

CHAPTER 6

FINDING OUR OWN EXPRESSIONS

Man's chief end is to glorify God, and to enjoy Him forever.

John Calvin

THE POWER OF WONDER

I am often enamored by my precious grandson, Sylas. He was two at the time of this story. I can only imagine how much God cherishes him.

I watched Sy's first encounter with rain and I will always hold dear the image of him standing on our front step taking in the experience of his first summer storm. I recorded a video of him because it was such a sacred moment.

Sylas dislikes kiddie pools, sprinklers, and, even less, ocean waves and family play at the beach. He wants none of it. Even wet sand holds no interest to him. He disliked baths until his mother tried putting him in the deep kitchen sink which I suppose felt more secure to him than a big tub. The sound and look of the bathroom shower, all that pouring water behind a curtain, terrified him. In general, Sylas prefers to stay dry.

One afternoon, I noticed him looking out the living room window. It was beginning to sprinkle outdoors. I took him by the hand and we stepped just outside the door. There, on the front steps, I let go of his hand and watched what he might do.

Without a word, the little guy held both of his arms out in front of him and caught drops of water on his arms while Abba let the heavens lightly rain on him. Sylas glanced up at the sky when he heard rolling thunder overhead. It was not the scary kind; it was gently majestic. The rain and sounds mesmerized him.

I asked him, “Well, what do you think of it?”

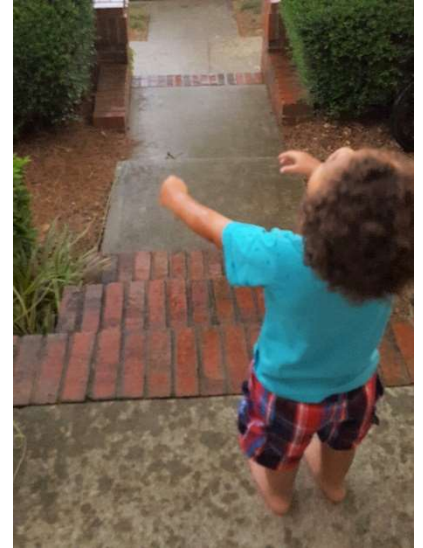
In a quiet voice, he replied, “Wow.” He shook his head to dislodge water from his tight curls and then he looked down at his wet, bare feet—all this while keeping his arms outstretched in front of him. Softly, he repeated, his new word, “Wow.”

“Wow” from that moment on, became one of his first words, right beside “Daddy” and “Mama.”

Enthralled, Sylas stood like a statue. No smiles, no laughter. No further communication. Head and body straight, arms outstretched, he was catching rain.

I convinced him to come inside after he was thoroughly soaked and began to shiver. It was raining hard by then. Once inside, I handed him a towel but he barely wiped his face with it. He dropped it on the floor and headed straight to a window. He wasn’t done. He communicated through baby talk: “Opella,” and with hand gestures, he wanted me to raise the window so he could stick an arm out for more. He happened to choose the one window that had no screen.

Again, he let pelting rain fall on one of his outstretched arms. The rain had become a downpour by then. I watched him, enamored at the sight of his experience with the wonder of rain. God delights in us the same way. He so enjoys us when we experience the discoveries that He has at the ready for us.



Wonder is important in knowing and loving God—we should become more like children in that regard. Jesus said, “Truly I tell you, unless you change and become like little children, you will never enter the kingdom of heaven.”

There’s so much of God’s beauty and intelligence in our world and lives. God likes to wow us. The first coming of Jesus was the greatest Wow of all time.

God watches over us like a doting parent and treats each of us uniquely because not one of us is alike, nor does He want us to be. He specializes in, even celebrates, extravagant diversity—especially in people because we are His favorite creations and works of art.

The Creator invites us to share our world with Him and with one another in the time we’ve been given on earth. We are the audience for, and participants in, His artistic expressions. Appreciating Creation is critical to enjoying God’s company because joy and wonder is serious business to Him.

Breathtaking skies at sunrise and sunset. The way the sun’s rays turn our world golden at the beginning and end of each day. The pastels and light on a canvas of changing sky. Ocean beaches and the gentle roar of crashing waves. An evening of quiet beneath a full moon. The smell of autumn and its glorious array of red, yellow, and orange leaves. Early morning birdsong. Kayaking on a lake or stream and watching fish swim beneath you. A panoramic lookout you’ve reached with a breathtaking view. The wind in your face on a sailboat. An inky blue sky dotted by a canopy of stars and the sound of cicadas serenading the air. A garden enclosed with flowers, trees, and a comfortable bench.

Lovemaking. Music. A juicy orange. The aroma of baking bread that smells as good as it tastes. Friendships. Newborn babies (especially your own), puppies, kittens. A good book. A sermon meant for you. This life God has created for us is what He calls "good."

Jesus came to restore Eden. Lesser things easily distract us from the main thing: knowing and enjoying God. Being aware and expressing gratitude or wonder is a way to delight God in return.