

Stewards of God's Grace: April 2021

Living the Story, sharing our story



In the Easter Season we encounter witnesses of the Resurrection in the stories of the Risen Christ's appearances to his followers: the women who came with spices for Jesus' body and discovered instead an angelic messenger; Mary Magdalene in the Garden hearing Jesus say her name; Peter and John racing to the empty tomb; the two disciples meeting a stranger on the road to Emmaus; Thomas late to the gathering who doubts the word of those who tell him they had seen Jesus risen, and so on. The latter chapters of the gospels are crammed with these stories of brief, life-changing moments that shift how Jesus' followers understood themselves and what God was doing in their midst. The witnesses to the Resurrection give us their testimony so that we might believe and join them as followers of Jesus the Christ. As the letter of John says, "we declare to you what we have seen and heard so that you also may have fellowship with us; and truly our fellowship is with the Father and with his Son Jesus Christ." (1 John 1:3) These stories are God's gift to us that we might know and believe.

If that's the case, then we are stewards of this gift. We may not think of ourselves as stewards of Scripture but in one very real sense we are. If we do not make use of the witnesses we are given then they are wasted. Having Bibles in our pews or on our shelves that we do not read nor attempt to understand disowns the gift. Good stewards make use of the gifts they are given and do so in a way that honours the Giver and preserves or enhances the gift. We do that with the Biblical testimonies to Christ when we let the stories challenge us, comfort us, coach us, change us—when we begin to live by the story of Christ and become part of his ministry and mission. Participating in Bible studies, reaching out to those in need, working for justice, seeking reconciliation, praying for one another, caring for the earth—all of these are ways of living as disciples and stewards of God's grace.

But there's more. Like the earliest followers of Christ that we hear about in the Book of Acts we too are asked to give an account of the faith within us. Each of us has a unique story to tell about who we are and why we believe. Some can do with great eloquence. Some find it a real struggle to put their faith into words. Some feel that good Anglicans speak only with their actions! Yet Christ has touched our lives and in ways that others need to hear. If your faith has helped you come through a health crisis, you may be able to share that with a friend or neighbour who faces one themselves. If you have experienced divorce and come through to a new life, you know something of death and resurrection. If you have found yourself confused and bewildered by the events of the day and experienced Christ's peace in the midst of it, you know the presence of the Risen One. We are all witnesses who have a testimony to share, a story to tell. Being stewards of our own story means honouring what God has done and is doing in our lives and being willing to let others know.

What story do you have to tell about the presence of the Risen One in your life?
How might you share your story and with whom?

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