

## My Cabin of Peace

"I awoke, and behold it was a dream."

John Bunyan

*Behold, thou desirest truth in the inward parts: and in the hidden part thou shalt make me to know wisdom.*

*Psalm 51:6*

Truth in the deepest part of my heart; peace, security, hope, comfort, and stillness. Outside the storm rages, the wind blows, the freezing wind cuts to the bone, and snow and rain blind the eyes. I stumble along, alone, sliding in the mud, tripping over stones, and falling, soaked to the skin and cold, oh so cold. It seems like the path never ends and as time goes on any glimmer of light has faded from the horizon. A flash of lightning, a roll of thunder, and the feeling of hopelessness is almost complete. In the distance the crash of breakers upon the rocks of the shore. I stumble on, aware that at any moment my footing could slip, and I would plunge down the rock face of the cliff and into the sea of hopelessness, never to return. Lost and alone, or so it seems, I wander on in the dark, trying to find some glimmer of hope or self-confidence, longing for the day the sun will shine, the birds will sing, and the storm will be but a fading memory. But for now, the storm rages, without a sign of abating. I find some shelter in a rock outcropping and wait for daylight. But even there the wind snatches at my coat, and water squelches in my shoes. My feet are so tired and sore that I do not want to go on another inch.

Then I feel it, a gentle hand, a tender touch, and I am drawn to my feet. A quiet voice says follow me and I will help you. I can hardly believe that someone saw me out in this storm and cared enough to come and rescue me. I feel a steady hand on mine as this strong stranger leads me away from the crashing sea. His hand is steady and strong, and as I walk with him, the rain does not seem to sting so badly, and the wind gives me a reprieve from its incessant blowing.

Then I see it, a light from a window beckoning me toward its warm glow. My feet stumble upon the threshold, and I find myself falling through the open door of the little cottage. And then I am standing inside, out of the raging storm. There is a fire in the grate, and the kettle on the stove, and the room is filled with the smell of fresh coffee, and baking bread. The gentle stranger helps me remove my sodden clothes, and step into a steaming bath. The warm water sooths the bruises from the falls, and my tired, aching feet. Soon I am sitting in a chair with my feet propped up by the fire; a steaming cup of coffee is in my hand, while a fresh baked roll smothered in butter, rests on a delicate plate on the sideboard. Peace, oh so peaceful. I glance at the window; the storm still rages and occasionally a strong gust of wind makes the window rattle.

I look around the room, there like a sentry of time, stands the old door; its heavy strap hinges connect to pins solidly anchored into the stone wall. My eyes moved to the heavy latch, strong enough to withstand all the onslaughts of the elements or any uninvited marauders seeking entrance. The latch key hangs in its place beside the door, ready to be pocketed for the next excursion. The walls and floors are made of natural stone, the former polished smooth by years of many feet, while the grains of sand twinkle like thousands of stars in the mortar between the wall stones. The beams of the ceiling still bear the marks of the adze, covered with fresh whitewash. From my point of view by the fire, I see the kitchen table, laden with more fresh rolls, fruit, and tasty looking food. I take it all in and bask in the overwhelming sense of peace and security.

On one wall are rows and rows of books. Some are new looking, while others are yellowing with age. From where I am sitting, I see the firelight reflecting on the titles on the bindings. I see that many of them have the word truth on them, and I wonder, what is this, where am I. Then I see the words on the wall above the books, *"Thou desirest truth in the inward parts."* *Psalm 51:6* I realize that all the titles are about truth. Truth

about who I am, and what I am, and who God is, and what he thinks of me. On the other wall are more rows of books and the words: *And ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free. John 8:32*

I suddenly realize that I am resting in the inner sanctuary of my own heart, and this gentle stranger called Jesus, has left as quietly as he appeared, yet somehow his presence and peace still lingered near.

I made my way to the wall of books, and my finger began to trace the titles on the bindings: Understanding Past Truth, Understanding Present Truth, Truth of Who You Think You Are. Then on the other wall titles like: I Love You, Forgiven, How I Created You, You Are Not a Mistake, You Are Never Forgotten, You Are Beautiful, You Are Beautifully Imperfect, You Are not a Failure, and You Are Mine, written by, Your Heavenly Father. I continued to scan the other titles as the storm raged outside. Trust, Healed, and Loved, were other books that caught my eye. I selected one called Peace and made my way back to the fire and began to read. *Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you: not as the world giveth, give I unto you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid. John 14:27* I read on as the heavenly peace wrapped itself around me like a warm blanket. My eyes grew heavy, and I must have slipped off to sleep, because I opened my eyes and through the window I could see the faint light of day, and I noticed the storm had abated. As the night faded into day, I read the book Forgiven, and Loving Yourself, Because God Does, and later one titled, Walking by Faith.

Once again, my eyes grew heavy and I slept, dreaming of another day when the storm would be over, and the sun would shine again. A day when the birds would sing in the trees and the smell of honeysuckle would fill the air with its sweet fragrance. I woke refreshed and realized the storm was over, my dream had come true.

There are many more things to be discovered yet in this little sanctuary of peace. I plan to read more of those books, so full of truth. Titles such as: Redemption, God's Grace, The Humble Heart, What to do With Burdens, and What it Means to be Human; Telling Yourself the Truth, Living for God, Honest Prayers, Serving Others, and The Heart of Jesus. Not to mention the row upon row, of songs of praise.

Now that I know this place is here, I want to come here often and rest and be restored. I know I will go out and storms will come, and I will be buffeted by the storms of self-doubt, and my own imagination. When that happens, I want to find my way back here, and by God's grace and help I will.

I know this scene is all part of my imagination, and yet it is a real place of serene quietness deep inside where I can be safe from the storms of life, and where with the help of Jesus, find truth and peace. There could be other books with titles such as: You are a Sinner, Condemned, Walking Away From God, and others like A Proud Heart, Unwilling, A Stubborn Heart, You are Lukewarm, and Self-righteousness. These are also words of truth. However, many times Satan uses those titles to discourage the faint of heart and as arsenal against God's children. God may at time show us those titles to get our attention, but he also reveals those things to us in the books: What it Means to be Human, Sinner Saved by Grace, Your Need of a Savior, and The Need of God's Grace. To be inside of that inner sanctuary and read titles about God's love, does not mean that he will not at times speak to us about our own sinfulness, stubbornness, and pride. But he does it in such a way that a weary soul can accept it.

When we come in out of the cold, we are in essence, submitting to God's love and grace, leaving sin and darkness behind. And, I dare say, that one cannot experience the true deep inner peace and step into that room of quiet rest, without a full surrender of the will. However, God does not try to clean us up out in the cold and storm, instead, he takes us inside where the warmth of his love softens the cold hard heart, which causes a deep unworthiness of his love.

We will continue to need to have those wet soggy, dirty, clothes stripped off, so we can be washed in the warm shower of his grace. When that happens, oh, what peace, and feelings of undeserving love fills the cracks of our lives. And God himself, loves us with his everlasting love.

*The Unlikely Writer*

*Jeff Goertzen*

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