

INTERCESSORY PRAYER

Be earnest and unwearied and steadfast in your prayer [life], being [both] alert and intent in [your praying] with thanksgiving. (Colossians 4:2 AMPC)

Intercessory prayer is a conduit of God's mercy and grace. As we pray for others, we grow in compassion, patience, and humility, learning to love one another as we love ourselves.

CALLED TO PRAY

Intercessory prayer is a call to grow in selflessness as we learn to sacrifice our time and energy on behalf of another, praying not only for those we love but also for those who mistreat us. (Luke 6:27)

- What does it cost to pray for someone without ceasing?
- Are we tempted to give up when we see no immediate change?
- Do we heed the Spirit's call to continue?
- What does it mean to be brought before the throne of God?

FOUR KEYS OF INTERCESSORY PRAYER

Praying for others always costs us something—time, energy, forgiveness, selflessness, or vulnerability. Yet we have the greatest example possible—Jesus. He prayed to the point of sweating blood, wrestling with the greatest possible sacrifice, His life. He prayed for all—those He enjoyed spending time with and those who callously and boldly mistreated Him. We are called to pray for others. It is a costly calling with eternal significance.

Today, we are called to:

- LISTEN without judgment or agenda
- REMEMBER that we are all broken people
- ALLOW God to work in and through us
- WILLINGLY SACRIFICE time and energy to pray for others

BIBLICAL INTERCESSORS

Scripture is filled with intercessors:

- **Abraham** prayed fervently for the people of Sodom. (Genesis 18:23-33)
- **Jacob** prayed unrelentingly as he wrestled with God, refusing to let go until he received a blessing. (Genesis 32:22-32)
- **Moses** prayed relentlessly for the people of Israel. (Exodus 32:31; Deuteronomy 9:25-29)
- **Hannah** pleaded unceasingly to the Lord for a son. (1 Samuel 1:10-11)
- **Solomon** prayed earnestly for wisdom. (1 Kings 3:5-14)
- **Elijah** prayed fervently for rain. (1 Kings 18:41-46)
- **Nehemiah** wept, mourned, fasted, and prayed persistently for Jerusalem. (Nehemiah 1:2-1)
- **David** prayed resolutely for the LORD to hear his cry (Psalm 40:1)
- **Jeremiah** called for neighbors to pray for neighbors. (Jeremiah 29:7)
- **Daniel** prayed intently for his people. (Daniel 9:1-19)
- **Anna** (the prophetess) prayed tenaciously for the redemption of Jerusalem. (Luke 18:1-8)
- **Peter** interceded for Dorcas, and God raised her from the dead. (Acts 9:36-41)
- **Paul** prayed for the people he served. (Romans 1:9-10; 10:1; Ephesians 1:15-23; Philippians 1:3-19; 1 Thessalonians 3:9-13)
- **Paul** encouraged Timothy to pray for others, especially leaders. (1 Timothy 2:1-2)
- **The early Christians** prayed for each other. (James 5:14-16)

QUESTIONS FOR REFLECTION

- What moves you to pray for others?
- Do your prayers deepen your love for those you pray for?
- How often do you pray for difficult people?
- Do you grow in compassion as you pray, especially for those who hurt you?
- Do you grow in patience when God doesn't seem to move in someone's life?
- Do you recognize God's call to sacrifice time and energy on behalf of others?
- Who can you pray for right now?

"If we are true intercessors, we must be ready to take part in God's work on behalf of the people for whom we pray." (Corrie Ten Boom)