

7 Ways to Recharge Your Prayer Life in 2018

I look forward to the beginning of each year because I set aside some days for special prayer. I don't like to finish one year and start another without taking time to thank Jesus for the ways He blessed me during the past 12 months and to ask Him for supernatural strength for the next season.

For me, these days of prayer offer a holy recharge. Without that time I feel weak, directionless and unprepared for new challenges.

What about you? Are your spiritual batteries drained from the battles of 2017? The Holy Spirit offers a jumpstart. Here are seven ways you can turn up the heat in your personal prayer life:

Develop your spiritual confidence. Many Christians live on the far edges of God's blessings because they don't believe they have been made righteous by Christ's sacrifice. You will never expect answers from God if you think He's mad at you.

Don't act like a slave who begs for things. You are His heir, and He wants to give you the kingdom. God tells us to "draw near *with confidence* to the throne of grace" (Heb. 4:16, NASB). You can ask Him for anything.

Be specific. Zig Ziglar used to say: "If you aim at nothing, you will hit it every time." That's why vague prayers are inferior to specific ones. I have recently begun the habit of making a "Top Seven List" of prayer requests. When I did this during an out-of-state move last year, the Lord answered six of my seven requests within two months.

One of my prayers was that when I bought my new house, my new house payment would not be more than my old one. It turned out

to be one dollar less! I was reminded that James 4:2 says: "You do not have because you do not ask."

Don't limit God with small prayers. Psalm 2:8 says: "Ask of Me, and I will give the nations for Your inheritance." We need to learn to ask big. Why would we settle for less when God can do the impossible?

Elisha boldly asked his mentor, Elijah, for a double portion of the Holy Spirit—and God gave him that mantle. God may want to double what you are requesting of Him. His vision for your life is far greater than what you supposed.

Be aggressive against your spiritual enemies. Status quo prayers won't be enough in seasons of spiritual battle. There is a time to go to war in the spirit, and this will require a militant attitude toward the enemy.

When Elisha told King Joash to take arrows and strike the ground, in preparation for a battle, the king halfheartedly hit the ground only three times. Elisha said: "You should have struck five or six times, then you would have struck Aram until you would have destroyed it" (2 Kings 13:18-19). Too often we are satisfied with small victories because we didn't pray with enough intensity. Your zeal will often determine your outcome.

Combine fasting with prayer. Fasting is not a way to bribe God. You do not need to forfeit food to get His attention. But fasting helps you focus on the Lord—and it can intensify prayer power.

There are certain spiritual obstacles that need an extra push. When speaking of a demon that needed to be cast out, Jesus told His disciples: "But this kind does not go out except by prayer and fasting" (Matt. 17:21). If you are hitting a spiritual brick wall, it may be time to fast.

Pull an all-nighter. I am not the kind of guy who typically

gets up at 3 a.m. to pray. I like my sleep! But there are moments in our lives when the Lord may woo you to spend time with Him in the night hours.

In Song of Solomon, the bride hears her Beloved calling her to get out of bed (5:2-6) and she doesn't respond quickly enough. Many of us are too distracted by the busyness of life to hear God call us to a season of prayer. Yet the Lord is looking for people who will carry His burdens. Will you let Him pray through you?

Let God amplify your feeble prayers. I used to fight discouragement about my prayer life because I didn't feel my prayers were powerful enough. But then I read Ephesians 3:20 in a new light. It says God is able "to do far more abundantly beyond all that we ask or think" (Eph. 3:20). That means after I pray, God adds His own miraculous ingredient.

My prayers may seem feeble and flawed, but He is able to amplify them.

Like the tiny lunch of five loaves and two fish, Jesus can take something insignificant and feed a multitude. When you pray, expect Him to increase the impact. What you whisper in your closet can shake the world. Let God recharge your prayer life in 2018.