

ETHAN TEMPLE MINISTRIES
TOOLS FOR LIFE
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INTERCESSORY PRAYER IN THE SPIRIT FOR OTHERS

The principle of persevering prayer applies to every area of the Christian's life, including our efforts to lead others to Christ. It should be clear from our previous discussion that our prayers are necessary for the salvation of those in our circle of family and friends.

Paul exhorts the Christian to make "intercession" for all men:

"I exhort therefore, that, first of all, supplications, prayers, intercessions, and giving of thanks, be made for all men; For kings, and for all that are in authority; that we may lead a quiet and peaceable life in all godliness and honesty. For this is good and acceptable in the sight of God our Saviour" (1 Tim. 2:1-3).

We are to bring about meetings with God through intercessory prayer. Our prayers for the lost bring about meetings of reconciliation between them and God and meetings of dissolution between them and Satan. Intercessory prayer is a major element in the ... "ministry of reconciliation" ... every Christian is called to participate in:

"And all things are of God, who hath reconciled us to himself by Jesus Christ, and hath given to us the ministry of reconciliation; to wit, that God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them; and hath committed unto us the word of reconciliation" (2 Cor. 5:18, 19).

In His prayer to the Father in John 17, Christ is praying an intercessory prayer that "oneness," or "unity," take place between the Father and the believers:

"Neither pray I for these alone, but for them also which shall believe on me through their word; That they all may be one; as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be one in us: that the world may believe that thou hast sent me" (John 17:20, 21).

Christ is praying for complete reconciliation between the Father and all believers. He not only prayed that intercessory prayer for us 2,000 years ago, He continues to pray an intercessory prayer for us today:

“Wherefore he is able also to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by him, seeing he ever liveth to make intercession for them” (Heb. 7:25).

Throughout the letters of Paul we read of his continual intercession to God on behalf of those to whom he is writing:

“For God is my witness, whom I serve with my spirit in the gospel of his Son, that without ceasing I make mention of you always in my prayers” (Rom. 1:9).

“Wherefore I also, after I heard of your faith in the Lord Jesus, and love unto all the saints, cease not to give thanks for you, making mention of you in my prayers” (Eph. 1:15, 16).

“For this cause we also, since the day we heard it, do not cease to pray for you, and to desire that ye might be filled with the knowledge of his will in all wisdom and spiritual understanding” (Col. 1:9).

Paul knew them well and loved them deeply. He certainly understood the necessity of continually making intercession for all the saints. He encourages every Christian to do the same for one another:

“Praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit, and watching thereunto with all perseverance and supplication for all saints” (Eph 6:18).

God revealed the necessity of intercessory prayer when Samuel spoke the following words to King Saul:

“God forbid that I should sin against the Lord in ceasing to pray for you” (1 Sam. 12:23).

Here we learn that it is actually a sin for us to refuse to pray for one another. Ellen White encouraged prayer for one another with these words:

“Although God dwells not in temples made with hands, yet he honors with his presence the assemblies of his people. He has promised that when they come together to seek him, to acknowledge their sins, and to *pray for one another*, he will meet with them by his Spirit. But those who assemble to worship him should put away every evil thing. Unless they can worship him in spirit and truth and in the beauty of holiness, their coming together will be of no avail” (*Review and Herald*, November 30, 1905).

As Christians are daily filled with the Spirit, God will lead in their intercessory prayer life. He will bring to their mind whom to pray for and, often, what to pray for in each person’s life. Hence, we can clearly see why Satan will do everything in his power to make us believe that it is not essential or important that we specifically pray for one another. He wants us to believe that it is not really necessary for us to pray for those who are out of Christ. He wants us to believe that God will work for the salvation of the lost even if we don’t specifically pray for those in our circle of family and friends. Hopefully, you will not believe his lies about the unimportance of prayer for others or yourself. This is why he will attack our prayer life, perhaps more than any other aspect of our spiritual life.

Personal Reflection and Discussion

When the Christian intercedes in prayer for someone, who is he/she actually doing?

For what, specifically, did Jesus intercede in prayer when He prayed for His followers, as recorded in John 17?

Is intercessory prayer a privilege or a necessity? Why?

How has Satan attacked your prayer life?

How can you become a more effective prayer intercessor for others?

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