

I Am a Leader for Christ . . . I Am the Mother of a Prodigal

Part 2 of 2

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As I wrestled with reconciling two simultaneous callings on my life—serving in women's ministry and mothering a desperately wandering child—I was keenly aware of how the Lord was impacting my own personal walk with Him. I struggled a bit, however, with how this trial would affect my ministry to other women.

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What I learned was that we cannot separate ministry from life, nor should we. They are intertwined, and God intends them to be so. Our ministry impacts our life, and the circumstances of our life surely impact our ministry. The walk of loving a prodigal is a platform that the Lord has given us to live out the truths we teach and to proclaim the gospel we believe.

There are two keys:

1. *We must be willing to be real.*

If we are honest, we know this can be a great challenge. We are leaders for Jesus and surely desire that every part of our lives reflects our love of Him—including our children. Thus, our tendency can be to hide or soften the reality of our child's life and what we are going through as the mother of a prodigal. *Don't!*

The gospel is never more beautifully displayed than in brokenness. This doesn't mean you share every detail, but it does mean that you are open and real about your struggle. If you aren't, you will rob others of witnessing the powerful, sustaining grace of God as you walk through a deep, painful valley ([Isa. 43:1–3](#)). They may miss the faith-building miracle of restoration and redemption as the Lord takes hold of that beloved one and **lifts them out of the miry bog and sets their feet upon a rock** (Ps. 40:2)!

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As you open your life to those to whom you minister, they will search your face for evidence of what is gripping your heart. Is it fear or peace? Are you reeling in anguish or standing in hope? We must fiercely trust God's sovereignty and His purposes in order to "be real" with a settled, peaceful confidence. This doesn't mean we have no fear or pain. It means we continually lay our fear in the hands of our Savior and depend on Him to be our strength and to help our unbelief. As we continue to step forward in faith, clinging to His promises, our belief in the trustworthiness of God is on full display. You are living out Romans 4:20 in a place that touches every mother's heart.

I will not waver in unbelief regarding the promises of God but will be strengthened in my faith and give glory to God, being fully persuaded that God has the power to do all that He has promised.

In addition, you need your "Aarons and Hurs" ([Ex. 17:12](#)). Your sisters cannot "hold up your arms" if they do not know that you are in a battle for the life of your child. The enemy would love to keep you isolated, battling alone. You are much more

easily discouraged that way. Allow your sisters in Christ to stand with you, battle for you, and minister to your broken heart.

2. We must stay the course and not give up.

He has promised to **work all things "together for good"** (Rom. 8:28), and He will. Often times this is very hard to see as we search for the good in this painful place. This is when Proverbs 3:5 becomes our battle cry: "**Trust in the LORD with all your heart, and do not lean on your own understanding.**" If you're struggling with worry and fear today, nestle in His grace and dive afresh into His promises. Allow Him to be "**a shield around [you] and the lifter of [your] head**" (Ps. 3:3).

There will be days when you are so weak and discouraged that you may wonder if you should continue in ministry. "**We do not have a high priest who is unable to sympathize with our weaknesses**" (Heb. 4:15). Remember, He knows your frame, understands your weary heart, and sees the enemy's attempts to discourage you. Nehemiah 6:9 is powerful here:

They all wanted to frighten us, thinking, "Their hands will drop from the work, and it will not be done." But now, O God, strengthen my hands.

Claim this, and ask *Jehovah-Jireh*, the God who provides, to help you remain steadfast in your work. How well I remember considering stepping out of leadership because I did not want to bring dishonor to God through my family situation. He showed me that I was to remain in ministry and allow Him to help me honor Him in that place of struggle. Ah, ladies, the Lord may speak more powerfully through your life in this prodigal journey than He has ever spoken through your words.

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We see all that is broken . . . God sees all that He is doing. We see the ashes . . . God sees the beauty. We don't have to understand it all to honor Him in it. We just have to remain yielded before Him in obedience, in steadfast faith and unwavering trust. He is deepening your faith, expanding your ministry, and doing "**far more abundantly than all that we ask or think**" in your life and in the life of your child (Eph. 3:20).

To God be the glory!

Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of mercies and God of all comfort, who comforts us in all our affliction, so that we may be able to comfort those who are in any affliction, with the comfort with which we ourselves are comforted by God (2 Cor. 1:3–4).