

March 29, 2007

Welcome spring! Whether you are actually experiencing spring-like weather or not, it really is here, and with it comes all kinds of changes and things to celebrate. Our windows here at home are covered with brightly colored Easter egg clings and plastic eggs are littering the house (I even found one under our dresser—Anja really likes egg hunts☺).

We are looking forward to remembering the sacrifice our Lord, Jesus, made for us when He took our place, bore the weight of our sins, and suffered the punishment we've earned. That's love! To be willing to go to such lengths to satisfy God's need for justice and fulfill His desire to have a relationship with us again. Words like grace and mercy used to be just church words to me, but now they mean so much. While we were yet sinners, Christ died for us! Grace means being given something I haven't earned, and I sure didn't deserve to have God suffer in my place. So we can respond with our hearts this Easter when we say, "He is risen. He is risen indeed!"

We also had a celebration of our own last weekend when we had Anja baptized. She asked Jesus into her heart last year, but we wanted to watch her and see if she meant it, and we have thoroughly enjoyed watching our daughter grown in the Lord over the last year. So we talked about how baptism is a way we can obey God by sharing with others that we believe Jesus and how the water is a symbol of God washing away all our sin and making us new people. It was a really special day for all of us.

Karl has a special day as well, since he'll be 38 in a couple days! (I had to type the number a couple of times to get it right, it almost came out 83☺). I thank God for the wonderful, kind and servant hearted husband and father He gave our family. We are blessed to have the family and friends we have, and want to thank you all for the prayers and caring words we've received from all of you over the last couple months especially. You have been used by God to carry us through some painful times.

One particularly helpful tool God used came from my Bible study leader. She's heard me try to explain how hard infertility and miscarriage are, so when she found a book at a CCC FamilyLife marriage conference, she had to bring it to me. At the time, I was in such pain I probably wouldn't have read it, but for her saying, "I skimmed the book and she's saying what you've been trying to tell us!" That got my attention. I started reading and didn't finish until 3:30 in the morning.

The book is *Hannah's Hope, Seeking God's Heart in the Midst of Infertility, Miscarriage, and Adoption Loss* by Jennifer Saake (Say Key). Jennifer has walked the road I'm on (and much more) and it felt so good to read someone else's words that could have come out of my mouth or my heart. And since she's further down the road than I am, she could give words that actually comfort and biblical counsel that met my heart's need.

I mention this because all of us have people in our lives that are going through these types of loss, but I've found that very few people can understand how to help and not hurt. Our perspectives are just so different. Jennifer wrote the book to help those going through the journey, but she also wrote it for those she calls burden bearers, those who care. She even has a chapter devoted to churches. If you are interested in getting your hands on a copy, some Christian bookstores carry it, but you can also order a copy from FamilyLife at 1-800-FLTODAY. I hope this information proves to be just what you or someone you know needs. Thanks again for everything,

Love,
Karl, Anja
& Anja