

Focusing In By Faye Reynolds

"For we are God's poiema, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do." Eph. 2:10

Some things do get lost in the translation. A word can spark great imagination or seem a simple statement of fact, as the verse above reminds me. The Greek word "poiema" is the word that the NIV translates "workmanship", which is such a boring word (a male's choice, I'm sure). But the literal translation is "fabric" which offers so much more potential. We are God's fabric which invites the image of being woven into his beautiful tapestry. Or, from the root of poiema comes our word for poetry which has the essence of artistry in its etymology. I am a Valentine love poem, written by God! Isn't that an amazing image of intimacy and tenderness? And so much more feminine!

I also know that there are men who are very creative. I've been reading Donald Millar's most recent book, *A Million Miles in a Thousand Years: What I learned While Editing my Life* and as he considers his personal life as an author, he imagines God also as an author – the author of our stories. He writes,

If I have a hope, it's that God sat over the dark nothing and wrote you and me, specifically, into the story, and put us in with the sunset and the rainstorm as though to say, "Enjoy your place in my story. The beauty of it means you matter, and you can create within it, even as I have created you." (pg 59)

As an author, Donald knows how story characters can take on a life of their own and he notes how one author was surprised that the protagonist ended up in Spain instead of South America as planned. In Ephesians we have the sense that God has an intention or plan for us to do wonderful things in Christ, but we don't always follow the Author's intent. We are invited into the creative process to write our own story within the great Story. The question is; will we make it a better story?

It excites me to think that God weaves special people into our fabric, or characters into our story that will affect us and change us. Think of all of the beautiful people that are part of your story – people who have blessed you or challenged you and made you grow, sometimes in spite of yourself. Every encounter plays a part in our story and continues to form our personal character. Our stories weave in and out of each other and we are changed.

You can call it God or a conscience or you can dismiss it as that intuitive knowing we all have as human beings, as living storytellers; but there is a knowing I feel that guides me toward better stories, toward being a better character. I believe there is a writer outside ourselves, plotting a better story for us, interacting with us, even, and whispering a better story into our consciousness. (pg 86)

God is writing a beautiful story for your life and for mine, not coercively or controlling, but wooing us gently toward a happy ending. How well we listen to his whispers will make all the difference.

By grace alone,

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