

Before the THRONE

Inner Court Ministries
Spring 2002

Portrait of Intercession

by Mark D. Spencer

Intercessory prayer is radical prayer. It is not for the faint hearted or for the weak. "And from the days of John the Baptist until now the Kingdom of Heaven suffers violence and the violent take it by force;" (Matthew 11:12). "Finally, my brethren, be strong in the Lord and in the power of His might. Put on the whole armor of God, that you might be able to stand against the wiles of the devil." (Ephesians 6:10-11). Intercession touches the heart of God as it pulls down strongholds within men's hearts and within the heavenlies. "For the weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but mighty through God to the pulling down of strongholds, casting down imaginations, and every high thing that exalts itself against the knowledge of God, and bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ." (2 Corinthians 10:4-5).

Intercession prepares the way for God's Spirit to woo and lead men to Christ. It opens the doors of opportunity to proclaim the Gospel to those who were once deaf and blinded to the love of God in Christ. "Continue in prayer, and watch with thanksgiving, praying also, for us, that God would open a door of utterance, to speak the mystery of Christ." (Colossians 4:2-3). It opens the windows of heaven, not only for spiritual blessing, but for the releasing of financial and material blessing. It will establish the young one who is being tossed to and fro. It will settle the restless and disgruntled. It will not give up until the desired results are obtained. "And He said unto them, 'Which of you shall have a friend, and shall go to him at midnight, and say to him, 'Friend, lend me three loaves of bread; for a friend of mine in his journey has come to me and I have nothing to set before him?' And he, from inside shall answer and say, 'Don't trouble me for the door is now shut and my children are with me in bed; I cannot rise and give what you desire.' I say unto you, though he will not rise and give him because he is his friend, yet because of his importunity he will rise and give him as much as he needs. And I say unto you, (keep on) asking, and it shall be given you, (keep on) seeking and you shall find; (keep



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on) knocking and it shall be opened unto you. For everyone that asks receives; and he that seeks finds; and to him that knocks it shall be opened." (Luke 11:5-10).

The intercessor understands intensive labor and the struggle for life and death. Natural birth and development comes through labor and struggle. Spiritual birth and development is

no different. "My little children, of whom I travail in birth again until Christ be formed in you." (Galatians 4:19). Intercessory prayer will develop your character and then prove your mettle. "That the trial of your faith, being much more precious than gold that perishes, though it be tried

with fire, might be found unto praise and honor and glory at the appearing of Jesus Christ.” (1Peter 1:7). Intercessory prayer will stand in the face of adversity and not back down. Men will be offended at the intercessor’s boldness and his utter confidence as he places demands upon the Covenant. It is better to offend men than to offend the heavenly Father! “And going away from there, Jesus withdrew to the district of Tyre and Sidon. And behold, a woman who was a Canaanite of that district came out and with a loud, troublesome cry begged, ‘Have mercy on me, O Lord, Son of David! My daughter is miserably and distressingly and cruelly possessed by a demon!’ But He did not answer her a word. And His disciples came and implored Him, saying, ‘Send her away; for she is crying after us.’ But she came and kneeling, worshipped Him, and kept praying, ‘Lord, help me!’ And He answered, ‘It is not right to take the children’s bread and throw it to the little dogs.’ She said, ‘Yes, Lord, yet even the little pups eat the crumbs that fall from the young master’s table.’ Then Jesus answered her, ‘O woman, great is your faith! Be it done for you as you wish.’ And her daughter was cured from that moment.” (Matthew 15:21-28).

The intercessor finds no shame or makes no apology in proclaiming the Gospel of Jesus Christ. “For I am not ashamed of the Gospel of Christ; for it is the power of God unto salvation to everyone that believes, to the Jew first and also to the Greek.” (Romans 1:16). “Whosoever, therefore, shall be ashamed of Me and of My words in this adulterous and sinful generation, of him also shall the Son of Man be ashamed, when

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He comes in the glory of His Father with the holy angels.” (Mark 8:38). “For we do not have a High Priest who is unable to be touched with the feeling of our infirmities, but was in all points tempted like we are, yet without sin. Let us, therefore, come boldly unto the throne of grace that we may obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need.” (Hebrews 4:15-16).

Effective intercession cannot be done without the aid of the Holy Spirit! It will rely upon the Unseen Partner, the Advocate. It looks to the unlimited resources and bounty of an Almighty God. “Likewise, the Spirit also

helps our infirmity; for we know not what we should pray for as we ought; but the Spirit Himself makes intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered. And He that searches the hearts knows what is the mind of the Spirit, because he makes intercession for the saints according to the will of God.” (Romans 8:26-27). “Now to Him Who, by and in consequence of the action of his power that is at work within us, is able to carry out His purpose and do superabundantly, far over and above all that we dare ask or think — infinitely beyond our highest prayers, desires, thoughts, hopes or dreams.” (Ephesians 3:20 Amplified). Intercessory prayer will defy circumstance and obstacles far too powerful and overwhelming for ordinary men. Jesus said, “If you will believe, all things are possible to him that believes.” (Mark 9:23). Intercessory prayer believes God! Intercession moves immovable mountains, conquers unconquerable situations!

Intercessory prayer obtains God’s perfect will! “And this is the confidence that we have in Him, that, if we ask any thing according to His will, he hears us; And if we know that He hears us, whatever we ask, we know that we have the petitions that we desired of Him.” (1 John 5:14-15). “If you abide in Me and My words abide in you, you shall ask whatever you will and it will be done unto you.” (John 15:7).

When others have long since given up because they have reached the end of themselves, the intercessor throws himself upon the mercy of God and draws unlimited strength, stamina and endurance from Him Who is Strength. ‘I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me.’ (Philippians 4:13). “His grace becomes their sufficiency. Their weaknesses become His strength!” (2 Corinthians 12:9). As the intercessor is hidden away with the Lord, in that secret place of the Most High, strengths are exchanged. Mine for His, and His for mine. The waiting upon God becomes a delightful thing, a joy some privilege few will ever know. “They that wait upon the

Lord shall renew (or exchange) their strength. They shall mount up with wings of eagles, they shall run and not be weary, they shall walk and not faint.” (Isaiah 40:31). Intercessory prayer unites the believer with the Lord of the Harvest. Imagine, co-laborers together with Him! Joint heirs with Christ. “Ask of Me and I will give you the nations for your inheritance and the uttermost parts of the earth for your possession.” (Psalm 2:8). “Take My yoke upon you, and learn of Me; for I am meek and lowly in heart, and you shall find rest for your souls. For My yoke is easy and My burden is light.” The secret has been discovered: learning of Him! Not from others. Not from a book about Him, but from Him. The Lord’s nature and mind becomes his. Jesus’ characteristics become his. Christ’s thoughts become his. As he learns the secret, he “casts his cares upon Him for He cares for you.” (1 Peter 5:7). The intercessor becomes meek and lowly in heart. Not believing he can carry the burden alone, the intercessor casts His Spirit received burden back upon the Lord. The yoke of the Lord Jesus becomes easy and His burden is then light. The Lord is now carrying the brunt of the weight. It is His labor and His work that have now been entered. The intercessor’s life is now simply yielded to the Master, to flow and follow His lead, His direction and will! Christ’s work is now accomplished His way and in His time. The intercessor labors within the rest of God. “There remains, therefore, a rest to the people of God. For he that is entered into His rest, he also has ceased from his own works as God did from His. Let us labor, therefore, to enter into that rest...” (Hebrews 4:9-11a).

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The call has long since gone out. The eyes of the Lord are looking for those who will answer the promptings of the Spirit. What is the response of the Church? Will Jesus find faithful prayer? Will He once again say, “And He saw that there was no man, and wondered that there was no intercessor?” (Isaiah 59:16). Jesus is our Intercessor and the High Priest of the New Covenant, yet He calls us to enter into His life and share His labor. “For my determined purpose is that I may know Him - that I may progressively become more deeply and intimately acquainted with Him, perceiving and recognizing and understanding the wonders of His Person more strongly and more clearly. And that I may in that same way come to know the power out flowing from His resurrection which it exerts over believers; and that I may so share His sufferings as to be continually transformed in spirit into His likeness even to His death.” (Philippians 3:10 Amplified). What is your response? “Behold, I stand at the door and knock; if any man hear My voice, and open the door, I will come in to him, and will dine with him, and he with Me. To him that overcomes will I grant to sit with Me in My throne, even as I also overcame, and am set down with My Father in His throne. He that has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit is saying to the churches.” (Revelation 3:20-22).

STANDING ✕ IN THE GAP

“Here I am, Lord, send me.” “The eyes of the Lord run back and forth across the earth to show Himself strong on behalf of those whose hearts are perfect toward Him.” (Isaiah 6:8 2, Chronicles 16:9).

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God is not looking for ability, or great talent. He is not looking for the rich or the beautiful. The great orator or politician does not turn His head. Neither social status or name dropping will effect what God is after. Seminary degrees nor years of practical experience will matter on the heavenly resume. The call is for men and women who will serve with faithful and loving hearts. Servants who are trustworthy and who only desire to hear one day, “Well done, good

and faithful servant, enter into the joy of your Lord!” Availability, not ability, is the commodity sought after. He who is willing to empty himself that Christ might fill all in all has become the

desired trait of this workman. Heaven's standard is the One who was willing to bear a cross, and yes, to submit even to its death. The call *has* gone out, the search is on; "pick up your cross and come follow Me." The intercessor is not a spiritual "superman." He has merely said yes to the invitation of God's Spirit. He has made himself available to the direction, discipline and leading of the Lord. He has joined himself with the thousands of others who have ever simply said, "Here I am, Lord, send me."

"...And Then Shall The End Come."

"And you shall hear of wars and rumors of wars. . . for nation shall rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom; and there shall be famines, and pestilences, and earthquakes in various places." (Matthew 24:6-7). The daily headlines and newscasts are full of these very things – wars, rumors of wars, earthquakes, famines, disease and terrorism. Much is made of end-time teaching within the Christian world. Teachers capitalize upon the daily headlines and the news media's sensationalism. And regardless of our own particular bias, rarely is it mentioned what Jesus said in verse 14 of Matthew 24; "And this gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in all the world for a witness to all nations; and then shall the end come." To all nations! Of the 19,000 separate people groups in the world, 16,000 have yet to hear of Christ's redemption and love! "And this gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in all the world for a witness to all nations; and then shall the end come." Of course, our heart's cry is the same cry as recorded in Revelation, "Even so, come, Lord Jesus!" However, we must never forget the first call was, "And the Spirit and the Bride say, 'Come. And let him that is thirsty come. And whoever will, let him take of the Water of Life freely.'" As the first disciple's responsibility was, ours is and still remains until Christ's return; "Pray therefore the Lord of the Harvest, that He would send forth laborers into the field." Our prayer, coupled with our obedience to proclaim the Gospel, will literally propel the Church toward the return of our beloved Saviour and King, the Lord Jesus Christ. "He that testifies of these things says, 'Surely I come quickly.' Amen. Even so, come, Lord Jesus!" (Revelation 22:20).



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