

## Intercession — An Essential Part of Every Christian’s Life

### 1 Timothy 2:1 (NKJV)

<sup>1</sup>Therefore I exhort first of all that supplications, prayers, intercessions, and giving of thanks be made for all men,

*In this verse we see four components to intercessory prayer:*

1. *Supplications*
2. *Prayers*
3. *Intercessions*
4. *Giving of thanks*
  - *Supplication is crying out for God to involve Himself and do whatever is needed.*
  - *Supplication is much more than just making a need known to God. It is identifying with the need, joining ourselves to the need, and being so moved by the need that we cry out to God for the need.*

*Supplication has three components:*

1. *Recognizing the urgency and desperation of the situation or need.*
2. *Recognizing our poverty and helplessness to meet the need ourselves.*
3. *Recognizing that only through God’s intervention can the need be met.*
  - *Supplication is assessing the situation and recognizing that if God doesn’t show up then everything will be lost.*
  - *Supplication is recognizing our own poverty and helplessness and knowing that only God can help.*
  - *Supplication is not like asking someone to help us change a tire. It is more like hanging from a cliff by our finger tips and calling out to the only person who is strong enough to lift us from that precipice.*
  - *Although supplication is a desperate cry for God to intervene it is not rooted in anguish, but earnestness, and a firm and unshakeable confidence in God’s love, mercy, and faithfulness.*
  - *Prayer, unlike supplication, is simply making our requests known to God.*

### Ephesians 1:16 (NKJV)

<sup>16</sup>do not cease to give thanks for you, making mention of you in my prayers:

### Philemon 1:4 NKJV

<sup>4</sup> I thank my God, making mention of you always in my prayers,

### 1 Thessalonians 1:2 NKJV

- <sup>2</sup> We give thanks to God always for you all, making mention of you in our prayers,
- *The Greek word translated as “mention” means “remembrance; memory; recollection—by implication recital.”*
  - *Prayer does not always incorporate supplication nor does prayer have to be intense.*
  - *Prayer can be as simple as mentioning the names of the people who are on our hearts and asking God to help or bless them.*

- *Giving thanks over a meal and praying God's blessing over the food does not involve supplication unless the person who prepared it is a really bad cook and you suspect you may die of food poisoning.*
- *The third component of intercessory prayer is intercession itself.*
- *Intercession is standing between the person and God for the needs of the person. Jesus is the only true intercessor. We do not intercede on our own. We co-labour with Jesus in us to intercede through us.*
- *Intercession is free of self-interest since we are praying for the needs of others.*
- *Intercession can be seen as a legal term, for example, when an advocate or lawyer intercedes on behalf of his client and represents that person before a judge.*
- *Intercession is deep warfare as we stand in the gap between the need and God.*
- *In intercession we take hold of God and we take hold of man and bring the two together.*
- *The fourth and final component of intercessory prayer is thanksgiving.*
- *Thanksgiving wraps everything up and is an expression of our faith in how God will answer, so we do not leave empty but filled with faith and strength, leaving heaviness, worry, and unbelief behind.*
- *Christians sometimes speak as if only some Christians are called to be intercessors.*
- *Intercession is not a separate ministry for a chosen few but the response of any believer's heart stirred by God's heart for the needs of others.*
- *If we never feel stirred to intercede we have not been moved by the plight of others.*
- *Intercession does not always involve emotions but is simply our choice to spend time before God and have focused and earnest prayer.*
- *Intercession moves us beyond ourselves and our needs to be touched by the needs of others.*
- *Some may be called to spend more time in intercession than others, but we are all called to be intercessors.*
- *Intercession really exemplifies our calling as Christians.*
- *We are to be witnesses of Christ.*
- *We are to warn the world of the coming judgment.*
- *We are to share the Good News of the salvation that God is offering each person through Christ's redemptive work at Calvary.*
- *We are to pray and intercede for God's redemptive purposes to be fulfilled in people's lives.*
- *Intercession not only changes the world and other Christians, but it changes the ones who are interceding.*
- *Intercession strengthens our relationship with God because we are identifying with God's heart.*
- *Intercession helps us to understand and experience the heart of God in new, more wonderful, and deeper ways.*

#### **Romans 10:1 NKJV**

**<sup>1</sup> Brethren, my heart's desire and prayer to God for Israel is that they may be saved.**

- *We see Apostle Paul's deep desire for the salvation of Israel. Paul was deeply moved to pray for his brethren who did not know Christ.*

### Romans 9:1-3 NKJV

<sup>1</sup> I tell the truth in Christ, I am not lying, my conscience also bearing me witness in the Holy Spirit,

<sup>2</sup> that I have great sorrow and continual grief in my heart.

<sup>3</sup> For I could wish that I myself were accursed from Christ for my brethren, my countrymen according to the flesh,

- *Paul was moved with supplication as he identified with the suffering and loss that Israel was experiencing because of their rejection of Christ—“I have great sorrow and continual grief in my heart.”*
- *However, Paul’s heart for Israel went beyond just supplication or prayer. He was moved to intercede—“For I could wish that I myself were accursed from Christ for my brethren.”*
- *The most astounding words that Paul spoke were, “For I could wish that I myself were accursed from Christ for my brethren.”*
- *Paul stood between God and Israel because he profoundly identified with Israel’s plight.*
- *Paul’s heart was so closely aligned with Jesus’ heart that he mirrored the same motivation that compelled Jesus to die the most horrific death in all eternity at the cross of Calvary. Like Jesus, Paul would have given his life for the lives of others.*
- *Jesus, the true intercessor, literally became our sin offering and was accursed so we could be saved—“Christ has redeemed us from the curse of the law, having become a curse for us (for it is written, “Cursed is everyone who hangs on a tree”).” (Galatians 3:13).*
- *Jesus literally became accursed and separated from His Father as He became our sin offering. As Jesus hung on the cross the perfect bond between He and His Father was broken and He cried out—“My God, My God, why have You forsaken Me?” (Mark 15:34b).*
- *Through intercession, Paul’s heart identified not only with the suffering and loss of Israel, but with the heart of God that is filled with sorrow and grief for everyone who rejects Christ and ultimately experiences eternal separation from God in Hell.*
- *When speaking about intercessory prayer, Paul describes who we are to pray for—“for all men, for kings and all who are in authority, that we may lead a quiet and peaceable life in all godliness and reverence. For this is good and acceptable in the sight of God our Savior.” (1 Timothy 2:1b-3).*
- *Then Paul expressed God’s heart of love for all men and His earnest desire to save all men—“who desires all men to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth.” (1 Timothy 2:4).*
- *When I pray and intercede for the lost I am not only conscious of the tragic and horrible state of those who do not know Christ, I am also moved by the sorrow that the heart of God experiences as people reject the salvation that cost Him so much!*
- *While I am alive on this earth there are some things that I am able to do that I will never be able to do in eternity.*
- *Only while I am alive on this earth am I able to pray for the needs of people.*
- *Only while I am alive on the earth am I able to share the Gospel with those who are not yet saved.*

- *Once my earthly life ends and I am in Heaven, I will no longer have the opportunity to lead people to Christ or to pray for those in need. Everyone in Heaven will be saved and their needs will all have been met.*
- *Every day I pray for revival. Every day I pray for signs, wonders, miracles, and healings to confirm the truth of the Gospel.*

#### **Mark 16:20 NKJV**

<sup>20</sup> **And they went out and preached everywhere, the Lord working with them and confirming the word through the accompanying signs. Amen.**

- *As I pray for revival my heart is filled with anticipation and joy looking forward to the day when I will see the power of the Holy Spirit manifest in unimaginable ways!*

#### **1 Timothy 2:5-6**

<sup>5</sup> **For there is one God and one Mediator between God and men, the Man Christ Jesus,**  
<sup>6</sup> **who gave Himself a ransom for all, to be testified in due time,**

- *Jesus is the true intercessor who intercedes between God and man. He fulfilled His role as the perfect and true intercessor by becoming the ransom by which all can be saved.*
- *Now Jesus Christ is looking to each of His children to co-labour with Him so we will pray and intercede for the needs around us.*
- *If we lack a component of intercessory prayer in our lives we will find something sadly lacking in our relationship with God. We will tend to be self-focused and oblivious of the needs and suffering of others.*
- *If we fail to rise to the occasion to intercede for the needs of others we will become more and more self-centered and selfish.*

#### **Romans 8:24**

<sup>24</sup> **For we were saved in this hope, but hope that is seen is not hope; for why does one still hope for what he sees?**

- *Intercession is being able to hope for what we do not see.*
- *Intercession is being able to believe for what seems impossible.*
- *Intercession is to pray for things that are much bigger than us—the salvation of the world.*

#### **Romans 8:25**

<sup>25</sup> **But if we hope for what we do not see, we eagerly wait for it with perseverance.**

- *Intercession must be motivated by a deep desire—“we eagerly wait for it.”*
- *Intercession must contain a wonderful balance between expectation and patience—“with perseverance.”*
- *Without expectation we will lack the motivation and zeal to persevere in prayer.*
- *However, without patience we can grow discouraged and quit if we fail to see results quickly.*

#### **Romans 8:26**

<sup>26</sup>Likewise the Spirit also helps in our weaknesses. For we do not know what we should pray for as we ought, but the Spirit Himself makes intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered.

- *True intercession always involves the Holy Spirit—“Likewise the Spirit also helps in our weaknesses.”*
- *A person is incapable of interceding without the Holy Spirit because intercession is the spiritual work of Jesus Christ.*
- *Intercession goes far beyond the words we speak to an expression of the very heart of God—“the Spirit Himself makes intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered.”*
- *God is looking for those who are willing to come into agreement with His heart so He can express His heart through us in intercession.*

#### **Romans 8:27**

<sup>27</sup>Now He who searches the hearts knows what the mind of the Spirit is, because He makes intercession for the saints according to the will of God.

- *Intercession is not an expression of what we want but it is an expression of the will of God—“because He makes intercession for the saints according to the will of God.”*
- *God will reveal His will to us through the Word of God as we study and meditate on His Word.*
- *God will reveal His will to us through the Holy Spirit as we spend time in prayer and intercession.*
- *Through intercession our will, desires, and goals begin to come into line with God’s.*

#### **Romans 8:33-34**

<sup>33</sup>Who shall bring a charge against God’s elect? It is God who justifies.

<sup>34</sup>Who is he who condemns? It is Christ who died, and furthermore is also risen, who is even at the right hand of God, who also makes intercession for us.

- *Jesus is the perfect example of an intercessor.*
- *Even in our darkest moments of fear, failure, heartbreak—Jesus is right there interceding for us—“who is even at the right hand of God, who also makes intercession for us.”*
- *Jesus not only interceded for His disciples during His earthly ministry but He continues to intercede for us at the right hand of the Father in Heaven.*

#### **Hebrews 7:24–25 (NKJV)**

<sup>24</sup>But He, because He continues forever, has an unchangeable priesthood.

<sup>25</sup>Therefore He is also able to save to the uttermost those who come to God through Him, since He always lives to make intercession for them.

- *Jesus has received an unchangeable and eternal priesthood.*
- *Jesus as our High Priest intercedes for us.*
- *One of the important ways that Jesus saves us to the “uttermost” is through intercession—“He is also able to save to the uttermost those who come to God through Him.”*

- *Christ is our resurrected Saviour not our dead hero. As our resurrected Saviour He continues to live to intercede for us so we can come to complete victory and freedom—“since He always lives to make intercession for them.”*
- *Just as Jesus is our High Priest, we are priests to God and one of our responsibilities as priests is to intercede for others.*
- *Every believer is called to be an intercessor.*
- *Why don't all Christians respond to this call to intercede?*
- *There is a cost to interceding in prayer.*
- *Intercession will cost us our time.*
- *Intercession means we need to be willing to be touched by the plight and sorrows of others.*
- *Intercession means we put aside our self-interest and place the needs of others in the forefront.*
- *Intercession requires faith. Believing God is quite different than believing in God.*

### 2 Corinthians 5:14–15 (NKJV)

<sup>14</sup>For the love of Christ compels us, because we judge thus: that if One died for all, then all died;

<sup>15</sup>and He died for all, that those who live should live no longer for themselves, but for Him who died for them and rose again.

- *It is Christ's love in us and expressed through us that compels and constrains us to intercede for others.*
- *To intercede for others we must be moved by God's love for them.*
- *Human sympathy or a simple sense of duty or responsibility will not give us the strength and resolve to make the necessary sacrifices to be an intercessor. If we are to intercede for the lost or for other Christians, we must have a deep stirring of God's love in our hearts.*

### 1 Corinthians 13:7 (NKJV)

<sup>7</sup>love bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things.

- *For us to be an intercessor we must not only have a great love for the person but a love mixed with faith that never gives up.*
- *For one to intercede we must bear all things, believe all things, hope all things, and endure all things.*
- *Intercession takes on the impossible.*
- *Intercession takes on things that appear as though they will never change.*
- *Intercession goes beyond the realm of human possibility to the realm of God's grace.*

### Matthew 9:36–38 (NKJV)

<sup>36</sup>But when He saw the multitudes, He was moved with compassion for them, because they were weary and scattered, like sheep having no shepherd.

<sup>37</sup>Then He said to His disciples, “The harvest truly is plentiful, but the laborers are few.

<sup>38</sup>Therefore pray the Lord of the harvest to send out laborers into His harvest.”

- *When Jesus was “moved with compassion” for people, He always acted on their behalf. Our first response in seeing the great sea of humanity that still do not know*

*Christ is to intercede*—“Therefore pray the Lord of the harvest to send out laborers into His harvest.”

- *Intercession is the most important first response to seeing a breakthrough.*
- *Intercession paves the way for God to lead us and others to action in the natural realm*—“to send out laborers into His harvest.”

**Ezekiel 22:30–31 (NKJV)**

<sup>30</sup>So I sought for a man among them who would make a wall, and stand in the gap before Me on behalf of the land, that I should not destroy it; but I found no one.

<sup>31</sup>Therefore I have poured out My indignation on them; I have consumed them with the fire of My wrath; and I have recompensed their deeds on their own heads,” says the Lord GOD.

- *This verse shows the absolute necessity for intercessors and the result of a lack of intercessors.*

**Isaiah 59:16 (NKJV)**

<sup>16</sup>He saw that there was no man, And wondered that there was no intercessor; Therefore His own arm brought salvation for Him; And His own righteousness, it sustained Him.

- *God was appalled and astounded that there was not one person to intercede and stand in the gap for the people, so Jesus came as a man to intercede for mankind.*
- *God operates by laws and principles which He has established.*
- *For example, there is the law of retribution (the consequences of sin).*
- *There is also the principle of mercy that God has established.*
- *If there is no one who intercedes then the law of the consequences of sin runs its course.*
- *Mercy is a higher law than the law of condemnation.*
- *Intercession does not change God’s mind, but it implores God to use a higher law.*

**Psalms 147:10–11 (NKJV)**

<sup>10</sup>He does not delight in the strength of the horse; He takes no pleasure in the legs of a man.

<sup>11</sup>The LORD takes pleasure in those who fear Him, In those who hope in His mercy.

- *Intercession releases God’s mercy.*
- *Thus intercession is very close to the heart of God.*
- *Through intercession God invites us and gives us the privilege to be included in His victories.*
- *As believers we are Christ’s Body. We are His hands and feet and mouth. Christ wants to express Himself and we are His chosen way to act on His behalf.*
- *Intercession offers us an opportunity to transform history!*
- *Intercessory prayer is not done out of shame, guilt, or compulsion.*
- *Intercessory prayer is an invitation that Jesus has called us to co-labour with Him in prayer to see His glory manifest.*