

Commentary: 'Created equal' and hope for girls

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I sat on my couch with my husband and my two daughters as we watched the first woman accept the nomination of a major political party to become president of the United States.



Meredith StoneWe, at least my husband and I, watched both the Republican and Democratic conventions very carefully.

But when Chelsea Clinton introduced her mother, tears began welling up in my eyes. I was trying to hide this emotion from the tiny human sitting next to me, so I didn't sniffle or wipe my face.

Then, with a perceptive sense that all conversation on the couch had paused, my youngest asked, "Is everyone OK?"

Important moment

For the next several minutes, I tried to explain to her women had not always had the same opportunities as men. I told her this was a very important moment in history for a woman to be nominated to be the president.

Then, in 8-year-old innocence, she asked, "So, no woman has ever been president?"

She didn't know about glass ceilings.

About 30 minutes later, she was sleeping on my lap as Hillary Clinton said: "When any barrier falls, it clears the way for everyone. When there are no ceilings, the sky is the limit."

I looked down at my daughter as she dreamed, and I began to dream about what barriers had just fallen for her. I hoped the sky was truly her limit.

Whoever we will vote for come November, Secretary Clinton's nomination is an important moment, not just for women and girls, but for our nation.

Not all equal

When we say we live in a country where "all men are created equal," I'm not sure it has meant all people are created equal.

The variations in human bodies, created in the image of God, have been cited as reasons for limiting the opportunities certain people might be afforded in the United States.

But with the nomination of a woman for president, perhaps hope for a new standard of "created equal" can continue to grow to include women fully.

Unfortunately, to say the least, in the same way electing a black president has not meant an end to systemic racism, we cannot expect this moment will mean the end to limited opportunities for women.

New conversations

In the same way we need to keep finding personal and communal ways to work diligently toward chipping away at generations of racial oppression, we also need to keep working toward gender equality.

So, whoever we vote for in a few months, I hope tonight can be a beginning

for new kinds of conversations with 8-year-old girls.

I hope one day those conversations might result in ceiling-less dreams for my daughters.

And I hope my daughters someday will live in a world where all people are created equal.

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