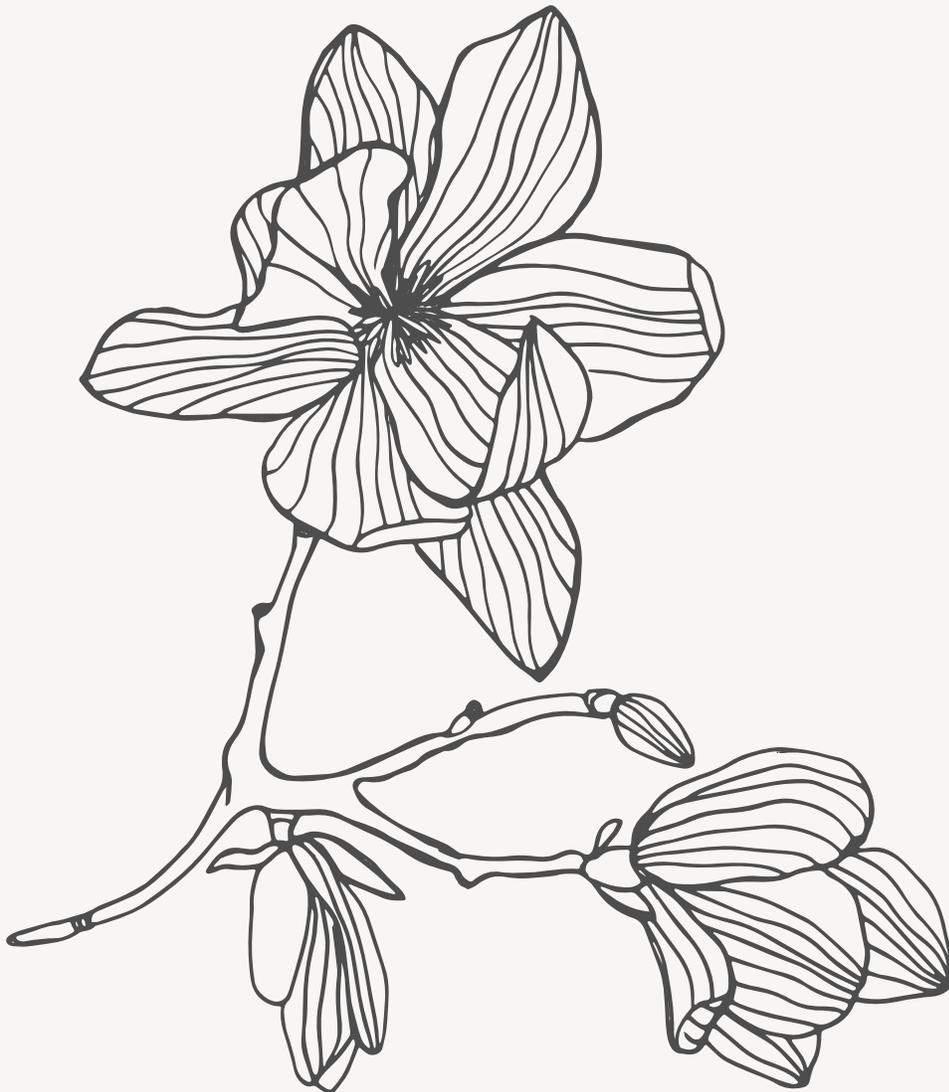


BY JANET DENISON

7 Tips for Taking Care of Your Soul

Help for When You Grow Weary



Sometimes we forget that we are called to care for our souls just like we do our bodies. “Weary in doing good” is a real thing, and for anyone who is in ministry or serving God, recognizing when we need to replenish our souls is critical to the success of God’s calling for our lives. Scripture tells us, “to not become weary in doing good” (Galatians 6:9). How do we obey that command? How do we live in such a way that we don’t burn out or run out of the joy of our salvation? It’s easy to get so caught up in the good work we are doing that we forget to recharge our spiritual batteries and end up exhausting ourselves in the process.

Following are a few ideas to help you replenish and restore your joy while loving others as yourself.

1. Recognize your spiritual needs

In Luke Chapter 8, we read about a woman who had been bleeding for 12 years and couldn’t be healed by anyone. She believed that if she could just touch the fringe of Jesus’ cloak that she would be healed - and she was. In verse 45 we read that only Jesus knew he had been touched... and verse 46 explains, “*But Jesus said, ‘Someone touched me; I know that power has gone out from me.’*”

We teach and minister through the power of the Holy Spirit. It is important to note that when you give your life in service to God through the power of the Holy Spirit, we too, can feel the Spirit’s power leave us. And just as Jesus often retreated to spend solitary time with his Father, we must spend time alone with God in order to replenish and refuel.

You have to replace the power you have used up. Recognize that God created you to need him.

For example..... If you have taught Bible study for a long time, you can probably teach a good lesson in your own knowledge and strength, which is part of the problem. When you become good at something, you can do it easily by yourself. The struggle is staying behind the Lord and so reliant on the Holy Spirit that you can’t help but teach a lesson through the Holy Spirit.

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Paul reminds us in Corinthians that God’s grace is sufficient for us. Why? Because **His** power is made perfect in our weakness. It’s when we are weak that Christ makes us strong. God wants to work through

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us, and he wants to be our strength because he knows that his power perfects our weakness.

*“My grace is sufficient for you, for my power is made perfect in weakness.” Therefore, I will boast all the more gladly about my weaknesses, so that the power of Christ may rest upon me” (2 Corinthians 12:9). It’s not when we are overly confident that we have prepared a good lesson that we teach one. **It’s when we are prepared, and allow the Holy Spirit to speak through us, that we have a good lesson, or better yet, a God lesson.***

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2. Spending time with God is an investment

Invest time in your soul. You will know God more fully and you will always experience a return on the time you spend in God’s word.

- We can’t know what God wants us to say unless we are close enough to hear his voice.
- One of the greatest gifts you give yourself and others is the quiet time you spend “being still and knowing He is God.” It’s after that time you are then able to make him known to others.
- When we don’t make the time to be still, other things can become unbalanced in our lives. When He is God, other things don’t become gods.

“Be still and know that I am God; I will be exalted among the nations; I will be exalted over the earth.” Psalm 46:10 When we are still, we will know who is God, and who or what is not.

3. Jesus made it clear, Mary not Martha made the best choice

- Everyone has to choose to do what is *best* - often at the expense of something that is *good*.
- Satan’s temptation is often choosing what is good over what is God.
- Christians are often tempted to substitute our good ideas for God’s.
- Nothing is more important than the time you invest in God’s calling, God’s comfort and God’s kingdom.

If you look at how Christ was tempted, you can see how Satan will often tempt you. Recognize that Satan wants you to be so busy - even with good things - that you don't have time to enrich your own soul...

Your quiet time will be interrupted. You will think you'll get around to it. Expect that it will be challenging to set aside time to invest in your soul.

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4. *“Since we live by the Spirit, keep in step with the Spirit” Galatians 5:25*

“Keep in step” in Greek can mean one of two things:

- Soldiers who march in unison following a commander.
- Two people who dance in perfect unison with one another.

Some function best with a dedicated and regimented quiet time. Others dance throughout the day with the Lord, moment by moment. All of us are to spend our days with an unceasing spirit of prayer.

What does it mean to “pray without ceasing”? Live with an ever present conversation with God so that he can interrupt your day anytime he chooses.

Learn to recognize what your soul needs regularly:

- Worship
- Prayer
- Confession/Repentance
- Bible study
- Solitude - spending time alone in the quiet
- Meditation - taking a passage from scripture to a higher level of focus
- Fasting - stepping away from something and dedicating that time with God
- Accountability

Whether marching or dancing, it's about knowing who the Lord wants to be in your life. God is the One who calls you to be with him so he can teach you, encourage you, comfort you, and fill you with his knowledge, hope, word, and thoughts.

5. Recognize your Pharisee potential

Henry Blackaby said, “When you made Jesus Christ Lord, you gave him permission to interrupt your life any time he chooses.”

If you have been a Christian longer than a year, you have Pharisee potential. Remember, no one knew more about God than the Pharisees or the Sadducees, but they didn't recognize God when he stood right in front of them. That is an important truth for all of us. Sometimes we act on what we know instead of recognizing what Jesus wants us to know in the moment.

God will interrupt your plans, so you must be ready for changes. It's why praying without ceasing is vital to hearing and recognizing his voice. God is our ever present help and strength. If he calls you to a ministry moment, he will author your words and provide you with his strength. *Your strength is made perfect in weakness.*

Hear the voice of the Lord speak into your life. Jesus is incapable of anything but perfection. Know and trust that anything he does through you will be perfect.

6. Spiritual strength is a “taste and see” process

“Taste and see that the Lord is good” (Psalm 34:8) is a pattern for spiritual strength.

- There will be times when you have a full meal, and there will be times you snack throughout the day.
- We need food, but it is also meant to be enjoyed.
- Much of your strength will come from rest. Without spiritual “rest” we will burn out and wear out. If you teach, preach, or serve on Sundays, your Sabbath rest will likely be another day.
- Just as you develop a taste for certain foods, learn to develop a taste and enjoyment for your quiet time with the Lord. Just like everyone enjoys their food prepared a certain way, we all have personal preferences in how we create our quiet time. “Flavor” it in such a way that you're going to enjoy it.

The more we taste and see that the Lord is good, the more we learn to love that time with the Lord. Much of your spiritual strength will come from resting in his presence.

Talk to God in the first few moments after you wake and offer him your day before your feet ever hit the ground. Tell him good morning; thank him for a restful sleep; ask him who he wants you to pray for, and go over your day's activities. Allow him to establish your steps before even getting out of bed!

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7. *Spiritual strength is difficult to teach*

- It is an individual experience.
- There are guidelines, but only One guide.
- Like salvation, our relationship with God will depend on our choices. Spirituality isn't an idea; it's an appointment. Are you faithful to keep what God wants to schedule?
- "Choose this day whom you will serve," then make that same choice tomorrow.
- Keep "tasting" until your time with God becomes as necessary to your soul as food is to your body.

For people who live in this culture, we have been trained to live by the clock and the calendar. Remember.....

You are God's beloved. He loves you with a great and perfect love. There is never a moment when the God of the universe isn't pleased by your desire to be with him and seek his perfect help and strength. Learn to enjoy spending time with the One who loves you like no other. If you are weary in well-doing, don't be. You know what to do. Seek the Lord with all your heart, mind and strength. Then you'll be able to love your neighbor as yourself. He is the food and strength you need.

May you not be just a hearer, but a doer of these words.