

How to Catch God's Attention

Do you want to be a woman of authority? Do you want to have the kind of spiritual power that changes things around you, that takes dominion over evil in the name of Jesus?

Usually when Christians talk about dominion and authority, they are referring to the acts of "binding and loosing," "casting and dismissing," "releasing and getting." These are a real part of our Christian lives, as the Bible says: "But you shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you" (Acts 1:8).

But not all of us manifest that power. In fact, many of us live in fear, discouragement and defeat. We want to live our lives in the authority and power of the Holy Spirit, but we fail time and time again.

Something is missing! Fortunately, the Bible introduces us to one person who can teach us what that "something" is: the woman who washed Jesus' feet at the home of Simon the Pharisee.

"And behold, a woman in the city who was a sinner, when she knew that Jesus sat at the table in the Pharisee's house, brought an alabaster flask of fragrant oil, and stood at His feet behind Him weeping; and she began to wash His feet with her tears, and wiped them with the hair of her head" (Luke 7:37-38).

At first glance you might ask, "What does this woman know about dominion and authority?" We don't see her binding and loosing, casting out devils or tearing down walls. Yet she caught the attention of Jesus at the table that night—and if you can catch the attention of the Master of the universe, you have power.

What this woman knew is how to worship Christ with everything

she had in her. She knew how to give her all in worship to her Savior. And in that kind of abandoned worship, she found the power to do something that no one else—not even Jesus’ closest disciples—had the wisdom and foresight to do.

Courage Through Worship

Now Scripture says that a woman’s hair is her glory (1 Cor. 11:15). I suppose that’s why we women spend so much time on our hair. We feel our best when we’re having a good hair day!

The woman in Luke 7, however, used her hair to wipe Jesus’ feet after she had washed them with her own tears. She took her hair—her glory, her most important cosmetic, the thing that made her feel complete and feminine—and wiped His dirty, sweaty, calloused feet.

In that act, it was as if she was saying: “Nothing I have, nothing I am, nothing I hope to be, is more important than loving You. I’m going to use everything I am and everything I have—even the precious things, the ‘glory’ things—to worship You.”

She washed His feet without hesitation or apology. All around her sat sneering Pharisees and disapproving disciples, yet she threw herself with total abandonment into worship of her Savior.

She didn’t care what the others thought of her. She didn’t care whether they considered her worship appropriate. She simply worshiped—and that gave her the courage to approach Jesus in the midst of a hostile crowd. She wasn’t out to impress people; she wanted to impress God!

Like this woman, you and I can find courage through worship. We must simply set aside our self-consciousness and give our all to draw near to Jesus. As we abandon ourselves in the presence of God—as we refuse to worry about who may be looking, what they may be thinking—we are set free from the

fears that hold us back from being who we really are in Christ. We become confident; we gain spiritual authority. We get the attention of Jesus!

That kind of abandoned worship requires emotion. The woman in Luke 7 showed her emotions through her tears and kisses. It is no coincidence that the Greek word for "worship" means "to bow and to kiss." Yes, it is right to be reverent; but it is also important to worship with emotion.

Kissing is an intimate act. It stirs our feelings. It requires a total release of ourselves. And in the case of this woman, she didn't kiss simply Jesus' hands or His cheek. She kissed his rough, dusty feet. And not just once or twice; the Greek word for "kiss" is in the imperfect tense, meaning that she kissed them continuously.

It is almost as if she was out of control. In worship, that's not such a bad thing.

Now, no one would approve of worship that is wild or vulgar or promiscuous, but being in His control means being out of ours. We must come to the point where we make no apologies for loving and worshiping Him with every fiber of our being. When we do, we make a connection with Jesus that all the theological learning in the world can never accomplish.

Did you know you can be filled with Bible knowledge and still be separated from the Lord? Consider the host of the dinner in Luke 7, Simon. He was a learned man who knew the Pentateuch. He knew the Law of Moses. He could no doubt have run rings around all of us in terms of his knowledge of the Bible of his time.

But in spite of Simon's intellectual knowledge, he was separated from God. He was not connected to Him in spirit.

The fact is, you may have gone to Bible college and seminary.

You may know Greek and Hebrew. But what's the use if you don't know how to get in touch with Jesus?

We need to know how to reach Him—how to forget about ourselves, concentrate on Him and worship Him. After all, He is all our righteousness; we stand complete only in Him. That's our power!

It doesn't matter how much we preach and teach. Unless we know how to enter into the presence of God and get His attention, our efforts are fruitless.

Overcoming Guilt

The worshipping woman in Luke 7 gave Jesus her all. She held nothing back. And as a result, she gained the attention of the Lord.

She needed that attention. She needed the power of God in her life. She needed to hear Jesus' words to her: "Your sins are forgiven. ... Your faith has saved you. Go in peace" (Luke 7:48, 50).

After all, she was known in town as a "sinner." She had been dramatically transformed by her relationship with the Savior, but she still had to walk that out before people who would scoff and criticize and try to pull her back into her old way of life.

She couldn't afford to worship Jesus halfheartedly. She needed courage and power to face the challenges that lay before her.

How about you? Many of us worship as if we have it all together. We don't need anything from the Lord. We don't need His forgiveness as much as the next person.

But Jesus told the Pharisees at that dinner, "Therefore I say to you, her sins, which are many, are forgiven, for she loved much. But to whom little is forgiven, the same loves little" (Luke 7:47). Are we worshiping as ones who "love little"?

Jesus perceived this woman's faith through her loving worship. In response, He offered her forgiveness of her sins. No longer would she be held back, as so many of us are, by a sense of her own unworthiness and guilt.

Guilt is a thief—it steals our confidence and weakens our spiritual authority base. It keeps us from using our spiritual gifts and speaking out boldly. Just as we get up enough courage to begin to sing or pray or preach, the devil whispers in our ear: "Who do you think you are? You can't do that—you're a failure and a fraud."

And usually he is right! We have all made bad choices. We all "fall short of the glory of God" (Rom. 3:23). We are all sinners in need of hearing Jesus say, "You're forgiven."

The Word tells us, "If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness" (1 John 1:9). When we worship with the kind of abandon that says, "Here I am, warts and all; take all of me," Jesus is faithful to tell us, "I love you just the way you are. Your sins are forgiven."

Whenever we feel down on ourselves, whenever we find ourselves sinking into a "pity party," we have only to worship to hear the voice of our loving, forgiving Savior—and we will emerge from that experience fresh, guiltless and new in Him.

A Prophetic Act

Because of this woman's wholehearted worship, she was given a special gift that not even the disciples who walked daily with the Lord had received: She caught a glimpse of the glory of God and the true nature of Jesus' mission on behalf of mankind. Though the disciples looked at Jesus and saw a conquering hero and political leader who would overthrow Roman rule in Israel, this woman saw a suffering Savior who would soon give His life for sinners on a brutal and lonely Roman cross.

After drying Christ's feet with her hair, she took a flask of expensive oil and began to anoint Him with the same loving, worshipful abandon. The disciples protested, "'Why was this fragrant oil wasted? For it might have been sold for more than three hundred denarii and given to the poor'" (Mark 14:4-5). But there is no waste in worship to Jesus.

"'Let her alone,' He responded. 'She has done what she could. She has come beforehand to anoint My body for burial'" (Mark 14:6, 8).

What happened? In worship, this woman became perceptive. She became prophetic. Judas had not yet gone to betray Jesus, and yet she knew what lay ahead. Jesus would die, and He would need to have His body anointed in preparation for burial.

Peter and John didn't see it coming—only this woman who loved the Lord enough to worship Him with everything she had in her. They sat in His presence and missed it; she worshiped Him and saw it.

What gifts does God have ready for you in worship? What do you need? Do you need prophetic insight into the circumstances of your life and the lives of your loved ones? Do you need power to overcome the worries and fears that hold you back from being all you can be in Jesus?

We need so much from God! Yet we hesitate to get close enough to Jesus to really touch Him. We hold back the emotion needed to kiss His feet continuously and wash them with our tears. We don't let our hair down because it might embarrass us or make us look bad in front of others.

We need to understand that our power lies in loving, abandoned, wholehearted worship. That's where we get Jesus' undivided attention. If you want to be a woman of spiritual authority and power, worship Him!

Read a companion devotional.

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