

THE ESSENCE OF STRATEGIC PRAYER IN THE LIFE OF THE BELIEVERS

Lizzy Iweala

Jesus started and ended his ministry with prayer. Prayer is very significant in the life of a believer, if the believer intends to impact his or her world. The mandate to pray without ceasing is revelatory due to the essence of prayer. Christ exemplified prayer and its effects. The effects of His prayer were very tangible, because it prompted his disciples to ask Jesus to teach them how to pray as detailed in Luke 11:1 *"And it came to pass, that, as he was praying in a certain place, when he ceased, one of his disciples said unto him, Lord, teach us to pray, as John also taught his disciples."* The miracles they witnessed were mind blowing. Jesus turned water into wine, opened the blind eyes, the crippled walked, the deaf heard, the dumb spoke, the dead were raised from sleep, he fed thousands with few loaves of bread and fishes, as if that wasn't enough to produce the "wow moment in for A God's Moment," they witnessed the extraordinary power of God's moment when he rebuked the storm and the storm immediately obeyed him; that was just awesome and a clear evidence that the Supreme God reigns and His creations are subject to obey at his command. Yes!

WHY PRAYER?

Prayer is the telephone Call to heaven. Prayer is very vital because it is the communication link between Man and his God. The link becomes even more effective when one is cognizant of the fact that Jesus is that link. He is the link by the reasons of the finished work of the Cross. We pray because we are commanded to do so if we must leave a victorious life. Pray without ceasing is the solemn instruction given to believers because our adversary the devil, is equally busy looking for those to mess with and prayer is the strategic weapon that is used in order to keep him aloof. Prayer is the power house of a believer in the same way as a transmission is to the engine of a car. Therefore, a prayer-less believer is a power-less believer. When we understand the essence of prayer and apply it strategically, victory cannot be an overstatement. Prayer indeed is like wrestling, it is a struggle, it is Jacob and the angel, it is Jesus Christ in Gethsemane. Prayer is also Paul and Silas in Prison. The failure of the individual Christian life is the failure in prayer. Prayerlessness deprives us of the benefits of prayer and it is a sin not to pray.

WHY STRATEGIC PRAYER?

Let me subjectively define what strategic prayer is. It is praying the right kind of prayer for a specific situation or need. Because when you pray amiss you will not get the intended result. You have to align with God

to get the expected result. More often some Believers get discouraged when they experience delay in the answer to their prayers and the reason could be due to praying the wrong kind of prayer for that specific situation. According to James 4:3, it states that "Ye ask, and received not, because ye ask amiss, that ye may consume it upon your lusts." Therefore, it is vital that we pray the right kind of prayer to get the expected result, and for the right motive. For example a Naval officer is trained to operate littoral zones in support of naval operations. However, if this Naval officer decides to go and fight as an Air Force Officer without any formal training he or she will likely become a casualty. The same is applicable with prayer. We have different kinds of prayer. We have prayer of Worship and Praise, Supplication, Petition and Intercession, Thanksgiving and Spiritual Warfare. Each category of prayer when rightly applied will produce the expected result or outcome; it is praying strategically. When you engage in a prayer of supplication for a situation that requires the engagement of Spiritual Warfare prayer, you may also end up as a spiritual casualty; it is as simple as that.

STEPS FOR STRATEGIC PRAYER

Worship and Praise is the first step for engagement. You will acknowledge God's Supremacy and appreciate Him as you Praise his attributes and why you have come to worship and praise him in the first place. You confess your sins because He is a righteous God who hates sin with perfect hatred. You ask for his forgiveness in the Name of Jesus. Yes! in the Name of Jesus, because it is Jesus who bridged the gap between us and the God the Father, by the reasons of the finished work of the Cross. When you confess your sins; you create an avenue for a divine alignment with God, and you become a conduit for His expressions. You plead the blood of Jesus and raise the blood stain garment by faith in the realm of the spirit as a form of your allegiance to His Lordship and as your Savior. You plead the blood of Jesus over your life, family and home. If you are engaged in a spiritual warfare prayer, you must plead the blood over your geographical locality. It is paramount that you subdue territorial powers in the name of Jesus in order to prevent resistance to your prayers. Therefore, when you plead the blood of Jesus it becomes a tranquilizing effect to those powers and then making it easier to bind them. According to Matthew 18:18, *"Truly I tell you, whatever you bind on earth will be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth will be loosed in heaven."* This is your visa to victory. This is a very strategic principle for missionaries.

You declare victory over your intended missionary geographical location. You take authority over the prevalent powers in that specific jurisdiction, plead the blood of Jesus, bind the strongholds and powers, and release the power to recapture the souls for the kingdom of God. By the time you are ministering the Word of God to the people, their hearts and souls are ready to receive the gospel without much resistance; this is the essence of strategic prayers. When you know your God according to the book of Daniel, you will be strong and will do great exploits and win souls radically for the kingdom of God because this is the secret for a victorious life.

The believers need to rise up and take their rightful place in the place of prayer. This is not the time to play church as usual. The tide has changed and so is the game. God is not looking for bishops, apostles, pastors, ministers or missionaries. God is looking for men and women who are willing to engage in the kingdom's affair. He is looking for those who are willing to carry the cross and follow him. God is looking for men and women after His hearts; men who hear the voice of God and say what they have heard and those who are ready to do His will here on earth. God is looking for men and women who are intentional in His vineyard. Those who are yearning for righteousness, and hate sin and its appearances with perfect hatred. This group of people are made in the place of encounter and in the secret place where prayer is the password. They master the strategies of prayer in the place of encounter where the Holy Spirit is the teacher. A Believer who needs to do great exploits must master the secret of the place of encounter, and this is only possible through quality times spent in the secret place.

PRAYER AND WOMEN OF COMMON GROUND GLOBAL IMPACT, INC. (WOCGGI)

Dr. Lizzy Iweala is the founder of Women Of Common Ground Global Impact, Inc. (WOCGGI). Impacting and empowering women for God's glory and creating a common ground platform for women from all walks of life where they can express and find their God-given potentials, enabling them to impact others by creating a Godly ripple effects in the process. WOCGGI was established as a result of a vision revealed to sister Lizzy by the Lord in the year 1993. In this vision, I saw myself ministering to a multitude of women in a place that looks like a stadium; it was in an open field with the women's arms all lifted up unto heaven and I found myself standing in front of them with my right hand stretched out towards them as if I was blessing them. The uniqueness of this vision is that, the women were all wearing the same uniform and that caught my interest. I shared the vision with my husband that evening when he got back from work and he responded saying that "maybe God wants you to pray with women." I took note of his input and was still battling in my spirit to have clearer revelation of the vision.

Amazingly, almost at the same hour on the next day, while I was in the kitchen cooking, for the first time I heard the audible voice of God, and he asked, "do you remember the vision I showed you yesterday?" and I replied, "Yes, Lord," then I asked, "Lord, why where the women in uniform,?" and he replied, " they are wearing uniform because I am going to use you to minister to women with similar problems." That has been the genesis of WOCGGI.

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I have seen the hand of God move mightily in our gatherings. I have seen marriages restored, I have seen the sick healed, I have the spirit and the yoke of depression broken. I have also seen women with low self-esteem, provoked to hopefulness and confidence. I have seen the yoke of evil patterns destroyed in the lives of some of these women. God has been faithful to His word ever since and still is showing himself mighty and strong in our gatherings for God's encounter. I am guided by the scripture according to Luke 1:37 "For with God nothing shall be impossible." Therefore, what God cannot do does not exist. Through our weekly prayer meetings, God has built an army of spiritual militants who have mastered the secret of provoking holy disturbances in the court of heaven until their cases are given the highest priority and attention. We have groomed prayer radicals who are engaged in spiritual warfare and have learned to wrestle with God just the way Jacob did when he had the encounter. These groups of women are fierce less when the enemy tries to mess with them in any capacity; they have learned to take back whatever belongs to them in the camp of the enemy. They will not negotiate with the enemy, they simply take back their stuff by force. They have mastered to recover their kids from the camp of the enemy; from drugs, from evil foundational powers, from any kind of addiction in the Name of Jesus. They understand the power in the Name of Jesus and the authority in the Word of God, therefore, they have refused to give the enemy an inch because they know that if they do so the enemy will want to take a foot. Knowledge

is power since God's people are perishing for lack of knowledge according to Hosea 4 :6, therefore, WOCGGI have refused to be intimidated since the enemy's intimidations has always been as a result of lack of knowledge. These groups of women have become the students of the word of God and are rightly dividing the word of truth as well as applying it to work in their favor. They have experienced the transforming power of the Lord and His word from the day they said "Yes" to Jesus. They are running with the baton and passing it on to any one with whom they cross paths. They are like the Samaritan woman at the well side of whom after being told of her past and present life situation by Jesus, dropped her pot and ran to evangelize her encounter. These women are equally doing the same, by testifying to their friends of what God is doing in WOCGGI and equally inviting them to our gatherings in order for them to experience the power of the Holy Spirit in action.

Mission Outreach:

WOCGGI is motivated by the acronym SIR (Selflessness, Impactful, Relevant) We believe that when you are selfless, you will impact lives with ease in any possible capacity. When you impact lives, you will absolutely become relevant. The lives of those you have positively impacted will experience the Love of God through your actions and you will subjectively experience fulfillment for impacting those lives or even if it is just a life. This acronym of SIR has transformed my life and the lives of the members of WOCGGI. They give selflessly to the work of the kingdom. They support my mission trips as we go to remote areas for both evangelism and medical missions. We've been to remote areas in Africa where medical care are in deprivations and we have impacted lives through medical interventions. Such a life impacting mission trips are made possible by the generous financial supports of these group of women who have gained the full knowledge of the importance of being selfless, impactful, and relevant. WOCGGI also engage in feed the children program during mission trips and assisting widows in any possible capacity. During mission trips we embark on feed the children, as many kids as our resources can provide: as we continue to trust God for increase in our financial resources.

Prayer Outreach:

WOCGGI is empowered through prayers. We have weekly telephone prayer sessions as well as our monthly zoom prayer meetings since the COVID-19 pandemic. At WOCGGI women are taught the essence of strategic prayers and effective strategies necessary to becoming spiritual champions in the arena of prayer. As a result of these divine insights in strategic prayers, we have experience uncommon breakthroughs in our personal lives such as deliverance from demonic oppressions, barrenness, restored marriages, restored

hope, financial breakthroughs and deliverance from evil family patterns. Luke 1:37 *"For with God nothing shall be impossible,"* has been a scripture verse that has substantiated the dumbfounding miracles we experience in WOCGGI. We have experience women delivered from demonic strongholds and oppressions. God is just amazing!

Ministry vs Covid Pandemic: Ministry took another new phase for us due to the Covid pandemic. Romans 8:28 *"And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are called according to his purpose."* This scripture has never been so relevant as it is to me during this Covid crisis. The lockdown prevented physical gatherings but to the glory of God to say that the advent of Zoom was in God's plan because it worked out for our good and for God's glory. Though, WOCGGI couldn't physically meet, the use of zoom provided extended geographical space for us to connect. We were able to hold zoom meetings and we were connected with individuals in different countries by sharing of links. Prior to Covid our meetings were confined to a specific physical location but Covid created a greater audience for us via zoom. WOCGGI took advantage of this new means to connect with the world as a means to spread the gospel and reach out to many by inviting them to our zoom meetings. The disadvantage has been in the area of holding physical meetings due to the restrictions in the number of people that is permissible for any physical gatherings. However, God is seen in this as a Strategist for the Gospel continues to make its way through the internet; transforming lives and glorifying God. WOCGGI remains fully aligned with the spreading of the gospel and impacting lives for God's glory. Praise the Lord.

We embark on annual women retreats. We believe in going for retreats in order to be revived. Sometimes women need to take a break from the normal daily routines of life to a solitary place of prayer . Retreats are spiritual havens for women; we look forward going for retreats because it is a place of encounter; a place where women unwind to drop their burdens at the feet of Jesus. We organize workshops and discuss topics such as marriage, divorce, betrayal in relationships and family matters, finances and providing solution through Biblical referencing.

During our retreats, we establish strong bonds through prayer partnership; prayer partners are established during the retreat period, trust is built and sisterly love flows freely and without restrictions to the glory of God. The atmosphere is highly spiritual to give ways for spiritual freedom to be able to discuss issues of the hearts without reservations. Workshops on various topics are held where the women are given the privilege to interact and verbalize constructive ideas.

After the retreat, we all return to our various homes energized both physically and spiritually by the power of the Holy Spirit. Days later, the effects of the retreat are inevitable as the women continues to testify

of uncommon breakthroughs in their lives and as the peace experienced in their personal lives and in their homes cannot be an overstatement..

I have come to the solemn truth that prayer is the reason for all the miracles happening in WOCGGI. When you understand the authority you have as a child of God, and utilize that authority against the enemy who wants to exhaust you with unending bombardments of spiritual attacks, that enemy will have no choice but to submit to your authority in the Name of Jesus. Strategic prayer is a radical prayer strategy that does not negotiate with the enemy. The enemy is wickedly wicked and you must engage strategically if you must take back whatever has been stolen from you. According to Mathew 11 :12 *"from the days of John the Baptist until now, the kingdom of heaven suffers violence, and the violent take it by force."* As a Believer, if you must fight the good fight of faith, you must provoke yourself to strategic prayers. If you dare to pray the right prayer to the relevant situation, victory is inevitable. Therefore, I encourage you to embark on strategic prayer and in the name of Jesus because in that name your victory is inevitable in the name of Jesus. However, sin remains a hindrance to our prayers because it gives the enemy a legal right to resist our prayers as well as to invade our lives according to Proverb 26:2 *"As the bird by wandering, as the swallow by flying, so the curse causeless shall not come."* Therefore, we the Believers must avoid actions that would give the enemy a legal right into our lives if we must master a victorious living which is in Christ Jesus.



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ANNOUNCEMENT

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