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Your Story Matters - Lesson 7 Outline Stewarding Stories: An Introduction

How can we view our stories as servants rather than masters?

“Many of our memories don’t surface easily or right away. Sometimes a present event triggers them. Sometimes a crisis of soul brings them out of hiding. They serve our soul development, but they are servants who live deep in the basement or way up in the attic.” — Vinita Hampton Wright

I. Identity

A. Stories give us cues about our identity

B. Stories do not define our identity

Because our cognitive beliefs have been *taught* (for believers, based on biblical truth), but our deep beliefs are *caught* (watching other people, especially our parents or primary caregivers during developmental years) and *bought* in painful experiences; we can be “*living lives that violate our sincerely held beliefs and convictions because we have never confronted and disarmed the power of these personal deep beliefs.*” — Nathan Shattuck

C. Stories honor our identity as image-bearers of God

“Abuse as the desecration of the image of God.” — Greg Wilson, Beth Broom

The opposite of being desecrated is to be honored. When we walk with others in story work, we bestow honor. It is a sacred work.



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II. Purpose

- A. “Pain has a purpose” v. the meaning of our memory
- B. Recognition: the fruit of contemplation “*Recognition is the **fruit of contemplation.***” — James K.A. Smith This recognition, as we increasingly come to it, can help us differentiate between what was and what is.
- C. Senses stored and re-stored

“A memory is often connected to us in more than one way, and so the memory can be lifted into conscious light through some event or sensation when we aren’t even looking for the memory.” — Vinita H. Wright

III. Wise Warnings

- A. Recognizing threats
- B. Keeping time

dyschronometria, an inability to keep time — James K.A. Smith

- C. Looking, but not seeing.

“Observing is something Mary did throughout her life as she found herself in unbelievably realities. To observe is to take notice. She remained present.” — Jessica Herberger [See pp. 20-22 of *Peace in the Dark*]



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D. Lacking goals

What are some potential goals or aims in story work?

- Dispel or quiet the shame
 - Gain clarity
 - Someone to bear witness
 - Reminds ourselves that it really did happen

E. Knowing your role

- Witness [See: <https://bibleproject.com/explore/video/martus-witness>]
- Companion
- Midwife
- Shepherd



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Closing Prayer:

Living God, author of my life and story, I come to you and call your writing of me, my body, heart, mind, spirit, and will — good, beautiful, and holy. You made me with delight and precision. You crafted my nose, my eyes, and my arms. You made my hands and feet. You are the very energy of my body, the deepest presence in my being. And I praise you, love you, and trust you and your creation.

Jesus, I also confess that I have often ignored my story, denied it, or rewrote it to not read as it does. I confess that I am in a story war and that there are many stories that are unresolved. I am confused and hurt. Angry. Maybe even bitter. Most of all, I confess it is easier to be lukewarm about my past than to engage it with passion.

Spirit of God breathe life into my memory. You are the One who calls forth memory and teaches me how to bring the death, resurrection, and ascension of Jesus into my daily life. Breathe life into me. Breathe courage into me to face where I have been blessed and where I have been cursed. Use my story to reveal the story of Jesus. Use the revelation of Jesus to take me deeper into the stories of others.

Glorious Trinity, I submit my heart, mind, soul, spirit, and will to you to receive from you all that you desire as I move into what you want to reveal. My heart is open. I am ready to do this work in your power and delight.

I pray all this in the powerful name of Jesus of Nazareth. Amen.

— Dan Allender