

“Later, when Jesus was alone with the twelve disciples and with the others who were gathered around, they asked him what the parables meant. He replied, “You are permitted to understand the secret of the Kingdom of God. But I use parables for everything I say to outsiders,” Mark 4:10-11 NLT

lectio // Mark 4:1-20

I was watching a TV show where a dad was talking to his teenage son about the book, *Catcher in the Rye*. The son said, “I don’t like it when they use symbols, and hidden messages, why don’t they just come out and say what they mean?” Not everyone likes a puzzle or a mystery to be solved. Not everyone has the patience for a story or to think more deeply. Nowadays, folks just want information fast. We’ve been uniquely Googlized! There is something in our brains that not only loves to create, but also to solve. A good story, or parable can stick with someone long after they read or hear it. It’s like our subconscious works on it, without our permission. The visualization of a good story not only allows us to imagine, it also allows us to either place ourselves in the story or activate a similar story in our memory and then cause us to quickly re-live it in our minds. With the disciples, they just took the shortcut, “they asked what it meant.” Jesus does tell them why he story-speaks and then admonishes them (loving correction), “If you can’t understand the meaning of this parable, how will you understand all the other parables?” Am I critical of those who want to help me learn by telling me a story? Or, do I just want them to rush to the point? I love stories. I love telling stories. Everyone who knows me knows that I talk long with stories. Do you get it? I started this thought with a story.

oratio

pray as responding to the words, phrase, sentence that God has stirred within you

Dad,

I still remember talking to a lady after speaking at a church in Escondido. She said, “you have the gift of storytelling.” I had never heard someone just come out and say it.... positively, that is. Folks don’t seem to have time for stories shared, but I still like to hear them. Sometimes it takes a few hours, with others it takes a few years to really hear their story. If this storytelling thing is a gift (and not an annoyance), how can I use it for your Kingdom? Put me around someone that will have the time to listen or put me with someone who needs to share their story - I’ll make the time and be patient enough to allow you to do your good work.

contemplatio

rest in the presence of God, allowing the words revealed to take root