

Stories to Tell
By Heather Trent Beers

"No one lights a lamp and then covers it with a washtub or shoves it under the bed. No, you set it up on a lamp stand so those who enter the room can see their way. We're not keeping secrets; we're telling them. We're not hiding things; we're bringing everything out into the open. So be careful that you don't become misers of what you hear. Generosity begets generosity. Stinginess impoverishes." (Luke 8:16-18, *The Message*)

Even published, I still question my writing – why write, why bother? Doubt frequently nibbles around the edges of my satisfaction.

One morning I wore myself out wrestling these doubts. Needing a break, I bolted to my favorite coffee shop and perused the book shelves as I waited for my order. Amidst the novels and self-help books sat a copy of *The Message*, Eugene Petersen's brilliant "contemporary rendering of the Bible...in everyday language."

Flipping it randomly to Luke chapter eight, I read, mesmerized by Eugene's telling of the seed that falls along different types of ground. After explaining how the seed either grows or doesn't, Jesus says,

"Are you listening to this? Really listening to this?" (*I'm transported and can almost see Him. It's as if He's looking past the disciples straight to me.*)

"Why did you tell this story?" the disciples asked. (*Good question.*)

He said, "You've been given insight into God's kingdom—you know how it works. There are others who need stories."

The barista calls, "Chai for Heather!"

I snap out of my reverie, but Jesus has caught hold of my hand through *The Message*. His gaze bores straight through to my troubled heart, and He whispers, "There are others who need stories. Go tell them."

Occasionally, doubts still stalk me. Now, though, I feel His grip on my hand. I see the intensity in His eyes as He tells me, "You've been given insight. Gather your materials. There are stories to tell."

How can I refuse Him?

Prayer: Lord, thank You for the joy writing brings me. Help me gather my materials and tell Your stories to those who need them.
