

## December 2011

The Scriptures tell us to give thanks, to help and bless others, and to praise God. Research studies now show that there are actual health benefits to positive emotions and actions like these.



... emotions such as anxiety and anger put stress on our systems, causing inflammation and heart disease, among a huge host of other illnesses. Positive emotions, on the other hand, “undo” the damaging physiological effects of negative emotions, calming the heart rate and reducing levels of stress-related hormones in our bodies. Kindness, compassion, generosity, love: these are positive feelings. These giving emotions turn off and tone down our stress response in many ways.” [*Raising Happiness*, Christine Carter. p. 32]

Thank you for being kind, generous and loving toward me. Take a moment to remember and enjoy the gift of support and prayer you have given to me and



women from Italy, France, Portugal, limited access countries, Latin America, and the US. Even as I write we are in the midst of a *Discover Bible Study* intensive. Another training begins January 18 in Mexico. **Your partnership with me is crucial.**

**Thank you!** I pray that you also are blessed by your gifts.

As we think about Christmas, we often have high hopes and expectations. When our Christmas is not “perfect” it can cause us sadness. Yet the first Christmas was far from perfect. Jesus and his parents were unwelcomed and unexpected in Bethlehem, many families lost their baby boys, and Jesus and his parents were on the run for their lives. That is a long way from the cozy loving family huddled around a Christmas tree with piles of gifts. As the first Christmas was painful to God—letting his son come into this messed up culture—may we have realistic expectations. May God’s peace and love flow through us. May our hope in God bring healing to those in pain around us. May your generous spirit bless others and bring you joy and good health!

**Thank you Lord for your generosity toward us!**

May you have a blessed Christmas!

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