

This Bitter Deception Can Tear Your Friends Apart

Three sisters share a bathroom, a closet, hairbrushes and the nightly bedtime recounting of the day. They know each other's strengths just as surely as they know one another's morning breath. All the girls know that Eden can sing and Hope can dance and Lily can paint. They celebrate each other's differences readily. They wouldn't want to forfeit what's theirs—and doesn't every girl have their *one thing*? You'd never catch Lily in a leotard these days and Eden's paints have long since dried up.

But in the everyday things of life they share—the writing, the reading, the piano playing ... oh, and the hair—they sometimes give each other the side-eye. The celebration of one another is a struggle. It's work to rejoice over a sister's longer hair, and longer books read and new writing pieces. On these, their natural bent can be to be silent.

Not all that different from us mamas, if we do what's "natural," isn't it?

A friend who's a triathlete or another who's in sales or still another who plays the violin masterfully—they're all easy for me to celebrate. I could spend a whole summer at the pool without getting my head wet, I like to buy and not sell, and I've never once held a violin.

But what about the mom with children the same age as mine? Or—for me—the other writer, the other speaker, the other adoptive parent?

It seems harmless to remain silent at another's successes—to look sideways and feel better about who we are because our successes might be bigger or to feel worse about what we're not in light of their gold. It seems harmless to cast the

side-eye and to stay silent. I mean they are, after all, *succeeding*—surely they don't need celebrating in addition to enjoying all that so-evident fruit.

Within my heart, however, they do need celebrating.

When I don't see the people in my world with the understanding that God has given to each a unique role within His body and that my job is to feel with another when they're weak and to rejoice with another when they're honored, I miss out on the beauty I was meant to receive from that person.

And I miss out on the sweet whisper of God telling me, uniquely, who I am in Him.

We dress up comparison like we dress up our pet demons: "*Oh, it's not that bad. It's just a function of motherhood, just a function of a being a woman.*" But what it steals from us—in ever-increasing increments over time—is the ability to hear His vision for our particular life and for our particular calling.

It all gets cloudy. And fast.

Comparison is the masqueraded thief of motherhood, attempting to turn my head from what He has to say to me, for me and for my family and for my children. I'm a writer as well; this aptly applies there, too.

Friends, we just don't have time for the internal noise that the enemy brings us with comparison.

Say no to the lie the enemy wants to use to hook you into this line of thinking. For some, this may require some unpacking with the Lord: *Where in my heart am I not hearing what You have to say to me, God? Why do these comparisons keep tripping me up?*

And let's be active about celebrating the ones in our world who are stepping up and into what God has for them. You have a

child who's struggling through the second grade and your best friend has one who is thriving. Celebrate with her, and then scoot on back behind your own closed doors and ask Him: *"What do You have for this child, God? What do You say to me, about Your vision for my child and my family?"*

There are sides of God **we will not know** until we celebrate the parts of the body that exhibit them.

Sara is a wife to Nate and a mother of five whose arms stretched wide across the expanse between the United States and Africa. After almost a decade of Christian life she was introduced to pain and perplexity and, ultimately, intimacy with Jesus. God met her and moved her when life stopped working for her. And out of the overflow of this perplexity, came her writing, both on her blog and in her book: *Every Bitter Thing Is Sweet*.

Blog Link:

Book Link:

Instagram Link: