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## Heart and Soul ... A Weekly Meditation

August 14, 2016

Sharing Our Faith Story

*“Let the redeemed of the Lord say so.”*  
Psalm 107:2 (New Revised Standard Version)

Our daily conversations do more than provide a running narrative of our lives; such conversations shape our experiences, practices and life with one another. As we speak, our thoughts and understandings are more deeply formed and clarified. Through speech, we do so much more than transmit information to another. We process that information in a manner that deepens our convictions. When that conversation turns to matters of faith, my friend Thomas Long, brilliantly observes, “When we talk about our faith, we are not merely expressing our beliefs; we are coming more fully and clearly to believe. In short, we are always talking ourselves into being Christian.”<sup>i</sup>

It is uncertain that this is the conviction behind these words from Psalms. What is certain is that God’s people are directed to speak of their faith; are commanded to share their faith story with others. It is the duty of every person of faith. The man or woman who has been “redeemed” by the Lord must become a busy person. They are to be messengers of God’s love and transformative power. It is this kind of witness that captures the interest of ordinary people and wins their verdict. Clergy are expected to speak of holy things. But when ordinary people speak of God the testimony takes hold with arresting strength and considerable surprise.

But, argues Tom Long, such conversation serves a sacred interest. Speaking with another person about our faith confirms experience; it sustains it and enriches it. Any experience which is denied expression speedily fades away, such as a second language that is never used. The loss may be imperceptible at first but, over time, more and more is lost until little remains. Yet, when voice is given to matters of faith, faith quickens and is given strength. A powerful dynamic is released: as we take hold of our faith, our faith takes hold of us. Doubts melt away like mist when we go public with our testimony of what God has done for us.

The Bible is filled with miracle stories. They are the stories that shape the contours of our faith and reveal God to us; stories that bear witness to God’s power. But they are not the stories that are the most vital for living a transformed and transfigured life. The miracle that is most vital, that is most urgent today, is not the miracle that is read about but the one that walks about in every believer who gives confession of their belief. The Lord says, “Let the redeemed of the Lord say so.” That is the Lord’s command. The world is waiting for our obedience.

Doug Hood

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<sup>i</sup> Thomas G. Long, Testimony: **Talking Ourselves into Being Christian** (San Francisco, CA: Joseey-Bass, 2004), 7.