

The Storyteller's Own Story

I met my friend the storyteller from time to time, and was always amazed at how he folded the essence of the Great Truth and then unfolded it so that it was clearer to his audiences.

I talked to him about his mission to glorify God and teach about the New Kingdom through his stories, and how he came about pursuing that mission. He told me that he loved to create the stories, and that though they were meant for others, they deepened his own relationship with God. To him, finding ways to illustrate the Great Truths was like assembling pieces of a puzzle.

“There have been many times when I had a problem finding pieces that would fit together, and after wrestling with them for a while the answer would surface.¹ The “click” that occurs in my mind when the pieces are put together is very gratifying.

“I cannot fit all of the pieces that I see into a complete picture of God, but I risk working with them because to cover the lamp of our mind² is to be like the man who hid the one talent he was given.³ God wants us to work the puzzle, even if we don't have the picture completely right.⁴ We mustn't force the pieces together, but God overlooks such errors if we are in pursuit of Him. And I believe that we must truly enjoy the puzzle-solving process.”

“The Great Truth is essentially a story, and my little stories in a way participate in that larger story.⁵ I like to think about the divine interaction that makes the stories come to life on a spiritual plane. I also like to put people I know into the stories, to pull us into a world that is bigger than all of us. Each one of us then takes place in the plot as we are drawn to and end up following Jesus.⁶

“I'm not just trying to dress the truth up in the latest fashion such that the meaning is destroyed.⁷ I am trying to tell of the Way of Transformation that we all need to take.⁸

“As the Great Truth became a part of me, I found my heart stirred by a heroic theme⁹ and felt like its contents would boil over if I did not share.¹⁰ I wanted my stories to shatter the spiritual ice frozen inside us¹¹ that keeps us from God. Even if I am only thought of as a story-teller, then perhaps I have a place alongside the priests and other religious leaders.¹² Though I am a story-teller, the Great Story found me, and not the other way around.¹³

“Stories are meant to be swapped, and I have heard as many as I have told. I remember a special one where a Persian princess had to tell a story every night to stay alive.¹⁴ I also told stories to help others stay alive, or at least to help them find the better, more abundant life.¹⁵”

As always, the storyteller gave me greater insight into the New Kingdom. I realized that our personal echo of God's Truth must be more than just a surface reflection. The disturbance must penetrate deep within our heart and alter its internal structure. It must stir things within and establish a dynamic growth that makes room for even deeper circulation.

The storyteller made me see that we are not just filling a vessel, like a wineskin¹⁶ – we are restructuring the interior of our heart. This makes me think of how God has

prepared many mansions for us¹⁷, as though he were creating subdivisions that compartmentalize His very nature. We must come to understand that He has promised to fill us with His righteousness once we realize we cannot live without Him.¹⁸

1. People see God every day, they just don't recognize Him. Pearl Bailey
2. Luke 8:16, "No one lights a lamp and hides it in a clay jar or puts it under a bed. Instead, they put it on a stand, so that those who come in can see the light.
3. Matthew 25:14ff [Parable of the Talents]
4. Unlike modern jigsaw puzzles, we don't have the final picture to compare to as we work.
5. See Peterson's book "Eat This Book," p. 43.
6. Peterson's book "Eat This Book," pp. 47-48.
7. Peterson's book "Eat This Book," p. 43.
8. Ortberg, John, *The Life You've Always Wanted: Spiritual Disciplines for Ordinary People* (p. 16). Zondervan. Kindle Edition.
9. Psalm 45:1, "My heart is stirred by a noble theme as I recite my verses for the king; my tongue is the pen of a skillful writer."
10. The root term for "prophet" connotes "one who boils over." *A Balanced Church*, Charles W. Conn, p. 155
11. A book must be an ice axe to break the sea frozen inside us. Kafka
12. Troubadours have always been more important and influential than theologians and bishops. Manning, Brennan [hsl: Who causes us to weep more often? Preachers or storytellers?]
13. [from the movie *Neverwas*] ... sometimes a story finds a storyteller, not the other way around.
14. The story of Scheherazade; it is difficult to nail down the timeline, so perhaps it was known. Interesting that the Bible has its own story of a Persian princess / queen who saves her own life and the life of her people (Esther).
15. John 10:10b, "I have come that they may have life, and have it to the full."
16. Luke 5:37-38; "And no one pours new wine into old wineskins. Otherwise, the new wine will burst the skins; the wine will run out and the wineskins will be ruined. No, new wine must be poured into new wineskins."
17. John 14:2a, "My Father's house has many rooms..."
18. Matthew 5:6, "Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they will be filled."