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Pastor Hanke's Blog

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Parts of a Story: Interacting

Have you ever read a book where you got caught up in every part of the story and the events the characters were facing? Have you ever watched a movie on the edge of your seat, intrigued with every twist and turn? What is it that makes some stories so compelling and others not interesting at all? I am always intrigued with what kinds of stories draw people in. To be honest, I also find what kind of music a person listens to and what type of food they like or don't like intriguing as well. People are just interesting.

I started off Holy Week this year with Oyster Fest. Opa and I love doing this every year, but this year it was more fitting than ever. As I thought about how this tradition started (it's a great story), I realized it relates to our theme for Holy Week and how we share in the story of Jesus. Oyster Fest is definitely at time of *celebration (Palm Sunday's theme)* as Opa and I hang out and enjoy our time together. But it actually started because of some very *intimate moments (Maundy Thursday's theme)* early in my life.

My Grandpa Schubkegel, who was a pastor, used to take me to the ocean just a few miles from his house. We would put crab traps down and visit while we waited for the crabs to come. What we caught we brought back to his house and cooked up for an amazing feast not typical on a pastor's salary. My love for seafood was born from this man, one who loved spending time with me, and I with him. With my Grandpa Hanke, who was also a pastor, I don't have seafood stories, but root beer float stories. I have many memories of hanging with him and talking over our root beer floats. Though my days of soda have dwindled, I'm still a sucker for a good root beer float in a frosty glass.

The stories with my grandpas didn't end the way I wanted. At the age of 13, as I was feeling the Lord leading me to be a pastor, my Grandpa Schubkegel died after a mistake was made by his surgeon. Then, merely six months after I was ordained, my Grandpa Hanke died. Two of the most formative people in my spiritual life passed away and never got to see me be a pastor. These *conflicts (Good Friday's theme)* could have been devastating, but when I go through Holy Week and see Jesus went through these same parts in His story, but arose with victory so that my story does not end in conflict, it changes how I *interact (Easter Sunday's theme)* or respond in my story.

A few years ago I realized that we did not know how much longer Mindy's grandpa, Opa, would be around. I loved my grandpas, so I wanted to treasure whatever time was left with Mindy's grandpa as well. It so happens that Opa loves oysters, and thus a new tradition was started. It was a way I could treasure the grandpas God had given me, even if the characters had changed.

When we began prepping for Holy Week, we were reminded that Mark has a very powerful and unique conclusion to his Gospel. It is a Gospel that walks through the different parts of Jesus' story and ends by asking us how will we interact with that story. What does the victory over sin, death and the devil mean for you and your story? How do we appreciate all the parts of our story and still find victory even when conflicts arise? This weekend we will talk about what it means into interact in your story with the parts you have been given. Jesus has blessed each of you with the parts of your story. There may be many conflicts, but thanks be to Jesus, because of Easter, it doesn't end that way!

God's Peace,

Pastor Will