FUNERAL – JANE WHITE – JULY 5, 1997

PHIL. 1: 20-23: IT IS MY EAGER EXPECTATION & HOPE .... THAT .... CHRIST WILL BE EXALTED NOW AS ALWAYS IN MY BODY, WHETHER BY LIFE OR BY DEATH. FOR ME, LIVING IS CHRIST & DYING IS GAIN. .... I AM HARD PRESSED BETWEEN THE TWO: MY DESIRE IS TO DEPART & TO BE WITH CHRIST, FOR THAT IS FAR BETTER!

EAGER ANTICIPATION

JANE WAS ONE OF THOSE PEOPLE WHOM I FELT MINISTERED MORE TO ME THAN I DID FOR HER. THE LIGHT IN HER EYES / THE SMILE ON HER FACE / HER CHEERFUL DISPOSITION! I ALWAYS LEFT HER PRESENCE WITH A WARM GLOW IN MY HEART. THE LAST TIME WE TALKED WITH EACH OTHER, WE TALKED ABOUT HOLY COMMUNION & WE DECIDED TO WAIT UNTIL SHE TALKED WITH HER DOCTOR & FELT A LITTLE STRONGER. THERE WAS NO DOUBT THAT SHE HAD THAT EAGER ANTICIPATION TO PARTAKE OF THE BLESSED SACRAMENT. AND I CAN JUST SEE HER NOW / SMILING DOWN ON US AT THIS VERY MOMENT & SAYING TO HER HEAVENLY COMPANIONS, IN MY WILDEST DREAMS I HAD NO IDEA HOW GREAT & WONDERFUL IT IS EATING & DRINKING WITH OUR SAVIOR & CELEBRATING FACE-TO-FACE WITH ALL THE REDEEMED! ..... I KNOW WHAT ST. PAUL WAS TALKING ABOUT WHEN HE SAID, "FOR ME LIVING IS CHRIST & DYING IS GAIN!"

IN HIS LETTER TO THE PHILIPPIANS, PAUL WAS AT THE END OF HIS TETHER / IN PRISON / CHAINED TO A GUARD .... & HE AS STILL FILLED WITH EAGER ANTICIPATION! WHAT HE SAID WAS, I AM REALLY IN A GUANDARY. I DON'T KNOW WHETHER IT WOULD BE BETTER TO DIE & GO HOME & BE WITH GOD OR TO GET OUT OF THIS PRISON SO THAT I CAN CONTINUE TO PREACH THE GOSPEL! HE GOES ON TO SAY, WHATEVER HAPPENS, IT IS GOD'S FUTURE!.... THERE IS NO DOUBT THAT THAT WAS JANE'S FAITH TOO --- THAT WHEN SHE LEARNED THAT SHE HAD LEUKEMIA, THE IMMINENT THOUGHT OF DEATH SURELY CROSSED HER MIND / AND THEN CAME THE QUANDARY: WHAT DOES GOD WANT FOR ME? WHATEVER HAPPENS, IT IS GOD'S FUTURE! FOR ME LIVING IS CHRIST & DYING IS GAIN! DAG HAMMARSKJOLD WROTE IN HIS DIARY THE NIGHT BEFORE HIS PLANE CRASHED, FOR ALL THAT'S BEEN, THANKS! FOR ALL THAT'S ~~BEEN~~ YET TO BE, YES! THAT'S JANE!

I LOOK AT MY OWN LIFE & THERE IS MORE SAND AT THE BOTTOM OR THE HOURGLASS THAN THERE IS AT THE TOP! TO BE SURE, SOMETIMES I FIND MYSELF GRIPPED WITH FEAR / MY BONES ARE CREAKING / AND A LITTLE VOICE INSIDE SAYS, WHOOPY – THERE'S MORE TO COME! & I REMEMBER ST. PAUL'S WORDS, "FOR ME TO LIVE IS CHRIST & TO DIE IS GAIN." GOD'S SPIRIT GIVE US EAGER ANTICIPATION. REMEMBER THE OLD HYMN:

IN THE SWEET BYE & BYE
THERE'S A LAND THAT IS FAIRER THAN DAY
AND BY FAITH WE CAN SEE IT AFAR
THE FATHER WAITS OVER THE WAY
TO PREPARE US A DWELLING PLACE THERE!

SURELY GOODNESS & MERCY SHALL
FOLLOW ME ALL THE DAYS OF MY LIFE
AND I WILL DWELL IN THE HOUSE OF THE LORD FOREVER!

MAY GOD IN JESUS CHRIST COMFORT YOU TODAY IN THE ASSURANCE THAT JANE IS WITH CHRIST / EXALTED IN GLORY BECAUSE OF her EAGER ANTICIPATION!