



“ALL'S WELL THAT ENDS WELL”

A Teaching Tale

My dear friend, may I offer you a divine story this month instead of my customary writing? You see, we've been invited to an incredibly special performance! Not just any performance, but a special kind of theater. In fact, I have our tickets in my hand. Do you want to spend a memorable evening at a beautiful playhouse? I heard we can both discover divine wisdom and new revelation, right here, right now! Let's hurry inside, as they are already turning down the lights. I don't want you to stumble to our front row seats in the dark! Can you hear the orchestra already tuning up? Everyone is quiet, anxiously waiting for the beginning.

SCENE ONE

The curtain slowly rises as the music plays, with the promise of an unforgettable evening ahead.

A magnificent deep voice booms, sounding both noble and virtuous: “All's Well That Ends Well if you follow the way of the sweet Master who led us with humility.”

Around a long royal table is a large group of stately and dignified people. They are known throughout the kingdom by the words that they themselves decree.

“I am the greatest in this kingdom,” declares Matthew.

Pulling out a freshly-minted business card from his own printing press, Mark argues, “No, I am far more anointed. You can read it for yourself. I am the main Apostle. It’s written right here!”

“Nonsense,” declares Luke. “Maybe you forget that I’m much more qualified and educated than either of you! I am the greatest at this table and the greatest in this kingdom.”

Peter chuckles and shakes his head. *“I see that I’m a prophet without honor at this table. Maybe you’ve forgotten all the prophecies I’ve given, as they’ve already come to pass. In fact, I have them all written down in this very scroll as I love to boost my accuracy record. Of course, I do this to give glory to me... I mean to God.”* He covers his embarrassment with a laugh.

James says, “Well, the people often forget to recognize the Hand of God on a man’s life. They forget our names and thus do not acknowledge the Lord.”

Nodding, Matthew adds, “For once we all agree that we must help the people remember us. Surely, Master Jesus would agree with us, would He not?”

The lights go out.

The music wanes.

The crowd is silent, fastened to their seats, not moving or whispering a single word.

SCENE TWO

Slowly the orchestra begins again. This time with notes that bring tranquility of heart. In the distance we see our sweet Master Jesus walking toward us.

A loud voice like a trumpet declares this special message:

“The Earth is the Lord’s and there is none higher than He! He is crowned with honor and grace. He has a name above all names, and every person ever born will ultimately bow

their knee to the King of Kings and Lord of Lords. Their confession will be made known before men, for He is the essence of magnificence and splendor. He is the Beautiful one; there is no one higher!”

Then He moves to the forefront of the stage, where His majestic presence fills that sacred space. When He stops moving the audience shudders. With just a look He makes the company tremble. He’s turning His head now, beautifully dressed in a long shimmering white robe with a wide golden sash. Every tongue is silent and a sense of awe fills the theater as His presence and the train of His garment fills the hall. His face is like the sun radiating a singular glory. Rays of brilliant light flash at the slightest gesture from His powerful hand. His hair is long and white like wool, and His eyes reflect a depth of love never before seen, as He looks at His beloved: you and me. Waves of gentleness and tender compassion move through the atmosphere. His voice is like the roar of many waters, resounding with an unrelenting invitation to come and be part of the family, enjoying the love and goodness of God that cannot be quenched (Hab. 3, Is. 6, Rev. 1).

A voice from above booms: *“Consider this. This same King of Glory—Jesus—stepped out of heaven and into the gap to become a slave and made Himself of no reputation. He forfeited every divine privilege. He had equal status with God but left that all behind, taking on the status of a slave to become human, in order to redeem us to God. It was an incredibly humbling process. He didn’t claim special privileges. Instead, He lived a selfless, obedient life and then died a selfless, obedient death—and the worst kind of death at that—a humiliating crucifixion” (Phil 2: 5-8 MSG).*

Another voice bellows out from the far, dark corner of the stage.

“Do we see ourselves as the servant He was when He walked the earth? Even today He is our example.”

Still standing in the center of the stage, He is now surrounded by His twelve disciples, and He looks at each one with love and concern. He takes up a servant’s towel and then kneels, preparing to wash their feet, even the feet of Judas, who would ultimately betray Him (John 13).

What a lowly place the Lord chose to lead from. Watching from the front row seat I noticed the astonishment on their faces, watching Him remove their sandals, revealing feet that walked through every kind of filth, covered with cracks, calluses and sores. But He didn’t turn away in disgust the way most people would have. Rather, He gently held their feet in His hands, while He washed, rinsed and dried them, as if it was a privilege—something He was honored to do. They could see His devotion and couldn’t help but weep at such a sacrifice. Who were they to deserve such unselfish and humble service from the very King of the Universe Himself? In that instant, they had a newfound revelation—that while their feet were clean, their hearts had been transformed by the power of His love.

The lights go out once again as the music fades.

The curtain falls, and the audience can’t wait to see what happens next.

Those in the crowd ponder the actions of the humble Master as the curtain slowly lifts to reveal a new scene.

SCENE THREE

We are now in Jerusalem and the sweet Master is sitting on a donkey. Where is the grand entrance He deserves? This is the King of Kings and Lord of Lords and yet he humbles himself to ride on a lowly donkey? A human king would certainly make a grand entrance in a golden chariot with the finest horses that money could buy, would he not? Where is the glitz and the glamour? Where are the special effects that would exalt a conquering King? Perhaps a legion or two of angel armies or a light beam shining on Him would have sufficed. Yes, even a trumpet or two would have been nice, declaring Jesus as more exalted than the governments of His day! Instead, we have the King Jesus riding on a lowly donkey. A donkey? Really?

Across the grand stage the crowds went ahead of Him and those that followed shouted, "Hosanna to the Son of David!" "Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord!" "Hosanna in the highest heaven!"

The stage is filled with smoke and quickly transforms into a scene in Pilate's palace.

These same people who just a short time ago cried Hosana now keep shouting, "Crucify him! Crucify him!" shaking their fists at him, infuriated and hateful.

Jesus stands there alone, His eyes filled with love.

He speaks not a word in His defense, nor does He grandstand, boasting of His power or piety

"Crucify him! Crucify him!" they shouted.

In the end, the voices of the crowd and of the chief priests prevail.

They have the upper hand, or so they think. They have Jesus right where they want Him. They grin with evil delight at the thought that their evil scheme is working.

Pilate smugly proclaims, *“What shall I do then with Jesus who is called Christ?”*

They all shout in perfect unity, *“Let him be crucified. Let him be crucified!”*

Pilate washes his hands in a bowl and slowly dries them then throws the towel on the floor as the light dims in the great hall.

The orchestra begins to play.

Each note rises with fierce intensity, as if death itself is in the air.

The auditorium holds their breath, as they brace themselves for the next scene.

SCENE FOUR

The audience is still holding their collective breath, dreading what will come next.

Jesus is tied to a pole and whipped. The bully soldiers push him around between them, as if He is the lowest of the low. They laugh when they see the pain in Jesus' eyes. Why can they not see the love in His eyes? Why can they not see that He is a different kind of king?

With each lash that comes down upon His back, the crowd screams in horror. You can hear the loud crack of the whip and know it's doing horrendous damage.

Then the soldiers strip Him of His clothes and place a crown of long sharp thorns upon His head. They rip out His beard and spit in His face.

You could hear the audience quietly weeping all over the great auditorium.

Then a low voice demands, “Prophesy who hit you... are you not the son of God...a King? Isn't that what you've said?”

The music again deeply touches the hearts of the people as smoke fills the stage. Lights beam from different angles.

Moments later Jesus is carrying a cross that digs deep into His wounded back.

He falls, His knees torn and bleeding, injured by the sharp stones in the road.

Each time He lifts the cross to carry it farther, the weight of the cross digs deeper into His back and neck and drives the crown of sharp thorns deeper into His skull.

With a great burst of love He proclaims, *“Behold, I make all things new!”*

He continues walking that lonely road to the place of the skull

Where are all the disciples? Where are those who had loved and worshiped Him?

Jesus is then nailed to the cross.

Huge spikes being pound through His hands and feet.

The suffering.

The pain.

The Father turning away from His Son.

The agony of a son exchanging words with His Father until finally He proclaimed,

“Father forgive them for they know not what they do!

It is Finished.”

The auditorium is totally overwhelmed. They are broken and weeping at the sights and sounds, visibly shaken at such an act of selfless love.

FINAL SCENE

The great royal hall of heaven is bustling with new life. The arrivals have just come ashore from Earth's coastlines. The angels of the Lord and the hosts of heaven are gathered for the great announcement.

JESUS King of Kings and Lord of Lords is present! This same Jesus is the risen Lord, no longer limited to an earthly body. He now sits on a golden throne ready to award the faithful on Earth.

The great reward assembly is finally here. The Marriage Supper of the Lamb is upon us and His Bride has made herself ready.

I must pause here to note that although Jesus was born in a stable where sacrificial temple animals were raised, and was wrapped in swaddling clothes, and found lying in a manger, it didn't make Him any less a King. Although he washed dirty feet, rode on a donkey and suffered a criminal's death, He was and still is the conquering King, the risen Lord. He is now judge and jury. All power is within His grasp. There is no one higher than He!

All heaven is waiting.

The angel armies are standing to attention.

One by one the faithful are called before the great mercy seat.

His judgments are final. The Overcomers are given their special assignments. They will rule and reign with Christ in His Kingdom.

The grand orchestra in this great hall begins to play the most beautiful music the audience has ever heard. Everyone is sitting on the edge of their seats, wondering what will happen next. With great anticipation they watch as the production comes to an end. Everyone watches as, one by one the people pass before the throne. As their names were called, each one bowed low before Him, weeping and worshipping Him in the beauty of holiness, stunned to realize this is what it feels like to be loved by the King of kings.

The first pilgrim was unknown in his lifetime—a quiet and humble man.

He stood there, love stricken by Christ.

He claimed no title or special honor.

His life was hidden in Christ Jesus.

He was faithful, devoted, and honorable.

At that point, Jesus speaks these words over him:

“Well done, thou good and faithful servant! You have been faithful with little. Now you will be entrusted with so much more!”

One by one these faithful Overcomers are given their great rewards.

The nameless and faceless, those who have always hidden behind the cross and have given Him *all* the glory.

Those who never used people to build their ministry but used their ministry to bless the people.

They completed their earthly assignments to the best of their ability and remained faithful to the end.

Those mighty warriors who followed the way of the Master and served, loved, and honored those around them were exalted and given great responsibility.

As Jesus gathered these dear faithful saints into His loving embrace, the narrator offered these final words.

“The wedding is about to begin!”

The orchestra played on, enveloping the audience in a beautiful atmosphere.

Everyone sat in holy silence during that sacred moment.

The voice of the narrator begins his closing. His voice soothing, gentle and kind.

“There is a great tug-of-war between the two masters of our age: the flesh and the Spirit of God. There is this deep need in man to be noticed, recognized and elevated. If those around us refuse to value us enough we’re not afraid to self-promote and validate ourselves. This mindset slips into ministry in the same way. Just like the early disciples who argued with each other regarding who was the greatest among them, so is it today. These days, it’s not unusual to see leaders posturing, propping themselves up with exalted titles and claiming the highest honors. I’m absolutely convinced that if a brand-new

higher seat and title suddenly became available, we would trip over each other just to claim it.

But something new is on the horizon. A new breed of leaders is upon us. They carry something very special to a new generation. They are spiritual fathers and mothers that refuse to use people or claim to be a big deal. Instead, they follow the way of the Master who was not ashamed to be born in a stable, to ride on a donkey and to make Himself of no reputation, by taking on the very nature of a servant, being made in human likeness. He was God yet He washed feet and ran His ministry by the power of the towel.

The kingdom of God runs by a different set of rules. In fact, it carries a very different mindset altogether. In order to gain you must lose. In order to live you must die, serving others instead of promoting yourself. Would **you** rather have **your** portion now or later? Then hide behind the cross!

I see a new type of leader reaching a new generation. They want to follow the way of the Master and love and serve others. I've long felt that the highest honor is that of a spiritual father or mother to love and nurture with humility and tender care. They will never be forgotten. Their ministry will live on in the hearts of their sons and daughters forever.

People will seek this leader out if they hide behind the cross, if they pick up their towel and love like Jesus loved, care like Jesus cared, and serve like Jesus served. I see a new breed of leader that has the mind of Christ that cherished humility and the beauty of His holiness. His life is hidden in Christ. These trustworthy souls will change the world and their spiritual children will call them blessed, pausing to ponder their lives when these dear elders graduate to heaven after living selfless lives. The question of the night is "To be, or not to be: that is the question" and "Men at some time are masters of their fates" (Shakespeare).

The lights are slowly dimmed. The orchestra is silent.

No one moves.

The scenes on the stage have imparted a revelation of new life and what it's like to live according to His presence.

Some audience members are still weeping. Some laugh with delight.

The way of the Master is clear now, even to those who were previously blind and could not see. Will you see?

Thank you, my friend, for taking the time to accompany me on this special holy presentation.

It's true that "All's Well That Ends Well" if we do as Jesus did, and lay down our lives to live in His shadow, exalting Him instead of ourselves.

**"Good night, good night! Parting is such sweet sorrow,
That I shall say good night till it be morrow."**

Thank you for coming.

Steve Porter

Rochester, New York

www.findrefuge.tv

Steve and his wife Diane founded Refuge Ministries and the presence-driven publishing company, Deeper Life Press. Steve is a regular contributor to many prophetic publications, including the Elijah List, Spirit Fuel, and the Identity Network. He has a special anointing to bring forth the deep truths of the Spirit with a clarity and simplicity that draws one into a closer walk and a deeper relationship with our Lord Jesus Christ. His writings have been read worldwide by hundreds of thousands of people. Steve's books, maturity tracts, articles, and videos have touched countless lives around the world. The Porters reside near Rochester, NY.