

ARE YOU PAYING ATTENTION? Part 2

If you've been with us for the past few weeks, you know that we've been making our way through a prophecy (dream) we received back in January. This prophecy contained several messages. First, there was a message to the church as a whole and that message was to the *bride*—GET READY because Christ is coming! Then there was a message to the men and that message was—PREPARE THE WAY OF THE LORD. Finally, there was a message to the women and that's the message that we're still unpacking.

We shared with you the story of Martha who was *cumbered* (distracted) with many things. But, Jesus said to her that only ONE thing was needful. We talked about how that one thing was learning to "PAY ATTENTION."

We compared Martha's 'distraction' with how the women in our prophecy were 'absorbed' in conversation. And we said this was a warning not to allow ourselves to become consumed by the cares of this life (caring for children, aging parents, worried about our job, who's in office, etc). We never want to become so focused on these things that we're unable to 'pay attention' to what God is saying.

I want to continue with this theme of 'paying attention,' but I want to look at it from a completely DIFFERENT way!

"Paying attention" isn't only about FOCUS or what we do with our minds. It can also be about POSTURE or what we do with our bodies. For example, in the military "coming to attention" means standing erect with your eyes forward. When a soldier comes to attention they are signaling that they are ready to receive instructions or orders. They're saying, "I'm ready to respond to you."

This ties back to our prophecy. If you remember, in our dream most of the women were absorbed in conversation except *two*. One of them was Mother *Stinson*. The name *Stinson* comes from a word that means **CROWN**.

What do crowns have to do with *paying attention* (giving honor)? Everything!

Proverbs 12:4

4 A virtuous woman is a crown to her husband: But she that maketh ashamed is as rottenness in his bones.

Crowns are placed on the head of rulers as a way of recognizing their office. Thus, part of a wife's role is to recognize the dignity of her husband's office. And one way she can accomplish this is by her "attention" (her readiness to respond to his leadership).

Someone might ask, “Why would a wife ever give her husband such honor?” The answer is—because she owes it to him!

Romans 13:6–8

6 For for this cause pay ye tribute also: for they are God’s ministers, attending continually upon this very thing. 7 Render therefore to all their dues: tribute to whom tribute is due; custom to whom custom; fear to whom fear; honour to whom honour. 8 Owe no man any thing, but to love one another: for he that loveth another hath fulfilled the law.

Oftentimes, we try to look for things in individuals to determine whether they deserve honor. (“Do they have the character that warrants my respect?”) However, a person’s character is not the first place we should look to see if they’re deserving of honor. The first place we should look is their office. Remember this—POSITION, not PERSON, is what determines if someone’s worthy of honor! Moreover, the Bible talks about “paying” tribute (honor). This means, honor is something we “owe,” not something we “donate” or “grant”.

Proverbs 12:4

4 A virtuous woman is a crown to her husband: But she that maketh ashamed is as rottenness in his bones.

Again, “crowns” bring attention to the head. Thus, to say that a wife is a ‘crown’ to her husband means that she shows (in a visible way) that she has a *head*.

I realize that to some people this all sounds oppressive and, quite frankly, outdated. But, that’s because we’re viewing this from the perspective of our modern culture. We must remember that the Bible was written in a different era. It was written during a time when people prioritized what they did to “lift up the group” OVER how it made them look or feel personally.

You cannot go through life focused solely on how things affect you personally. (Just ask a coach if they’re able to simply focused on their own performance. Just ask them what matters more, how the team performs or how they perform as a coach?)

You learn real fast that when players perform poorly blame flows UPWARDS!

It’s funny to me how no one has a problem when shame/blame flows upward. However, EVERYONE seems to have a problem when honor or praise flow in the same direction!

Proverbs 12:4

4 A virtuous woman is a crown to her husband: But she that maketh ashamed is as rottenness in his bones.

Notice how the author qualifies the kind of wife that's a crown to her husband. He points that it's a VIRTUOUS wife who is a crown to her husband!

The word 'virtuous' means **valor** or **strength**. It's a word that is associated with *warriors*. This means that it takes a STRONG woman to "stand at attention" and bring honor to her husband.

Proverbs 16:32

32 He that is slow to anger is better than the mighty; And he that ruleth his spirit than he that taketh a city.

Proverbs 16:32 New International Version

32 Better a patient person than a warrior, one with self-control than one who takes a city.

So, the *real* warrior is the person who's able to control their own spirit! This is because the Bible associates strength with self-control and discipline. You are a truly strong person if you can consistently place yourself in a posture of submission and readiness.

Again, I realize how difficult this might sound to some people. However, this may say more about us (and our culture) than it says about God. It says that we see ourselves as independent. It also says that we're willing to put our own needs above the needs of others.

Philippians 2:3–7

3 Let nothing be done through strife or vainglory; but in lowliness of mind let each esteem other better than themselves. 4 Look not every man on his own things, but every man also on the things of others. 5 Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus: 6 Who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God: 7 But made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men:

Sometimes women might feel like God is sometimes picking on them. However, when you realize that everything God requires from you He (Jesus) already did, these commands take on a different feel!

Jesus isn't saying, "Do as I say." He's saying, "Do as I have DONE." In fact, He says, "Take my yoke upon you and learn of me."

Every woman/wife can learn something from Jesus. Did Jesus seek His own reputation? Was He afraid that His identity was being erased? Did Jesus feel like it was oppressive for Him to follow His Father's instructions?

No. He said, "I say what I hear the Father say, and I do what I see the Father do."

Do we feel like it's beneath us to follow in Christ's steps? If so, then we're proud and need our hearts and mind renewed.

I'm convinced—we don't just have a lack of concentration. We also lack the proper posture (attention).