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Gathering
Dandelions

Meditations and Musings on Faith, Fracture,
and Beauty Mistaken for a Weed

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Are You Watching?



*"Are not two sparrows sold for a penny?
Yet not one of them will fall to the ground outside
your Father's care. And even the very hairs
of your head are all numbered."*

—Matthew 10:29–30

"Watch me, Mom! Are you watching? Here I go!"

I looked up from the magazine I'd been trying to read to watch my son, Cole, jump into the pool in the exact same way he had done seven times before. A few seconds later, his head popped up out of the water like a cork.

"Did you see me, Mom? Did you see my jump? It was my best one!"

"Yes! It was fantastic!"

I lifted my magazine once more, ready to go beyond the opening paragraph I'd now read seven times in the past 10 minutes.

"I'm going to go even higher this time. Watch me!"

Down goes the magazine.

Splash goes Cole.

"Did you see me?"

"Yes, it was wonderful!" And so it continued.

Summer days at the pool were not always as relaxing as I'd hoped. My fantasies of lying luxuriously on a chaise lounge with a magazine, sipping on a cold glass of lemon-flavored water were replaced with the reality of slathering sunscreen onto squirming kids, yelling at those same kids to slow down and walk-not-run, getting the last sip from a leftover (warm) juice box, and never finishing a magazine article. And of course,

my summers were filled with those three words, "Are you watching?"

Observing the kids jump into the pool in a variety of poses was fun for a few moments. But it was clear they wanted my undivided attention the entire time, which quickly became wearisome.

Interestingly, "Are You watching?" is a question we ask of God, too. When life is confusing or overwhelming, maybe you wonder if He's reading a magazine. Or maybe you imagine He is wearied by the same feelings, the same worries, and the same fears that repeat themselves in your life. The issues that weigh on our hearts can be perpetually and frustratingly similar, no matter how the particulars of our circumstances vary.

What I believe Cole really wanted to know, and what our hearts cry out to know from God, is the deeper question: "Are you SEEING me?" Truthfully, we don't want to know if God is just watching; we need to know

He is seeing. We are desperate to know that He's not glancing up between sentences from a magazine, not placating us with hollow exclamations, but really, truly, seeing into the deepest core of who we are and what we need.

I hope you are blessed by at least a few people who can see you—all your strengths, weaknesses, victories, and defeats. These people are witnesses to your life. They are acolytes pointing you in the right direction, affirming and encouraging your heart. We are designed to need people, so their presence fulfills very real, God-designed needs. But people, by very nature of our humanness, will never see all of the parts of our soul that require unwavering attention.

It is God alone, the One who counts the hairs on your head and formed your yet-to-be-born body, who can see you for all you are, all you need, and all you are meant to be.

God isn't just watching you. He sees you. He sees your predicaments, your heartbreaks, your quirks, and how reruns of Little House on the Prairie still make you cry. He is with you when you succeed at new things or fail once again at the same old things.

Even so, it's one thing for us to understand this truth in our head, and it's another thing entirely to experience being seen.

To experience being seen, we need to slow down. We need to breathe in, breathe out, and look around with intention. When we look for God in every moment, we will find God looking at us. We must endeavor to live a vulnerable life, one that declares to Him our need to be seen. We can—no, we must—ask Abba over and over again, "Are You watching?" not because we seek to get His attention (He's never not paying attention) but because every time we ask, we declare our utter dependence on Him.

And every time we ask, He will answer in the affirmative. Every single time. And we can jump into the deep waters of His undying attention, pop up like a cork, and know we are seen by the One who loves us most.



- How do you long to be seen and known?
- Have you withheld from God your need to be seen because it feels too vulnerable?
- Do you know, deep in your soul, that God doesn't just watch you, but rather He sees you—all you are and all He created you to be? Let your honest answer become a cry of your heart or a song of praise to the One who is not merely watching, but seeing you in this moment.



Dear Abba, my frail heart needs to know You are intimately familiar with all of my being: heart, soul, and mind. I need to know You are not just watching me but that You are seeing me. I need to know there is not one thought, one action, one fear, one joy that misses Your attention. I need to know that I am not alone in traversing this life and that You are vigilant in the complexities of my circumstances. I confess, sometimes I wonder if You are reading a magazine. I'm sorry I doubt. I ask You, my all-knowing, all-loving God, to show me again that You see me, know me, and love me. Help me to breathe in, breathe out, and intentionally look for You in every moment. In doing so, I trust that You will, over and over again, reveal Your attentiveness, Your faithfulness, and Your unwavering love in the places You know I need that most. Amen.