

Series: **Take Charge: Stronger in Prayer**

Key text: **Luke 11:1-13**

Date: **4th March, 2018**

It is time to take charge of the circumstances surrounding your life.

In Luke chapter 11 we see that the disciples realized that it was time to take charge; Jesus was coming from a session of prayers, they had seen things move around Jesus and had come to understand that it was his dedication to prayer that made such powerful things happen.

“Now it came to pass, as He was praying in a certain place, when He ceased, that one of His disciples said to Him, “Lord, teach us to pray, as John also taught his disciples.” - Luke 11:1

By asking Jesus teach them to pray, the disciples were showing that they had realized that prayer is a core life course, which if you fail as a Christian you would have to keep re-sitting until you pass, so they wanted to know how to do it right. In this Christian walk, you must understand that prayer is not an elective course but a core course which can keep you in the same spot if you do not actively engage it.

Many people are familiar with the saying, ‘Que sera sera,’ an attitude that encourages one to helplessly go along with whatever happens in life. But our Lord Jesus, in words and by example, never taught us a ‘*que sera sera*’ attitude or lifestyle; rather, He taught us an ‘If you say unto this mountain, be moved...’ attitude and lifestyle. Jesus also taught us persistence. In verses 5-8 of Luke 11, a situation is described of someone making a specific request to his neighbour and in spite of the difficulty of giving in to that request, his persistence made the neighbour give him what he wanted eventually.

Some of us have adopted a helpless attitude with certain difficult circumstances around us, built our lives surreptitiously around the issue, creating alternatives to coping with it but Jesus showed and taught us importunity, persistence, and faith in prayer through whatever situation we face. In prayer, we ask, seek, and knock.

Jesus taught us that prayer is communication with God; that prayer is to address God with adoration, confession, supplication and thanksgiving. He also taught us that prayer is made on the basis of a relationship because you cannot make requests of someone you are connected to or have an ongoing relationship with – you cannot make demands from a perfect stranger.

Through prayer, ordinary men achieve extraordinary things. In James 5:17-18, we read of Elijah, a man with a nature completely similar to ours:

“Elijah was a human being with a nature such as we have [with feelings, affections, and a constitution like ours]; and he prayed earnestly for it not to rain, and no rain fell on the earth for three years and six months. [I Kings 17:1.] And [then] he prayed again and the heavens supplied rain and the land produced its crops [as usual]. [I Kings 18:42-45.]” - James 5:17-18 (Amplified)

One version says he (Elijah) had human frailties like we do, yet he was able to generate tremendous power in the place of prayer - he got results through prayer. In other words, Elijah

also had failings and exhibited funny behaviours from time to time like we all do, but he prayed and something significant happened. He used prayer to make powerful and significant impact to the situation of corruption and decadence around him.

Some people feel God is already angry with them so how can they go before Him and make any kind of conversation or request. You must do away with all those excuses for not praying, noting that lack of prayer is a subtle sign of arrogance because you are indirectly saying that you have it all figured out so you do not need help or support. Prayer, especially for a Christian, is meant to be a lifestyle and not something you reserve in your armory for 'serious,' 'once-in-a-while' matters.

Usually, you compare yourself and your back-story to another person's front story but this passage in James did not focus on Elijah's front story (the glamorous happenings); it shows us the back story – the existence of struggles, insecurities and frailties, in spite of which he was able to pray and get results. If Elijah could, we can too! We can get big results through prayer because we can go directly to the Source, as Hebrews 4:16 admonishes us to go boldly before God's throne. This gives us foundational power in prayer because coming on the basis of the righteousness of God qualifies us for answers to prayer. It is time to take charge; don't just let things be.

Jesus said that He has given us authority and power, and if you are wondering what you are meant to do with that, know from now on that you are meant to *move* things in the place of prayer.

Here are some important points about prayer you should know and work with:

1. Prayer is a privilege we enjoy because we have access to God. Imagine having access to the president of Nigeria, who would respond to your call at any time... You have that kind of access with the Father of all spirits, the Governor of the nations, who does not have the limitation of being inaccessible due to meetings because He is the meeting. You should make full use of this access; many people do not appreciate the value of access until they are shut out of something desirable. Jesus paid a major price for the access we have we have to God. Say this to yourself: "I have access to God and will maximise it; In this month of March, I will pray, intercede, bring my supplications to God and enjoy open heavens.
2. Prayer is a lifestyle of building intimacy with God. He craves intimacy because He is approachable (Revelations 3:20); He says we should come so we reason together (Isaiah 1:18).
3. Prayer establishes your influence as a believer. When things happen in your home or with your spouse, for instance, instead of joining issues physically, you should recognize that something wrong is happening in the spirit realm; this should then prompt you to go into your prayer closet to speak to whatever is trying to cause confusion in your home to conform to God's will in your life and family.
4. Prayer guarantees holiness. The blood of Jesus purges our conscience of dead works (Hebrews 9:13-14).

It is time to take charge of situations that seek to keep us down.

A prophetic word for someone specifically: as Jonah was in the belly of the fish but came out on the third day so those comatose things in your life over which you have prayed and sought God's face for will resurrect this third month.

Prayer: Father I receive grace for prayer and supplication. Let Your fire come upon my prayer altar; I want to be intimate with You and I want to love you more by meeting with You as many times as possible every day, in Jesus name. Amen