

Steek ertens in jou woonplek 'n kers aan terwyl jy lees.

Tema: God is nie in beginsels nie, of hoe?

Skriflesing: Lukas 13:10-17

Broodjies vir die pad

“And now brothers, I will ask you a terrible question, and God knows I ask it also of myself. Is the truth beyond all truths, beyond the stars, just this: that to live without him is the real death, that to die with him the only life?”

— Frederick Buechner, *The Magnificent Defeat*

“Listen to your life. Listen to what happens to you because it is through what happens to you that God speaks . . . It's in language that's not always easy to decipher, but it's there, powerfully, memorably, unforgettably.”

— Frederick Buechner

“Our stories are all stories of searching. We search for a good self to be and for good work to do. We search to become human in a world that tempts us always to be less than human or looks to us to be more. We search to love and to be loved. And in a world where it is often hard to believe in much of anything, we search to believe in something holy and beautiful and life-transcending that will give meaning and purpose to the lives we live.”

— Frederick Buechner, *The Longing for Home: Reflections at Midlife*

“In honesty you have to admit to a wise man that prayer is not for the wise, not for the prudent, not for the sophisticated. Instead it is for those who recognize that in face of their deepest needs, all their wisdom is quite helpless. It is for those who are willing to persist in doing something that is both childish and crucial.”

— Frederick Buechner, *The Magnificent Defeat*

“Part of the inner world of everyone is this sense of emptiness, unease, incompleteness, and I believe that this in itself is a word from God, that this is the sound that God's voice makes in a world that has explained him away. In such a world, I suspect that maybe God speaks to us most clearly through his silence, his absence, so that we know him best through our missing him.”

— Frederick Buechner, *Secrets in the Dark: A Life in Sermons*

“It is not objective proof of God's existence that we want but, whether we use religious language for it or not, the experience of God's presence.”

— Frederick Buechner, *The Magnificent Defeat*

“Jesus, remember me when you come into your kingdom,” the good thief said from his cross. (Luke 23:42). There are perhaps no more human words in all of Scripture, no prayer we can pray so well.”

— Frederick Buechner, *Listening to Your Life: Daily Meditations with Frederick Buechner*

“My story is important not because it is mine, God knows, but because if I tell it anything like right, the chances are you will recognize that in many ways it is also yours... it is precisely through these stories in all their particularity, as I have long believed and often said, that God makes himself known to each of us more powerfully and personally. If this is true, it means that to lose track of our stories is to be profoundly impoverished not only humanly but also spiritually.”

— Frederick Buechner, *Telling Secrets*

“You enter the extraordinary by way of the ordinary”

— Frederick Buechner

“If you tell me Christian commitment is a kind of thing that has happened to you once and for all like some kind of spiritual plastic surgery, I say go to, go to, you're either pulling the wool over your own eyes or trying to pull it over mine. Every morning you should wake up in your bed and ask yourself: “Can I believe it all again today?” No, better still, don't ask it till after you've read *The New York Times*, till after you've studied that daily record of the world's brokenness and corruption, which should always stand side by side with your Bible. Then ask yourself if you can believe in the Gospel of Jesus Christ again for that particular day. If your answer's always Yes, then you probably don't know what believing means. At least five times out of ten the answer should be No because the No is as important as the Yes, maybe more so. The No is what proves you're human in case you should ever doubt it. And then if some morning the answer happens to be really Yes, it should be a Yes that's choked with confession and tears and . . . great laughter.”

— Frederick Buechner

“if you don't have doubts you're either kidding yourself or asleep. Doubts are the ants-in-the-pants of faith. They keep it alive and moving.”

— Frederick Buechner, *Wishful Thinking: A Theological ABC*

Myth

THE RAW MATERIAL OF A MYTH, like the raw material of a dream, may be something that actually happened once. But myths, like dreams, do not tell us much about that kind of actuality. The creation of Adam and Eve, the Tower of Babel, Oedipus—they do not tell us primarily about events. They tell us about ourselves.

In popular usage, a myth has come to mean a story that is not true. Historically speaking, that may well be so. Humanly speaking, a myth is a story that is always true.

— Frederick Buechner, Originally published in *Wishful Thinking* and later in *Beyond Words*

“If we only had eyes to see and ears to hear and wits to understand, we would know that the Kingdom of God in the sense of holiness, goodness, beauty is as close as breathing and is crying out to born both within ourselves and within the world; we would know that the Kingdom of God is what we all of us hunger for above all other things even when we

don't know its name or realize that it's what we're starving to death for. The Kingdom of God is where our best dreams come from and our truest prayers. We glimpse it at those moments when we find ourselves being better than we are and wiser than we know. We catch sight of it when at some moment of crisis a strength seems to come to us that is greater than our own strength. The Kingdom of God is where we belong. It is home, and whether we realize it or not, I think we are all of us homesick for it."

— Frederick Buechner

"Many an atheist is a believer without knowing it just as many a believer is an atheist without knowing it. You can sincerely believe there is no God and live as though there is. You can sincerely believe there is a God and live as though there isn't."

— Frederick Buechner, *Beyond Words: Daily Readings in the ABC's of Faith*

"And because God's love is uncoercive and treasures our freedom - if above all he wants us to love him, then we must be left free not to love him - we are free to resist it, deny it, crucify it finally, which we do again and again. This is our terrible freedom, which love refuses to overpower so that, in this, the greatest of all powers, God's power, is itself powerless."

— Frederick Buechner, *The Magnificent Defeat*

"Unbelief is as much of a choice as belief is. What makes it in many ways more appealing is that whereas to believe in something requires some measure of understanding and effort, not to believe doesn't require much of anything at all."

— Frederick Buechner, *Whistling in the Dark: A Doubter's Dictionary*

"Maybe it's all utterly meaningless. Maybe it's all unutterably meaningful. If you want to know which, pay attention to what it means to be truly human in a world that half the time we're in love with and half the time scares the hell out of us. Any fiction that helps us pay attention to that is religious fiction. The unexpected sound of your name on somebody's lips. The good dream. The strange coincidence. The moment that brings tears to your eyes. The person who brings life to your life. Even the smallest events hold the greatest clues."

— Frederick Buechner

"Principles are what people have instead of God.

To be a Christian means among other things to be willing if necessary to sacrifice even your highest principles for God's or your neighbour's sake the way a Christian pacifist must be willing to pick up a baseball bat if there's no other way to stop a man from savagely beating a child.

Jesus didn't forgive his executioners on principle but because in some unimaginable way he was able to love them. 'Principle' is an even duller word than 'Religion'."

— Frederick Buechner, *Wishful Thinking: A Theological ABC*

"Christ never promises peace in the sense of no more struggle and suffering. Instead, he helps us to struggle and suffer as he did, in love, for one another. Christ does not give us security in the sense of something in this world, some cause, some principle, some value, which is forever. Instead, he tells us that there is nothing in this world that is forever,

all flesh is grass. He does not promise us unlonely lives. His own life speaks loud of how, in a world where there is little love, love is always lonely. Instead of all these, the answer that he gives, I think, is himself. If we go to him for anything else, he may send us away empty or he may not. But if we go to him for himself, I believe that we go away always with this deepest of all our hungers filled."

— Frederick Buechner, *Listening to Your Life: Daily Meditations with Frederick Buechner*

"The Gospel writers are not really interested primarily in the facts of the birth but in the significance, the meaning for them of that birth just as the people who love us are not really interested primarily in the facts of our births but in what it meant to them when we were born and how for them the world was never the same again, how their whole lives were changed with new significance."

— Frederick Buechner, *The Hungering Dark*

"Let the preacher tell the truth. Let him make audible the silence of the news of the world with the sound turned off so that in the silence we can hear the tragic truth of the Gospel, which is that the world where God is absent is a dark and echoing emptiness; and the comic truth of the Gospel, which is that it is into the depths of his absence that God makes himself present in such unlikely ways and to such unlikely people that old Sarah and Abraham and maybe when the time comes even Pilate and Job and Lear and Henry Ward Beecher and you and I laugh till the tears run down our cheeks. And finally let him preach this overwhelming of tragedy by comedy, of darkness by light, of the ordinary by the extraordinary, as the tale that is too good not to be true because to dismiss it as untrue is to dismiss along with it that catch of the breath, that beat and lifting of the heart near to or even accompanied by tears, which I believe is the deepest intuition of truth that we have."

— Frederick Buechner, *Telling the Truth: The Gospel as Tragedy, Comedy, and Fairy Tale*

"We can know that in the beginning there was God and not just some cosmic upheaval that brought light out of darkness only when we have experienced him doing the same thing in our lives, our world--bringing light out of our darkness"

— Frederick Buechner

"It hardly matters how the body of Jesus came to be missing because in the last analysis what convinced the people that he had risen from the dead was not the absence of his corpse but his living presence. And so it has been ever since."

— Frederick Buechner, *The Faces of Jesus: A Life Story*

"The word longing comes from the same root as the word long in the sense of length in either time or space and also the word belong, so that in its full richness to long suggests to yearn for a long time for something that is a long way off and something that we feel we belong to and that belongs to us. The longing for home is so universal a form of longing that there is even a special word for it, which is of course homesickness,"— Frederick Buechner, *The Longing for Home: Reflections at Midlife*