

December 3rd

AWAY IN A MANGER

*“Away in a manger, no crib for a bed.
The little Lord Jesus laid down his sweet head”*

How many times have you heard this carol during the Christmas season? For me, as long as I can remember. As I approach my 73rd Christmas, it was the Christmas that I was 8 years old that I remember hearing this carol and the Christmas Story from the book of Luke for the first time.

My family moved often during my grade school years. Each time we moved my mother would find a church close to our new home. She did not drive so we would walk. We would only go a couple of times and not go back. But that year I turned 8, we had just moved across town in Denver and she joined a Christian church two blocks from our house. My dad even started attending and soon we were going every Sunday. This was also when I attended my first Sunday School class. It was during the Christmas season and I remember hearing the Christmas Story from Luke being read by the Sunday School teacher. She was reading from a Children's Bible Story Book and I was amazed that I could understand what she was reading. My mother would sometimes read the Bible to me at home, but it was a King James Bible, and everything sounded like a foreign language. I really liked going to Sunday School after that because it was just like story time at school.

But...all too soon we moved again, and I never returned to Sunday School. Yet today over 65 years later, every time I hear 'Away in a Manger' with that wonderful story of our Savior's birth, I have a flash back to the Sunday School class at that church in Denver. I don't remember anything about the actual church, but I remember the carol and story.



There is another side of the Christmas season. It is the sadness of loved ones who we have lost and are no longer here. Gail and I experienced this when our daughter Linda was murdered. It caused depression and sadness and made it hard to even deal with holidays for those first few years after her death.

But as time went on, we could again believe in Gods promise. Linda was a believer in Christ Jesus, and we know that someday we will be together again. As the end of the carol's words bring renewed joy to our lives.

“Bless all the dear children in your tender care
and take us to heaven, to live with you there”

Contributed by George Richards

