

Rachel Xavier's Valedictorian Speech

Community Christian School, 2010

"I am only one, but I am one. I cannot do everything, but I can do something. What I can do, I should do and, with the help of God, I will do!" – Everett Hale

Hmm... School, academics, band, choir, sports, 4-H, music lessons, church, drama productions, family, friends, other daily responsibilities... and the list goes on. These are the areas I've been involved in and I can only imagine the other areas in student's lives...longer or just different lists.

Sure, these things are great. They keep us on our toes, forcing us to be a more responsible and well-rounded individuals. If we're not careful though, some of these things get to be routine. For the most part we try to do everything to the best of our ability, but in trying to set priorities, some of the MOST IMPORTANT things get set on a shelf. Many times we start "playing church" and we miss out on the genuine, PASSIONATE, CRAZY LOVE relationship we are privileged to have with our heavenly father. We get so caught up in daily routines that we sometimes barely even realize that we're letting God slowly slip out of our lives. We start depending on our own incompetent, sad imitation of strength. We end up so ashamed of our past that we don't feel worthy to plead to God about it... so many time, we don't. The cycle goes on until we find ourselves in a huge mess and we're learning the hard way... again.

About the time we are at our wit's end, totally broken and ashamed, searching for love and acceptance through friendships, relationships or even accomplishments that only leave us empty handed. God still remembers us. He hasn't forgotten or left us through all this. He's been calling us back the WHOLE TIME... if only we choose to listen to Him. He lovingly pleads with us, "Child, why are you striving these days, fruitlessly trying to EARN grace? Why are you crying? Let me lift up your face. Why are you LOOKING for love? Why are you still searching, as if I'M not enough? Child,

stop running away from me. I've promised to ALWAYS be by your side WHEREVER you fall. In the dead of night, whenever you call. Please don't fight my hands that are holding you. Love of my life, look DEEP in my eyes. THERE you will find what you need. Give me your life. The lust and the lies, the past you're afraid I might see. You're my Beloved. Lover I'm yours."

God tells us in Jeremiah 29:11-14a – For I know the plans I have for you, declares the LORD, plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future. Then you will call upon me and come and pray to me, and I will listen to you. You will seek me and find me when you seek me with all your heart. I will be found by you, declares the LORD, and will bring you back from captivity.

Many times when we try to do things in our own strength, not listening to God's will, we forget that He wants nothing less than the best for us. He came to give us LIFE and that we might have it more ABUNDANTLY (John 10:10).

I challenge you to ALWAYS keep God FIRST priority, even when life comes at you like a CRAZY HURRICANE... because I assure you, only He can calm the storm.

I also challenge you this next school year to truly impact the world for God. It will be hard, you'll have to reach out past your group of 5 or so close friends. You'll have to actually GET TO KNOW some people that may be out of your "comfort zone" or "outside the box". It won't be easy, but it will be SOOO worth it. Remember as you look at yourselves and others, that Jesus did not come to save "perfect" people. He came to reach out to save the SINNERS... the tax collectors, the prostitutes, and the unclean. I challenge you to have JESUS COMPASSION.

I'd like to thank Mr. Gray, Mr. Porch, and Mrs. Bollom for their outstanding impact on my life here at CCS.

Mr. Gray: You've taught us sooo much besides science. You constantly remind us what's most important in life. Your life demonstrates to all of us complete humility and a tremendous compassion. Even though you've gone through sooo much, one wouldn't even know because you're always SO joyful.

Mr. Porch: Wow, I can honestly say I've met a genius! You could definitely give Albert Einstein a run for his money any day! I can't even fathom how you do all the things you do. You have sooo much wisdom and a passion for music, true beauty, and what you do. You EXEMPLIFY "Doing common things uncommonly well." *** Younger classmen: DO NOT take this man for granted!

Mrs. Bollom: Beautiful, kind, genuine, loving, humble, devoted - those are only a few of the wonderful words that describe such a wonderful woman. You have the most amazingly beautiful spirit. You're not a respecter of persons, you encourage EVERYONE in Christ. We'd be lost without you.

I am in debt to you all. I want to be more like you.

To all of the students here at CCS, I've been incredibly blessed to have had the pleasure of meeting and getting to know you. Remember, EVERY ONE OF YOU is a **Unique, Unrepeatable, Miracle of God**. Don't try to be anyone else but you. It's way more fun that way!

So, in conclusion, you might be broken, ashamed, feel totally unworthy, or maybe just feel like you could NEVER measure up to the talents and characteristics of others....

BUT LISTEN!! If you're a child of God, **you** are a child of the **CREATOR OF THE UNIVERSE!** Girls, every one of you is a princess—daughter of the KING.

Our God is completely for us, and He is always with us. All we have to do is FULLY RELY ON HIM in everything we do and He'll write us our masterpiece.

OUR GOD IS GREATER, OUR GOD IS STRONGER, OUR GOD IS HIGHER THAN ANY OTHER. OUR GOD IS HEALER, AWESOME IN POWER, **OUR GOD.**

And if our God is FOR us, then who could ever stop us? And if our God is WITH us, then what could stand against us?