the breath knocked out of you? I have, as a child, when I fell off of a slide. I can still vividly remember the feeling. Some of life's situations and circumstances can give you that same "breath-knocked-out-of-you" feeling. Can't they? As Christians, we have the wonderful "lung filling" scripture found in John 20:21,22. "Then said

Jesus to them again, Peace be unto you: as my Father hath sent me, even so send I you. And when He said this, He breathed on them and saith unto them, Receive ye the Holy Ghost."

"Receive ye the Holy Ghost." Let each one of those words flow over you, Pilgrim. Let them seep deeply into you today. Let our Lord's Holy Spirit - heal and comfort and teach and restore and sanctify. By His grace - we can breathe again.

So what did I say at the talk? I don't want to go over that again. But hopefully for Bruce, our TV production manager's sake, this letter will have a proper ending.

What I would like to mention is how much fun I had in preparing for the speech. I wrote down the highs and the lows and transitional pivotal points experienced during these years. Do you remember those time lines we'd find in our school history books? I found them always so helpful in trying to picture the sequence of historical events. Did you, Pilgrim?

They were usually pictured in a straight line. But wouldn't it have been even more meaningful if the line hadn't been drawn straight, but rather like a roller coaster - even with some "loop-the-loops?" That's the way most of our lives are. Don't you think? There are up times and down times - flat times, mountain top times and valley times.

Yes, and as Christians, if we were really wanting to be accurate on depicting our life diagrams, we could draw a vertical mark through the horizontal one. It would form a

cross and pinpoint the very BC to AD moment in our life when the Lord became our individual, personal Lord and Savior.

I hope I haven't lost you, Pilgrim. As you can tell, I am a visual person so this little exercise was fun for me. Some of the remembering and writing down of the memories were sad and some were painful.

But what was most fun, was after writing it all down, I got out my Bible and Concordance and found a scripture verse that best exemplified the happening.

As I searched for just the right scripture to fit the event, I was reminded of the WORD - the Word made flesh - our Lord Jesus. The events seemed to fade and His Word grew ever stronger. I was strongly reminded of how our Lord did and does sustain us through it all.

Now, as I write to you, Pilgrim, and reflect on this life diagram, I can imagine getting one of those old chalkboard erasers and just erasing the line design and just leaving the scripture.

For do you know what, Pilgrim? In a few decades, by God's grace, I'll graduate from this earthly life and be eternally with our Father God. And do you know what, Pilgrim? In a few decades, by God's grace, there won't be a trace of remembrance of Lucy MacLeod's line design - ah - but Pilgrim - Pilgrim - The Word - our Lord's Holy Word - that's an entirely different scenario!

So Bruce - sorry - here's another letter and another show in which I don't say "goodbye." It just seems more fitting for this letter's time line theme - for because of our Lord Jesus Christ and His Cross and our belief in Him - none of us, Pilgrim, really has a "the end," goodbye, cutoff scene - but rather a graduation one into - our Lord's arms. So, I'll just read some of my scripture cards and when we run out of time - just close me down - and Charlie, our radio producer - you do the same for the audio tape.

Maybe next time we'll deal with goodbyes - but today, Pilgrim, you get eternal scripture.