



Teammates and special friends,

April 22, 2011

During this special week that started this past weekend with Palm Sunday and will culminate with Easter this next Sunday, I've been thinking a lot about the "Royal Law". Basically, it is "LOVE GOD and PEOPLE with all you've got".

I received this story from a dear friend and coach who does this very thing. THESE TRUE STORIES should bless and challenge us at the same time.

*I'd like to relate a story that Frances Hesselbein shared in her autobiography. She was once asked if there was a defining moment in her life that determined the person and leader she would become. She responded:*

*When I was 8 years old I was visiting my grandparents' home in South Fork, PA, a small railroad and coal-mining town 9 miles from our home in Johnstown. On the shelf above my grandparents' organ were two beautiful Chinese vases. I asked my grandmother if I could play with them. She told me no and sat me down gently with her arm around me to explain why:*

Long ago, when your mother was about your age, some days she and her sisters would come home from school crying that some bad boys were chasing Mr. Yee and calling him bad names. Now in this little town was a Chinese gentleman who ran a laundry service, living alone in the back of his small laundry. Each week he picked up your grandfather's shirts and brought them back a few days later washed, starched, and ironed perfectly. Mr. Yee wore traditional Chinese clothes - a long tunic and a cap with his hair in a queue. The boys would chase him yelling 'Chinky, Chinky Chinaman,' and worse. They would try to pull his queue.

One day there was knock on our door. When I opened it, there stood Mr. Yee, with a large package in his arms. I said, 'Oh, Mr. Yee, please come in. Won't you sit down?' But Mr. Yee just handed me the package saying, 'This is for you.' I opened the package and in it were two beautiful vases. I said, 'Mr. Yee, these are too valuable. I couldn't accept them.' His answer was, 'I want you to have them.' I asked, 'Why me?'

He said, 'Mrs. Wicks, I have been in this town 10 years and you are the only one who ever called me Mr. Yee. They won't let me bring my wife and children here, and I miss them so much so I'm going back to China. The vases are all I brought with me. I want you to have them.' There were tears in his eyes as he said goodbye.

In my grandmother's arms I cried my heart out for poor Mr. Yee. That was long ago, but nevertheless, the defining moment I learned was that all people deserve respect, a moment that would stay with me, shaping my life with a passion for diversity and inclusion. My grandmother wanted me to have those vases when she died, and today they are in my living room. Do you think I ever walk in that room and see those vases, and not think of Mr. Yee and Grandma Wicks?

*2000 years ago, the Son of Man entered Jerusalem. Like Mr. Yee, He was ostracized and persecuted because He was Different, and because of the wickedness of men. Like Mr. Yee, He was willing to part with that which was most dear to Him, offering it as a Gift. His Gift, which came at a very dear price, was all inclusive, for all people for all time. If we are ever tempted to look down*

*upon someone who may appear to be different, may we remember the story of Mr. Yee and that Jesus came for ALL of us. And may we remember that Jesus chose not to look down upon us despite our own personal wickedness, and instead of condemning us, did the unthinkable and sacrificed Himself for us. None of us is as Strong as All of Us. And All of Us have been Redeemed by the King, the only King who ever gave Himself as a Sacrifice.*

Question? Are there any Mr. Yee's in your life? More importantly, how have you responded toward them? Do we see them as Jesus sees them, or even more sobering, do we see Jesus in them (His image)?

Jesus was different. WE SHOULD BE AS WELL. Do we look like everyone else or have we had a defining moment in our lives where HE has changed us so that we now are willing to SACRIFICE OURSELVES for Him and others? WHY? So that THE WORLD WILL KNOW HE LIVES!

Onward & upward,  
Nelson