

Songwriting Article #14

By Clayton B Howell, BMI

Remember awhile back I asked you to get yourself a Children's Bible? Well, now I want you to get it out and read the story of the good Samaritan. Don't go back and re-read it in your adult Bible for the Biblical sounding language, use the Children's Bible. Don't get caught up in the familiarity of the Bible words, get caught up in what the story means.

My youngest brother used to call this story the, "Goodest American", because he knew what an American was but didn't quite understand what a Samaritan was. As I think of how much of the world perceives us today, I think maybe he was right in his assessment. Since Americans of the USA are some of the most hated people in all the world, (largely because of the good that they do), we rank with the Samaritans of Jesus' time, who were hated by the Jews because they were not pureblooded Jews. In this country, many of us are not pure-blooded ANYTHING, which is why, in my opinion, that we can reach across, class, ethnicity and upbringing to accomplish great things.

So, I want you to think of a way to tie in the concept of being someone who is not even thought of as worthy to do God's work, but who does it and does it as God intended because he or she doesn't have a sense of entitlement to the praise of the work, but rather they want the glory to be God's. Someone whose belief system says, "I am not worthy to do Your work, O Lord, but if you let me, I will do whatever I can for You and do it gladly." Let yourself see the homeless man on the street as a person who is just as much a "minister" as anyone who leads a congregation in Sunday worship, for instance.

Your assignment is to take this story and retell it as a contemporary story about someone who is an outcast that helps a Christian see what selfless means because of their actions. Someone whom we would consider unworthy of helping God's work get done and who we would never have believed did it, unless we had seen it with our own eyes. Make us understand that God's eyes are tied directly to His heart and that what we may see as meager, God sees as tremendous because of what we had to overcome just to do the meager.

Pastor Ivan Rhone of Center Street Ministries in Houston, TX always says that it is not about equal giving when they pass the plate, but about equal sacrifice. The widow's mite was huge because she gave all that she had to God, not thinking of herself at all. Center Street has a congregation that spans the spectrum from executives to homeless persons and everyone is seen as a valuable member of what goes on there in the time of worship. Don't ever think that because we go to such and such a building with the name of a church on it that it is a primary place of worship. For the truly born again Christian, the place of worship is every place that God is and since God is everywhere, our whole lives should be an act of worship. Think of this as you tell a story based on the Good Samaritan. I don't care if you rhyme it or not, but just tell the story, THEN, write the song. If you care to share, send it to Keith and I at KCCH Music by e-mail and will gladly give you our evaluation plus share our perceptions with you. My e-mail is clayh@kcchmusic.biz and Keith's is Keith@KeithCaldwell.biz.

Until next time, keep writing.