

An interview with Lisa Lloyd Author of *Chasing Famous*



Life can be compared to a series of auditions. Regardless of who we are, we are constantly auditioning for a part: to be the most loving spouse, attentive parent or amazing employee. It is human nature to want to be loved, affirmed and accepted. Whether it is conscious or not, all these desires focus inwardly. In *Chasing Famous: Living the Life You've Always Auditioned For* (New Hope Press), Lisa Lloyd helps readers shift the focus outwardly and back on God and His glory.

Q: The phrase “chasing famous” brings to mind some vivid images. How does your book spin the idea of fame?

As an actor, when I think of “famous people,” they are on another level. They are esteemed, rich, and successful—they appear to have everything. I want to be them and chase after what I think is bringing them their success so I can have it too. There’s an L.A. actress who beat me out for a role in a TV movie about a year ago, and now I see her all over the place on national commercials. She’ll pop up on TV, and I’ll think, *Oh, goodness, this girl again!* In the deep recesses of my heart I wonder, *What do I need to do to have her success? Do I need to take a different acting workshop? What if I lived in Los Angeles—would I have access to the things she has?* In my jealousy I ask, *If I was in a different situation would I be able to have her success?*

Whether we are actors or not, we all want some level of fame. We chase after it. We look at other people, compare ourselves and say, “If only I were doing what they were doing . . . If only I had that house, body, or family situation . . . If only I was in their circumstance, then I would have their success and fame.” Sometimes we go after what we want and someone else has, or we live depressed because we will never have it. That’s just idolatry, right? It’s very “me-focused,” and because it’s so self-focused, it will never bring fulfillment because my focus of self is the complete antithesis of focus on God.

God wants to be glorified through me. He wants me to chase the fame of His name, not the fame of mine. He wants to use my past mistakes, talents, and everyday life for His glory. My book helps us know how we can chase the fame of God’s name with everything in us, though everything in us clings to our own self-preservation and chases after our own glory.

Q: As an actress, the pressure to seek fame and fortune must be heavy. Share with us how you came to seek to put God in the spotlight and eventually write your book, *Chasing Famous*.

I drove to an audition one day, reviewing my lines and wiping my sweaty palms on my pants. I focused on thinking about what I needed to do to book the job. I just sensed the Lord say to my spirit, “Lisa, I need you to be more concerned about making Me famous at this audition than yourself.” It stopped me emotionally because I never really considered the magnitude of glorifying God in my work. I always just kind of threw up a prayer that was very me-focused, “Lord help me book this audition for the paycheck and the sake of getting to work on my craft.” But really, deep down, I wanted the applause when people saw me on TV. My desire as an actress was the glorification of me. To hear the Lord say I needed to focus on the opposite was a radically new thought.

As I drove, I considered making God famous at the audition would look like me walking into the building asking God to shine through me. To be focused on the other actors auditioning—to talk with them and ask them questions about themselves. To stand before the director, not concerned about being chosen, but being a light. To offer the gifts and talents God’s given me as an act of worship. Then the booking of the job was not up to me but to Him.

After that audition, I saw all over Scripture how God has positioned and purposed us as His glory—and image-bearers—to proclaim the fame of His name to all the world. Then I was asked to speak somewhere, and every subject or topic I spoke on came back to the reason of *why* we do these things (parent, trust God, work toward racial reconciliation, etc.). It’s all because it brings God glory and makes Him famous.

Q: How are our lives similar to one audition after another?

In an audition, I’m hoping to be pretty enough, quirky enough, talented enough, funny enough, and fashionable enough so I can be the one chosen. Many people have to agree on me to book the job—the

director, the producers, and the client. In life, I'm constantly walking around hoping people will like me, choose me, approve me, select me. I want to be enough for them. Sometimes this is blatantly obvious; other times it's very subtle, and we don't even know we're trying to be enough. It's only when we realize we've already been selected by God and have to do nothing for Him that we find peace. Now we can live a life of security, knowing our job is not to be selected, but to point people still seeking approval to the One who gives it unconditionally.

Q: Striving to be the best at something, whether it be a loving spouse, supermom, or excellent employee, is nothing new, but how has social media made us even more competitive?

Social media is the perfect place to hide behind a screen, showing the world only the good stuff of our lives. Seldom do we become vulnerable and share how we struggle. When we are vulnerable, we set ourselves up for people's pity and let them see a side of us that's not completely "with it." We have to answer to this as people comment beneath our posts. Instead we just see (and often post) achievements and successes.

A friend of mine on social media is a model, and it's easy for me to compare myself to her. I get sidetracked from my true identity and fail to remember God doesn't want me to be her—God wants me to be me. When I'm sidetracked by who I'm not, I lose focus of Whose I am.

We can combat this when we dare to be vulnerable on social media. Vulnerability breeds vulnerability, and it can set people free to know they are not alone and Christians do not, in fact, have it all together. We all need Jesus, and we make Him famous when we say so.

Q: You write, "God delights in using our shortcomings, and even our former disdain for His name, to His glory." Can you give us an example of how He's used your experiences for His glory?

Though I was a Christian as a teenager, I didn't live like one. I wanted to but wanted the love of people more, especially boys. I lost my virginity at 15, and by the time I was 18, I was pregnant. I was headed to college and was terrified. In the center of my crisis pregnancy, I thought my only viable option was abortion, so that's what I did.

A month later, a Christian friend of mine reminded me God had plans for my life, but it was up to me if I wanted Him to fulfill them. He couldn't press forward with all He had for me if I was living as I was. I needed to give up my current way of living to experience God to His fullest. In that moment, I saw my sin and wanted nothing to do with it. I wanted to change. I asked God to forgive me and felt Him say to me there was nothing I would ever do to make Him not love me. He told me I'd need to leave behind the friendships and behaviors that were currently easy for me. If I did, He would make it worth it.

This story is why I am who I am and do what I do. It's why I've written this book and want to live for the glory of His name.

Q: Has playing so many characters and personalities made it difficult for you to find your own identity and purpose in Christ? What do you do when you discover your focus has shifted back to self?

Not so much playing the characters, but my purpose gets skewed when I try to find my identity and value in my work as opposed to God. At any moment, I could no longer be an actor—I could be in a car accident, for example. If my worth is tied up in my career, I will be lost. My worth must be wrapped up in the fact I'm God's. This is easy for me to say but much harder to live out.

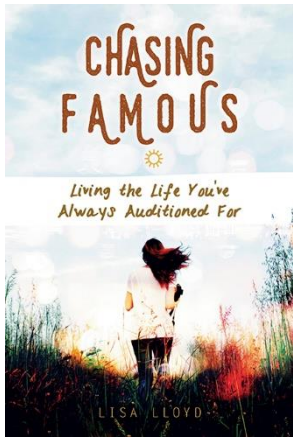
I have to surround myself with reminders of truth, such as time in the Word, time with my godly husband, or time with a godly friend, to put me back in perspective. If I can remember that being an actor or booking the next job won't give me the applause of Jesus when I get to heaven, then I can usually get back on track. However, I often need outside sources to remind me of this when I'm consumed by my own thoughts. It's important I work to have those sources of repetitious truth at the ready.

Q: Why do you think we often trade the applause of the One who's given us everything for the applause of those who simply want something from us?

It's because we're insecure—or at least for me. I want a tangible, audible "atta-girl!" If I put too much hype on the affirmation of others and their applause, or lack thereof, it dictates how I feel about myself. At its core, I'm an idolater. My security must come from the fact God loves me, messiness and all. When I get the

spotlight off myself and my shortcomings and onto God and His enough-ness, then He can use me to make His name great. It's in the nothingness of me that He makes much of Himself.

Q: How does making glorifying God our main objective change the way we approach our daily lives?



It takes the pressure off, first of all. If the point of my day is to glorify God, then that is where my happiness and joy will lie. It doesn't lie in me doing things or putting myself in a position to be happy. My joy comes from paying attention to where He is and joining Him there. I need to be sensitive to His Spirit and die to me when it comes to my friendships, my attitude, my husband, my kids, my calendar, my objectives. When I live this way, the Spirit within me is greatly delighted, and therefore I am too. I may not get my checklist taken care of that day, but when I'm living my day asking God what I can do to make Him famous, my checklist becomes secondary while my God-focus becomes primary.

Q: You experienced a dramatic redemption with Christ. What would you say to the person who is too entrenched in pain, frustration, anger, or guilt to see the reality of Christ and the true freedom He offers?

I've met many of these people, especially after they hear my story of premarital sex and abortion as a teenager. To these people, I ask them what they've seen in God's character that tells them He will respond any differently to them than He did to me. There is nothing. It is Satan who has us believing God will hold our records of wrongs against us when, in fact, God wants to give us freedom so He can use our past to show others how amazing He is! It takes bravery to trust God in this and give up the shackles we've grown accustomed to, but there is a free life waiting for us. The prison door is wide open for us to leave through. It's up to us to walk.

Q: You write about the great freedom to be found in sharing our past struggles and being authentic about what God has rescued us from. How does being vulnerable about our past failures free us to shift the spotlight more effectively to God? Is there ever a time not to share or not to reveal every detail?

When we take the brave step to share our past failures with others, we loosen Satan's grip on us, and God uses us to set others free. As I mentioned earlier, vulnerability breeds vulnerability. When I share my story and challenge others to share theirs, they tell me it's like they were given oxygen for the first time in years.

I shared my story at a women's conference recently. A few hours later, a woman told me that after she heard me speak, she shared her abortion story with her Bible study group at the conference with her. She'd never told anyone before, not even her husband. Then another member of the same group shared she too had an abortion. This group rallied around both women and later helped them find post-abortion counseling. Their initial fear of being shunned was a lie. Instead, the group loved and linked arms with them. God drew nearer, not further away. The enemy was pushed back as these women shifted the spotlight of their lives onto God.

I share my story whenever a group I'm in is discussing the grace of Jesus. I share one-on-one when I sense that the person I'm talking with might find freedom if he or she were to hear my story. I once was a part of a peaceful, silent protest on the other side of the parking lot from Planned Parenthood. There was a young woman there protesting us. She told me she had a three-year-old she wished she'd aborted. I shared my story with her, and as I did, she told me the sun was getting in her eyes so that was why she had to wipe the tears from her face.

When it comes to details, I reveal those that point back to God. If details are circumstantial and point to me, I leave them out. If someone is bravely sharing his or her story for the first time in a group that loves him or her, I say, share everything you want.

Q: How do we do the hard things God asks of us when it goes against what we want for ourselves?

It's hard to do what God wants me to do when it goes against what I want for myself. I think we take one day at a time. We commit to obey Him today, and then tomorrow. We ride on the joy from yesterday's obedience as we bravely obey Him today. I try to remember giving God glory isn't always about making God famous to others. I make God famous to Himself when I step out and trust that obeying Him is worth it every time.

Q: Living a life dedicated to making God bigger in the eyes of those around us is seldom easy. What tips can you offer for keeping our spiritual energy and focus strong?

Having a spiritual reset every day is key for me. This is hard, but carving out time to spend with God before my day starts is helpful. When I do this, I respond to my kids better, I'm quicker to obey God, I serve my husband with a happy heart, and I'm open to needs around me.

Once a month, I meet with women who are super passionate about Jesus. I used to think to myself, *Man, I would love to get together with her and her and her and her, but I just don't have time.* So I put a regular date on the calendar, asked these women to come to my house, and talk about life and God. We hold one another accountable too. It's fulfilling (because it's Biblical!), and though these women didn't know each other before our once-a-month meetings, they look forward to it as much as I do.

Q: How can believers discover the unique gifts God has given them and then learn the most effective ways to use those gifts?

I think it's the simple act of paying attention. In *Chasing Famous*, I offer questions we can ask ourselves to discover our gifts, including:

- What activity, when completed, leaves you with a 'high,' and you can't wait to do again?
- What do people cheer you on about?
- What would you do for free?

As we discover our gifts, we are not guaranteed to be released to use them in world-changing ways, but we can find small ways to use them. Our spiritual gifts are for the body of Christ to encourage and build each other up. If my true desire in discovering my gifts is to use them for this reason, then I don't have to have a spotlight or a superstar platform to be effective. Instead, I'm obedient to use my gifts however and whenever God opens the door for me.

Q: You devote a chapter to comparing ourselves to others and being dissatisfied with our talents. How do we combat the poison of comparison and learn to embrace our unique, God-given skills and talents?

I'm in the habit of comparing myself but not in the habit of seeing myself as gifted by God. If I want to embrace my unique God-given skills and talents, I must get off "repeat." This is a decision I must make every day. Second Peter 1:3 (NLT) tells us, "God has given us everything we need for living a godly life." I don't have to find it; it's already there. But it's a decision and a mindset shift. To get the focus off myself, I will have to fight the enemy daily whose greatest fear is that I would make God famous by embracing who God's made me to be so He can release all of Himself through me. It's possible and doable, only if I remind myself of Who needs to stand center-stage of my life.

Learn more about Lisa Lloyd and *Chasing Famous* at www.LisaLloyd.org and chasingfamousbook.com, on [Facebook \(LisaJLloyd\)](#), and via [Twitter \(@LisaJLloyd\)](#).