



## THE INTERCESSORY PRAYER

### Safe Only on Your Knees

Sir George Adam Smith, a Scottish biblical scholar and professor, tells how he and his guide were climbing the Weisshorn peak in the Swiss Alps. It was stormy and they were making their climb on the sheltered side of the peak. When they reached the summit, they were filled with so much excitement, that Sir George jumped and was nearly blown by the fierce wind over the edge to the glacier below. The guide seeing the danger wasted no time, grabbed, and put him down telling him, “on your knees, sir. YOU ARE SAFE HERE ONLY ON YOUR KNEES.

Life on earth is like the summit of Weisshorn peak in the Swiss Alps, during stormy days. The view is beautiful but it is treacherous and dangerous. And it is only when we get to our knees on prayer that we can avoid fatal mistakes, and dangerous situations.

#### **This lesson is focus on “THE INTERCESSORY PRAYER”**

Intercessory prayer is a very unique prayer distinct from the other prayers, because this is the only kind of prayer that you can not use to pray for yourself unlike the prayer of faith, persistent and intense prayer.

Intercessory prayer is the only kind of prayer that can sustain your prayer life especially when you come to a point where everything is going well in your life and you no longer see the need to pray.

**It does not follow that because everything is going well in our lives we are out of danger.**

***1 Peter 5:8 Be self-controlled and alert. Your enemy the devil prowls around like a roaring lion looking for someone to devour. 9 Resist him, standing firm in the faith, because you know that your brothers throughout the world are undergoing the same kind of sufferings.***

Wild life researchers tell us that lions attack only the isolated and the vulnerable. The Word of God is clear that, it is in the same way with the devil. He will only attack the isolated Christians (these are the Christians without a home church), and the vulnerable Christians (those with home church but lacking in prayer). They are lacking in prayer because they do not engage themselves in intercessory prayer.

The Word of God is clear, that we should not necessarily be the devil's victims, because we can resist him, by standing firm in the faith. The best way to stand firm in the faith is through prayer.

***1 Timothy 2:1 I urge, then, first of all, that requests, prayers, intercession and thanksgiving be made for everyone-- 2 for kings and all those in authority, that we may live peaceful and quiet lives in all godliness and holiness. 3 This is good, and pleases God our Savior, 4 who wants all men to be saved and to come to a knowledge of the truth. 5 For there is one God and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus, 6 who gave himself as a ransom for all men--the testimony given in its proper time.***

## **I. WHAT IS INTERCESSORY PRAYER?**

❖ Intercessory prayer is a petition in behalf of others. It is a prayer where the petitioner approaches the throne of grace for the needs of others. This is a generous prayer because it only shares and not receives.

W. Duewel, shared this story in his book "Touch the World through Prayer". During the Mau Mau uprising in Kenya in 1960, missionaries Matt and Lora Higgens were returning one night to Nairobi through the

heart of Mau Mau territory, where Kenyans and missionaries alike had been killed and dismembered. Seventeen miles outside of Nairobi their Land Rover stopped. Higgens tried to repair the car in the dark, but could not restart it. They spent the night in the car, but claimed **Psalm 4:8** ***“I will lie down and sleep in peace, for you alone, O Lord, make me dwell in safety.”*** In the morning they were able to repair the car.

A few weeks later the Higgenses returned to America on furlough. They reported that the night before they left Nairobi, a local pastor had visited them. He told how a member of the Mau Mau had confessed that he and three others had crept up to the car to kill the Higgenses, but when they saw sixteen men surrounding the car, the Mau Mau had left in fear. “Sixteen men?” Higgens responded. “I don’t know what you mean!” While they were on furlough a friend, Clay Brent, asked the Higgenses if they had been in any danger recently. Higgens asked, “Why?” Then Clay said that on March 23, God had placed a heavy prayer burden on his heart. He called the men of the church, and sixteen of them met together and prayed until the burden lifted. ***Touch the World Through Prayer, W. Duewel, OMS, pp. 85-6***

Did God send sixteen angels to represent those men and enforce their prayers? I am sure the answer is yes.

❖ Intercessory prayer is to literally stand in the gap for someone. When we intercede for someone God sends his angels to deliver His protection and Provision.

The Apostle Paul is not only great in his preaching and teaching, he is also very strong in his intercessory prayer as recorded in the new testament of the Holy Bible. Here’s a few of the many intercessory prayers he prayed.

***Ephesians 1: 16*** ***I have not stopped giving thanks for you, remembering you in my prayers.*** ***17*** ***I keep asking that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ,***

**the glorious Father, may give you the Spirit of wisdom and revelation, so that you may know him better. <sup>18</sup> I pray also that the eyes of your heart may be enlightened in order that you may know the hope to which he has called you, the riches of his glorious inheritance in the saints, <sup>19</sup> and his incomparably great power for us who believe.**

**Ephesians 3:14 For this reason I kneel before the Father, <sup>15</sup> from whom his whole family in heaven and on earth derives its name. <sup>16</sup> I pray that out of his glorious riches he may strengthen you with power through his Spirit in your inner being, <sup>17</sup> so that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith. And I pray that you, being rooted and established in love, <sup>18</sup> may have power, together with all the saints, to grasp how wide and long and high and deep is the love of Christ, <sup>19</sup> and to know this love that surpasses knowledge--that you may be filled to the measure of all the fullness of God.**

**Philemon 1:4 I always thank my God as I remember you in my prayers, <sup>5</sup> because I hear about your faith in the Lord Jesus and your love for all the saints. <sup>6</sup> I pray that you may be active in sharing your faith, so that you will have a full understanding of every good thing we have in Christ.**

This few examples of intercessory prayers that the Apostle Paul recorded is just a fraction of the whole intercessory prayer he prayed, but it is more than enough to reveal to us that Intercessory prayer is a prayer that thinks not of self but of others. Its focus is not its own interest but the interest of others. Its concern is the welfare of others and not itself; its desire is to seek the progress of others more than its own progress.

- ❖ **Intercessory prayer is the prayer that enables us to move into the realm of “Pray with out ceasing”.** This gives substance to long prayers. This is because there’s a lot of people around us as well as people all over the world that needs our prayers.

## II. TWO LEVELS OF INTERCESSORY PRAYER

- **Regular Level.** This is the daily prayer we do as we pray for others. In this kind of intercessory prayer, our knowledge of the person we are praying for is based on the information we receive from the person himself or from others who knew the person. The good thing about this is that, we can pray this kind of intercessory prayer whenever you want to, wherever you want to because you have something to pray for. This is mentioned in our text when it says,

*1 Timothy 2:1 I urge, then, first of all, that requests, prayers, intercession and thanksgiving be made for everyone-- 2 for kings and all those in authority, that we may live peaceful and quiet lives in all godliness and holiness.*

- **Revelation knowledge Level.** This is the level of Intercessory prayer where the intercessor is given by the Holy Spirit revelation knowledge of who to pray and what to pray. In this level the intercessor can only interceded if there is prompting from the Holy Spirit.

This kind of intercessory prayer is critical because failure to do it means victory for the enemy. On the other hand once it is done, victory is also certain, God's provision and protection is served to the recipient.

Few years ago, one of the Elders of the Church I pastored then brought me every Saturday to his factory to teach the word of God to his factory workers. One morning He picked me up with his car at about eight o'clock, it was cloudy, windy, and the road was slippery due to the rain that was on and off. There was not much car on the road so we were traveling with a very comfortable speed. In front of us was a jeep but we kept a legal distance from it. Then for some unknown reason, the hood of the jeep flew open and got stuck to the front windshield forcing the driver to slam the break bringing the jeep to an

abrupt stop right in front of us. Seeing what happened, the Elder responded quickly but the car was skidding fast towards the jeep. I have no doubt in my heart then that we are going to hit that jeep real bad.

But for some unknown reason, as we were about to hit the jeep I could still remember clearly, I felt a sudden force taking control of the car making it stop a couple of feet away from the jeep.

Few days after the incident, a sister in the Lord came to our house and asked me if I was struggling with something that morning referring to the day of the incident. I asked her why she asked that question. She said, because she felt a burden in her heart to pray for me that particular morning. When I told her about the narrowly missed accident she understood why God gave her a revelation to pray for me that morning. **Her intercession prevented the accident from happening.**

Oct. 10, 2006 10:30 PM, I received a call from my wife that she was at the corner of Tacoma Mall Boulevard and S 56<sup>th</sup> St., she just had an accident. I rushed into the scene, called 911 and asked for a police officer to investigate the accident. The right fender, bumper, and signal light of the van were damaged. My wife was shaken but she was okay.

My daily routine after I brought my son to school is to spend time in the word and in intercessory prayer, for my family, the church, and for other concerns. But that particular morning, after spending time with the word, and started praying, there was a sudden rush of sleepiness, making me feel like I had not slept for several days and my body was just shutting down, and I was helpless to resist it. Instead of continuing to pray, I gave in to slumber and deeply fell asleep. Few hours later, I woke up and there were many things to do so instead of going back to prayer, I got up and started doing the things I need to do. Throughout that day I felt an urging to settle down and pray but I have so many

things to do and I just ignored it until it stops and have forgotten about it. I only remembered it after my wife's call came. Had I spent the time to pray instead of doing other things, the accident would have been prevented.

### **III. BENEFITS OF INTERCESSORY PRAYER.**

***Romans 8:38 For I am convinced that neither death nor life, neither angels nor demons, neither the present nor the future, nor any powers, <sup>39</sup> neither height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God that is in Christ Jesus our Lord.***

Nobody can separate us from the love of God because of the intercession of the Holy Spirit and Jesus Christ. ***Romans 8:26-27; Romans 8:38-39***

- ❖ When we pray the intercessory prayer, our text says that we will experience peaceful and quiet lives in all godliness and holiness. Not only that this would also result to the salvation of individuals we are praying for.

Hudson Taylor J. Hudson Taylor (1832-1905) was an English missionary to China, founded the China Inland Mission which at his death included 205 mission stations with over 800 missionaries, and 125,000 Chinese Christians.

Eighteen-year-old Hudson Taylor wandered into his father's library and read a gospel tract. He couldn't shake off its message. Finally, falling to his knees, he accepted Christ as his Savior. Later, his mother, who had been away, returned home. When Hudson told her the good news, she said, "I already know. Ten days ago, the very date on which you tell me you read that tract, I spent the entire afternoon in prayer for you until the Lord assured me that my wayward son had been brought into the fold." [***Our Daily Bread, July 19, 1989***]

❖ When we pray intercessory prayer, we literally take part on the present work of Jesus Christ and the Holy Spirit. And this pleases God moving Him to bless us as well.

### **Difference between hell and heaven**

Both places have banquet tables filled with delicious food. Each person is given five feet spoon and fork to use. People in heaven are happy and healthy while people in hell are sad and malnourished. The reason, People in heaven used the five feet spoon and fork to feed one another while people in hell they refused to feed others.

***Proverbs 11:25 A generous man will prosper; he who refreshes others will himself be refreshed.***

## **IV. CONCLUSION**

Story of two intercessors, one working for the devil, while another one working for God.

**First Story:** A Christian leader—we'll call him Steve —was traveling recently by plane. He noticed that the man sitting two seats over was thumbing through some little cards and moving his lips. The man looked professorial with his goatee and graying brown hair, and Steve placed him at fifty-something. Guessing the man was a fellow-believer Steve leaned over to engage him in a conversation. He said "Looks to me like you're memorizing something," The man replied, "No, actually I was praying," Steve, said. "I too believe in prayer," the man said. "Well, I have a specific assignment," "What's that?" Steve asked. The man replied, "I'm praying for the downfall of Christian pastors." Steve said "I would certainly fit into that category," "Is my name on the list?" the man replied "Not on my list". ***Common Ground, Vol. 10, No. 7***

The question here is; is this demonic intercession working effectively against the Church? I don't know, but here is a very alarming and frightening statistics on the condition of pastors in North America.



## CRISIS IN LEADERSHIP

*The following statistics are from across denominational lines and have been gleaned from various sources, such as Pastor to Pastor, Focus on the Family, Ministries Today, Charisma Magazine, TNT Ministries, and a few other respected ministries.)*

- ❖ Fifteen hundred pastors leave the ministry each month due to moral failure, spiritual burnout, or contention in their church.
- ❖ Four thousand new churches begin each year, but over 7,000 churches will close a net loss of 3000 churches.
- ❖ Seventy percent of pastors constantly fight depression.
- ❖ Eighty percent of pastors and 84% of their spouses feel unqualified and discouraged in their role as pastors.
- ❖ Ninety-five percent of pastors do not regularly pray with their spouse. Eighty percent of seminary and Bible school graduates who enter the ministry will leave the ministry within the first 5 years.

**Second Story:** While very ill, John Knox, the founder of the Presbyterian Church in Scotland, called to his wife and said, “Read me that Scripture where I first cast my anchor.” After he listened to the beautiful prayer of Jesus recorded in John 17, he seemed to forget his weakness. He began to pray, interceding earnestly for his fellowmen. He prayed for the ungodly who had thus far rejected the gospel. He pleaded in behalf of people who had been recently converted. And he requested protection for the Lord’s servants, many of whom were facing persecution. As Knox prayed, his spirit went home to be with the Lord. The man of whom Queen Mary had said, “I fear his prayers more than I do the armies of my enemies,” ministered through INTERCESSORY prayer until the moment of his death.

We are living in a perilous times and the church needs an army of intercessors more than before. May you will be challenged to enlist into God’s army of intercessors.