



## *Pastor Hanke's Blog*

### *March 11, 2018*

#### Common Language in a Story

As part of our evening routine, my kids and I are watching a popular show full of kids stories and fairy tales. As I have been watching, I've noticed that these stories, like Snow White, Beauty and the Beast, and the Wizard of Oz, are as familiar to me as the stories I grew up with in church. As a Christian I asked myself, "Should I know these stories as well as I know Jonah and the Big Fish, Noah and his Ark, and Moses and Red Sea?" How did these secular stories become a childhood comfort?

With that question in mind, as I've continued to watch the show, I've noticed that the language is similar between the two types of stories. There is a theme of good vs. evil, and language about the light and the dark. It is that way in many of the children's books I have read to the kids as well, even in the Bible stories. Jacob is starting to catch on to this too. One day when the characters in the episode were wrestling, he asked me why we want the good guys to win? Why do the heroes always get the happy endings and the villains don't?

Lately I have been reading a marketing book as I continue to ask how to get the message of our church and preschool out to our community. This particular book was written by a Christian author. He also uses this story language, saying that people always see the villains in their lives, and want to be the hero in their own stories as they look for the solution. And this is a marketing book.

It is no wonder that when Jesus is talking to Nicodemus, who is confused by needing to be born again, not only does He give Nicodemus a "church" answer, but He continues to speak about light and dark, and good and evil. Jesus brings out the story language to help the listeners understand using words with which they are familiar.

The language of the church is one of the most challenging components for an unchurched culture. At times it can be easy for us to fall into our "church language," and forget that these are words that some may not understand. We might even get frustrated at the idea that there is a language barrier between the church and the world. The good news is that there is also a common ground. We find it in the themes of light vs. dark, and good vs. evil, and it's used in stories all over the world. This weekend we take time to reflect on how Jesus used common language to help bring people to the Truth!

*God's Peace,*  
*Pastor Will*