

Crossroads Community Church

Another challenging week has gone by but we came to praise and worship the God who sustains us. Worship was exuberant and uplifting; Bob offered a prayer of gratitude and offered the service to God. Pastor Don shared announcements and prayer reports: we thank God for the dedicated staff at our Homes for the Aged, who despite difficulties coming in to work because of inclement weather, have persevered, they are an answer to prayer as they kindly care for sweet elders who are very grateful for their love and dedication. We also praise God for touching people's generous hearts towards the Shepherd's Cupboard Foodbank as winter months are the most difficult for many. Bob eloquently delivered a thought provoking message.

There are three questions I want to cover this morning, 'How do we get God's attention?', 'How does God get our attention?', and 'Do we want God's attention?' Here is a very good example of someone who really went for it to get God's attention, in Mark 2:1-12. This paralysed man was pretty desperate to get to Jesus, probably convinced his friends to bud in line, crash through the roof to make his grand entrance all to get Jesus to pay attention to him. Did Jesus take notice? You bet he did and He healed him, forgave his sins then told him to get up and walk just to quiet down the skeptics. If we needed to get God's attention would we be as bold or take such drastic measures?

Another example of bold faith is found in Mark 5:24-34; Here we have a woman, advanced in age with a twelve year unresolved and unexplained bleeding issue despite the best efforts of well-meaning doctors that money could provide. She must have been desperate for a solution and when she heard that Jesus was in proximity she pushed through the crowd despite all the down lookers, she had the bold faith to take action, she thought, 'If only I could touch the corner of His robe I would be healed.' So that is what she did, and her faith was so strong and genuine that it moved Jesus; He felt power leave Him amidst the crowd. When He finally encountered this woman, he confirmed with her that her faith had healed her. When we are that desperate, are we as bold and strong in our faith to reach out to God for His attention?

To get God's attention we can choose different methods, we can pray continuously, worship Him amidst our circumstances, consult Him daily by reading His word or we can combine prayer with fasting. Some choose to pray and fast, and in many cases this moves the heart of God if it is genuine, not to be used as a bargaining tactic so God can fulfill our selfish desires. True fasting is explained in Isaiah 58:1-14. What God desires from us is not a set of empty rituals void of any love or concern for people. He wants us to serve Him by serving those in need, which is an assured way of getting His attention. It may not always be easy or convenient, but when it is out of our love for Him that we love and help others that is something God simply cannot ignore.

Now if it is possible for us to get God's attention, He also has ways to get our attention, example the Apostle Paul a.k.a. Saul in Acts 9:1-31; God dramatically got his attention, He blinded Paul when He appeared to him on the road to Damascus. In the process God transformed Saul to become Paul; calling him to preach the Gospel all over the known world. For such a huge mission God had to shake things up for sure but other times as in the case of Samuel it was a whisper in the night,(1 Samuel 3:1-21). God had chosen Samuel to be a prophet so He called on him at a very young age and He used a tender voice to get his attention.

So He can get our attention, but do we want His? In the case of King David he had many trials and defeats but the greatest was the one stated in 2 Samuel 12:12-25. David had sinned and he probably didn't want God's attention but God sent Nathan to correct David. David felt convicted and God spared his life although David's actions had severe consequences on his family. When God told David that the son conceived in sin would not live, David bore his heart before God, he fasted, he prayed hoping God might spare his child, and even if God did not fulfill David's petition, David still praised and worshipped God.

Beloved, God has the power to get our attention by either blinding us or a simple whisper, He can speak through visions and dreams, through scriptures during our Bible reading, and many times He speaks through fellow believers or other times through our circumstances and sufferings. Why would such a perfect and majestic God want to get our attention? Sometimes it is to correct or convict us of wrong, other times to guide us and more often than we can count He wants to help us in our time of need; above all He wants a relationship with us. He loves us and wants the best for us even if sometimes we don't like the way things seem. When we trust Him, when we give Him the attention He loves and we joyfully receive His, we will never be afraid of Him speaking to us, we will welcome His attention, He is our heavenly Father who through all our life's journey is there to sustain us with Grace, Mercy and

Love, have a Blessed week with Him, Asherey Shalom!

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