

Prayer Power: Shopping With the Holy Spirit

I am not a hobby shopper. Some women salivate at every sale sign and peruse the racks and shelves for entertainment.

But for me, shopping is like having my teeth cleaned—a necessity that must be endured. I might still be wearing last decade's styles if God had not infiltrated my aversion to stores, taken the pain out of purchasing—and transformed my understanding of prayer.

It all started with an orange carpet stain. My daughter, who was in elementary school at the time, accidentally spilled juice on the carpet in our family room. Discovering the dried stain days later, I shot up a desperate prayer: "Lord, help me find something to get rid of this stain so that she won't feel bad about the spill (and so I won't be upset)."

Carpet stain removers lined the lowest shelf of cleaning supplies at Walmart, forcing me to kneel down to examine them. Miraculous claims of stain-cleaning power shouted at me from every can. I pondered all the choices, wondering how to choose the best one. To my relief, hardly a soul graced the store at 8 in the morning as I, a usually dignified physician, scooted on my knees sideways down the aisle asking God about stain removers. Did He really care about something so insignificant? Would He be angry if I asked?

With a smidgen of faith and a mountain of self-consciousness, I placed my hand on top of a can of cleaner, closed my eyes and asked God, *Is this the right one?* I waited a few seconds. No answer. What was I expecting, thunder from heaven? I moved on to the next. Nothing. As my hand rested on the fourth can a voice proclaimed, "That is the *best* stain remover." It was an audible voice! An angel? My eyes flew open. I heard it again.

“That is the *best* stain remover.”

I turned toward the direction of the voice. Two frail-looking, white-haired women were ambling down the aisle toward me—not exactly my concept of angelic beings. I paused, my hand motionless on the can. But as they passed behind me one of the duo declared for the third time, “That is the *best* stain remover.” I bought the product and the stain vanished.

That incident revolutionized shopping for me. If God cared about a carpet stain, would it be OK to seek His wisdom for other purchases? I needed to buy shoes for our daughter, for instance. What was the harm in asking? God is omniscient; He would know where to find the perfect fit.

After all, nothing rivaled trying to find shoes for Amelia’s narrow feet. Her pint-sized patience evaporated in seconds, catalyzing an avalanche of anger in store after store as she tried on dozens of shoes, only to leave empty-handed. Since binding her feet was not an option, I despaired at shoe shopping with her.

This, however, was a new day. Before clambering into the car together, we asked God to show us where to purchase her new shoes. As we waited expectantly, a certain store came to my mind. Would we really find the right fit on our first try? We decided to test it out. Less than an hour later, an adorable pair of new shoes adorned her feet. We were on to something huge.

The next lesson involved Amelia’s Christmas present. She had her heart set on a new bicycle to replace the one she had outgrown. Just days before the holiday, I suddenly realized there was only a one-hour window to purchase the bike and hide it before she got home from school. I had no idea what color she wanted or where to buy it. Why had I not checked? Was it expecting too much to ask God for the store *and* the color? Would I be able to hear God in just a few minutes?

I quieted my thoughts and prayed. Pink was her favorite color, but purple was the impression I received. What store had a purple, 24-inch girl's bike? In my mind's eye I saw a retailer in an area of town that I normally do not frequent. Desperation and doubt intermixed with faith as I drove to the store and hurried to the sporting goods section. There in the center of the aisle stood a purple, 24-inch girl's bike, waiting just for me. All the other bikes hung from the wall. God's provision could not have been more obvious. When Amelia received the bicycle on Christmas day, she exclaimed, "Purple is the color I wanted!"

Not only did these experiences help me begin to look at shopping as an adventure and teach me to be a good steward of our finances, but something much greater took place: I sensed that this was just the beginning of learning to pray with power.

*Excerpted from 7 Secrets to Power Praying. **Jane Glenchur, M.D.**, has an extensive medical background as well as a passion for prayer. She was recently invited to serve as a medical associate for the Global Medical Research Institute, which was begun by Randy Clark for the purpose of documenting medical miracles.*