

The Secret I Want to Tell My Daughter

On a recent visit to my hometown, my husband and I took our kids to a basketball game at our high school alma mater. We had always wanted to take them, and since our kids love stories and details from our past, they ate it up. They wanted to see where Dad had played and where Mom was a cheerleader. They asked for stories about their aunts and uncles and what they had done there. They asked a thousand questions, and we were happy to answer.

The waves of nostalgia hit us the moment we walked into the school. The hallways, the bleachers, the concession stand—even some of the music that was blasting for the team warm-ups was the same. Dan and I were talking over each other, pointing things out, answering the kids' questions, and telling stories. Watching the game and talking with our kids was a blast. But I also couldn't keep my mind from swimming with all kinds of memories.

The strongest came very unexpectedly when my oldest daughter and I went to the restroom at halftime. Standing in the place I used to run in to tell my friends a secret or to cry about some heartbreak (perceived or real), I just could not be silent. A fire lit inside me. I gripped my daughter's shoulders and despite the wide-eyed look on her tween face that said, "Mom, what in the world are you doing and why are you doing it here?" I emphatically told her:

Emma Jo, I cannot tell you how many times I cried in this bathroom for ridiculous reasons. Some real, but mostly ridiculous. I want you to be more wise than your mom. Please tell me that you know who God says you are, and you're not gonna run into bathrooms to cry because you've believed some lie.

I've thought of that moment a lot since then, and now that I've had more time (and a more appropriate location), here's what else I've added . . .

Core Truth

My dearest girl, I want you to hold on to the truth we've taught you since you were born. I want you to know who God says you are. That your worth and your beauty and your purpose are wrapped up in Him—the Creator of the Universe! The all-knowing, unchanging God who loves you and gave His Son so you could live. And when you start to doubt, come back to the truth that He purposefully and uniquely created you. His love, His actions, and His plan show He has given you great worth. You're called to strength, responsibility, self-control, and wisdom—not only for God's glory and your own good, but also to provide help, strength, and wisdom to others. You're loved by God.

The Cautions

*Now listen closely. When you hear that you should believe in yourself or trust your heart or look inside yourself to find truth, **don't**. Do not—unless what you believe and think is built on the firm foundation of God's truth. There will be a whole lot of days when what you think and feel about yourself is going to be a roller coaster ride. And if you believe in yourself or look inside, your worth, purpose, and beauty are going to be flying up and down those hills, too. I want you to be strong and have confidence in who you are, but the only sure foundation for that strength and confidence is in Christ and in God's truth that will not change.*

Your Part

I'm praying you'll dive deep into God's Word and make that unchanging, absolute truth your eyes, heart and hands. That

the Bible would be the starting place for what you think, feel, and do instead of going to the Bible only to evaluate and adjust what you think, feel, and do. The second means you're going to God and truth AFTER you think, feel, and act; the first means you are starting with God and truth. While going to the Bible to evaluate and adjust your thoughts and feelings will be necessary, letting God and His Word shape what you think, feel, and do is the best way to start.

His Part

And you don't have to do all this on your own! You, as a follower of Jesus, have the same power that raised Jesus from the dead in you! (Rom. 8:11) That amazing power in you—God's power—makes having God's heart, eyes, and hands in your life and circumstances possible. It's not dependent on your strength or ability, but His. Your part is to know His way and obey. Because of God's work in you, you have a new capacity to be the woman He created you to be and a new power to live out the life God calls you to. So live it out! In His power and His way, live it out.

The fact is my daughter will probably run crying into a bathroom or two someday. But I'm praying that this is what will come to her mind and heart when she does. Until then, I'll keep talking and teaching anytime, *anywhere* I can.

Taken from Heidi Jo Fulk's blog post "Truth for My Daughter in an Unexpected Place." . Used with permission.