

“Where do you get your inspiration for your Ponderings?” he asked.

It’s a good question. The simple answer is the Holy Spirit. I like to think that everything I write is Spirit inspired. Granted, some writings are more inspired than others. The truth is that the answer to the question is more complicated. I thought I’d share how ponderings are born.

1. Observation. I try to pay attention to the world around me. I take notice of what is happening. It may be something that I saw or it could be something that someone said. For instance, the poem and ponderings last week grew out of the countryside as we rode. The rocks breaking through the soil reminded me of backbones, and the poem was born. Darden Smith called it the habit of noticing. I try to practice the habit.

2. Scripture. I try to let Scripture inform what I observe. Sometimes a Scripture brings comfort and hope, at other times, it brings challenge and growth. It can be a feel good piece, or a piece that is uncomfortable because it calls for change. In nearly all circumstances, I feel the challenge in my own life first. I try not to begin with the idea that others need to hear this, but with the idea that I need to hear this.

3. Pondering. I think about what I’ve observed and what I find in Scripture. I’ve had experiences where the words just fell out. They come easily and flow, well I was going to say, “to paper,” but they are written on the computer or Ipad. I’ve also experienced difficult births. I have an idea and an observation that I can’t get to work out. It is a struggle, and sometimes I give up on the idea. There have been times when I’ve quit struggling that the pondering slips out.

4. Love. I love to write. I don’t journal, but in a way the ponderings are a journal. They are my gathered thoughts. I love to share these thoughts, and I am grateful that others want to read what I write. I always appreciate hearing when my ponderings have touched someone. I love God. I’ve learned that if God gives us a gift then using that gift is how we show our love for God.

Since, I was asked that question I’ve been pondering how to respond. I thought I needed to ponder it. If one person asked it, perhaps there were others who wondered. I wondered myself. Sometimes I feel pretty dry, and I’m sure that some things that are written aren’t too good. As far as I know, this is how ponderings are born.

Pastor Parnell