

The Power of Acceptance

Mary Ann Bird, in her memoir entitled *The Whisper Test*, tells of the power of words of acceptance in her own life. She was born with multiple birth defects – deaf in one ear, a cleft palate, a disfigured face, a crooked nose, lopsided feet.

“I grew up knowing I was different, and I hated it,” she said. “When I started school, my classmates made it clear to me how I looked to others.”

When schoolmates asked her, “What happened to your lip?” Bird said, “I’d tell them I’d fallen and cut it on a piece of glass. Somehow it seemed more acceptable to have suffered an accident than to have been born different. I was convinced that no one outside my family could love me.”

Bird’s second-grade teacher was Mrs. Leonard, whom she described as “short, round, happy – a sparkling lady.”

Ms. Leonard was one of the most beloved and popular teachers in the school. Every student, including Bird, wanted to be noticed by her, wanted to be her pet.



Each year, the school administered hearing tests. Bird tells what happened:

“Mrs. Leonard gave the test to everyone in the class, and finally it was my turn. I knew from past years that as we stood against the door and covered one ear, the teacher sitting at her desk would whisper something, and we would have to repeat it back – things like ‘The sky is blue,’ or ‘Do you have new shoes?’ I waited there for those words that God must have put into her mouth, those seven words that changed my life. Mrs. Leonard said, in her whisper, ‘I wish you were my little girl.’”

Be assured today, no matter what condition you may be in, whether deformed physically by birth or by accident or deformed spiritually by sin, God is saying, “I wish you were my son” or “I wish you were my daughter.”

He loves you that much. And that relationship is obtained through faith in God’s Son, Jesus Christ.

It is a life-changing experience.

“I will be a Father to you, and you will be my sons and daughters,” says the Lord Almighty (2 Corinthians 6:18 NIV).

What an exhilarating thought – to be a child of the King!

– Beecher Hunter