

Seeing Christ's Bride Through the Prophetic Eyes of Love

Standing in worship last Sunday, I couldn't seem to close my eyes. Normally, as the worship band plays, I often keep my eyes closed, as it helps me stay focused on worshipping God rather than people-watching on a Sunday morning.

Yet this Sunday was different, God kept my eyes open and His voice simply whispered, "Really see the people."

I knew this meant He wasn't giving me permission to people-watch, but rather, He had something more to say about the group of people I call my church family.

Looking around, I couldn't help but see how different we all are. I mean really different. There are outfits and hairstyles I could never pull off, and personalities that could not be more opposite than mine, yet here we all are, worshipping together. Some are silent, some still, some singing with every ounce of energy they have, some standing, some sitting, some crying and some smiling.

None of us look the same, but we're all here for more or less the same reason—we love Jesus, we're trying to figure out this Christianity thing and in the end, we're all just looking for a place to belong, a place to fit in and a place to call home every week.

Once again, God began to whisper, "Do you see them? Do you understand in order to be fully home in this place, you have to see the people around you? Truly see them. And seeing," He said, "is done with your heart."

It requires interaction, listening and pausing long enough to engage with their heart, character and who they truly are. Then we see, and here is where we are all at home.

Because home is where you rest, where you are yourself and I am myself, and we don't have to apologize for it. Although at times you may have to apologize, apologizing for being yourself is not one of those apologies.

Instead, you get to be everything you know God's called you to be, and it's in these moments where our differences stand out, and I get to say, "That's not me, but that's you, and this is where you shine."

Evaluating my own heart, I realize how quickly these differences separate me from others, when in fact, these are things that should bind us together.

Because at some point, we will both hit a wall, and that's when we really need each other. In order for each of us to break through, I'll need what you have, and you'll need what I have. It's here we advance and go farther than we ever imagined.

Finally, as the service came to a close and we all began to mingle, I realized the hardest part was beginning. It was time to truly see the ones around me. This meant listening, hearing, observing, reflecting and engaging each of them at a new level and a new understanding.

Less about me, less about differences and more about getting to really know their heart and mind.

When my eyes are closed, there's nothing but darkness, nothing but inward thinking. But the moment my eyes open, the light floods in and an understanding begins as I am fully aware of who's around me and the gifts they carry.

In a time where we're all caught up with destiny, living out our purpose and seeking God's will for our lives (myself included)—I can't help but sit back, with eyes wide open and take notice of whom God is drawing around me. This is especially true with the individuals who are wildly different

from me, because when I interact with them, it means we can both go further together than we ever could on our own.

It all simply means I have to open my eyes and see them. Truly see them. {eo}

Mikaela Kate is passionate to see you reach your full God-given potential! A speaker, writer and coach, she has invested seven years in developing leaders from college-age men and women. Conducting Bible studies, women's groups and young adult teams, she encourages others to go further and higher—taking their gifts, passions and skills to the next level. Mikaela lives in South Carolina and is an active member of The Father's House Church.