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The Weight of My Neighbor's Glory

Because I have a 10-year-old daughter, I am fairly current with the latest movies that involve Miley Cyrus, the Jonas Brothers, and of course, princesses. It's the latter that gives me hope, because princesses were big even when I was a little girl. "What's the appeal?" you might ask, especially if you're male. Let me explain....

The best movies and stories about princesses begin with the girl not knowing she's a princess, and they are even better if she is an ugly duckling. Through circumstances outside her control, her true identity is revealed and a major transformation begins, both externally in how she looks and internally in how she feels about herself. She also learns to discern who truly cares about her for who she is, and who is only a friend because of her new-found status.

Movies and stories like these strike a chord in our hearts, because we, too, believe at our core that we are not ordinary, that hidden inside is something special. Unfortunately, we disregard these stirrings, afraid of being puffed up. We don't realize that these yearnings are common to all.

I think one of my favorite lines from a princess movie comes from *The Princess Diaries*, where Mia's quiet boyfriend asks her why she still chooses him even though he is just a commoner and she has plenty of other guys clamoring for attention. Mia says, "You saw me when I was invisible." In other words, she felt known and respected by him, even before he knew she was royalty.

I like this line because I think it encapsulates the mission of each person who calls themselves a follower of Christ. It is our responsibility to not only recognize the extraordinary person the Triune God created in us, but to remember that He has created someone special in each and every person we meet as we move throughout our daily routine.

C.S. Lewis says in *The Weight of Glory*, "The load, or weight, or burden of my neighbor's glory should be laid on my back, a load so heavy that only humility can carry it, and the backs of the proud will be broken." It's interesting to note that humility is needed to recognize that even the most boring, seemingly untalented person among us is an extraordinary creation, worthy of God's delight.

It's only by resting well in our own "secret identity" as princes and princesses of the Great God that we can be secure enough to see the glory in our neighbor that was placed there by the same God. The appeal of princess movies, like *The Princess Diaries*, has a lot to do with our yearning to be viewed as someone special. But movies and stories like these are also vivid reminders that we carry the responsibility of helping others see their potential and worth in God's sight. We need to have the eyes to see people when they feel like they are invisible.

Although I'm sure my daughter will eventually outgrow her fascination with all things related to Miley Cyrus and the Jonas Brothers, I hope she will always remember that she is a princess who is deeply cherished by her heavenly Father. I also hope she understands her role in humbly encouraging others to see themselves as God sees them, as fellow princes and princesses in the kingdom of our God. ~ *Nan Kublman*