

Roots in Ripon

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Chuck Roots

17 April 2017

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Pancakes, Please!

It has been a while since I wrote about my grandkids. They are growing like weeds and bring more joy and happiness to my wife and me every day. Having spent many years in the military moving from base to base around the world, we are very aware that many families do not enjoy the blessing of having grandchildren close by.

For us, nine-year-old Alyssa lives three miles away, and nine-year-old Brooklyne and five-year-old Colson live twenty-five miles away. We couldn't be happier being so close and so involved in their lives.

Thursday Isaura was doing her weekly stint of taking care of Brook and Colson. She usually does this on Fridays, looking after Colson during the day (he begins school this fall), and then picking up his sister from school in the afternoon. As for Alyssa, either Isaura or I pick her up Monday-Thursday since she attends school less than two miles from our home.

Since this was Easter weekend with no school on Friday, we had all three grandkids from Thursday afternoon through Saturday evening.

As expected the kids were wound up pretty tight since they were spending the night at Meema and Granddaddy's! Thursday evening, we watched a Veggie Tales DVD about Easter, then it was off to bed. They love to sleep in the loft (a.k.a., my Man Cave). The girls share the blow-up mattress, and Colson gets the hide-a-bed. As I often do, I read to them. I chose "Rush Revere and the Brave Pilgrims," one of the Rush Revere Series written about American history by Rush Limbaugh. I read two chapters before they all finally drifted off to dreamland.

I'm up early on Fridays to join my golfing buddies for a round at Spring Creek, so when I came home later in the morning I found Meema elbow-deep in making Portuguese Sweet Bread with the kids. This is a custom she brought with her from the old country, and is passing it along to our progeny. If you haven't tasted this bread, you've missed out. Part of the Easter tradition is to bake the bread by placing a whole egg (representing life) on top of the bread dough and then baking it in the oven. The kids were having great fun kneading the dough with flour and sticky dough all over the kitchen counter and floor. But the end result is certainly worth it.

On Friday evening, we went to the Good Friday service at the Ripon Free Methodist Church with the kids in tow. We visited with folks outside following the

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service, allowing the young ones to run around on the grass for a while before hauling everyone home. Once safely ensconced in our house, I made popcorn for everyone. I do it the old-fashioned way by popping the kernels on the stove. Then we settled down to watch the beginning of the movie series entitled, "Anne of Green Gables." All three kids loved it and didn't want it to end. As we put them to bed, I once again read to them from Rush Revere, and they were out cold before I finished one chapter!

Saturday morning, we roused the kids in time to make it to the Easter Egg Hunt in Escalon. It was fun watching the dozens of children racing around the playground looking for eggs in the grass. On the drive back home, I asked the kids which they wanted me to make for brunch: waffles or pancakes? In unison from the back seat came, "Pancakes, please!" Admittedly, I am a purist when it comes to baking, which means I cook from scratch, having learned to do so from my grandmother.

Now, normally the kids would help me make the batter for the pancakes along with cooking the bacon, but this day they were more interested in continuing to watch Anne of Green Gables. If you haven't ever watched this series, I recommend it, especially for your grandkids. It is entertaining, plus it re-enforces values that have seemingly been lost in our American culture. The topic of forgiveness is a strong theme throughout, along with courtesy, manners, respect, friendship, perseverance, and many other virtues and values not emphasized in today's Hollywood fare. And if it is portrayed, it is usually mocked.

After consuming lots of pancakes, it was time to break out the packages of egg dye for the kids to have fun coloring the dozen or more eggs Meema had boiled for them. We had lots of giggles and laughs creating eggs of different colors, and adding glitter to some, and stickers to others. But what a mess! I still have glitter on my forearms!

All of this reminded me of what the Bible says about grandchildren. In Genesis 31:55, it says, "*Early the next morning Laban kissed his grandchildren and his daughters and blessed them.*" Later on, Solomon would write this about grandchildren: "*Children's children are a crown to the aged, and parents are the pride of their children.*" Ah! How true!

Isaura and I have been so very blessed by God with our two precious daughters, their stalwart husbands, and our delightful grandchildren.

Now, this all makes me wonder if at the Marriage Supper of the Lamb in Heaven, Jesus will also be serving pancakes!