

Where's God in My Divorce?

Today is a wistful feeling sort of day for me. I'm not sure what prompted it—maybe it's planning for college for my oldest or planning kindergarten for my youngest. I'm missing a simpler time, when a perfect day involved reading on the sofa, math on the patio and memory work in the cul-de-sac. I miss being with my children 24/7. It was beautiful chaos. Of course, there were days I would have *loved* to forget about grammar, biology and lap books.

And other days I just wanted to read my book rather than *The Vikings* to five squirrely kids. But oh, what I wouldn't give to have one of those days again. I miss them—the sweet simplicity of our life back then.

When my husband left, lots of things changed. Some things became something different, not necessarily bad. Some things became better. And then there are those things that became something altogether unwanted.

I had to go back to work full-time, which meant sending five children to school or day care—a huge challenge for us all. We survived and, dare I say, thrived. We figured it out. Not pretty but doable.

Now my children are three years older, and I wish I could say that I was three years wiser ... maybe. Some days I think I'm doing pretty well, and then other days, I can't seem to keep the muttering mommy away. She grumps around the house, fussing at everyone and acting annoyed at everything.

Where did fun mommy go? She used to be here all the time, even on the most stressful of days. Now she's lost in the work and worry. I have so much to do and so much to deal with and so much less money than I'd like. But then I have to ask myself: Is this the mom I want my kids to remember? Is this the woman I want to be? Do I trust God or not?

Recently I've been studying James—a very challenging book of the Bible. It got me thinking. This whole faith thing isn't just believing; it's living. I was trying to encourage a friend's faith recently, and now I'm finding that everything I shared applies very much to me.

My faith needs to be the place where I start and end and all the stuff in between. James calls us double-minded when we are half-hearted in our commitment to God. I'm committed to God, truly, but I'm finding that this single mom life really makes it difficult to keep my focus on Christ rather than my circumstances.

I'm so busy looking at the train wreck that is my life, I'm missing the beauty of the life God is building before me. James also informs me that the ultimate result of my double-mindedness is instability and vulnerability. Ouch.

I see the instability in my life, especially in my overly emotional reaction to things. I'm vulnerable to fear, anxiety and sleepless nights. I must ask myself, "Do I believe what I say I believe?" Do I believe that God is enough? He says He is! Do I believe that God will provide? Do I believe that God will give me His peace and strength—for my heart and my mind? Do I believe that He loves me?

I have to say that I do. I do believe.

The prophet Elijah once asked the people of Israel, "How long will you go limping between two different opinions? If the Lord is God, follow him; but if Baal [the idol du jour], then follow him" (1 Kings 18:21). What are my idols du jour? Peace? My children's salvation? My children's character? The future? Time to accomplish everything? Sleep? Health? An organized house? Financial security? There are more, but I'll stop. I think at one time or another, probably each day, I've made those idols much more influential in my life than my faith. (No wonder I'm a mess.)

I think one of the biggest changes because of my husband's departure is me. Although things that didn't challenge before, challenge now; things I took for granted have become struggles; and things I could never imagine happening, have happened, I can say the changes in me have often been for the better. Things I could never imagine surviving, I've survived.

I understand God's faithfulness in all circumstances. I'm learning to count it *all* joy. I'm becoming a stronger, more focused woman in many ways. I just need to get and keep my focus firmly on the right thing. I'm choosing Jesus.

"I lift up my eyes to the hills. From where does my help come? My help comes from the LORD, who made heaven and earth. He will not let your foot be moved; he who keeps you will not slumber. Behold, he who keeps Israel will neither slumber nor sleep. The LORD is your keeper; the LORD is your shade on your right hand. The sun shall not strike you by day, nor the moon by night. The LORD will keep you from all evil; he will keep your life. The LORD will keep your going out and your coming in from this time forth and forevermore." –Psalm 121

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