

I don't know how many times I have heard tonight's gospel story from Luke, let alone read it. But I kid you not this is the first time I have ever heard the phrase "idle tale" in a way that registered. In all honesty, it caught me off guard. Maybe I hear it differently because we are at a point in our household where, trying to refrain from accusations of lying, we try and soften it with "telling tales", or "telling stories." Maybe because I was so moved by Presiding Bishop Curry's Easter message. Check it out if you haven't seen it already, but more about that in a bit.

One of the things I love about the Easter Vigil is how you cannot avoid the scope of the story. And by story, I mean, THE story. The story of God's creation, deliverance, and redemption of His children. Tonight is a night for wide angle viewing, I'm talking 60's era epic hollywood, you know, shot on 70mm film, something like Ben Hur. Watching it just makes you feel small, in that there is a lot going on. Don't get me wrong, the point of making the correlation to wide angle classic cinema and our service isn't to make us feel insignificant, rather it is to remind us that we are all active participants in this sweeping epic. Seriously though, how often do you spend any time thinking about having a place in the creation narrative, the exodus story, to name a few, (and we didn't even read all of the readings we could have!)

Even though these stories seem a long way off and far removed, the fact that is that in a few moments as we renew our baptismal vows we are remembering the moment our lives were made completely new. Just like when 4 siblings stepped into a wardrobe and were transported to a new place and time in the wonderful Narnia series by C.S. Lewis, once we rise out of the waters of baptism, we become a new creation. We are thrust into this sweeping narrative that is our very life in Jesus Christ who came to share his life, offer his life so we might live. As Presiding Bishop Curry says throughout his Easter message, "This is not a fairy tale."

Tonight we come together to remember the mighty works of salvation worked on our behalf from the beginning of creation. From the moment God saw that it was good we were set on a collision course with grace and light, even in the midst of darkness and hatred. This is no idle tale. We may have started in darkness tonight but as our part in this story becomes more apparent the light grows brighter. We who have been hidden in God with Christ, reborn into the life, death, and resurrection of our Lord cannot but help to see that as new members in Him we have been given work to do.

Even though the world around us seems dark, hopeless, violent, callous and indifferent where does that leave us? It leaves us with work to do. Can we despair? No. Can we pass the buck? No. Why? Because

this isn't a fairy tale. This is no idle tale. What we celebrate tonight is the victory of God. The victory of love. Love that could not be voided by death. Love that knew not the permanent bonds of the tomb. Love that in spite of everything to the contrary, wins. The end. The only way to combat the darkness is to share the light. The only way to push back against hatred is to show love. Curry implores us, "Do not be afraid to be people of love". That is who we are, this is the story we share in. This is how we share, no show, God's intended dream, this story we all share.

God shows us through his Son that loving others is the way to life. That is our ultimate reality. Sacrificial, selfless, unbound love is the hallmark of Jesus, a love that drove him all the way to the cross. If there was more to offer, he would have. This is no fairy tale. This is no idle tale. This is OUR tale of victory and love because it is God's tale of victory and love. Go forth my friends, amazed as the disciples were, redeemed by Jesus' blood, raised to new life with Him, and share His story, our story. Because this is no idle tale.