

4 Practical Prayers That Will Bear Spiritual Fruit

Tonight was exceedingly rough. I really dislike those nights. So instead of sleeping I decided to write. I can't sleep anyway ... I don't want to wake up any friends ... And I've already poured out my heart to God face first in the carpet.

I'm back to those days.

My face in the carpet days.

I don't have a closet to hide in anymore ... Oh how I miss my closet.

One of the many things that broke my heart tonight was all my interactions with my littlest girl. The transitions our family has made have been very difficult for her. She is feisty anyway, so put a change in the mix and she's just ... well, *really* feisty.

Unfortunately I have about 2 minutes' worth of patience left at the end of the day, and I can't seem to be the mommy I want to be.

I want so much to be kind, gentle and patient mommy, but right now I'm so blasted tired after work and staying up late to finish coursework or classwork or planning or grading or just being plain sleepless like tonight.

So I get fussy about my daughter's fussiness and then mommy guilt comes crashing down.

I'm gone more than I am with my children. It is yet another huge change that has occurred in my life in the past 5 years. And, honestly, I hate it.

In my short amount of time with my children I want to love on

them ... And yet, this little one and I can seem to do nothing but butt heads. According to her, I'm the meanest mommy ever. Of course, that is her response to being in trouble.

Tonight I told her that it was her choice whether she got nice mommy or mean mommy. It sounded good in theory ... At least it did about two seconds before I spoke it aloud.

But something seemed off ... I couldn't put my finger on it until she and I talked later. I told her, "You have to make better choices." She gave me the reasons for her bad choices and all involved other people.

To which I said, "You can't let other people determine how you are going to act. Your behavior is your choice."

Ouch.

That's why my good mommy/bad mommy comment didn't feel right.

Why does my 7-year-old's behavior determine mine?

I'll tell you why ... *I'm hanging by a thread!*

Tonight as I lie in bed trying desperately to fall asleep, feeling like I'm going to have a heart attack and begging God for something ... I don't know what ... I began to pray more than I have in days, weeks.

I realized that the things that have changed in my life lately have been very good in some ways, and just so very difficult in others. I have such guilt for working ... such guilt for not providing a better situation for my children ... such guilt for being tired, impatient, easily angered and overwhelmed.

And sometimes I just want desperately to go back to life before ... not even life before divorce, but life right after. Life when everything was awful but I had perspective and peace.

I want perspective and peace again.

I know why I don't have it though. I haven't made any time to pray ... just those "Hail Mary" prayers I make on a daily basis.

I don't make time to be in the Word—that would make such a difference. I really need to do that ... forgo more sleep I suppose. Ugh, how is that even possible?

I don't really know, but that will be my first prayer ... that God would provide time in the Word.

My second will be that God would provide time with my children ... good, fun time with my children.

My third will be that God will enable me to handle the responsibilities He has given me with more grace and peace. (I'm too afraid to pray for patience).

My fourth will be that God gives me perspective on my life ... that I will remember that He is sovereign and I am not. Good gravy—I have control issues.

I made decisions based on the knowledge that I had. I trusted that God was leading me. I did that whole step-out-in-faith thing. And although tonight I'm a mess, I know that God led me.

I just need to keep reminding myself that just because things are hard doesn't mean that they are wrong.

I need to handle things better. God has given me the tools to handle things ... His word, His strength, His wisdom, His peace.

I need those things very much.

And God gives them ... I just need to ask.

I'm asking.

I'm still hanging by a thread. But I'm thinking now it might

be changing to a thread of hope.

“Rejoice in hope, be patient in suffering, persevere in prayer” (Rom. 12:12).

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