

The Prince and the Princess

Introduction:

I woke up on the morning of 15 December 2010 in our tiny bedroom at Ffald-y-Brenin retreat in West Pembrokeshire. I lay quietly waiting on God and approached his throne of grace. In the spirit I climbed onto his knee like a child and said, "Tell me something or tell me a story." This story is what I was immediately able to write.

The Prince and the Princess

Once upon a time there was a prince and a princess. They didn't know they were a prince and a princess; they didn't feel like a prince and a princess. They went to the king who was sitting on his throne and who already knew what they were thinking.

"What would help you to know you are a prince and a princess? Money? Success? Freedom to do what you like?" The king asked.

"Maybe all of those things," they answered.

"Well, try them out one at a time," said the king. "I thought you already had everything you need but here is a large pot of money. Report back when you have spent it all."

The prince and the princess carried the pot between them. They bought more things; they travelled to new places; they even gave away large amounts of money to other people who needed it. When all the money was gone, the prince and the princess looked at each other and said, "I still don't really know I am a prince." "I still don't really know I am a princess."

They went back to the king who was still sitting on the throne.

"I know, I know," he said. "You still don't know. Very well then, try success. Whatever you decide to do, you will both be successful in it."

The prince and the princess left the king's throne room and planned new ventures. Everything they did succeeded. People saw their success and were amazed. One day the prince and the princess met up again. They had been so busy being successful that they hadn't talked to each other for some time.

"I know, I know," said the princess. "I know what you are going to say. And nor do I." So the prince and the princess went back to the king, who was still sitting on his throne.

"I know, I know," said the king, just as the prince drew breath to speak. "Off you both go and do whatever you like. Come back and tell me how you got on."

So the prince and princess rushed off and did whatever they wanted, some good things, some downright wicked things. None of it helped the prince and princess to know they were a prince and a princess. The prince decided to go and see the king on his own. The king was still sitting on his throne. On one of his knees sat the princess.

"I know, I know," said the king. "Come up here. There's room for you both." So the prince climbed up and sat on the king's knee.

"How can I ever know that I am a prince?"

"How can I ever know that I am a princess?"

"Well, it is very simple. I am the king and I am your father. So you are my son and you are therefore a prince." The king shifted on his throne and turned his head. "And you, my dear, you are my daughter and so you are a princess."

"Yes, but how can we know you are our father?" Whispered the princess.

The king clapped his hands. A royal servant approached the throne and bowed low. He held out two gold salvers to the king and the king picked up a piece of paper from each salver. "Your birth certificates," he said.

The prince and the princess didn't even look at them. "That's just paper," said the prince. "That's just words," said the princess. "We really need to know," they both said.

The king was very patient and very loving. He put his arms around his son and his daughter and hugged them.

"Right," he said. He reached out with his left hand and pulled a hair out of the princess's head.

"Ow!" Yelled the princess.

As quick as a flash, before the prince had time to duck his head, the king reached out with his right hand and pulled out a hair from his head too.

"Ow!" Yelled the prince

"Now," said the king. "Pull one of my hairs out, please."

The prince pulled out one of the king's hairs. The princess pulled out another at the same time.

"One would have done," said the king gently. "Now let's put the hairs on a salver."

"Why?" said two voices together.

"Because the Royal Scientist will test these hairs for us. If they contain the same DNA, it proves, scientifically and beyond a shadow of a doubt, that I am your father. Then you will know. Hop down now."

Two days later the prince and the princess, still not knowing they were a prince and a princess, went back to the king. The Royal Scientist was there.

"I have done what we call a Paternity Test," the scientist spoke quietly. "The DNA in your hairs proves that you are both children of the king."

The prince and the princess looked at their father, the king. They looked at each other.

"I am a princess. I know it now!"

"I am a prince. I know it too!"

The prince and the princess knelt down in front of the king. "Thank you, your majesty," they said together.

The king laughed and leant towards them. "Yes," he said. "I am King but you, my children, can call me Dad."

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And that is the end of the story and it is a parable about knowing that you are a child of God. This is what the Bible says about those who believe in Jesus:

How great is the love the Father has lavished on us, that we should be called children of God. And that is what we are. 1 John 3:1. NIV

For you did not receive a spirit that makes you a slave again to fear, but you received the Spirit of Sonship. And by him we cry Abba, Father. The Spirit himself testifies with our spirit that we are God's children. Romans 8:15-16. NIV

Let us then approach the throne of grace with confidence, so that we may receive mercy and find grace to help us in our time of need. Hebrews 4:16. NIV