

6 Fresh Ways to Expand and Extend Your War Room Prayers

Prayer is talking with God. We develop prayer habits just like other habits. Perhaps you're in the habit of sitting with your eyes closed and speaking to God, or joining hands in a circle with a few friends in your small group, or standing quietly while someone in the front verbalizes a prayer. There's nothing at all wrong with any of those, but there are many different ways to pray.

Think of someone close to you, who you enjoy communicating with. Don't you communicate with them in a variety of ways? With your spouse you may send a coded text message while at work, discuss finances together while pouring over papers at the dining room table, and later whisper sweet nothings while speaking more with your body than your voice. With your child you may leave an encouraging note in their lunchbox, place a quick call to check in when they first get home, and discuss their latest encounter with a bully while tucking them into bed.

It's not that different between you and God. Communication with Him—prayer—needs to become a part of all aspects of your life. How would it feel if the *only* way you and your spouse communicated was sitting across the table discussing a problem? You want and need to do life together, and communicate in all kinds of ways. God wants the same with you.

Here are some ways to pray that I and others have found helpful.

Writing or Journaling Your Prayer

During some of the most emotional times in my life journaling has provided a wonderful way to express my heart to God, and also to hear Him speak back to me. A prominent minister found

he had significant trouble keeping his mind focused during prayer, and for many years now has written out his prayers and then on his knees read them out loud to God.

Journaling this way is not recording what happened. But if you direct your writing as expressing your heart to God, this can be a wonderful way to pray.

‘Text Message’ Prayers

You may not be able to stop and pray in every situation. For example, I’ll pray under my breath while in the middle of a difficult surgery or at some other critical moment. You can call out text message-prayers to God countless times during the day. “Help me!” “Thank You!!” “Oh, I get it.” “What do I do now?”

These short prayers are prayer too. Take God with you 24/7. Do life with Him!

Scripture as Prayer

So much of the Psalms, and many other passages in Scripture, are prayers. When you don’t know what to pray or what to say, go to the Psalms and read for a few minutes. You’re likely to come across some prayers that sound very much like what your own heart is wrestling with. Speak, read, that Psalm out loud to God as a prayer.

You can do the same with many Bible passages—promises, challenges, even stories. God loves to hear His Word prayed back to Him.

Pacing or Moving Prayer

In recent months I often find myself praying while pacing back and forth in my home or hotel room. God has been stirring my heart about some big things, and moving seems the natural thing to do. During these times I often sense His clear inspiration and guidance about decisions and other matters I

am facing. I am usually incredibly energized after such a time of prayer.

If God is stirring your heart to move, sometimes moving your body will help you embrace the full power of what He is communicating to you.

Tears or Groans

At times tears express all we have to say to God. During some of my heaviest moments of grief this was certainly the case. Simply coming into God's presence and allowing your heart to weep (or cry or groan or whatever) is prayer. The point is that you're directing your heart to God, and your emotions and emotional expression is pointed toward Him.

If your heart is heavy, allowing yourself to weep in His presence is a great honor to God. He welcomes your tears.

Silence

God rarely speaks loudly over the cacophony of sound in our head or in our environment. I believe every believer must regularly spend time in quietness, silent in God's presence. You may have to intentionally empty your soul of the burdens you're carrying before you can get quiet. Think of it as bringing all your "stuff" to the door of His throne room and laying it all down there at the door. Cry, beg, plead, scream if you must.

And then enter in silence. Just *be* in His presence. It's where He will meet you most deeply, and where you will hear Him most clearly.

God wants to hear you, and speak with you. Welcome all the different ways to pray in all the aspects of your daily life.

Your Turn: *What different ways to pray have been especially meaningful to you? Does this article provide you with encouragement to try any new ways of praying? Leave a comment*

below. {eoa}

Dr. Carol Peters-Tanksley is both a board-certified OB-GYN physician and an ordained doctor of ministry. As an author and speaker, she loves helping people discover the Fully Alive kind of life Jesus came to bring us. Visit her website at .

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