



WHEN PRAYER FALLS FLAT

January 20, 2008

When I was boy my mom used to bake a lot of cakes. She made a chocolate cake with a simple yellow frosting that to this day is my favorite cake. But I had a lesson to learn when my mom was baking. I can remember her yelling at myself and my sisters, “Don’t bang the door, you’ll make the cake fall.”

I couldn’t understand that, How does a cake fall? But I learned that if I bang the door or jumped in the kitchen, my mom’s cake would be impacted. It would sag in the middle. Even though she had a great recipe, sometimes her cakes fell flat.

We are talking about the missing ingredient—prayer. We’re talking about discovering vital prayer lives.

We’ve looked at preparing the heart of the pray-ers. The questions of why, and we’ve looked at how to remove barricades. Then last

week we looked at three models for prayer and many of us used one of those models to begin to crack open the prayer puzzle in our lives.

But even with all that teaching and experimentation we have to face a big reality when it comes to prayer.

Sometimes we get *bored* with prayer.

It's not that prayer is boring, it's that we've become bored with it. The habit is there, but it is at a standstill.

What do you do when you discover that your prayer life has become flat?

This week let's discuss what to do when prayer falls flat?



WHEN PRAYER FALLS FLAT IT'S TIME TO STOP YAWNING AND TWEAK THE RECIPE.

T.S. When Prayer Falls Flat Revitalize Your Habit. . .

Revamping your prayer life

To revamp alter something for the better.

- to improve the appearance, condition, or structure of something by making sometimes superficial changes
- Revamping your prayer life implies revitalizing it by giving it a new look.

Change your place

Mark 1:35

35 . . . Jesus got up, left the house and went off to a solitary place, where he prayed.

Luke 5:16

16 But Jesus often withdrew to lonely places and prayed.

Luke 6:12

12 One of those days Jesus went out to a mountainside to pray, . . .

Change your time

Mark 1:35

35 Very early in the morning, while it was still dark, Jesus got up, left the house and went off to a solitary place, where he prayed. NIV

Luke 6:12

12 One of those days Jesus went out to a mountainside to pray, and spent the night praying to God. NIV

Change your demeanor

Posture

Matthew 6:6

6 But when you pray, go into your room, close the door and pray to your Father, who is unseen. . . .

Matthew 26:39

39 Going a little farther, he fell with his face to the ground and prayed, . . .

Luke 18:13

13 "But the tax collector stood at a distance. He would not even look up to heaven, but beat his breast and said, 'God, have mercy on me, a sinner.'

Procedure

- Lift our hands

Ps 28:2

2 Hear my cry for mercy
as I call to you for help,
as I lift up my hands
toward your Most Holy Place.

Ps 63:4

4 I will praise you as long as I live,
and in your name I will lift up my hands.

- Sing

Ps 9:11

11 Sing praises to the LORD, enthroned in Zion;
proclaim among the nations what he has done.

- Sit in silence

Ps 37:7

7 Be still before the LORD and wait patiently for
him;
do not fret when men succeed in their ways,
when they carry out their wicked schemes.

- Shout

Isa 40:9

You who bring good tidings to Jerusalem,
lift up your voice with a shout,
lift it up, do not be afraid;
say to the towns of Judah,
"Here is your God!"

T.S. When Prayer Falls Flat Revitalize Your
Habit. . .

Renewing your prayer life

To Renew: to make like new : restore to freshness,
vigor, or perfection

Experiment with a new model

Maybe you go to Revelation and Pray the Prayer
modeled in its pages.

Rev 5:9-10

"You are worthy to take the scroll
and to open its seals,
because you were slain,
and with your blood you purchased men for God
from every tribe and language and people and nation.
10 You have made them to be a kingdom and priests
to serve our God,
and they will reign on the earth."

Experiment with a new arrangement

Personal—Pray alone

Luke 9:18

18 Once when Jesus was praying in private and his
disciples were with him, he asked them, "Who do the
crowds say I am?"

NIV

Partnered—Pray with one or two partners

Matt 18:19-20

19 "Again, I tell you that if two of you on earth agree about anything you ask for, it will be done for you by my Father in heaven. 20 For where two or three come together in my name, there am I with them."

NIV

- Prayer partners help hold us accountable.
- The Key is find a common ground an compatibility.

Corporate—Pray in a group

Acts 4:24

24 When they heard this, they raised their voices together in prayer to God. "Sovereign Lord," they said, "you made the heaven and the earth and the sea, and everything in them. NIV

In corporate prayer meetings you are encouraged by others prayers, learn how to pray following the good example of others.

T.S. When Prayer Falls Flat Revitalize Your Habit. . .

Recharging your prayer life

Recharge: to regain energy or spirit

: to charge again ; especially : to restore anew the active materials in

: to inspire or invigorate afresh

Try Retreating

Luke 5:16

16 But Jesus often withdrew to lonely places and prayed.

Try Fasting

Matt 6:16-17 (note what precedes it)

16 "When you fast, do not look somber as the hypocrites do, for they disfigure their faces to show men they are fasting. I tell you the truth, they have received their reward in full. 17 But when you fast, put oil on your head and wash your face, 18 so that it will not be obvious to men that you are fasting, but only to your Father, who is unseen; and your Father, who sees what is done in secret, will reward you.

It's a spiritual matter, and those aren't well-suited to tight rules. You'll have to learn how to [discern](#) the Spirit's voice in your situation.

SUMMARY

Revamping your prayer life

Change your place

Change your time

Change your demeanor

Renewing your prayer life

Experiment with a new model

Experiment with a new arrangement

Recharge your prayer life

Try Retreating

Try Fasting

CHALLENGE

Is your prayer life a little flat?
Do you need to fire it back up?

Put a check mark next to one or two of the ideas we shared today that you are going to try this next week.