

## What her words taught me

By Maria Houston

*Last night my daughter and I came home later than usual. It was past her bedtime, and it sure felt like it was past mine. I couldn't wait to get her in bed.*

*Walking through the kitchen, my mind focused on my bed waiting for me upstairs, she reminded me that she was hungry. Putting my own needs aside once again, I grabbed her an orange and started to peel it. It was in this moment, my eyes heavy and my mind too tired to accept any new thoughts, she began to tell me an aspect of her day.*



*Conversations with my daughter can often be difficult. The stroke she suffered years ago inside my tummy has impacted her ability to sometimes talk with ease. We have prayed for years for her to speak. When the Lord answered that request we boldly asked Him to help her articulate her sounds and words more clearly. Now that those prayers have been answered, we ask the Lord to help her take all the amazing ideas in her head and convey them in a more organized manner.*

*Here in my dimly lit kitchen, moments from my bed, she began to tell me something that happened at school. She jumped from detail to detail. I heard well-described bits and pieces of the event, but without context for that information I was unable to understand the significance of her story. So I began to ask her questions, hoping I could put these events in order. I wanted to make sense of the clues I was given. More importantly, I wanted to understand the story better so I could join in her excitement. In time, I pieced the events together and understood her story.*

She was telling me her part in this event. She got to hold the Viking ship poster. She got to smile for a picture. She heard an announcement over the loud speaker. She was excited her class won. The larger story explaining what the contest was, how her class won. What was won was not nearly as important to her. She was sharing with me her perspective. She wanted me to feel her excitement in being the person who got to hold the poster for a picture.

As I was getting ready for bed, I was tempted to fret about this first-grader's future. Will she always communicate like this? Do other children talk like this? Will she be able to get a job? These familiar worries, like old friends, started swirling around in my head. But my own worries were suddenly silenced by an observation. I noticed that she told me the events that were the most exciting for her. She described in detail the exciting parts of the story. The larger context was not nearly as important to her as the moments she was describing.

Then I thought, "Aren't I the same way? Don't I look at my day in terms of how I felt, thought, and experienced it? Don't I interpret what God is doing around me based on how it affects me? Do I ever ask God to give me a zoomed-out perspective so I can have a better context of what is actually occurring? Do I ask to see it through His eyes versus mine? Do I ever ask Him what He is up to?"

Instead I am so focused on me, my pain, my hardship, my suffering, my judgment call, and my perspective, that I fail to see how my experience is just a tiny detail of God's wide vast plan. Just like she was so focused on telling me about holding a poster without any context for why that may occur, I also remain focused on myself without any greater context for what God is doing.

As I climbed into bed, I was reminded that God understands we view things from such a small perspective and that one day I will understand my part in the greater story.

"For we know in part, and we prophesy in part [for our knowledge is fragmentary and incomplete]. But when that which is complete *and* perfect comes, that which is incomplete *and* partial will pass away. When I was a child, I talked like a child, I thought like a child, I reasoned like a child; when I became a man, I did away with childish things. For now [in this time of imperfection] we see in a mirror dimly [a blurred reflection, a riddle, an enigma], but then [when the time of perfection comes we will see reality] face to face. Now I know in part [just in fragments], but then I will know fully, just as I have been fully known [by God]." (1 Corinthians 13:9-12 AMP).

And how humorous of God to remind me through scripture that my child will probably not always talk like she did that night.