



## Snowflakes and Christmas

What do snowflakes have to do with Christmas? Well, actually nothing in the truest sense. However, as I think about it, perhaps we are somewhat like snowflakes, and in our personal snowstorms, we might actually miss seeing the snowflakes.

We fantasize about Christmas. We want softly falling snow on Christmas Eve, but then it can stop. That is what older Christmas cards depict, and we like that image. Let's keep that picture of snow.

What is a snowflake? A snowflake is made up of hydrogen and oxygen. It is the ice that makes a snowflake as it collects around a particle of dust floating in the atmosphere. The particle of dust might only be 1/100,000 of a millimetre in size; but it needs to be there for the snowflake to form. Each snowflake has six points, it comes in different shapes and sizes, is single or in a cluster; yet no two snowflakes are the same. Each one is individual and unique. Stop, take the time to let a few flakes fall on your glove and notice their beauty. Feel the coolness on your cheeks and tongue. A snowflake is another sign of God's wonderful creation.

Each one of us in this room is individual and unique, specially handcrafted by God. *"For you created my inmost being; you knit me together in my mother's womb. I praise you because I am fearfully and wonderfully made; Your works are wonderful, I know that full well. My frame was not hidden from you when I was made in the secret place. When I was woven together in the depths of the earth, your eyes saw my unformed body"* (Psalm 139: 13-16).

We are loved by God, so much that He sent Jesus as a tiny baby at Christmas as our Saviour from sin. *"For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life"* (John 3:16) [each person inserts their own name.]

Above the manger is a cross; and this same Jesus who we worship now at Christmas, hangs bleeding and dying as He suffers for our wrongdoings and mistakes. Because of His suffering we are forgiven, and are made clean, and white as snow. No matter what the depth of our sin, Jesus can and will forgive it. *"For as high as the heavens are above the earth, so great is his love for those who fear him; as far as the east is from the west, so far has he removed our transgressions from us"* Psalm 103: 11-12. *"Come now, let us reason together, says the Lord. Though your sins are like scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they are red as crimson, they shall be like wool"* (Isaiah 1:18). That is the meaning of Christmas; that is the reason for the season; that is why we celebrate.

Sadly, just as clusters of snowflakes can turn into a blizzard, we, too, can lose sight of Christ and so often Christmas is turned into the biggest storm of the year. As we do a little personal inventory in a humorous way, with which snowflake can you identify?

**Meet Tammy Traditionflake.** As surely as snow comes every year, so do these flakes.

*I like Christmas; you know I just love going to church on Christmas Eve, with all the family. That is what one should do at Christmas; you know it is a tradition. We always have roast goose and mincemeat pie for Christmas; that's what my mother always did, too. My husband would like lemon pie; but how can I change; that's tradition.*

**Meet Wilma Worryflake.** These are snowflakes that begin to form gradually, and keep falling, and falling, and before you know it there is a big white pile.

*Oh, yeah! Christmas again. What will I do this year; last year I had my mother here to help. What do I buy the kids for presents? I really don't have the money. What do I buy my husband's new boss? What if turkeys don't come on sale? What if they have the bird flu? Where can you buy decent cranberries, I never can seem to find any? Which dishes should I use; my dish set is incomplete since my neighbour broke a plate last year. Who will shovel the walk? What if my brother shows up drunk again.....oh no! What if one of us gets H1N1?*

You get the point. Wilma puts the W in worry.

**Then there's Betty Blizzard.** This is a total whiteout! These flakes come down so fast, are blown by the wind, and can destroy any previous plans.

*Oh goodness! Christmas comes earlier every year; I better start to get busy now! Let me make a list...100 cards to write, bake bread for the senior's luncheon, cookies for the school party, buy presents for...no I should really make them...for grandma's family gift exchange, loaf cakes for the silent auction at church, send invitations for our Christmas dinner...oh, I should have made my Christmas cake already; I will definitely do that today...oh-oh-oh-oh-oh-oh-oh-how will I ever get done...better get busy now...oh, I forgot to add cleaning to the list...I better hurry....*

**There's Penny Perfectflake.** This snowflake is not found floating down from the sky. It is cut out of paper—something made in an art class and hung in the window.

*I am so lucky! I only had to go to five tree lots this year to find my tree, and it is just perfect. I love my decorations—all gold balls, and ribbon. The kids were a little upset, when I took down their decorations and put these up—but theirs just didn't match. I bought a new star for the top—it matches just perfectly. I hope that the rest of Christmas goes like this, I do not want to be disappointed again.*

**Meet Priscilla Partyflake.** On any given day, a few flakes may fall here and there, not a real snowfall.

*Fun! Fun! Fun! Let's see...December 20 is my office party and dance...I will wear my new black dress. For my husband's office party, I will wear the red strapless one...good thing that was on sale. Christmas Eve...what will I wear....I can't forget to bring the champagne to that get-together....Christmas Dinner on the 25<sup>th</sup> at Laura's house. On the 26<sup>th</sup> we have an executive dinner and dance.... I think the 27<sup>th</sup> is just low key; I will sleep.*

**Then there's Carla Crustyflake.** This is the snow that is sharp, has some ice on it, and is a bit gray from all the exhaust and dirt.

*You know Christmas is just the same every year. I wish they would just cut it out of the calendar. Christmas is for kids. Christmas is for families. It has no meaning for me so I work every Christmas and let the younger ones have it with their kids. When my kids were little, and before my husband left me....well it was different then... now it's just another day.*

**And lastly we meet Cassie Contentflake.** This is like a pile of snowflakes, content to stay till spring. It is sheltered, so it does not melt, nor does it blow away.

*Christmas will be different this year, because our son is on tour in Afghanistan, and my father is no longer with us. It would be nice if we could be together, but Jesus is the centre of Christmas. My father is with His Lord, and our son will share the Saviour's birth with his military comrades. Because of the recession my husband is out of work, we cannot afford too much extra but that is okay. God is with us, and He has promised to see us through. Each evening we have*

*devotions around the Advent wreath; tonight we will bring out another piece of our manger scene. We bring one piece out every evening during our devotions. We leave baby Jesus, till the last, and He is added to the scene on Christmas Eve. Then all together we say, "Today in the town of David a Saviour has been born to you; he is Christ the Lord" (Luke 2:11).*

Most of us can probably identify with several of those 'flakes'! As we reflect on them let us strive to be more like the contented snowflake and keep Christ foremost in our celebrations.

As we remember that snowflakes are formed around a dust speck, or an imperfection, so imperfections in our lives may be a catalyst or turning point that brings about a change. Perhaps a job loss, or an accident or illness, although initially devastating, can actually turn out to be a blessing. We remember that God is present in all the 'snowstorms' of our lives, and He will see us through.

He has promised in Isaiah 41:10 "So do not fear, for I am with you; do not be dismayed, for I am your God. I will strengthen you and help you; I will uphold you with my righteous right hand."

In closing consider this verse from a favourite Christmas card.

***Because of Jesus...***

*We have Hope for tomorrow,  
Confidence in the future,  
Light in our darkness,  
Victory in each trial,  
Rest when we're weary,  
And  
Love for a lifetime.*

