

NOT A FAIRYTALE by Barbara Spencer

*“And she brought forth her firstborn Son, and wrapped Him in swaddling clothes, laid Him in a manger,
Because there was no room for them in the Inn.”
Luke 2:7 (NKJV)*

I am remembering Christmas as a child, and how excited I would get at that time of the year. A few days before Christmas, all of us (there were six children) would go together with our mother to pick out a tree that had to be kept in water so that it would not dry out and catch fire. We would put those big ole Christmas lights on it, and then we would put ornaments on it that we had made in school and at home. To us, when the tree was finished, it looked so beautiful. We were very proud of our work. My mother would give each of us one of her old stockings (that she had carefully cleaned) to hang on a wall where she had cleared space in our two-room house so we could hang them as our ‘Christmas stocking’ for Santa to fill Christmas Eve night.

Then there was the excitement of going caroling with the Church, and singing about that little baby that was born and wrapped in swaddling clothes and laid in a Manger. We participated in Christmas plays and after the play, we would get a brown paper bag with an apple, an orange, some mixed nuts and Christmas candy inside.

The highlight of our Christmas was always when our Aunt sent us a huge box in the mail that was filled with a gift for each of us. Those gifts contained used clothing. We put those gifts under the tree to be opened Christmas Eve night.

Soon, it was time to start preparing food for Christmas Day. Everything was prepared from ‘scratch’. We would gladly stay up late and help with the preparations of chicken and dressing, candied yams, greens, cornbread and more. Delicious!

I did not fully understand at the time, but I always felt there was something more to that yearly event because I always got an unexplained warm and special feeling inside and people were speaking and smiling more, but all I knew was that every time they sung or talked about that baby in a manger, good things would happen.

*“And the Child grew and became strong in spirit, filled with wisdom; and
The grace of God was upon Him.”
Luke 2:40. (NKJV)*