

Vignette

Ed Story

JUST AFTER BIRTH, I WAS ADOPTED by John and Marjorie Story. From a young age I knew that I was adopted as that part of my life was never hidden. Mum and Dad were white and I am "dark/black". They also adopted eight other children including three other Aboriginal brothers, Graham, Harold and Robert who passed away suddenly in 1995 at the (young) age of 36. This was a huge shock to all the family. Robert and I were becoming very close shortly before his passing.

When I was twenty, my birth-mother searched for me and I found out about my Polynesian heritage and met with her family and my two half brothers. Later during 1998 I had the need to find out once and for sure whether I had any Aboriginal descent and began a search for my birth father. I found out that I had not only an Aboriginal background but also an Afghan heritage with the Afghan cameleers from Western Australia and my Aboriginal tribe called the Wongai from around the Kalgoorlie region in Western Australia. I have only met my Aboriginal/Afghan birth father three times and I continue to learn more about his family as I reconnect with his Mum, my Nanna and also other members of his family, including his brothers and sisters and also my half sister and brother. Being a mixed Aboriginal person has also been difficult for me, with the challenges of how mainstream society perceives Aboriginal people to be. I have never grown up with my traditional Aboriginal culture, and this causes confusion between a dominant white culture and my distant Aboriginal culture and spirituality.

My (adopted) Dad, John Story was a very devout Christian. We often went to church with him, the nine of us children taking up the third row at Seymour Methodist Church (now Seymour Uniting Church). Like many, as an adolescent my faith in God, Jesus and the church weakened and I stopped attending church for a few years. In 1994 my adopted father John Story, died from lung cancer. The deaths of my father and brother made me then decide to get married officially to my wife Cheryl, as I thought that my mother Marjorie Story would not get to witness us being married if we left it any longer.

Shortly after my marriage in 1997, my faith and belief in God and Jesus Christ was reignited and I regularly attended services at the Melton Uniting Church. I was inspired by Rev Ian Hickingbotham, the minister at Melton at the time.

The sudden passing of my adopted mother Marjorie Story in 2000, and connecting with the Seymour Uniting Church minister Rev Len Sherratt, who conducted her funeral service, and my call to speak at her funeral service strengthened my faith in God and also a stronger calling to Christian ministry. At one time I met with Ian, to discuss some difficulties in my work environment and my sense that I needed to become a minister and a man of faith. Ian placed me in contact with Vince Ross the State Director of the Uniting Aboriginal & Islander Christian Congress in Victoria. My relationship and friendship has grown into full-time employment as Vince's assistant at Narana Creations in Geelong. I am now being mentored by both my work colleagues Rev John Rickard and Vince into Christian studies, which I started in February 2006.

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