



R Family News

March, 2015

Loving Those Cultures

Renita Rhodes

While riding home on my motorcycle through the cooler evening air with a box of ice cream between my feet I pondered the joy I felt. I had just cooked the Sunday supper for the Asian Bible School students. I loved the interaction between all the different cultures – we have nine different countries represented this year. Although not all of them were present for supper there were still enough to make it interesting.

I love learning about other cultures but in times like this you really have no idea if the individual's characteristics are from his personality or his home culture. For instance there was a mom who showed up about 1.5 hours after supper was supposed to start and realized it was all put away. She said she'll eat an hour later because she's not hungry, but could she have some food for her 2 year old? Is this typical of her or her culture? We don't have anything to compare it with so you just go with the 'flow'. Everyone is 'out of their comfort zone' so it is a lot easier to mingle with each other without feeling the pressure of meeting everyone's expectations of their home cultures.

I realize again how much I just LOVE other cultures. God sure made a beautiful thing when He made all different kinds and colors of people! I am often reminded of how Heaven will be when I am with a group of so

many different cultures! Each group of people so beautifully displays the creativity of God! Won't it be amazing to worship our Savior with so many different cultures!

At times like this I am so thankful for the opportunity that God has given us to live and work here! I realize that we have often written lately of the stress of readjustments to life here after being gone for 14 months of sabbatical. It does us good to realize that there are also things that we love here. The people are one of those things! ◇



Please pray with us for...

- *Spiritual & Physical Protection for our family.
- *Asian Bible School which is going on at IGo right now through March 20.
- *Our children – that they would specifically learn obedience and submission.
- *Rick & Renita – much wisdom & insight for parenting. There's a lot of tough stuff lately!
- *More IGo students for this next year.
- *Clear direction for RaVonne for 'what's next'.
- *Praise God with us that He loves us enough to convict us and bring us to new victories & healing through confession and surrender.
- *Praise God that He is a personal God!

Recent Happenings:



Another 'Border Run' through the mountains of Thailand all the way to Burma.



Family Camping in Thailand – 30 minutes from our house.



I sure enjoyed having Heidi Gingerich & LaRonda Schrock here for several weeks. Former Staff friends are so much fun to reconnect with! This picture is 4 out of 5 of our former accountability group – back together again!



Reggie, Rick, Reid & Rodney ran in the Run for Relief – a fundraiser to assist displaced people in Burma.

Unfulfilled Longings

All your life there were things you dreamed of ... good dreams. Dreams that are even looked on with favor from God. Longings that are right! In your heart you long for those dreams to be fulfilled. And yet, it seems like you have lived with unfulfilled longings for so long. What do you do with unfulfilled longings?

God is speaking to my heart about living well with unfulfilled longings. He's speaking to me about living with a trustful heart towards Him even when it seems like it hurts too much to do so. Sometimes shutting down the longings seems safer. Living with hope is just too risky. After all, sometimes it's easier to tell ourselves we just shouldn't long for those good things anymore. But living with our hand open to God (for fulfillment of those dreams or not) keeps our hearts soft toward Him and toward others. I believe surrender is the key! This song has been my prayer as I keep surrendering my unfulfilled longings to God.

*All to Jesus I surrender;
All to Him I freely give;
I will ever love and trust Him,
In His presence daily live.
I surrender all,
I surrender all;
All to Thee, my blessed Savior,
I surrender all.*

His peace is beautiful after the surrender!
-Renita



AMAZING THAILAND

Some days our sunrises have been pretty dim and very red from all of the pollution. In February-April (which is the driest time of the year here) they slash/burn in the mountains all around the city which leaves Chiang Mai lost in the pollution that settles in the valley.