

## #510 08/03/09 Finding the gifts of others

It is important to teach our child to appreciate the gifts of others. As I wrote last week, we can do that by pointing out to her the gifts that we see in her friends. Doing so helps our child become humble about her own gifts, intellectual and otherwise. But, what about when we are not around to help her recognize the gifts of others?

That is also a skill we need to teach her. (Did anyone warn you before you became a parent that it was a fulltime teaching job?) Our child needs to learn to really listen to and watch others to see where they are gifted. One side benefit to our child when she learns this skill is that she will become a great encourager to the people around her.

Most of this can be taught by your discussions with your child. Instead of pointing out that her friend is a really good listener, say to her, “When Kate was here yesterday, did you notice that she picked up on the fact that you were worried about your algebra class? She asked you how you felt about the tutorials before you even said anything. Is she always that tuned in to people?”

Comments such as that will help your daughter to focus outside herself. She will begin to see that Kate has the gift of really listening to what others say. She will come to appreciate listening as a gift. Each time she can be led to see gifts of others, she will come closer to being humble about her own gifts.

Another discussion opener can be the question, “I really like your new friend, Allie. Does she enjoy doing the same things as you do, or are her gifts in other areas?” When you daughter says that she is a really gifted athlete, say something like, “Hey, maybe if she hangs around here, your ole’ mom will be encouraged to keep up her running schedule!”

Always, these discussions must be light and off the cuff in a way that makes talking about others’ gifts seem natural. Remember that you are helping your child see that any God-given gift is to be highly regarded even if it is not intellectual giftedness. Your ultimate goal is that your child learns humility.