

What She Said, Part 6
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Monday

The Power of Stories

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Today's Treasure

*I who speak to you am he.
John 4: 26*

I love stories! Now in my 70s, I have countless stories in my memory and many etched indelibly in my heart. I may fail to remember your name or our conversation but most of the time, I remember your story. Often my husband would tease me about my collecting "social histories" when I accompanied him to business events. As a young girl, I loved to sit where I could hear the stories of my parents and relatives.

In the past several years in our Christian circles, there has been an emphasis on story. And with the increasing knowledge of the impacts of trauma and past experience, counselors often focus on the story.

Last year I had a personal experience with the power of story when I saw a counselor regarding our planned move with my parents to a new home. We had been caregivers but this was committing to dailiness. Through the use of story, I unpacked the anxiety and fear that was gripping my heart about this transition and as I reflected on God's Story from Genesis to Revelation, I saw the redemptive pattern!

When Jesus arrested me, I had a pamphlet (remember those!) that gave a testimony of receiving Christ based on the woman at the well. This story became an anchor for me as a young believer. Now I see more clearly the power of this woman's story from Genesis to Revelation. I see the pattern of my first-grade story as God places it in the larger narrative of His big story and my life. There is a sidebar in the way God created us. Neuroscientists have shown when we tell our story to an empathetic listener our neurons get rearranged! And that seems to even happen for older people. That fascinates me and gives me hope for many who bear the traumatic scars of life in a fallen world.

Keith Mathison (Reformed Bible College), writing about Tolkein, gives us a great tool for understanding “story”. Does the story begin with “once upon a time” or with “hath God said”?

This is one framework for considering and telling our stories seen in the Samaritan woman’s story.

Creation – Hath God said? We see in the Samaritan woman’s story that she knew of the promise of the Messiah.

The Fall – The effects of the fall of Adam and Eve are front and center. The woman denies her sin but Jesus, even as He has pursued her at the well, reveals her sin.

Redemption – “The water that I give will become in him a spring of water welling up to eternal life” and the most precious revelation – “I who speak to you am He”!

Glory – The Messiah, the Savior of the world becomes the story the woman tells with self-revelation and eagerness. And many believed!

LIFE-GIVING ENCOURAGEMENT

Read our Samaritan sister’s story with fresh eyes and begin to think of your Story and all of the little stories encompassed in it. Hath God said?

PRAYER

God of heaven and earth, thank You for telling us Your Story in stories. And thank You for sending the Word made flesh and the record we have of His story. By Your Spirit, please enter into our hard stories, especially, and show us You have always been at work in them and will finish them for Your Glory and our good. Amen