**Deepening the Emotional Connection**

**for Your Readers**

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The wind blew strong. The papers on Daniel’s desk ruffled. He took a sip of coffee. It was hot. Time to close the window and turn on the air conditioning.

A hot, dry wind blew off the desert and through the open window of his Airstream, teasing the beads of perspiration on Daniel’s forehead. Behind him, papers ruffled on the card table he called his desk, bills rattling their past due—past due—past due percussion. He lifted his coffee mug to his lips, as if a beverage could solve anything.

We want to make our readers not just listen but \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_!

“God liked a few people so He sent a relative He was fond of, so that if anyone pays Him a little attention, the person can skirt around trouble, and buy himself a few more days on this earth.” OR…

“For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life.”

God’s Words reveal the importance of a \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_with the heart: “They honor me with their lips, but their hearts are far from me.” Isaiah 29:13, Matthew 15:8

What does that mean in our writing—fiction or non-fiction?

Especially those who write for the Lord are looking to create \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ (even if that response is as simple as a sigh, joy, laughter, or as serious as conviction, action, insight).

 “I’ll consider that when voting.”

 “I won’t do that anymore.”

 “I’m going to recycle.”

 “I’ll respect people like that.”

 What kind of response?

 Action

 Giving

 Going

 Praying

 Praising

If readers fall in love with \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_, they may not fall in love with \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_.

If readers hear our words but don’t \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_, it’s lip service (or ear service).

Our job is not to convict and convince. That’s the Holy Spirit’s job. Ours is to \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ the reader’s \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_, not just their ears or their minds, to create a vehicle for the Holy Spirit to work, and then get out of His way.

Make it so soul-refreshing—so compelling—that \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_.

Readers always ask (sometimes subconsciously), “Why should I \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_?”

**Deepen** the:

* Humor
* Character

Find a way to make your reader love your characters, even the villains. If your reader cares about your character, he’ll care about your character’s \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_…and the message you hope the reader will discover.

Three dimensional characters—height, width, depth; work, home, play; thoughts, words, actions; mind, body, spirit; not flat-faced, emotionless, fact-dumping…

* Word choices—stronger verbs, crisp, language that fits the style of the piece, the exact word (not settling), colors, names, sounds, rhythm, pattern, repetition, non-repetition. Consider the word choices in \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_.
* Plot (fiction)/Purpose (non-fiction)—Sibling rivalry vs. siblings who no longer speak to one another. If you’ve tightened \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_, you’ve instantly caused your reader to \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_.
* Authenticity—move beyond a surface reaction through authenticity, genuine reactions, responses that anyone might have not just you, being realistic about your own faith struggles; stats about drug usage vs. testimony from a drug user—which is \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_?
* Vulerability—Sometimes the missing link for a novelist as well as nonfiction writers; If we stop shy of allowing ourselves to be vulnerable in our writing, we also stop our readers from \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_. Our vulnerability gives them permission to be so too.
* Practical application

Theory builds knowledge. \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ changes hearts.

God said, **“I don’t want your sacrifices, I want your love. I don’t want your offerings, I want you to know Me.”** Hosea 6:6, TLB

* Senses

Taste and see that the Lord is good. Touch My side… Hear O Israel, the Lord our God is one Lord. A sweet fragrance of Christ… Our prayers are a fragrant offering, like incense.

The human brain is divinely wired to relate smells to \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_.

We dive beneath the words on the page to a deeper engagement with a **concept**.

* Word placement and rhythm

 “She left home for good in a car with bad tires and half a tank of gas and no map at midnight.”

“At midnight, in a car with bad tires, half a tank of gas, and no map, she left home for good.”

 “The tower of coffee cups crashed onto the linoleum when in a huff the waitress tossed her dishtowel on the counter.”

“When the waitress tossed her dishtowel on the counter in a huff, the tower of coffee cups crashed to the linoleum.” (See and \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ the action)

How did GOD deepen emotional connection with His readers?

* Related almost every principle He taught through \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_.
* Touched us where we \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ and where we \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ .
* Used \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_(being swallowed by a whale will get your attention, being the only family to survive a world-wide flood will make a person take notice) .
* Often used \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ (the veil torn top to bottom; the napkin folded).
* Stirred our \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ .
* Became \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_.
* Illustrations—II Samuel 12:1-11

Nathan made David \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ before David would recognize himself and \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_.

Removing barriers:

Excess words

Excess explanation

Cold, hard facts that are…cold—emotionless or hard to juggle

The author (I/me/I think/I believe…)

Pictures rather than words

Stats

Photo

Movie with subtitles

Movie with sound

Show you a plate

Hold it