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The Diary



When I was a little girl, I had a diary. It was just a cheap cardboard bound little book with a lock. I kept the key hidden away. Had anyone really wanted to read my diary badly enough, the lock would have been simple to break, yet having a lock on the diary was a sign of power. It was my story and no one was allowed to read it.

Part of the intrigue of a diary is both the power of the writer to lock away their secrets and the risk of someone else finding the diary and reading the author's most treasured secrets.

To me, there was always something mysteriously wonderful about my diary. For one thing, it was a place I could write my deepest secrets and thoughts in safety. Secondly, there was the beauty of the lock itself. The lock was power. My power. The power to tell my story and then hide it away. I always kept the key hidden far away from the actual diary. My diary could not betray me as long as I kept the key.

There was always the potential for a power shift. If someone else found my diary and my key, opened my diary and read it, then they would have the power of knowing my innermost thoughts.

Of course, diary keeping is quite different today. Online diaries and locked away passwords are the storage places and keys for today's world, but the dynamics are really the same.

As I mused about the power of a diary this morning, I thought of the irony of it all. We all have a longing to tell our story, the longing to be known intimately, yet to do so is risky so we try our best to keep our story locked away. We don't feel safe to share that story with just anyone. I remember one occasion in elementary school when I saw the horror on another little's girl face when "the boys" found her diary and read her secrets, which amounted to who she was in love with that week. They taunted her and sang, "Na, na, na, na, na; we found your diary. You're in love with Roger," (or Mark, or whoever it happened to be that week).

And then there was always the possibility of reading about yourself in someone else's diary. Perhaps they would tell of unfeigned love for you, or maybe they would say they hated you! It was all part of the intrigue.

Our stories are powerful and we often use them as pieces in a chess game. If I hide my story, I have power. If you discover my story, you have power to use it against me.

Perhaps the greatest power is when we are willing to purposefully share our stories. Sadly, this involves great risk, for to share our innermost self with someone else makes us vulnerable. Perhaps they will not treasure our story. The results can be pain and betrayal.

Our stories must first be written for our own hearts to acknowledge their beauty, purpose, and pain. Only then can they be safely shared with those whose lives our stories are destined to touch. And timing is important; in the Bible Daniel was instructed not to tell part of his story at that time and John gets a revelation that can't be understood yet.

I recently read some research that indicated that in the telling of our stories, whether verbally or through writing, our brain is able to heal from past experiences that have left, as it were, scars on our lives. The right and left part of the brain reconnect in ways that actually bring healing to the brain.

And this morning I thought of how The Bible is, in a way, God's diary. It contains His innermost thoughts and

feelings. He continues to work so that everyone will have a copy of His story, and Jesus is the key that unlocks the story. So God gives us both His diary and His key. He gives us the power to know Him intimately and He models for us the power of story. We sometimes call that the power of testimony. Scripture teaches us that overcoming power comes through the blood of the Lamb and the word of our testimony.

So today may we all listen for God's whisper for perhaps He will speak to us to share our story with someone else and through the telling of that story, we can invite them into the wonder of God's story for after all, stories are meant to be read.

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