

8 Ways to Recharge Your Prayer Life

How would you grade your prayer life these days? Are your spiritual batteries drained? Do you need a recharge? It's easy for prayer to become monotonous and predictable, but the Holy Spirit is always willing to offer a jumpstart. Even if you feel like a failure in this area, He can turn a spiritual wimp into a warrior.

After a recent string of answered prayers, I've discovered a fresh excitement about my own prayer journey. I've also realized that if I want to mature spiritually, my prayer life must go to a higher level. Here are eight ways you can turn up the heat:

1. 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 is mad at you. Don't act like a slave who begs for things. You are His heir, and He has given you His royal robe, His signet ring and His estate. He wants to give you the kingdom. God tells us to "draw near *with confidence* to the throne of grace" (Heb. 4:16). You can ask Him for anything.

2. Be more 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 my recent out-of-state move, 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."

3. Ask big. We can limit what God wants to do in the Earth by praying in a puny way. 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. The Lord said: “Ask of Me, and I will give the nations for Your inheritance...” (Ps. 2:8). His vision for your life is far greater than what you supposed.

4. Become more aggressive. 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.

5. Groan when necessary. People who have allowed God to use them in intercession know that certain situations require travail. This is not easy prayer—it is the spiritual equivalent of childbirth! When Elijah prayed for rain to end a seven-year drought, the Bible says he “crouched down upon the earth and put his face between his knees” (1 Kings 18:42). If you really want a crime wave to end in your city, or a nation to find Jesus, or your own children to be saved, let the Spirit pray through you in a deeper, messier and noisier way.

6. 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.

7. Do a night watch. 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?

8. Expect God to fill in the gaps. 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. {eoa}