



# R Family News

December, 2013

## Ponderings...

Luke 2:19 "But Mary kept all these things, and pondered them in her heart."

This verse has been the one that jumps out at me when I read the 'Christmas story' almost every year! Is it just like ladies to ponder things? ☺ I find myself pondering life ... activities; words people speak; intentions and actions of my children, husband, friends, myself; the meaning of God's Word; how God wants me to live, respond, speak in each situation; my failures ... life!

There has been a lot to ponder this year and I find myself stopping at this 6 month mark of our sabbatical and pondering more. Are we using our time well? Are we missing something that we had a goal for? Do we need to make adjustments in our lives for the rest of our time?

It is good to ponder and then to take action from the ponderings. Otherwise we go through life without much thought and I believe we will reach the end with some serious regrets!

Ponder what Jesus has done for you! Ponder what He wants you to do for Him ... seek Him and ask for direction! Ponder the life you live! Ponder the gifts that you are given and what you are doing with them! Live intentionally! -Renita Rhodes



## Merry Christmas!

*Emmanuel – God With Us*

Isn't it just amazing that God came down as a baby to live among us all those years ago? And isn't it even amazing that God is still with us today! God loves us and cares about us ... He sent His one and only son, Jesus, to live among us, die for us, and redeem us! He continues the work that He has started in each of our lives!

He walks with us now!

Live for Him! Celebrate Him!

Please Pray with us for...

- Our family to have a hunger and thirst for God and His Word.
- Our children that they would grow in Christ and His love and compassion to others at school and at home!
- The upcoming DVD production, titled "Sold Out" (in Jan.). Please pray for God's protection and guidance through every aspect of this project.
- The commitments that were made at the Myerstown meetings.
- RaVonne to know what God wants of her in the next year after graduation.

Praise God for...

- Giving us his Son and purpose in life!
- Speaking to hearts at the Myerstown meetings!
- Providing friends here that challenge us and care about us.

## “TEAM”

### -Together Everyone Achieves More-

When the Little Red Hen set out to plant her wheat, tend it, harvest it, and prepare it for food, she asked for some help. But the pig, duck and other barnyard animals did not want to help. So she did it herself. If you are familiar with this Little Golden Book story, you know that the Little Red Hen’s response to the other lazy animals was “I’ll do it myself”, said the Little Red Hen, and so she did.

While doing it herself worked for the Little Red Hen, doing it yourself is not how God intended for His Kingdom work to be done.

When Jesus founded the church, He set it up to be a team (we are members of a body, not the body our self). When Jesus began His earthly ministry, He chose 12 men to be on “His team” to get the ministry started. When Paul set out on his missionary journeys, he took a team. Even the Godhead is a team – God the Father (Creator), God the Son (Redeemer) and God the Holy Spirit (Comforter).

This morning I had the privilege of sitting around a table with a team of 10 men, working on an upcoming event to further God’s Kingdom. What a blessing to work with a team of committed brothers! I came home excited and amazed at how the Lord worked in bringing this team together. Let me explain the purpose of this team and how it came together.

In my working with our Anabaptist young people, I have observed several things that concern me:

1. Our youth are getting a large portion of their teaching and influence from the evangelicals/protestants via media
2. The Anabaptist options to meet this need are almost non-existent

For example: when a group of young people decide to go to a cabin for the weekend and want some spiritual input for Sunday morning, the options of solid Anabaptist teaching on DVD isn’t there. Therefore they sit at the feet of preachers that most of us would never invite into our churches.

Another example would be when a church group or mission organization is having a retreat and wants a speaker to come and share with them - often either the qualified speakers have schedules that are already full or the group can’t afford to pay for a speaker to come (we face this at our IGo staff retreats each year). Therefore the next option is to go to the evangelical circles and find a DVD on a subject that we believe would be helpful. While this is not always a bad thing, it is an area of concern for many of us who see how many of our young people are leaving our Anabaptist churches and going to places like the speakers who are feeding them on DVD.

God has called me to preach the Word, and the opportunities/request that I receive far exceed what I can do while raising a family.

For the above reasons, I developed a burden to professionally video some teaching to help meet this need today. But this is a big undertaking – how can I make this vision become a reality? The answer – TEAM - Together Everyone Achieves More.

The group of men that I met with this morning are men who have volunteered their time and talents to make this DVD production become a reality. As we finalized the plans for this January 10 and 11 event, I was amazed at how we were able to delegate all of the needed responsibilities, use everyone on the team, and use them in a way where they are gifted and enjoy serving. Yes, that is amazing! Only the Lord can pull something off like this – putting a team together where the needed gifts to do each specific job for the greater goal at hand are all present.

I am sure that each of you are a part of several different teams – your family, church, work, and probably more. Be a faithful, committed member on the teams to which God has called you. When your team is struggling, don’t quit or leave the team – that is when you are needed the most! God has chosen to ask us to team with Him in getting His work done here on earth. It says in I Corinthians 3:9 “we are laborers together with God”. Wow –what a privilege, to be a laborer with the Lord in His Kingdom work here on this earth! His method of getting the job accomplished is through teamwork, so let’s be faithful members of God’s team!

A privileged team member,  
Rick