

5 Ways to Break the Fear of Praying Publicly

I still remember the fear striking my heart every Friday night. Corporate intercession before service was mandatory for leaders in the church, and I dreaded every minute of it.

The woman of God who headed prayer was a powerhouse in the Spirit. Anointed, God-glorifying, devil-busting prayers emanated from this woman like glory emanates from Jesus. She had a certain cadence, a rhythm. It was almost as if she were singing her prayers—only she wasn't. In any case, I know it was music to our heavenly Father's ears.

One by one, she would hand the mic off to other prophetic intercessors who would pave the way for the Holy Spirit's wonder-working power in the service and bind the hand of the thief who comes in to steal, kill and destroy. The authority in that room was off the charts! Heaven was coming down and devils were fleeing, all in the name of Jesus.

I always knew when it was nearly my turn because there was a certain order to the intercession. You grow accustomed to people's prayer habits when you gather corporately. Some wind down by repeating certain phrases, like "glory to God." Others do a little hop, skip and jump. Still others start off with rapid-fire petitions and end with thanksgiving.

I knew when they were about to call upon me for prayer. So I did what any fearful intercessor would do: I slipped out of the sanctuary and hid in the bathroom until service started. Yes, really. I was too scared to pray—much less prophesy. I struggled to pray in public. There was a roadblock. Actually, it was a soul block.

Eventually, I got over it. Today, prayer flows from my spirit

like a Holy Ghost river. (You can join my *Mornings With the Holy Spirit* prayer calls here). I might not be as eloquent as others, but the heartfelt supplications and warfare declarations carry power in His name. In 2012, the Lord told me to make prayer my life's work, which led me to start a house of prayer, which ultimately birthed a revival hub in South Florida that includes healing rooms, a training center and a church. Is it any wonder the devil flights prayer so hard?

So what do you do if you have a prayer block? You may pray the house down in your closet at home, but when called upon to pray with two or three—or more—you hesitate. Something in you pauses. You freeze up on the inside. And then you get mad at yourself later because you know the Lord wanted you to make intercession. What do you do?

1. Root fear of man out of your life. Ultimately, this is a fear issue. There are many types of fears and phobias. If you're typically not fearful in most situations, the fear of man is likely at the root of your public prayerlessness. You may be comparing yourself to others and decide inwardly that you are not as equipped or as powerful. You may be concerned about people judging you as inadequate in intercession. I assure you, most believers are not critiquing your public prayer. Ask the Lord to deliver you from the fear of man, which brings a snare (Prov. 29:25).

2. Pray in the Spirit. I know this might sound like my answer for everything, but bear with me. This is a three-fold strategy. Praying in the Spirit deals with issues in our souls that we don't even know exist or that we don't know how to deal with (Rom. 8:26). Praying in the Spirit builds you up in your "most holy faith" (Jude 20). Praying in the Spirit publicly can also give you the courage to pray boldly in your native tongue.

3. Get a prayer partner. Find someone you can trust—someone

you feel comfortable with—with whom you can pray one-on-one. This is not quite the same as a corporate prayer gathering, but it's a start—and you have to start somewhere. Praying on phone calls is also less unnerving than praying in a live prayer meeting. All of this preps you to eventually step out on a platform and pray with little awareness that anyone is listening to you but God. And that's our goal.

4. Write out prayer points. Being prepared can help alleviate fear. If you write out a few prayer points and Scriptures to go along with them, you have a road map for public praying. No one will fault you for having these points listed out. It's a sure way to guarantee all the bases are covered. In many ways, it's wisdom. You will eventually find that this starting point will launch you into Spirit-led prayer.

5. Do it afraid. Ultimately, there's nothing more powerful in your life than your own will. Even God won't usurp the human will. The devil can't stop you from praying. You can consciously choose to "do it afraid." You can make a determined decision to take the advice in this column and implement it. You can break through this blockage, this hindrance, this frustration by the power of your will.

Let me pray for you right now. Father, in the name of Jesus, I thank you for the ones reading this article. I thank you for their heart to pray. I ask you, even now, to help them overcome every fear, anxiety and insecurity associated with public prayer. Father, help them to stop comparing themselves to other intercessors. Help them to see themselves in You. Give them boldness and courage to release powerful prayers in your name and for your glory. Give them a steadfast, determined heart to pray without ceasing, in Jesus' name.

The Lord told me the angels of abundant harvest have been released into the nation. Read more at . {eoa}