

Why Your 'Small Prayers' Are More Important Than You Think

I smashed the down arrow for the elevator. My right foot tapped out the nervous energy coursing through my body.

"It's only breakfast," I kept telling myself.

I was attending a retreat for writers—a retreat where I had shown up not knowing anyone, and many of the other attendees were old friends.

I had enjoyed the first couple days, meeting some wonderful women. My two roommates and I became fast friends.

But on this particular morning, many of the attendees, my roommates included, had planned breakfast meetings.

I had no plans. Who would I sit with? What would I do for breakfast? A hundred different anxious thoughts ran through my head. I felt like I was 12 again, wondering who would let me sit at their lunch table.

Then I remembered to direct those anxious thoughts regarding breakfast to my heavenly Father.

I breathed a quick prayer while watching the elevator numbers light up in sequence. "God, I know it's just breakfast. Help me get my eyes off myself and quit worrying about if I fit in. Direct me where You want me to sit, and if there's someone I can encourage this morning, or if there's any way You'd like to use me for Your glory, I'm here."

The elevator doors opened as I whispered, "Amen." I took a deep breath and rode down in peace.

I walked into breakfast alone, my eyes scanning the room, taking note of all the groups already meeting. I filled my

plate with pastries and eggs.

Dodging chairs filled with other retreat members already deep into conversation, I found a table with just one woman seated.

"Mind if I join you?" I asked.

"Oh please, yes, go right ahead," she replied.

I sat down and started asking about her life and writing. Within minutes, we squeezed six of us around a table meant for four. I finished my meal eating off a small corner of the table.

We chatted about our homes, families and fried fruit pies, which I apparently need to learn how to make.

As we finished our meals, the table slowly emptied. I was in no rush and had a half-hour before the first session.

My heart sighed a happy thanks to God for a delightful breakfast making new friends.

I looked at the young lady on my right. I had met her briefly on the first day of the retreat and had felt this nudge to get to know her better.

The nudge grew stronger.

"Now. Ask her about her writing. Ask about her life. Do it now."

"OK, God. I'm listening and obeying," my heart replied.

I turned sideways in my chair and asked her, "So, what do you write? Tell me a little about yourself."

A big smile spread across her face. She'd been a quiet observer during our lively group's breakfast conversation. Now, she quickly opened up and shared about her writing and the type of work God has called her to do.

We realized we had a mutual friend, and the conversation flowed fast.

She told me about her two kids, and I felt like I had met the younger sister I'd never had.

Then she asked a question, and my spirit felt the turn in conversation.

"How did you decide to only have two kids? I've been struggling with that, even though I know it's the right decision for our family." She gave a quick synopsis of physical and mental health struggles, and it felt like I was listening to my own story.

"Oh, honey. I understand," I replied.

I gave a quick rundown of the past decade of my life—battles with depression, anxiety, my husband's cancer journey, and how I struggle with guilt in my motherhood, feeling like I'm not like other moms but somehow should be.

With each new revelation, she replied, "Me too! I thought I was the only one. No one talks about these things!"

Tears bloomed in her eyes, spilling down her sweet, young cheeks.

I knew we were sitting on holy ground. This was the answer to my elevator plea about breakfast to get my eyes off myself.

I gave her a big hug, spoke words of God's love and truth over her, and then we prayed together.

When we finished the conversation, we stared at each other wide-eyed for a minute. In a room filled with 50 other women, we had no idea the two of us had so much in common.

We dabbed our eyes with tissues and headed into our first retreat session of the day, and I told her about my elevator

prayer.

“God loves you very much and is definitely looking out for you,” I said. “I just knew He was prompting me to start a conversation with you.”

I’ve learned nothing is too insignificant to pray about.

Even something as small as “Where should I sit for breakfast?” or “Who would You like me to encourage today?” can have a big impact, not only on your life, but on the lives around you.

As we pray over the small, everyday things in our lives, we become more aware of God’s promptings to reach out to those around us. He grants us courage to follow through, and we gain a front-row seat to the work God is doing in people’s lives.

We may not always see an immediate answer, but small prayers throughout the day keep us in close communion to Him. That alone is a big answer. {eo}

Amelia Rhodes lives in Michigan with her husband and two children. As a recovering perfectionist who has been freed, by God’s grace, from the grip of perpetual anxiety, Amelia encourages women to discover who they are in Christ and to deepen their relationships with each other. Her latest book is *Pray A to Z: A Practical Guide to Pray for Your Community*. Learn more about Amelia and her writing at [ameliarhodes.com](#).