

As I have reflected on the questions that shape my worldview; Who am I? Where am I? What's wrong? What's the solution? -- it has helped to broaden my perspective of how I fit into God's story. I'm just a little pinpoint in the whole grand scheme of the story but God has given me gifts and talents that are unique and it does matter, very much, how I live my life. I'm just a small piece of the puzzle but the puzzle won't be complete without my piece. I am part of a bigger story that has a wonderful ending even though there will be difficulties to face, probably persecution. I am entering the story in Act 5 - Scene 2 where we are to go into all the world. Wherever I go and whatever I do I want to represent the kingdom of God (consistently live the Christian life) in such a way that it spills over onto those in my sphere of influence and, even if only for a brief moment, they can get a taste of heaven that will attract them to Jesus. The kingdom is real in this present life through true believers, even though it's not complete, and we are to be His representatives in this fallen world in anticipation of its future completion.

What does that look like for me? I have been challenged to be more purposeful in representing God's kingdom in my little world. I have already started telling "our story" to our grandkids. We had an opportunity to be with them right after the retreat and I hesitantly told them (ages 4 and 6) a true story about my life -- and, to my surprise, they had questions that led to spiritual conversations and they even wanted more stories! It just so

happens that I have lots of stories to tell them! What a special way to connect with our grandkids. Also, we went for walks after school (well, we walked and the grandkids rode their bikes) and Mike followed Dr. Bush's example of taking a bag to collect recyclable trash that was strewn in the area. This also is part of restoring creation. It's not a monumental thing -- but it's us doing our part in recognizing the value of God's creation and tending it as He commanded us to do.

—Beulah Beach 2014-17 Cohort Participant