

shows up. When they argue about who gets to go first, I want to remember to tell them the story of how the disciples argued about the very same thing. I want to draw their attention to the greatest story of all.

And when it comes to celebrations—things like Easter and Christmas and birthdays—I want to remember the stories that go with them. To talk about why we celebrate Easter, what it means that Jesus is Immanuel, how we are made in the image of God. Because the story in all those things will last longer and leave a bigger impression than any present I could give.

I'm reminded of a line from the movie *Walk the Line* that goes something like this: You can't help people unless you know which story to tell. O God, remind me to tell your story, to value your story more than stuff.

“All Jesus did that day was tell stories—a long storytelling afternoon.” Matthew 13:34, The Message

V: Value story

“Celebrate the story, not the stuff.”

—“Simple Celebrations,” *Living Simply*, page 154

Stories have power. They draw us in, engage our imaginations, and keep our attention. Stories link us to others, to events, to things. Stories help us remember.

Jesus taught by using stories—he took people and places and situations familiar to his audience and used them to make a point about God’s kingdom. Shepherds and farmers, widows and children—nothing was too ordinary or too common to teach a lesson.

I want to be like that. I often pray that God would call to mind a story I could use to teach my children when one of those “teachable moments”