

## Telling the Story

March 8, 2012

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I told you in this post that I've been reading Les Miserables and soaking it in. Here's a little excerpt in my reading this morning:

"It is like their Sieyes! A regicide ending in a senator; for that is the way they always end. They give themselves a scar with the address of thou as citizens, in order to get themselves called, eventually, Monsieur le Comte. Monsieur le Comte as big as my arm, assassins of September the Philosopher Sieyes? I will do myself the justice to say, that I have never had any better opinion of the philosophies of all those philosophers, than of the spectacles of the grimacer of Tivoli!"

Am I totally dense? Do ya'll understand that? If you say "yes", maybe you majored in French history in college. I'm in awe!

I consider myself a woman with a fairly well-rounded education, but there are huge chunks of Les Miserables that leave me completely lost. I have the big picture of French history, but the details are lacking. I don't know the terms. The unexplained vocabulary leaves me scratching my head and cross-eyed. I have a gap when it comes to the people, the history and the places.

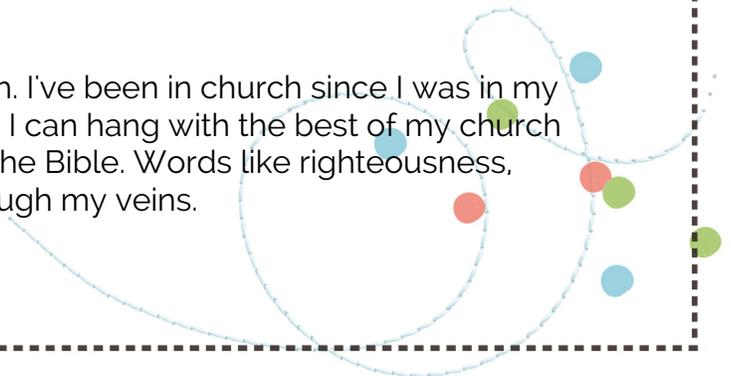
I've decided that I love the main story-line enough that I'll wade and skim through the detailed descriptions of the battle of Waterloo, the geography of Paris and the philosophies embraced by Frenchmen in the 1800s. I'm going to stick it out.

But what if I wasn't that determined? What then?

Then I'd put the book down and go looking for something else to read. I'd look for another story.

I've been thinking about that in the terms of the way we Christians often communicate with the unchurched world around us--neighbors, co-workers, family members...

I'm a church girl through and through. I've been in church since I was in my mama's womb. I know the lingo, and I can hang with the best of my church peeps. I love the rich vocabulary of the Bible. Words like righteousness, justification, and holiness pump through my veins.



But I want to be very careful to really know how to express those rich terms in the verbiage of the world that I live in. Sometimes when I talk about God to new Christians or unchurched people, I probably come across like a complicated passage in Les Miserables. I don't ever want people to walk away and look for something else besides Jesus just because they can't wade through my "Christian-eze". I don't ever want to be so steeped in my own church culture that I refuse to speak differently simply because that language is what makes me look good to my church peeps.

I want people to stick with The Story, because there's redemption at the end.

