

When Your Family Thinks You're Too Zealous for Jesus

What do you do when you have been radically touched by God, but your family hasn't? Maybe you have been to a few meetings at one of the revival fountainheads where God is manifesting His presence in mighty and supernatural ways. Maybe the glory cloud of God has fallen on your own church or prayer group. Or maybe you have just watched a video of a revival service and now the Holy Spirit is revealing Himself, working in you and moving you into dance and intercession.

Suddenly, you live for intimate moments with the Lord. Holiness is now the only air you want to breathe because you don't want to do anything that would offend the Holy Spirit.

You are bursting with exhilaration for the things of God, but your family just doesn't seem to get it. They say it's OK for you, but there's no need for it in their own lives.

Or perhaps they're claiming you've gone off the deep end and are determined to help you get a grip. Whatever their response, your heart is breaking because you are desperate to share this newfound splendor with those you love.

First of all, remember that God will not deny the sacrifice of a broken and contrite spirit (Ps. 51:17). You can find rest in the Lord in your place of brokenness, confident that God is at work. "And we know that all things work together for good to those who love God, to those who are the called according to His purpose" (Rom. 8:28, NKJV).

Knowing that you can't change your loved ones is the first step toward generating spiritual hunger in them. John Kilpatrick, the pastor who has led the Brownsville Revival in Pensacola, Fla., for more than five years, gives a strong warning to wives who desire to see God radically impact their

husbands: "If God has blessed you and touched you, wonderful. But don't go home and start making demands. Don't even start giving off unintentional signals of superiority or super spirituality because that is not the way your husband is going to be influenced to go after God!"

Kilpatrick says he would give the same counsel to a woman whose husband is not turned onto God that he would give to a church member who comes to the Brownsville Revival from somewhere else. A pastor or a husband who is not in the river of revival must see lasting change, he says.

"When your husband sees you are more in love with Jesus than ever before and that also translates into you loving your husband more than you have ever loved him before, then you are on [the] road to seeing spiritual hunger in him."

Because your husband may not be at the same level of hunger that led you to revival, you need to do what you can to make him more hungry, says Kilpatrick. "There has to be something there that will help to make him hungry for God to touch him. That's the only way he is going to be changed and powerfully impacted."

Kilpatrick's wife, Brenda, advises women to be like John the Baptist and decrease so that their families can see God. She says that just as Deborah saw Barak rise up when her spirit was awakened (see Judg. 5:12), women can have confidence that when God touches them, their husbands and other loved ones will be impacted, also.

AWAKE, DEBORAH! When all of Joann Lowell's business appointments in Mobile, Ala., were suddenly cancelled, she drove to the revival in Pensacola. She had been hearing about this move of God since it had broken out a few months earlier. She didn't go up to the altar to get saved because she was already a Christian, but she did get prayed for by church leaders.

The next morning she wailed and cried as God ministered to her by His Spirit. She knew He was healing her.

For five weeks, Joann just wanted to be with the Lord. "I was trying to do this with the Lord without my husband knowing. I would get up early, play Brownsville tapes and just drink in the presence of God.

"I was afraid my husband would ridicule, judge and not accept that it was of God. I was afraid of rejection. Our marriage was already shaky, and I was afraid to be a turn-off and end up losing my marriage."

Joann made another business trip detour and headed to Pensacola. A couple of days later she called Robert. He was furious when he learned that instead of being at the Mary Kay conference she was registered for in San Antonio, Texas, she had been at the revival in Pensacola for two days.

Joann begged him to come down to the revival for the weekend, and he agreed. In fact, not even the huge snowstorm that hit their Blairsville, Georgia, hometown was able to stop him. He told three different state troopers who tried to prevent him from going further into the storm, "No, sir, I've got to go down to Pensacola and get my wife out of a situation."

Robert arrived at the church early and saw that his wife's pink Cadillac was the only car in the parking lot. She had found a seat for them right up front. Robert ridiculed Joann and was critical of the revival service, but he later testified that the praise and worship began to melt his heart.

He did not respond to the altar call, but when Kilpatrick asked all the couples to come forward for prayer, Robert turned to Joann and said sarcastically, "I suppose you think we need to go up there."

Kilpatrick prayed for him, and he felt a thousand pounds of

nastiness come off his shoulders. He even added, "Bless her, Lord," when Kilpatrick prayed for Joann.

As Robert headed for the exit door, evangelist Steve Hill put his hand on his shoulder. Robert immediately flew back 5-1/2 feet and was slammed against a wall. He sank to the floor, where he lay in a heap under the power of God for about two hours. During that time he was delivered from drugs, alcohol and cigarettes.

On their way home to Georgia, the couple stopped at the beach, and Robert suddenly dropped to his knees and began to repent. He cried all the way back to Georgia. For three days and nights he continued to weep and repent before God. He also approached his family—including his mother-in-law—and asked each one for forgiveness.

Within a short time, the Lowells moved to Pensacola. Now Robert travels with Awake America, serving as an armor-bearer for Steve Hill and working in the crusades. Joann is deeply committed to intercession, and they regularly minister together in churches.

GOD, CHANGE ME! Robert's radical transformation is only one example of how God sets our loved ones on fire in response to our prayers. But it can serve as a model and an encouragement to all of us who are believing Him for a similar transformation in members of our own families.

One important point to note is that the transformation did not come about as quickly as it might have seemed from the account. Joann had been praying for Robert for many years. And in the process, God changed her.

In fact, she believes her own repentance was the key to the healing of her marriage and family. She says she became desperate for truth when the Lord told her to stop focusing on her circumstances and family and start focusing on Him. "It was as though the Lord took my face and said, 'Look at Me!'

God was trying to do something in me. I had to take my focus off changing my husband and allow God to deal with the sin and areas of compromise in my own life.”

Joann says she sees many people whose loved ones are unsaved, controlling or fearful of a new move of God. She tells them three things:

****Pursue holiness and say “no” to compromise in your own walk.**

****Realize that you are not responsible for your loved ones; God is. Become radical for Him and trust Him to work in them.**

****Be the godly woman you are called to be, but don’t preach; your love and acceptance are all your family needs from you. Bless them and pray for them. Be your husband’s friend, not his counselor.**

In general, she says, “There is no easy road. Repentance are key.” So is persistence. If you want to see your loved ones in revival, “never give up or stop praying, but rest in the Lord, knowing that He has a plan.”

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