

Faculty Work Comprehensive List

---

4-16-2018

## See the Story, Live the Story

Patricia C. Kornelis  
*Dordt College*, pat.kornelis@dordt.edu

Follow this and additional works at: [https://digitalcollections.dordt.edu/faculty\\_work](https://digitalcollections.dordt.edu/faculty_work)



Part of the [Christianity Commons](#), and the [Education Commons](#)

---

### Recommended Citation

Kornelis, P. C. (2018). See the Story, Live the Story. Retrieved from [https://digitalcollections.dordt.edu/faculty\\_work/1023](https://digitalcollections.dordt.edu/faculty_work/1023)

This Blog Post is brought to you for free and open access by Dordt Digital Collections. It has been accepted for inclusion in Faculty Work Comprehensive List by an authorized administrator of Dordt Digital Collections. For more information, please contact [ingrid.mulder@dordt.edu](mailto:ingrid.mulder@dordt.edu).

---

## See the Story, Live the Story

### Keywords

fiction, Christian education, kingdom of God, learning

### Disciplines

Christianity | Education

### Comments

Re-posted from The Center for the Advancement of Christian Education (CACE) blog.

Online access: <https://cace.org/see-the-story-live-the-story/>

# See the Story, Live the Story

APRIL 16, 2018

When my daughter was five years old, she was a princess. I know this because I visited her kingdom. As she played with her Barbies and Ninja turtles, she entered an imaginary and magical kingdom she called “Ergensis” and commenced to reign royally. She invented scenarios and stories that involved friends, brothers, and imaginary characters. As I eavesdropped on her imaginative play, I could hear her creating a persona for herself who was very real. She believed when she was in this world. It was make believe, and yet not make believe. When she became wholeheartedly immersed in the story, then it was real.

Isn't that the way it ought to be for our students with Christ's story? Obviously, the difference between my daughter's story and Christ's story is that Christ's story is real. But is it real for our students? Have they become so involved in the story, so absolutely absorbed, that it has become essential to who they are and to the ways in which they live their lives? Unfortunately, too often the story has become mundane, common. They've heard the bible stories so many times in elementary school, in Sunday school, and in family devotions from the story Bible, that they stop thinking about it. They're just stories – interesting but unreal.

Sometimes, too, Christ's story seems unrelated to the information studied in their classrooms. What does Christ's story have to do with algebra or grammar or poetry? Sometimes the story is muddied by the competing stories of our modern culture. When we uncritically accept the influences of our society, what does that do to the story? Is Christ's story as real, as vibrant, and as lived to your student as the kingdom of Ergensis was to my daughter?

As Christian educators, we are called to the reconciling and restoring work of the kingdom of Christ. We must model in every aspect of education how Christ is present and is calling us (teachers and students) to be part of the transformation of his creation. I recall former teachers who not only modeled Christ's story for me but also invited me to be part of the story in active ways as well. They were teachers who made science and math more than facts, theorems and statistics. They were the teachers who revealed the interrelatedness of the subject area, creating a picture of the world in which every aspect was under the rule of Christ. They reveled in the awesomeness of God, in the order and magnificence of his creation. They expanded my vision of who my God is and they invited and encouraged me in concrete ways to explore how I fit into his story.

We have an awesome task before us. We can't be content to simply present facts. The facts are meaningless without an understanding of the reconciling work of our Savior. We are working for the kingdom, and as laborers we need to invite our students into the story in ways that are real – in ways that nurture and empower them to become partners and characters in the story. James K. A. Smith affirms this in his book, *You Are What You Love*, "A Christian education can never be merely a mastery of a field of knowledge or technical skills; learning is embedded in a wider vision of who I am called to be and what God is calling the world to be. How does my learning fit in this Story? And what practices will cultivate this ultimate orientation in me?"

God's instruction to the people of Israel applies to educators as well: "These commandments that I give you today are to be upon your hearts. Impress them on your children. Talk about them when you sit at home and when you walk along the road, when you lie down and when you get up. Tie them as symbols on your hands and bind them on your foreheads. Write them on the doorframes of your houses and on your gates" (Deut 6:9). What an invitation to "See the story AND live the story!"