

## **What to do when tired, drained, just going through the motions, #1 of 3**

Hi all,

As I write this the holidays are upon us in full force. In addition to the normal busy-ness of life, now is the season of additional strain including money needed for presents and travel, events involving work and family, food to prepare, and so much more.

Many feel like a slogan I saw on a t-shirt: "I'm going to use what little energy I have today to breathe, and maybe blink. That's about it."

Or maybe this: "I'm not an early bird or night owl; I'm some form of permanently exhausted pigeon."

### **I'm exhausted!**

In II Corinthians 1: 8 Paul said he and his traveling companions went through a time they were 'pressed so heavy it was beyond our ability'; the idea communicated was they felt like olives under such pressure that oil flowed out.

I think we can all relate to that - our very life being squeezed out of us. But what can we do to refill, recharge, and regain enthusiasm once again? Is it just a matter of letting this season pass and then we can recharge?

Paul told the Ephesians in a startling example of opposites, "Don't be drunk (saturated) with wine to excess, but be filled (fully completed) by being filled with the Spirit..." (5: 18)

He does not use the same words to list these opposites. The word drunk means to saturate. The word 'filled' in the phrase 'filled with the Spirit' means 'to be made full and complete'. Filled....complete...with the Holy Spirit. How to do that? His very next words are:

### **"Speaking to yourselves with Psalms, and hymns, and spiritual songs, making melody in your heart to the Lord."**

A Psalm in Paul's time was a sung poem (lyrics) accompanied by stringed instrument(s), a hymn was sung without instrument (a cappella), and a spiritual song is one out of your heart to the Lord.

In the phrase 'making melody in your heart to the Lord', the word 'melody' is 'psallontes', and you can see the word Psalm in the first part of that word. Paul is therefore literally saying to 'pluck your heart strings in a song from you to Him'. That's how to be filled with the Spirit, and that filling helps us in times of stress and holiday pressures.

Remember too the word for 'worship' as used in John 4: 23 where Jesus reveals the Father seeks people to worship Him in spirit (from the heart) and truth (not worshipping with an ulterior motive), is 'proskuneo', literally, 'to kiss towards'. The Father is seeking 'kisses', covenant kisses given from our spirit with nothing else on our agenda than to express love to Him.

Spiritual songs can be a sung prophecy, divinely inspired and we see that very often in house church meetings. It can also be just you and the Lord, you pouring forth from your heart all the love and thankfulness you have towards Him, using your words out of your heart rather than someone else's words set to music - it is the music of your heart strings to Him.

### **The question today is this:**

Have you developed personal worship? I'll ask another way: If the church where you go suddenly didn't have a worship band and leader, and the pastor asked the congregation to stand and worship - would you immediately raise your hands and start worshipping, able to block everything out to pour forth of your heart in love to the Lord?

Can you pluck your own heart strings to worship Him? If the answer is no, then develop the practice of addressing the Father in your own words how you feel, how grateful you are to know Him, how if you weren't born again you'd be at the least a miserable human being, and possibly dead or in prison - find your own words and express that to Him in word and song.

A friend who with her husband led a house church once complained to the Lord, telling Him, "I miss the worship of the traditional church". In a shock to her, He responded immediately: "You don't miss the worship, you miss the music, for worship flows from your heart out of your intimacy with Me."

Many Christians never develop personal worship in the first place, yet Jesus said the Father seeks those who will worship Him in spirit (purity of heart) and truth (no hidden motives in your worship).

But you can actually have those times while going about the business of life.

### **Conversational thanks and fellowship**

One of the things I've done since my teen years was to include the Father in everything I do in a running conversation. Even if a busy day means I have to break away to attend to things for hours at a time, I often pick up right where I left off. In that way I found I do the do's so I didn't have time to do the don't's, if that makes sense. As soon as I open my eyes to the morning light I start by thanking Him or complimenting Him on a beautiful morning...and I go from there, even now after all these years.

I will often ask upon hearing an opinion from someone, "What do you think Father?" or if it pertains to the body of Christ, "Do you have a thought about that Lord?" - I'm always asking for the opinion of the Father on things, and then I shift my attention to my spirit man to see if I get a grievance, or a neutral (no opinion, no comment), or sometimes I hear directly His words.

I look for 'God-incidences', coincidences I know are from Him, a 'wink', a clue that He is there and oversees my steps. From all this flows worship, thanks, gratefulness, always...even when major things are going on. I find something, anything, to be thankful for and in.

When we turn our attention off self and all the activity of life onto Him, even in short shifts of attention to offer a quick 'Thanks Father', we find He pours into our spirit a rest and energy that keeps us fueled up and going strong. Next week, a supernatural way to regain physical strength...

Until then, blessings,

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### **What to do when tired, drained, just going through the motions, #2 of 3**

Hi all,

Last week I shared point #1 for regaining spiritual strength and energy, which was about personal worship.

Today point #2: supernatural refreshing: I was on a ministry trip in Mexico in 1986, staying with missionary friends. After dinner our first night the missionary handed me a list of 22 names who said they wanted to move to Mexico to work with them. He asked me to ask the Father which people if any should move there to work with them, and anything else He said.

I responded with: "These are people that you know, not me. You should be the one to ask the Father who and if they should come." He replied: "I'm too busy to pray. I'm too busy doing the work of the ministry to take time to pray about it. Do this for me please."

### **That's how life is**

It doesn't matter whether you are a missionary on foreign soil or at home trying to keep life together, we've all felt like my missionary friend, too busy with life to take time to pray. In fact that is pretty much the norm for most. There is a solution.

In I Corinthians 14: 18-25 Paul is teaching the proper use of a personal prayer language versus one that needs to be interpreted. He told them if you are given the tongue that needs interpreted, speak it forth if the opportunity is there, or allow another person to give the interpretation - or else be quiet and speak the interpretation to yourself. (v27-28)

In this passage Paul quotes Isaiah 28:11 stating it is about tongues: "With stammering lips and another language will I speak to this people."

### **Supernatural rest and refreshing for when you just cannot stop to rest**

Isaiah's full prophecy about tongues says this: "With stammering lips and another language I will speak to this people. This is the rest whereby the weary will be refreshed. This is the refreshing, but they would not hear." (Speaking of Israel's unbelief concerning Jesus)

Tongues is the refreshing, the rest, according to Paul and Isaiah's prophecy. On the large scale we can say that receiving the Holy Spirit IS the spiritual rest all seek. But on a personal level it is also a key to our own rest and refreshing.

One day I was on a trip, very tired, looking for rest and refreshing, and this passage came up out of my spirit. I laid down on the bed where I was staying and started praying in tongues lightly, almost under my breath. My mind shifted from wandering to focusing to what was coming out of my spirit, and 10 minutes went by before I knew it. I felt recharged from the inside out. After a few times of doing this I've estimated for me, about 10-15 minutes doing that is equivalent to a 2 hour nap.

You can try it too, and realize each person is different, but this works for me when I absolutely cannot stop to recharge.

### **Supernatural rest and refreshing on a daily basis**

We must first change out mindset to the culture of New Testament truths away from auditorium church culture.

Christian culture encourages the setting aside of personal prayer time either before you start your day or after the day is done, scheduled like we might schedule a trip to the dentist. Christian bookstores are filled with daily devotionals with 'you need to set time aside for God' advertisements, usually accompanied by a verse from a Psalm.

Of course in Christian marketing varies by product. Something like "I have cried to you, Oh Lord, and in the morning my prayer will come before you", from Psalm 88:13 works nicely if you want to guilt a person into morning prayer. Or for that too busy in the morning person or insomniac they present, "At midnight I will rise and give you thanks for your good laws." from Psalm 119: 62, lol.

And for the strongest guilt just cover the whole day with Psalm 55: 17: "Evening and morning, and at noon I will pray..." LOL

### **I learned early on in my walk that I don't have the discipline...**

...to set aside time for Him like an appointment. My schedule and family and the ebbs and flows of life prevent me from saying 'every morning from 4: 45-5am I will pray and study.' I refused even back then to be guilted into condemnation that I wasn't doing enough in the Lord that way.

"Hmmm....let me see Lord. I've got that presentation at work so I can't get with you this morning, but I can schedule my lunch early so let's get together then. And if that doesn't work let's see about tonight...tonight is 'Survivor' on TV, oh I don't want to miss that. So if I miss you at lunch I'll give you between 10 and 10: 15 (22:00-22:15) after the show is over."

I don't disagree on the need to spend time with the Lord, I just reject the culture of condemnation that makes me a 2nd class citizen of the kingdom if I don't get up at 5am to pray along with the flavor of the month devotional.

### **The New Testament truth is that Christ is in us**

So we take Him with us wherever we go, whatever we are doing. That means prayer and fellowship with Him can be continual. It also means you'll feel in your spirit when to set life aside to be with Him. Both work together in balance.

That communion and fellowship with Him, is prayer. You don't get up in the morning and 'get into' fellowship with the Lord - as long as you are breathing you are in fellowship in the sense He is in us

24/7. All we have to do is shift attention to Him and start our thoughts to Him. Then be quiet and listen for a response which may come in peace, assurance, a words.

Christ is in us, we are called into fellowship with Him. (I Corinthians 1: 9) Just talk to Him throughout your day! He isn't "up there", He is inside you! You have only to shift your attention to Christ in you...and what I find is that as I pray in tongues while looking down inside my spirit, I feel that rest, that peace, that warmth of His presence in me.

I have disciplined myself that when I'm not talking or working on other things, often when driving, to pray in the spirit. It is the moment of rest in between a whirlwind of activity. So I seek that rest. I discipline myself to enter into that rest by when possible, shifting my attention to pray even just a couple of sentences in the spirit.

When I'm in a store walking down the aisle or on the computer and have a neutral moment, I pray lightly in the spirit, maybe just a line or two. But I keep coming back to it through the day. A sentence or two here, a sentence or two there. Always 'keeping the motor running' under my breath when I can turn my thoughts towards Him, for it is that rest, that refreshing, from the spirit to my soul and to my body.

#### **What happened with the missionary's request?**

I took the list, went to my room, told the Father: "Father, you know I don't want to do this, but I am here staying under his roof, ministering under his authority on this trip, you know I would never ask this of you. But will you go with the flow on this please and give me something on each of these 22 people so \_\_\_\_\_ can be at peace, thank you." And He did, which I wrote down, presented it to the missionary who looked over my notes, shook his head up and down, had a few questions here and there, and said, "Bears witness. Pretty much what I thought too, thanks." And that was that.

Closing the series next week, until then, blessings,  
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#### **What to do when tired, drained, just going through the motions, #3 of 3, Israel's vacations**

Hi all,

Sometimes we get to a point that just taking a day to rest isn't enough to recharge. Having a time of worship isn't enough. Praying in the spirit just isn't enough. We get to be like a t-shirt I saw, "It's a beautiful day to leave me alone." lol

We need a change of scenery, a distraction by going somewhere for a week or more - and yet we may feel guilty about such things. Should we spend the money? Do we have the money to take such a break? What about all the work we have to do?

Israel had 3 'vacations' built into their yearly calendar, a calendar God gave them. What does it say to us that God mandated taking at least 3 vacations per year, each of which was at least 1 week long? (Plus travel time going to and returning)

#### **Israel's 'vacations'**

Deuteronomy 16:16 commands that 3x a year adult males would have to come to the temple, and of course it was a family event. Those 3 required 'vacations' are Passover, Pentecost, and Tabernacles.

In Luke 2: 40-52 we find 12 year old Jesus in the temple with the religious leaders during Passover. Verse 41 says this: "His parents went every year to Jerusalem for the feast of passover." That's every year. Every. Year. Family time!

Passover week included the Feast of Unleavened Bread, and the Sunday after the Saturday Sabbath of that week was the Feast of Firstfruits. This occurs in the March-April time frame by our calendar. In 2019 it is April 19-27.

A mere 50 days after Firstfruits came Pentecost, the 2nd required vacation. In 2019 Pentecost Sunday is June 9. About 4 months later was Tabernacles, which in 2019 is October 13-19. Most Israelites came before Tabernacles to attend Yom Kippur which was the week before, (October 9, 2019) meaning the fall 'vacation' was at least 2 weeks in length.

They had to walk wherever they were going. These trips to the city were not consumed with religious duties each day. Their temple duty amounted to making an offering on the festival, and then the rest of the week was theirs to do with as they pleased. So each week was a true family, community, and national vacation.

There were no cell phones in their day, so when they got out of town they truly 'unplugged' from their life back home. God mandated they leave their home and work for (3) week-long breaks (plus travel time), so it must be healthy for we human beings to recharge in this way.

Can we take a hint from God's command for these 'vacations' as to how He might lead us, some 3,400 years after this command was given? Their trips were low budget: Packing up, leaving home, walking or riding to the city, camping once there or staying at an inn, or with friends or family. They would be carrying money or grain or livestock for an offering(s) to the Lord and spending money. They probably enjoyed going to the 'big city' for shopping, meeting friends and more distant family. It sounds very similar to what we do today.

This was God's idea because He knew if left to ourselves, we'd work ourselves to exhaustion or worse!

### **Purpose to these breaks**

When we realize these were whole family events, whole community events, we realize multiple purposes in the Lord's mind. Consider too that when Jesus was 12 his family left the city to return to Nazareth in such a jumble of people that they didn't even know where their son was! It was evidently a safe enough event they at first weren't concerned, thinking him to be with the other families.

How can we emulate what God built in to Israel's yearly calendar? To me it speaks of unplugging from electronics and plugging into the community and family around me. Of actually 'being there' in the moment. And by being there I don't mean physically there but on Facebook or texting with someone back home. It means no work, no social media other than those around me for that week. It speaks of alone time, just the family, seeing the sights, and meeting new people as well.

Look at the timing of God's 'vacations': April, June, October. In the northern hemisphere that is spring, late spring/early summer, and fall. After Tabernacles it was about 6 months to their next 'break'. God didn't require travel in the more difficult winter months which was considerate - that's how the Father is! So gracious.

### **What does your life look like?**

After we renew our minds to the idea God invented vacations and would want us to emulate the example He gave, we are comfortable with justifying time off. After that comes the budget and planning. It is all a balance; Personal worship time. Praying in the spirit. Taking a full day off each week. Taking a trip somewhere to get you out of familiar surroundings of home and work and all the cares of the world. Balance...find that peace inside, and He will lead you on how to personalize your time of recharging your spirit, soul, and body.

New subject next week, until then,  
Blessings,  
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