

‘Lord, Help Me to Think Your Thoughts and Know Your Ways’

One morning during my devotional time, I asked the Lord to bless my young son, John, and “give him a good day.”

That may not sound like much of a prayer request, but it was a significant one for John—he had been diagnosed with infantile autism when he was a year and a half. Doctors believed he would never recover and suggested that he be placed in an institution.

Thankfully, God had other plans, and after much prayer, love and hard work, John recovered to such an extent that he was able to attend first grade in a Christian school.

During John’s preschool years, I had grown to appreciate many things parents generally take for granted—including their children’s’ ability to verbalize and express affection. John was 3 $\frac{1}{2}$ when he was able to give us hugs and kisses. In light of his condition, my prayer request was for an uneventful, “normal” day. We had so few normal days.

I was blessed to teach the first-grade class next to John’s. On the day of my special prayer, his class was scheduled to take a phonics test. Around noon, his teacher approached me and told me she had to give him a 0 on the test.

My heart sank. What could have happened? He knew the material.

The teacher said he hadn’t written anything down on his paper. She had asked him why and given him several opportunities to provide an excuse. Did he not understand the instructions? Was she not clear in pronunciation? Did he not have a pencil?

None of these was the problem. John told her he simply did not want to take the test. She had no choice but to give him a 0.

I took John aside and, being the good teacher, principal's wife and parent that I was, applied strong disciplinary measures. I ended with, "Don't you ever decide that you are not going to do your work again, young man. Is that clear?" Through tears, John replied, "Yes, Mom. I'm sorry. I won't do it again."

I went back to my classroom and silently cried out to God. "Lord, I wouldn't have minded something like this any other day, but today, Lord, I specifically asked You to give Him a good day. Why did this have to happen today?" My emotions were in a whirlwind.

Then I heard Him ask me quietly, "Would you have preferred that he lie or make excuses like some children you know?"

"Oh, no, Lord! I wouldn't have wanted him to do that."

"Well, then. He did wrong, told the truth about it, accepted the consequences for it and repented. In My eyes, he had a VERY good day. My thoughts are not your thoughts. My ways are not your ways. This was a great day!"

WOW! What a revelation! I felt like a foolish little girl throwing a tantrum. He had answered my prayer—just not in the way I expected.

"Oh, Lord!" I prayed. "Truly You know the end from the beginning, and everything You do is right. Forgive me for my lack of understanding. Help me to think Your thoughts and know Your ways."

I realized that my definition of a "good day" was one in which John would earn 100 percent on his test, behave well and look good. But that wasn't God's definition. God called the day good because He was able to reveal John's heart and build his character. I had to align my thinking to agree with His.

This experience taught me to look beyond what appears on the surface to see God's plan and purpose. We need to trust Him to show us His ways when we ask Him, and trust that His ways are perfect.

Prayer Power for the Week of May 18, 2015

This week ask the Lord to show you His ways and be prepared to receive what He wants to teach you. Embrace the knowledge and thank Him for the adventure of discovering more of Him. Ask the Holy Spirit to show you aspects of His character and personality through His Word, and study how this affected His dealings with His people. Pray according to His Word and character for those suffering persecution for their faith in Christ, suffering the loss of loved ones through war, sickness, natural disasters and street violence and those ministering on the front lines. Remember Israel and pray that our leaders would heed wise counsel and seek the Lord as they make decisions affecting our nation and the entire world (Is. 55:6-11; Ps. 139:17-18).