

Powerful Prayer Strategies to Heal Your Holiday Hostilities

Is your worst holiday fear the idea of your dining table filled with relatives who act as opposing political commentators? Family get-togethers can be stressful enough, but with our culture fueled by hate, misunderstanding and inflammatory rhetoric, it can be downright nerve-wracking.

What will happen when your opinionated relatives sit down together? Instead of fretting over the worst-case scenarios, here are 10 prayer strategies to help heal holiday hostilities.

- 1. Remember the reason for the season.** Actually it's not so much about football or pumpkin pie. It's about gratitude and the celebration of the birth of the Christ child. Thank God for your blessings and for sending the Christ child not only for you, but for all those in your realm of holiday-influence.
- 2. Every person at your office party, on your Christmas card list and at your holiday table is a person Jesus loved enough to die for.** Ask God to give you the ability to love them like He does.
- 3. If you are hosting or attending a get-together, pray in advance.** Ask for God's love and peace to permeate the atmosphere.
- 4. Pray over the room and each chair—from the dining table to the recliners—that will be used by those attending.** Pray the chairs will be seated with peace and pray in the name of Jesus against the spirit of anger and hate.
- 5. Pray for your own attitude and ask God to give you the strength to brush aside hurts or offenses that could trigger an angry response from you.** Make the decision to react in peace, no matter how tempting it is to defend your hurt feelings or bruised toes.
- 6. Pray for an attitude of forgiveness to rule your time with your loved ones.**
- 7. If rough topics do come up, pray that God will give you and others strategies to redirect the conversation.**
- 8. If you are offended, push past your grudges and ask God to**

show you what He wants to accomplish in your relationship with the one who offended you.

9. Thank God for this opportunity to have time to spend with family and friends. Tell those in your holiday party how glad you are to see them and let them know how much you love them.

10. Banish the politics and other provoking topics from your table and open your time together with a sweet prayer of love, forgiveness, gratitude and joy. Pray that the real reason of Christmas will enter into every heart.

It is only when we let Christ shine in us that friends and loved ones can see our Savior. Push the politics aside and let Jesus shine into every holiday gathering. People may not remember who won the argument at the table, but they will remember whether or not you made them feel loved. {eo}

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This article originally appeared at .