

Kathie Lee Gifford Tells Powerful Story of Forgiving Howard Stern

Legendary daytime television host Kathie Lee Gifford—known for her outspoken Christian faith—has hardly shied away from confrontation, even when it could come back to bite her.

The erstwhile “Today” anchor recently opened up on “The Prodigal Stories Podcast” about her brief but powerful encounter with shock jock Howard Stern, who was purportedly embroiled in a one-sided, decades-long feud with the popular TV personality, presumably for no other reason than her Christian beliefs.

It all came to a head one day when the two were in the same building.

Despite staffers from both her and Stern’s teams maneuvering to keep the two celebrities from facing one another—even keeping them on separate floors of NBC Studios at Rockefeller Center—the 69-year-old Gifford threw caution to the wind and made her way to Stern and his cadre.

It wasn’t of her own volition, though, that she approached Stern. In fact, Gifford recalled feeling compelled by the Holy Spirit to introduce herself to the brash radio host, whom she had never met.

“I went, ‘Oh, there’s Howard,’” she reminisced of the 2012 encounter. “I didn’t think anything of it. And the Lord spoke very, very clearly to me. He said, ‘Kathie, I want you to go downstairs and say hello to him.’ I’d never met him, I’d never watched his show. I’d only heard and read about all the evil over the years. And I said, ‘OK, Lord. I will.’”

Still a twinge of surprise in her voice a decade later, Gifford said NBC employees—including her own hair and makeup artists—“had gone to unbelievable trouble” to keep her from running into Stern.

The veteran anchor had to reassure her staff it was OK and that she didn’t need to be shielded from him.

“I went downstairs in little flats [shoes]—he’s 6’6” [and] I’m 5’6”—and I find him,” Gifford said, jokingly equating her situation to the biblical story of Zacchaeus, a short tax collector whose story of trying to find Jesus is recorded in the book of Luke.” I can barely get through the crowd. And I’m going, ‘Howard? Howard?’ And finally he looks at me. I said, ‘Hi, I’m Kathie Lee. I think it’s about time that we said hello. I just want to wish you all the best on the new show, and that’s it. Just take care. Have a good day.’”

At that, Gifford turned around and went back upstairs to her green room.

“I didn’t think anything of it,” she said.

Stern certainly thought something of it, though.

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