

A Pearl of Great Worth

There is such a lot of information to explore and so many perspectives on that information, that I sometimes wonder how we ever manage to take it all in. Yet everything that has ever happened to us and everything that we've ever learned is never lost. It may not always be quickly remembered, but, somehow...in some way...it has been recorded.

Each "speck" of information, each experience is imbedded in the mind. I can only speak for myself, of course, but the first time that I remember something...the first time that I "look" at that memory...I become enmeshed in the actual emotions and feelings that occurred in the original event.

But, the process of looking at that memory has the effect of adding a second layer of memory over the original one: a memory of my looking at the original memory and reliving the event. Now, there is the original "speck" covered by one layer of "looking back."

The next time I revisit that same memory isn't quite as painful or joyful, because I now see the original memory PLUS the memory of looking back at it for the first time. In fact, each time I revisit that memory, I add another layer of memory over the top of it, a new memory that includes any changes in how I currently happen to be looking at things. Consequently, this layered record also contains all of the changes that I've undergone

since the original event. Unlike the process of fossilization—which this process seems to mimic—it is a living process rather than a dead one...even though there is some truth in the statement that I am becoming “an old fossil” and less changeable as time goes on.

Each layer of memory keeps the previous layers safe, while soothing the effects that the original memory might have had on my mind. Each layer can become more and more lustrous—and filled with light—if I look back with gentleness and enlightenment...or it can become darker and more forbidding, if I choose. In a more general sense, it's as if any and every thing that happens in our lives is the center of what can become a very precious pearl.

The book of Genesis has an original meaning, too...its core essence...which is also the center of a pearl of great worth. When we look back on the book of Genesis, we add layers and layers of who we've become on top of our initial interpretation of the original story. Each layer keeps the original safe, but these layers are seen through the eyes of who we are at the time we look at it. Consequently, if humanity continues to search for the truth, then someday, the way in which we now interpret those pages may seem old and outdated.

If the original event was God talking to us, then it's understandable why there needed to be at least one layer between the event and our seeing (or understanding) it. It's like

looking at the sun: the original event is so blindingly beautiful that we need to look at it indirectly...with some layer or veil in between. Lots of things are like this...

I tried my best to do what I believed was the right, but nothing seemed to work. Somehow, I couldn't get rid of the anger. The memory was just too painful.

So, of course, I railed away at the only one I knew would listen...God. Ironically, I wasn't even talking about what was really bothering me. I was just angry, and I needed to direct that anger at someone. It didn't really matter what the subject was...it never did. He, in His quiet, gentle way was always there.

"Shhh," He said. "Everything will be all right."

But it was like trying to hold and comfort a child that wouldn't be comforted.

"Why should I even listen to You! You're a...a...hypocrite like everybody else!" And I rattled on about something that really had nothing to do with the hurt and pain...

"Why...You...You even go and...and...You tell Moses to tell his people to bring gold and silver and jewels and stuff...and to build You and Your ark a place to stay...and THEN, You turn around and tell Jesus to tell us that all that stuff isn't important! That we should store up for ourselves treasures in heaven. If that isn't being a bit hypocritical, I don't know what is!"

Luckily, God has a sense of humor, so I wasn't zapped on the spot. Instead, He said

"Well, Lyn, what would you have done?"

And, seeing that I didn't have a clue, He fed me the answer to His question:

"I wanted to teach them that My house is precious, and what was precious to them at that time was gold, and silver, and jewels. In fact, since they were nomads, I had them build a temple in Jerusalem so that they would learn to come home to God. Later, the one temple was destroyed, and they learned that they could come home to God in many places. In fact, they would eventually learn that each and every one of them is a temple to God...and that each and every one of them is precious to Me. In my house are many mansions."

Instead of getting angry at me for my impertinence, He chose to tell me a story and it floated into my heart like a gentle breeze...

“And, someday...someday...I will teach them about the House of Lights, My House, an incredibly beautiful place without any walls to hold the light inside...But they aren't quite ready for that yet.”

He continued to rock me and speak to me and sing to me and enfold me in gentleness, and kindness, and love. He cared. And everything was all right, just as He'd said it would be. Amazingly, the anger inside of me was gone. Even now, as I write this, another layer of light has been added...because whenever I think back on that memory, the original hurt that I'd experienced on that particular day continues to fade, safely cushioned in the glow of His acceptance of me, for who and what I am.

Each pearl is different, each unique; and there may even be a string of them for some of us. But, each pearl is precious, because it has been paid for with the totality of our lives.