



Ladies of Grace Blog
Week 1, February 2019

Belonging

Our airport conversation oozed with emotion when my seat-stranger revealed he is in the process of adopting his 33-year-old niece. “She grew up in a tough family,” he said. And then, head down, quietly, “We have always loved her.” He described her birth father as incompetent, unloving and so this uncle boldly approached the entrance of his niece’s hurting heart, knocked and asked if he could come in, bearing gifts of overwhelming love and adoption papers. This father of three swelled and smiled, “I have to get used to saying I have FOUR daughters now.” His words danced with joy, excitement, delight.

I listened to that father of now-four daughters and thought, “Oh, Lord! Could it be that Your heart swells with this kind of joy and delight when we fling open the doors of our hearts to invite You in?” I heard this man’s desperate desire that this niece would choose to belong to him and wondered, “Is Your desire to adopt us even stronger than that? Why, Lord, would You even consider it worthwhile to so passionately pursue us like that?” This man did not talk about how talented his niece is. He didn’t describe the wonderful ways she has treated him. He only spoke of love and of wanting her to know that her life will be forever changed when she finally belongs to those who really love her.

I considered her past life, and ours; how before we belonged to God we were slaves to the incompetent, loveless principles of the world. But how He so loved us that He sent His Son, born of woman, born under the law, to redeem us (Galatians 4:4); to save us from our tough earthly family of slavery into His grace-filled arms of belonging. I pondered her future and ours; how significantly her life might change in this new heart-home with a mercy-minded father, who claims her as his own because his own heart-geyser gushes with love for her. He will give her a new name, his name. When she has good news to share, he will rejoice with her. When she faces trials, he will be by her side, holding her up. This adoption will shift how she walks through life. Perhaps it won’t erase the heartache that is her past, but it will offer hope for a new and different future; and in the safety of that boundless belonging love, she will be able to peer toward her past and face her future through cataract-free lenses. And so with us.

Our adoption into God’s family doesn’t mean that the memory of our past circumstances will magically disappear. When He claims us, He doesn’t wipe our memories clean. Over and over in scripture He says, “Remember.” That we might remember who we were and where we were, but that He relentlessly pursued us. That we might remember once we were separated from Him, but now “... (we) who were once far off have been brought near by the blood of Christ” (Ephesians 2:13). That we might remember though we were once slaves to the law, Christ broke down the dividing wall of hostility by abolishing the law (Ephesians 2: 14-15). That we might remember that once we opened that door to His knocking we inexplicably became heirs, filled with His Spirit and part of His Holy Temple (Ephesians 2:19-21); new creations who will be engraved with His Name, the name of our new home and the name of His Beloved Son (Revelation 3:12), a belonging that will be sealed forever.