

"By lovingly seeking to have the same mind we'll find strife and conflict left behind."
- Joseph Kuepfer

"I have decided to follow Jesus, No turning back, no turning back."

January 2018

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
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21	15	16	17	18	19	20
28	22	23	24	25	26	27
	29	30	31	God Bless You!		

"Burdens are lifted at Calvary." - John M. Moore

"If they have persecuted me, they will also persecute you."
- John 15:20

"In a manger he lay, on a cross he died, Now his name is hallowed above all beside!"

by "The Right" 16 December 2017, Saturday

dearest brother Will,

By the mercy and grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, bless you and yours. You cannot believe the blessing your love support is. There is no way I can thank you enough!

I know Christmas is sorely laced with multiple traditions of men and it is not the birthday of our Lord. None-the-less let us ever be so thankful He came for us, John 1:14; St. Luke, ch. 2. He alone the true source of all hope! ☺ May these days and all days be counted for good - Romans 8:28.

I pray all is well for you and your grandparents. It is my sense as of your 11/28/17, letter all is well.

I plan for soon writing Andrew John. The bk was sent back to him by the misguided ones on or about 12/11/17, as they handed me a "returned" form alleging it was not sent by publisher; book club; or bookstore. I am so sorry to have to report this to you brother.

Glad to hear "Trigger" is doing well. God has provided good companionship. It has been a blessing having canine travelers with us along the way. Do your grand parents enjoy having Trigger around?

Inclusive herewith is an inspiring biographical article about Joni Eareckson Tada's life and 1/2 century of ministry since she was sorely injured in a diving incident at age 17, 50 years ago. Her's is truly a story of how God works with this dear woman, her husband and others in furtherance of the Gospel and the Kingdom of God. I pray it serves as an encouragement for you, for us all. ☺

I and a Christian brother here, age 75, truly enjoyed your "going on in my life" section of your letter. Your 2 year old Billy good story - excited anticipation as you gave us a blow by blow - Ha! Ha! Yes! You were right will. "Funny!" ☺



diagnosed her with developmental disabilities, and she also suffers from epilepsy.

But Shelby already knows Joni. She volunteers here at the ministry. On this afternoon, Shelby's helped to the front in her wheelchair so Joni can hear her. The two sit wheels-to-wheels, and Shelby's voice breaks. "I just want to say that you are very strong and very special," she tells Joni.

Joni smiles and thanks her, and then she adds: "But I want you to know, Shelby, that I don't feel strong. I feel like I'm the weakest person in the world."

She describes her two-hour morning routine: A friend helps her with a bed bath, toileting routines, legs

exercises, dressing, fixing her hair, and brushing her teeth. Sometimes when she wakes up, she feels she can't do it another day: "I tell God: 'I don't have the strength for this. But You do. I can't do quadriplegia today. I can't do it without You.'"

God always gives her the strength, she tells Shelby, and she's learned to boast in her weakness. She calls it "the Biblical way to wake up in the morning." That's something people with disabilities can teach the church, she says: That dependence on Christ is the only way to salvation, and embracing weakness leads us to Him.

She takes a few more questions, and she doesn't let the group go without singing a verse from a famous hymn: "When we've been there 10,000 years, bright shining as the sun, we've no less days to sing God's praise than when we'd first begun."

Decades after Joni first imagined herself at the Pool of Bethesda, she visited the ancient ruins during a trip to Jerusalem with Ken. It was a quiet afternoon. Tears streamed down her face as she contemplated a beautiful truth: Jesus had not passed her by.

"O Jesus, thank you for a 'no' answer to physical healing," she's remembered praying.

"It's meant that I'm depending more on Your grace, it's increasing my compassion for others who are hurt and disabled. ... It has strengthened my hope of heaven, and it's made me love You so much more. ... And I would not trade it for any amount of walking."

Joni looks forward to the day she'll walk again in the new heavens and the new earth. She looks forward to kneeling too. For now, she asks those with able bodies to do what she and others can't do—yet.

"Kneel before the Lord God, your Maker and mine," she writes. "And while you're down there, if you feel so inclined, thank Him for being so good to a paralyzed woman named Joni." ❀

about coping with disabilities. Now emails and calls come from people struggling with depression, divorce, abandonment, and all kinds of suffering.

Joni's presence looms large in the ministry, but she doesn't think the programs depend on her to continue. She doesn't plan to retire but knows she's closer to the end of her ministry than the beginning. At a recent family camp, she says a group of teenage volunteers didn't recognize her when she first arrived. Joni was thrilled.

Does she fear the future?

As she ages, she sometimes fears her pain growing even worse. And she shudders to think about the prospect of losing Ken, if he died first. "But I'm not going to be fearful about what I have no grace available for yet," she says. "I've got to take a deep breath and trust my Savior will help me when it comes time."

In the meantime, people still sometimes ask her if they can pray she'll be healed. She never turns them down. But she also asks them to pray she'll have a holy heart more than a healed body. Her ultimate hope is in heaven, where body and soul will be healed forever.

Until then, she's called suffering a form of sandblasting away her sin and drawing her closer to Christ: "My displaced hip and scoliosis are sheepdogs that constantly snap at my heels, driving me down the road to Calvary, where I die to the sins Jesus died for."

And she often feels Christ is closest when she's in pain. "I don't know why, but it seems that God shows us the face of Jesus in those moments," she says. "And those who refuse to enter suffering, fearing there's nothing there but darkness—they miss that."

During a tour of JAF, Shelby Donlon, 27, raises a hand during questions and answers. Shelby was born with arthrogryposis, a condition that included severe clubfeet. As a toddler, doctors

1/ You shared deer and rope story - That's a good one. An affirmation deer are NOT the helpless little creatures as the Bambi in Disney's animated version. Force a duck in a corner with a broom and it will come crashing out of the corner flapping its wings wildly, biting with beak, and scratching with feet. God has not left them defenseless. This could be why we don't follow our friends lead with the rope when we hunt deer. And we are not fooled by a childhood story like Bambi.

Your 1 pp article, by Jerry - well spoken. She follows who went to "Job", an error trade laying blame on Job, his sin. The Word (Jnl:1)^{KJV} has a much larger perspective. As the Lord Jesus made clear it was neither sin of the blind man nor sins of his parents that gave rise to his blindness. It was by design for fulfilling God's purpose. We are well advised as James 1:3-4, teaches let patience have its perfect work in us.

I thought to write Jerry by snail mail a white back and it came back as undeliverable. One day The Lord will provide the way.

9:10 am, EST, Saturday continuing. We have be blessed seeing 7 DVDs by Dr. Ken Howard. His Christian based, KJV/AO based Creation education is very good and gives us means for passing on wisdom and understanding. He references Dr. Brown's "In The Beginning" at times. I find Dr. Brown's work very helpful.

By "The Flight" 18 December 2011, Monday, 11:40 am EST.

Mmmmm... - just put together a soup. Lunch was a bit of a disappointment - none-the-less The Lord is good to me... Hallelu~~ya~~h!

Fifty years after her accident, Joni dwells on fullness, not loss.

During an afternoon tour of the couple's modest home that Joni bought when she first moved to California, she points to her father's Western-themed painting hanging over the mantel. It reminds her of learning to paint, as her father put her hand on his to hold a brush when she was a young girl.

Across the living room, a vibrant pencil sketching of a horse in full stride reminds her of learning to adapt her artistic skills after her accident. (She says she's "left-mouthed" and can't draw a thing with the right side.)

Photos on the walls show her three sisters, her family farm, and Joni and Ken on ministry trips in places like Cuba and Moscow. The couple met at Grace Community Church in 1980, and Joni has laughed when she's recounted their first date.

She was nervous during dinner and drank too much water at the restaurant. She realized the bag attached to her indwelling catheter was perilously full. Ken was unfazed, emptying the bag next to a tree outside and singing a little song: "Where Joni goes, nothing grows."

The couple married in 1982, after dismissing un-Biblical suggestions they should go away for a weekend together before marrying. Joni jokes their honeymoon was a bit like "handicap awareness week," but she's thankful for their shared commitment to Christ.

That hasn't meant marriage is always easy. Early on, Joni struggled with patience at times, and Ken sometimes struggled with depression under the weight of helping to care for Joni and also teach high school full time for 32 years.

Joni has a small team of women who help her get up in the morning (she calls them her "get-up girls"), and the couple worked through their struggles with prayer and Scripture. They've traveled the world (and the United States), and Ken still travels with international teams to deliver wheelchairs, and he works in the ministry.

At their dining room table, Ken says Joni's 2010 battle with stage 3 breast cancer brought them even closer: "I realized I could lose my best friend."

Chemotherapy and a mastectomy were grueling and weakened Joni's already frail bones. Her doctor declared her cancer-free in 2015, but pain persists from other problems with her bones.

In a private Facebook group, she corresponds with others who face severe pain. One woman described her own pain as "something inside me pulling my ribs one way and pushing my spine the other." "I read that," Joni says, "and I thought: 'That's exactly it.'"

She's careful with pain medications and laments the country's overwhelming opioid epidemic. She's found anxiety makes her pain worse, so she often prays or sings hymns when she's dealing with it: "To know that Christ's grace is available—it won't take away the pain, but it will give you the courage to face it."

Joni recounts a particularly painful day and how Ken drew a "C" on a Post-it note and stuck it to her shirt. He told her he could see the courage of Christ in her eyes. At the dining room table, Ken opens his wallet and pulls out a spare Post-it with a "C." He smiles at his wife: "I still carry one in case you need it."

Pain is a constant chord in Joni's life, but it isn't the dominant note.

On a van ride to a screening of the newly digitized version of the *Joni* movie at a local church, Joni sits with her wheelchair secured with clamps to bolts on the floor: "What should we sing?"

She sometimes has to lean a certain way to get enough air to sing, but that doesn't stop her from beginning: "O worship the King, all glorious above, O gratefully sing, His power and His love."

She wheels through the halls of the event greeting people. "Oh happy day," she tells volunteers.

Even the details of the accident seem to marvel her: Joni's sister Kathy had been in the water that day and stepped on a crab. She turned around to warn Joni and saw her sister floating facedown in the water. Kathy rescued her and brought her to shore.

The menu at a prescreening reception: crabcakes.

After the screening, Joni jokes with the crowd and tells them she won't make a sequel. "There will be no 'Return of Joni,'" she says. But she grows serious when she explains how God used her accident to draw her closer to Him, and she urges anyone in the audience who doesn't know Christ to "lay your sin at the foot of the cross and let God save you."

On the way home, Ken, Joni, and Kathy (who is in town visiting) talk about the people they saw. They pray and thank God for His blessings. They enjoy the full moon, and the sisters remember how their parents loved to sing songs about the moon on camping trips. (Both parents have died.)

At home, Joni rolls onto the driveway, looks up at the night sky, and harmonizes with Kathy: "Shine on, shine on harvest moon, for me and my gal."

Despite the 12-hour day, Joni rolls into the headquarters of Joni and Friends at 10:00 the next morning.

She goes right to work.

In her office, Joni sits at a long desk next to Francie Lorey, an assistant who has worked with her since the beginning, typing many of Joni's books, articles, and speeches. They each sit at a computer screen, and Joni dictates thank-you notes as Lorey types and the words appear on both screens. (Joni has also learned to use dictation software, though it's a more laborious process.)

After a couple of hours at the computer, another assistant feeds her lunch while she keeps working. She's headed for Chicago tomorrow and trying to get through a pile of tasks.

After lunch, she heads downstairs to meet a group of visitors who have just toured the 34,000-square-foot building that houses JAF operations, including the wheelchair program, a radio broadcast, resource materials for local churches starting disability ministries, and a disabilities institute to train interns who are interested in entering fields related to disabilities care.

The staff also fields more than 700 pieces of correspondence each month. Joni says the needs have expanded beyond questions



3/

A fall walk along the rocky stream below is truly a reminder of how good our Creator is! Our friends at "Still Waters Ministry" included this photo on the cover of a previous daily devotional. Their thoughtful messages and guidance in my Bible reading is a blessing day-by-day. I'll be Spike would make the most out of a walk along a stream like that.

This evening - 18 December, Monday, I am quietly sitting here; continuing for sharing with you brother Will. Referring for

boys and girls Jesus said, "Their angels, do always behold the face of my Father" Matthew 18:10. They are there for us.

"Take heed that ye despise not one of these little ones; for I say unto you, that in heaven their angels do always behold the face of my Father which is in heaven." - Matthew 18:10, KJV

This evening I'm blessed reading a sermon by Adon Gengerich a "Still Waters

Ministries pastor entitled: "Angels - God's Ministering Spirits. These divine messengers are identified with the Lord's work as we study in KJV daily. ☺"

Today I was blessed with a Christmas card from a brother Dan and sister Janis, the Williamsons, fellow workers in The Kingdom who live in Smyrna, Georgia, and another from dear Sister Therese Moore. We all know Jesus was not born on 25 December, but we are celebrating our thanks giving that he came for redeeming us at Calvary. John 1:14! It is so good we are privileged holding each other up in prayer. You, dear brother Will, and your grandparents are heard in the oracles of heaven, as mine and so many other prayers go to His presence! ☺

She'd sit for hours with a Bible on a music stand, turning the pages of Scripture with her mouth-stick. Friends joined her for Bible studies around her family's large farm table, and they read books about God's sovereignty by authors like J.I. Packer, Martyn Lloyd-Jones, and J. Gresham Machen. "We just delighted that this accident wasn't a mistake," she says.

Not only was it not a mistake—Joni learned God uses suffering to make people more like Christ and to know Him more deeply. Indeed, He used the suffering of His own Son to accomplish salvation for sinners. Joni's deepest need for healing was spiritual, not physical.

Her friend, Steve Estes, crystallized this truth in 10 words Joni still repeats often: "God permits what He hates to accomplish what He loves." It was a life-altering realization: God was fully in control, and He could use her suffering for good in her life and the lives of others.

From her farm table in Maryland, Joni had no idea how many others that would include.

During her rehabilitation, Joni had learned to paint holding a brush in her mouth. She showed pieces at a local venue and appeared on the *Today* show. Her autobiography (with more than 5 million copies sold) was made into a movie, and she joined Pastor Billy Graham at 12 evangelistic crusades.

She moved to California in 1979 and started the ministry Joni and Friends in a one-room office in Burbank.

She later served on the National Council on Disability that worked on the Americans with Disabilities Act signed into law by President George H.W. Bush in 1990.

When actors and activists pushed for embryonic stem cell research to help people with paralysis, Joni advocated using adult stem cells, which were already yielding scientific successes and didn't involve destroying embryos. (She also worked with President George W. Bush's administration on ethical stem cell use.)

She spoke out for Terri Schiavo, a disabled Florida woman whose husband had successfully persuaded courts to allow doctors to remove her feeding tube, despite her parents' pleas that their daughter was still interactive and viable. On *Larry King Live*, Joni warned against a mentality of "better off dead than disabled."

That extends to the unborn, and Joni has lamented abortions targeting unborn children with disabilities like Down syndrome. She grieved California becoming the fourth state to legalize assisted suicide and noted if euthanasia had been legal in 1967, she might not be here today.

Meanwhile, Joni and Friends (JAF) grew: The ministry started dozens of summer camps for people with disabilities and their families. Volunteers assigned to each camper give caretakers a much-needed respite.

JAF affiliates help local churches consider how to help special needs families on an ongoing basis and encourage even the smallest churches to offer a welcoming environment for people with needs.

The ministry also launched Wheels for the World—a program that delivers wheelchairs to people with disabilities in developing countries. The 100,000th chair went to a boy in Uganda crippled in his legs and feet. His single mother couldn't afford a wheelchair, and the little boy—named Ebenezer—had spent years dragging himself in the dirt.

In a poignant twist, inmates at 16 prisons across the United States help refurbish wheelchairs for the program. In workshops filled with hammers and hardware, prisoners broken by their own sin and the sins of others restore broken wheelchairs for people with broken bodies.

Back at the worship service at Church in the Canyon, the congregation remembered the broken body of Christ. Three men passed gold plates filled with small communion wafers.

Ken reached up to place a wafer in Joni's mouth, as the pastor recited Jesus' words: "This is my body, broken for you." After communion, Joni's voice rang out as the congregation sang a hymn she often sang after her accident: "Be still my soul, thy Jesus can repay from His own fullness all He takes away."



Likewise the Spirit also helpeth our infirmities: for we know not what we should pray for as we ought: but the Spirit itself maketh intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered.

- Romans 8:26 KJV

This is truly a remembrance of the greatest work in all His story. He came from all majesty in weakness of the flesh for suffering our consequence of death that in His resurrection we might have the gift of life; now and forever. I can hardly bear the thought

of the wonder of it all, brother Will. Surely cause for eucharistia (thanksgiving) now and forever. May you, your grandparents and all who share in the joy of His goodness and mercy be "truly-blessed" now and forever. Let us revel in Hebrews chapter 1.

by "The Flight" 19 December 2017, Tuesday

Continuing - good morning bro Will.

This morning the worldly chattering about the train wreck. As it sped along at 80mph it entered a curve designed for only 30mph and left the tracks. By the grace of God only 3 of the people died and injuries were not described as critical. A pray there were lessons learned.

And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are called according to his purpose.

We are blessed as The Lord has mercifully called us out of the world, may we serve well that He is glorified and the work honors our King, Jesus.

I [Jesus] have given them thy words; and the world hath hated them, because they are not of the world, even as I am not of the world. - John 17:14 KJV

... evening.

This evening we had a 7pm spl. treat so nearly all the men here contributed and participated in

snacks and conversation and such. It was a pleasant time for all. ...

Now, I'm in my 6'1/2 x 10'1/2 concrete block room. But do not forget. Like Paul, I am never alone - Jesus is ever present! Halleluiah!

In the midnight darkness of a Baltimore hospital in 1967, Joni Eareckson begged God to heal her. Weeks earlier, the 17-year-old girl had broken her neck after diving into unexpectedly shallow waters in the Chesapeake Bay.

The result: paralysis from the shoulders down.

The teenager endured grueling surgery and lay strapped onto a Stryker frame designed to allow nurses to turn patients with spinal cord injuries. Her weight dropped to 80 pounds. One friend sobbed at the sight.

But Joni had grown up in church, and she hoped that God was teaching her a dramatic lesson before healing her quadriplegia. At night, in her hospital bed, Joni would imagine herself at the Pool of Bethesda.

In the account from John 5, a man disabled for 38 years waits at a pool for someone to dip him into healing waters. Jesus passes by and heals him. The man gets up and walks. Joni imagined herself at the pool and sang a hymn she learned as a child: "Savior, Savior, hear my humble cry. While on others Thou art calling, do not pass me by."

Joni never walked again.

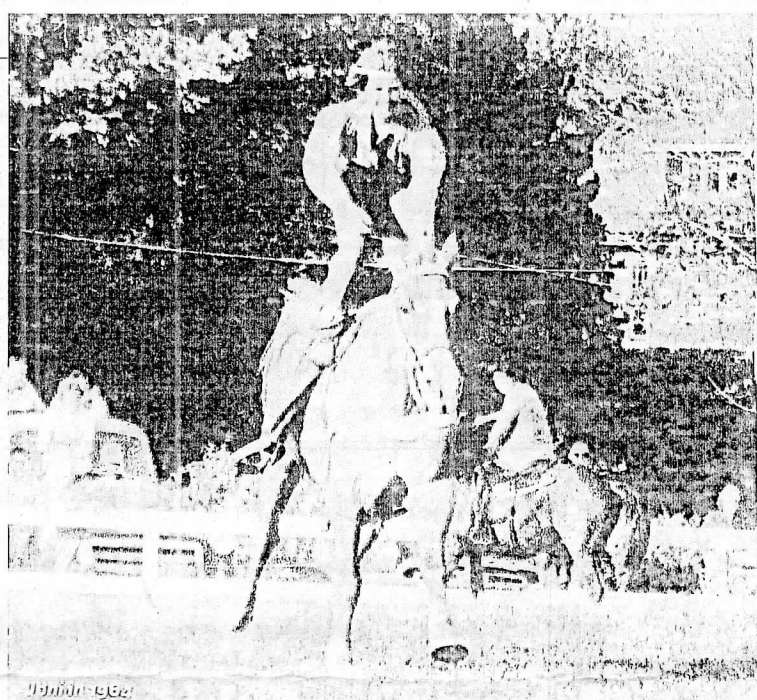
Her permanent paralysis—including losing the use of her hands—led to a battle with depression and doubts about God's goodness. Why would He leave her this way? What kind of Savior doesn't heal a paralyzed girl who cries out to Him?

Fifty years later, Joni's answer is jubilant: "It sounds incredible, but I really would rather be in this wheelchair knowing Jesus as I do than be on my feet without Him." She celebrates "that glorious but awful, beautiful but sad, terrible but wonderful day I broke my neck—because look what God has done."

Joni came to embrace God's sovereignty in her suffering, and she founded a ministry that has helped hundreds of thousands of people with disabilities in the United States and around the world. She's written dozens of books and spoken out against abortion and euthanasia.

And she's done it all without cultivating a superhero persona. Indeed, Joni openly talks about her weaknesses, her battle with chronic pain, and her dependence on God's grace for **getting out of bed each day—with joy.**

For 50 years of exalting Christ in suffering and offering compassionate help and gospel-based hope to the needy, the weak, and the vulnerable, Joni Eareckson Tada is WORLD's 2017 Daniel of the Year.



Joni Eareckson

Spend a little time with Joni, and you'll begin to discover a central truth about her extraordinary life: It's fueled by ordinary rhythms of Christian living.

On a summer Sunday morning at Church in the Canyon (PCA) in Calabasas, Calif., Joni and Ken Tada, her husband of 35 years, sat near their usual spot at the front-left of the small church they've attended for more than two decades. Joni chatted with friends. Ken helped an elderly couple navigating the aisle on walkers.

A few minutes earlier, Joni had asked Ken for a favor in the parking lot: Would he please adjust her corset?

She wears the surgical binder to help her sit up straight and take deeper breaths. Fifty years in a wheelchair—and chemotherapy for breast cancer in 2010—wears on bones and body and has led to scoliosis and a displaced hip that cause chronic, sometimes severe pain.

But adjustments help, and Joni was cheerful as worship began. The service wasn't flashy, but the content was rich and Biblical. Pastor Bob Bjerkaas talked about Christ's sympathy in our suffering and pointed out that Jesus prayed the Father would spare Him from crucifixion: "Jesus Christ knew what it was to desperately want an experience to be removed from His biography."

So did Joni.

After her accident, she faced a litany of what-ifs: What if she hadn't gone swimming that day? What if her tennis date hadn't canceled? What if she hadn't jumped in head-first?

She begged a friend to kill her, and despaired she couldn't do it herself. Eventually, she turned to hopes of miraculous healing and attended an event in Washington, D.C., led by purported faith healer Kathryn Kuhlman.


Ushers packed people with disabilities into a wheelchair section, and Kuhlman never approached them. Before the service ended, they herded Joni and others in wheelchairs back to an elevator. She felt disappointed and bitter.

Finally, Joni prayed: "God, if You won't let me die, then show me how to live."

HANDOUT

5
We can only imagine the blossoms this time of year.

← They are tucked away in Heavenly Father's treasures for the future.

My next door neighbor and close Christian brother (76) has just shared with me a transcript of Dr. Erwin Gutzler's recent Moody Church home sermon, "God is in Control". These messages drawn from the pages of The Bible ~~into~~ ^{into} our lives are inspirational - speaking to us.  The 1st lesson this eve entitled "If God can, Why Doesn't He?" He refers us to Daniel delivered from the lions' mouths but 100s of Christians have not been over the years;

Acts, ch. 12, James is killed by Herod's men, but Peter is miraculously spared and freed. ... We see in our KJV/AV a call for our unconditional "TRUST" in God! (Prov. 3:5, 6). Shadrach, Meshach and Abed-nego have been my model for many years before this persecution and through all trials. They "TRUSTED" without compromise. Our Victory now and forever, is without question vested in our Lord Jesus Christ. "Our God whom we serve is able to deliver us ... (Dan., ch. 3). We serve ONLY Jesus Christ! His will shall always be done! We do NOT know the mind of God. Whether he delivers us or not we are never to bow down to the false idols. "Not my will but Thine be done!" We cannot be separate from the Lord our God, the love of Christ ever within us.

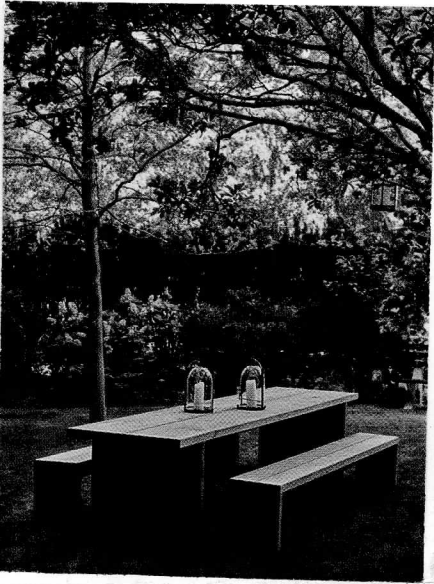
Blessings! The people in charge will provide a bag of snacks for Christmas tomorrow (Wed, 20 Dec). Hearts not as hard as pharaoh it would seem. 🙏



ADAPTATION

As a quadriplegic and a disabilities advocate is far more
example of a courageous truth Christians don't always

JAMIE DEAN IN AGOURA HILLS, CALIF. PHOTO BY GARY FONG/GENESIS



Looking forward, perhaps one day we will be able to sit, enjoy the fresh air share a prayer, and chat. It seems the table is ready. ^{is}
by "The Flight" 20 December 2017, Wednesday

Dear bro Will, we have prayers of Jesus' servants near and far ascending to heaven. Our victory in The Lord Jesus Christ ever certain. Our prayers of thanksgiving (eucharistia [Grek]) sealed and answered

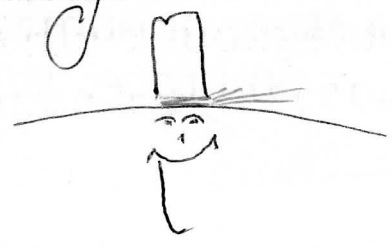
for us by our Lord Jesus Christ. Bless all, bless you, as we are mindful that Jesus came in the flesh (Jn 1:14) for us; without wavering defeated the Devil on Calvary and was "resurrected" from the dead that we might have the certain hope. Halleluiah! Hark the Herald Angels Sing... No wonder the angels sing - what joy we have! Now, and forever, Amen.

I think of your goats huddled together in the cold of the Kansas night. A bit like the animals sheltered in the cave keeping our savior warm His first night on His daunting mission to save and redeem the likes of us. Truly the mission of all the ages. We are truly blessed as we are reminded this season.

I come from from a long line of shepherds (cowboys). And today The Lord looks after you, Will; over our loved ones for He alone is our King!

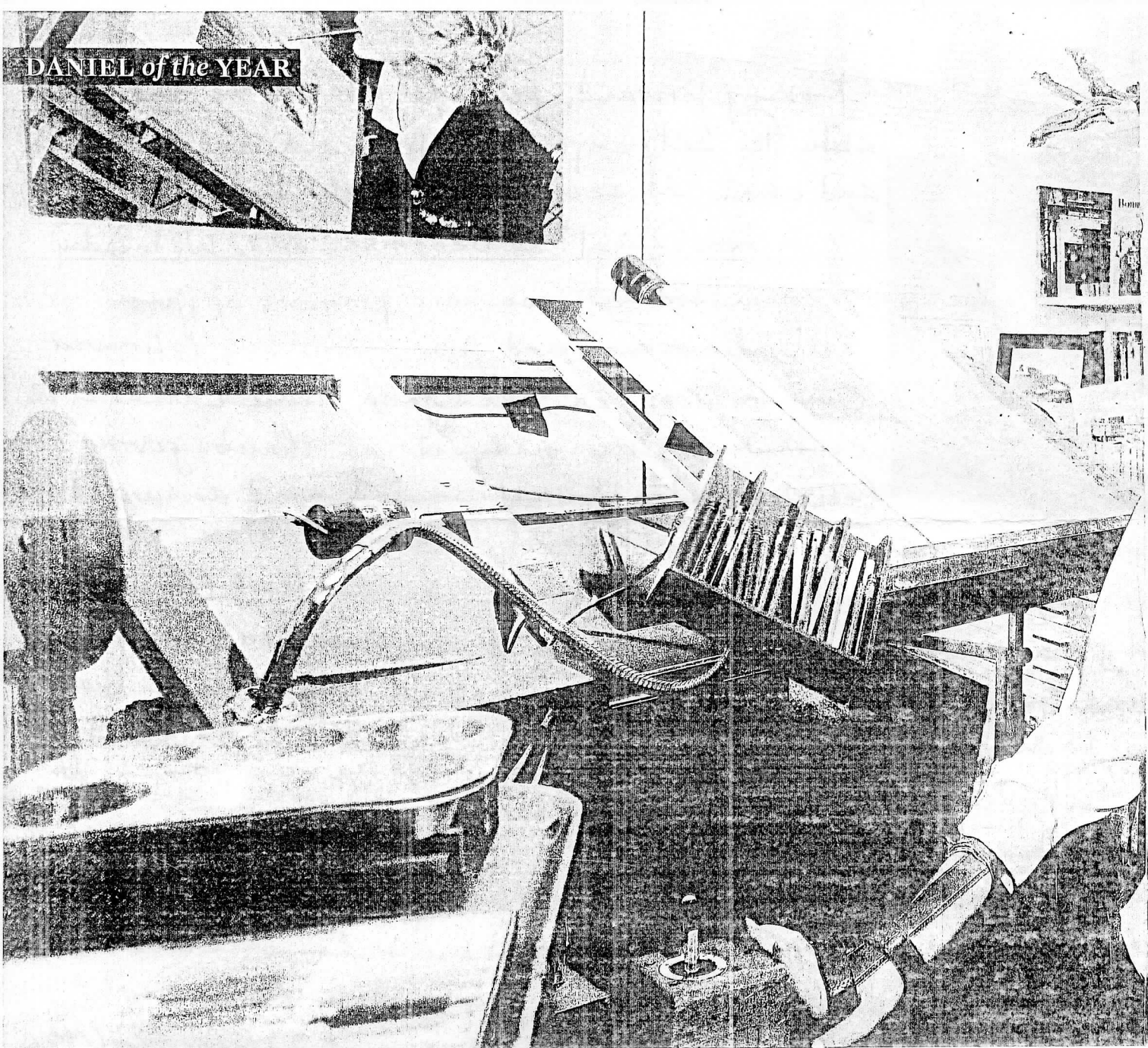
with love of Christ,
courage and
Eucharistia,

rex russell-dean



P.S. Standing watch with our Lord Jesus Christ!

DANIEL of the YEAR



JONI EARECKSON TADA's extraordinary half-century is more than a story of human endurance. It's a Christ-exalting embrace: 'When I am weak, then I am strong'