

GOSPEL GLIMPSES

Jenny Ho

In 2-4 sentences, tell us a little about yourself (where you are from, what brought you to San Diego, family, careers, etc...)

My family moved from Chicago to San Diego in 1991 when my parents started a small business. Andy and I have been married for 22 years, and we are blessed with three boys and one girl ranging from ages 3 to 14. As a working mom who is not domestically inclined, I function very poorly when deprived of a full night's rest. So I am especially grateful for a very tidy husband, children who help with house chores, and 4 grandparents who live locally and support us through child care, pickups/drop-offs, and home-cooked meals!

Tell us about something that is life-giving to you and why!

When my mind is dull and my body aches, I long to be out in nature and breathe fresh air. Spending time in the great outdoors really helps to ground me, as I am drawn to worship our great God, clothed in splendor and majesty! I feel most serene when surrounded by my favorite people amidst towering trees, vast mountains, babbling brooks, ocean waves, and wildlife. This year we had chance encounters with black bears, mule deer, bighorn sheep, octopus, and brittle stars. Seeing the vastness of creation is always a humbling experience that breathes life into my weary soul.

In Philippians 4:8, Paul encourages believers to focus on things that are pure, praiseworthy, just, true, lovely, and commendable. In light of that, share with us one thing you have seen or experienced that exemplifies one of these.

Starting this past summer, I found audiobooks to be a welcome form of mental escape, since I had trouble keeping my eyes open late at night, yet I was filled with many anxious thoughts after putting the kids to bed. I'm grateful to God for rich literature and free library resources! Stepping into someone else's fictional and biographical world and sharing in their struggles has given me strength to endure my daily hurdles. My most recent audiobook brought me this prophetic quote from Reinhold Niebuhr. Hearing it read aloud made it all the more real and convincing that we can only be saved by faith, hope, love, and forgiveness.

"Nothing that is worth doing can be achieved in our lifetime; therefore we must be saved by hope. Nothing which is true or beautiful or good makes complete sense in any immediate context of history; therefore we must be saved by



faith. Nothing we do, however virtuous, can be accomplished alone; therefore we must be saved by love. No virtuous act is quite as virtuous from the standpoint of our friend or foe as it is from our standpoint. Therefore we must be saved by the final form of love which is forgiveness."

What specific Scripture verse(s) has the Lord been using to encourage you during this season?

I've been meditating on Colossians 1:15-20, which fills me with hope in Jesus, the firstborn of all creation. By him, through him, for him, in him – all things were created and will be reconciled to him. While we ache over personal loss, regret past failures, or grieve over broken relationships, God promises that he is sovereign and powerful over all things. My heart breaks as world news and social media are flooded with stories of heightened anxiety and depression, food insecurity and poverty, job loss and lack of economic opportunity, persecution of fellow believers around the world, nursing home residents who suffer from loneliness and isolation ... and the list goes on and on. But the thought of Jesus Christ holding all things together from the beginning to the end of time assures me that no personal or social dilemma is beyond the grasp of an eternal God.

Our Savior Jesus, full of grace and truth, walked on this earth, died on the cross, and secured for us a peaceful future. Even after the acute threat of coronavirus subsides, and our lives return to some form of normalcy, we will still confront the sin in our hearts and countless social problems that need to be solved. We will certainly rejoice when our favorite restaurant, gym, church, hair salon, or movie theater opens up. But how much more will we celebrate when the gates of heaven are flung wide, and we are ushered into everlasting unity and harmony among all of God's people.