Shifting Our Focus

We all see life through our own lens. Things around us shape our perception and our perception becomes our reality. As Education Coordinator for Big Oak Ranch a lot of my time is spent uncovering the potential in our students. Education plans, past grades, testing, where they came from, what other things may have occurred, are all examples of things I press into to find out just a little more about what is going on inside. Those things are my lens in which I devise a plan to help them move forward not only from their past but to help them discover the God given potential he has placed inside of them. What are their dreams and plans for the future? What can we do today to better prepare them for what God has in store for them tomorrow? Sounds wonderful, right? Well it is! But there are times that through my lens I become so focused on the goal in front of me that sometimes I miss the big picture of His perfect plan.

Recently, we had a new student come to the school and on paper I had it all figured out. I had a “plan” and I trusted it pretty heavily. A week later my plan was failing and he was falling into that deep hole academically that is very hard to recover from. Shutdown only begins to describe his place and frustration described mine. See, if we only focus on our circumstances, we miss out on the fruit that can be produced through us during that season.

We must persever with our eyes fixed on Jesus and allow him to prune out the distraction and dead in our lives. “I am the true vine, and my Father is the gardener. He cuts off every branch in me that bears no fruit, while every branch that does bear fruit he prunes so that it will be even more fruitful. You are already clean because of the word I have spoken to you. Remain in me, as I also remain in you. No branch can bear fruit by itself; it must remain in the vine. Neither can you bear fruit unless you remain in me.” John 15:1-4 We must not look horizontally at what surrounds us but vertically to Him.

God does not see things like we see them. “For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways, declares the Lord. As the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways and my thoughts than your thoughts.” Isaiah 55:8-9 He is almighty, our everlasting Father who has it all figured out. We must choose daily to focus on Him for He comes to give us joy and lead us forth in peace. He has great plans for us, plans to prosper us and give us a hope and a future.

Although there are still problems to address, this young man is now making progress. There have been moments where we see his true smile come to life. I must choose daily to focus on the good plans God has in store for him. I’m looking to Jesus for wisdom because he knows exactly what we all need.

Father, as we walk throughout our daily lives help us run with perseverance, fixing our eyes on Jesus. Remove the distractions and dead things in our lives. Help us not to grow weary in doing good. Prune our hearts Lord, so that we can produce kingdom building fruit that will only bring you glory and honor. In your powerful name, we pray these things, Amen.

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