REFLECTIONS ON CHRISTMAS
by William Sandbach Reed, M.D., M.S., Founder and President of CMF.

Christmas in my early life was a most joyous and happy time. My father was a grocer, in a small community in Michigan on the Canadian border. He always had our stockings stuffed with apples, oranges, pecans, tangerines, and sometimes a small present like a jackknife or a kaleidoscope. Under the sweet smelling balsam tree, were presents gaily wrapped, a thrill to see when we awoke early Christmas morning. Christmas in our family was always a time of prayer and thanksgiving to Jesus and our Heavenly Father, Whom we knew was the one Who made all blessings possible.

When the "Great Depression" came about, things tended to change. I remember writing out my wish list and asking for a red bicycle. My father somehow found a small bike which he diligently repaired and painted bright red. I still remember the thrill of seeing my bike one frosty, happy Christmas morning. Daddy and Mother didn't have many gifts, as I recall, but Dad proudly said that they had each other, Bobby, me, and a new sister, Georgia.

After my family moved to Florida in the mid 30's, I remained with relatives in Michigan eventually graduating from high school and going to the University of Michigan on an academic scholarship. Christmastide in those days, with family so far away, became a time of heavy-heartedness. I'd stay in Ann Arbor and work through the holidays which seemed the best course at the time. Without family, Christmastide was a lonely time, a time of tears, but somehow I knew that Jesus traditionally leaves the 90 and 9 to seek and find the lost lamb caugth in the cleft of the rock.

This year and all years since our own family has come about, Christmas is truly a glorious time. The spirit of Christmas comes alive this time of year with lights, song, and a time of great joy and rejoicing. As with my parents, Kay and I are most pleased to have each other and our children, grandchildren, brothers, and sisters. Little Carly is now two years old, our youngest granddaughter, and Tawny, our first, is 27. How blessed we are to be a Christian family, happy and thankful, no presents needed or expected. Our great gift is that of salvation and the receiving of God's Holy Spirit.

At Christian Medical Foundation, our tradition has been for years to finish each year with all expenses paid. We have no mortgages, just a '90 Dodge Caravan we're paying for and a leased copier. We have, however, debts such as salaries unpaid, CPA fees, and loans from three dear friends who helped us when we urgently had to pay payroll taxes. Our CPA says that we are financially healthy, but we need your tax deductible year-end gift. This year it will take a miracle for us to start 1995 in the black, but we serve a miracleworking God.

Please pray for these dear friends this Christmas: Jean (R.N.), Mary K., Mary Ann, Rob, Dr. Lewis, Dr. Harry, Francine, Walter, Dorothy K., Carly, Mike B., Barb and George, Eleanor R., Rhoda W., Piko, Fred, Peace in Bosnia, Texas Medical Center at Tyler, Dr. Terry B., John L., Brendan, Nathan and Heidi.

Thank you, dear friends, for your love and help, for this, His CMF.

Have a blessed Christmastide.
The Falling Leaf

A brightly painted red and green - and orange leaf
Picked up by a gentle breeze as it began to fall
Flew up and down - across the meadow, rising, dipping
Dancing - truly not heading toward the green and beckoning earth.
I knew it no longer was alive. Autumn had come.
The wind had severed the glorious happy leaf from twig and branch.
No source of life - and yet it danced, pirouetting, whirling
Into the distance - beyond sight and knowledge
Over the horizon, still rising. Then descending to the beyond.

So it was that the young doctor, the earliest day of premature Autumn
Was swept by the Holy breath of God away from twig and branch
He fell and then leaped upward praising and singing
Dancing and falling, rising and dipping, upward - upward
Caught by the wind, going higher - flying outward - sighing.
Over the horizon, away from our sight, away from pain and sorrow.
Like the brightly colored Autumn leaf and yet not earth bound.
Heading - joyously not toward earth but toward the new life given.

Given to all who, severed from the branch of earthly life, breathe deeply of the wind of eternity, the everlasting life given to those who love.

William Standish Reed, M.D., M.S.

As I saw at the cemetery a single leaf fall - not really falling but dancing in the sunlight on a sad and trying day, the day of the funeral of Dr. Chris Wallace, a 46 year old friend who died of melanoma in November in Appleton, Wisconsin.

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December 1994

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The 23rd Annual International Conference of Christian Medical Foundation is going to be held September 27 through October 1, 1995, at Sheraton Sand Key Resort Hotel, Clearwater Beach, Florida. CONTACT: Lyn Thomton, (813) 932-3688.

Remember CMF in your will.
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FRAISE THE LORD!!!
Christian Medical Foundation has been blessed with a new label machine. One of our prayers have been answered. Isn't the Lord wonderful.... Thank you LORD.

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