



Indianapolis, IN 46241

November 30, 2009

Greetings to all,

During this season we talk a lot about our Saviors birth. We hear how an angel went to Mary and told her that she would give birth to the son of God and that she would call him Jesus and that he would deliver God's people for all times. Most of us know the rest of the story, but I wonder how she would have reacted if things had been just a little different. She was very young. Would she have lost hope if Joseph had walked out on her? Would she have become bitter if the people around her had not accepted her and her child? Would she have become cynical if the economy had changed and she could not find work to support herself and her son? Would she have done without or would she have left the raising of her son to someone else? I know this sounds a little different, but that is what has happened to another Mary that I know. I believe she would not want to be compared to Jesus' mother but in many ways she is a lot like her.

Mary was 15 when she had her first child. She dropped out of school and tried to raise him with the father. Both were very young and struggled with paying the bills and making ends meet. She soon realized that she would be unable to give her son the life she wanted for him so she is allowing her mother to raise him. She went back to school and almost got her diploma when she met and married another man. He was not the nicest person but Mary did not feel she deserved anything else. She dropped out of school and got a job to support him and they lived this way for several years. She then became pregnant three years in a row and gave birth to three daughters. By this time her husband was in jail and she was raising the girls on her own. She contacted me in May of 2008.

She had lost all of her belongings when she came back from Kentucky after caring for her grandmother. Her daughters had no clothes or food and she was looking for a job. Mary has received lots of help through this past year and half. She has gotten birth certificates for all of her daughters. She has received food, clothes, help with car repair bills, a fan for the summer, help with finding a place to live, job referrals, help with her resume', referrals for child care, Christmas help for her children, referrals for utilities assistance, and many other things.

However, I have received back something far greater. Mary is a talker. She talks fast and more than even I do. She will come into my office and I know to set aside two hours at least to meet with her. I know all of the girls and what they are doing. I knew when they were potty trained and how they are all doing in pre-school. I know how her mother is doing and that she is beginning to have some problems with her son who is now 11 years old. I know that she continues to have a positive outlook in life and that with all she does not have she still has faith that everything is going to be ok. I received this e-mail from her and want to share it with all of you.

"I have been having a hard time but things got a little better so I have been really busy. I start a job tomorrow but so far it is only a week they are supposed to find me more work after that. I guess that little bit of pay is better than none at all. I finally got my gas turned on I thought that we were going to freeze. We couldn't take showers or cook on the stove, but energy assistance paid

to turn it on. And they paid 100.00 of my light bill. So I just have to pay my water bill and rent and I hope with just that I can get some extra money for Christmas. So I guess things could be worse that how I see it. Oh and I finally got a washer and dryer so that saves me from going to the laundrymat. I no longer have a phone so it is hard for me to call you. But my friend lives a few streets away and she is at my house alot so I use her phone when I can. So how are you doing? Where are you spending the holidays? Well I will try to get a hold of you more often probably through email. And thanks for all the help that you have given me. Mary

I do not know what will happen to Mary in the future but for now she is "doing OK" I consider it an honor to have been able to get to know my new friend. I know that this a very busy time and that everyone is asking for things at this time. Everyone is trying to stretch the dollar further and further. I know that it is not always possible to do all you want but that we do what we can. Restoring Lives West is continuing to work with people just like Mary and beginning to build the relationships that make a difference in a young person's life. We need to continue this much needed ministry on the Westside of Indy because we know that lives are being changed. I challenge each of you to think of your year end giving and see how much you can give to support this very important ministry. We like many others have struggled this year but know that with the love of God and friends that this ministry will continue for a long time. Donations can be sent to Restoring Lives West 709 S. Lynhurst Dr, Indianapolis, IN 46241 or through our new PayPal account. Just go to www.restoringliveswest.org and click on the donate button. May your Christmas be full and your families close.

Yours in Christ,

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