

"What is intercessory prayer?"

Intercessory prayer is the act of praying on behalf of others. Standing in the gap as it would be for another person or issue.

An intercessor is one who takes the place of another or pleads another's case. One study Bible defines intercession as "holy, believing, persevering prayer whereby someone pleads with God on behalf of another or others who desperately need God's intervention."

The role of mediator in prayer was prevalent in the Old Testament, as seen in the cases of Abraham, Moses, David, Samuel, Hezekiah, Elijah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, and Daniel.

A wonderful model of intercessory prayer is found in Daniel 9. It has all the elements of true intercessory prayer. It is in response to the Word (v. 2); characterized by fervency (v. 3) and self-denial (v. 4); identified unselfishly with God's people (v. 5); strengthened by confession (vs. 5-15); dependent on God's character (vs. 4, 7, 9, 15); and has as its goal God's glory (vs. 16-19).

Like Daniel, Christians are to come to God on behalf of others in a heartbroken and repentant attitude, recognizing their own unworthiness and with a sense of self-denial.

Daniel does not say, "I have a right to demand this out of You, God, because I am one of your special, chosen intercessors." He says, "I'm a sinner," and, in effect, "I do not have a right to demand anything."

Christ is pictured in the New Testament as the ultimate intercessor, and because of this, all Christian prayer becomes intercession since it is offered to God through and by Christ. Jesus closed the gap between us and God when He died on the cross. Because of Jesus' mediation, we can now intercede in prayer on behalf of other Christians or for the lost, asking God to grant their requests according to His will.

"For there is one God and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus." 1 Timothy 2:5.

"Who is he that condemns? Christ Jesus, who died—more than that, who was raised to life—is at the right hand of God and is also interceding for us."
Romans 8:34.

Consequently, he is able to save to the uttermost those who draw near to God through him, since he always lives to make intercession for them. Hebrews 7:25

True intercessory prayer seeks not only to know God's will and see it fulfilled, but to see it fulfilled whether or not it benefits us and regardless of what it costs us. True intercessory prayer seeks God's glory, not our own.

The following is only a partial list of those for whom we are to offer intercessory prayers:

All in authority- 1 Timothy 2:2,
for kings and all who are in high positions, that we may lead a peaceful and quiet life, godly and dignified in every way.;

Ministers - Philippians 1:19,
Yes, and I will rejoice, for I know that through your prayers and the help of the Spirit of Jesus Christ this will turn out for my deliverance,;

Jerusalem - Psalm 122:6, *Pray for the peace of Jerusalem!*
May they be secure who love you!;

Friends - Job 42:8
Now therefore take seven bulls and seven rams and go to my servant Job and offer up a burnt offering for yourselves. And my servant Job shall pray for you, for I will accept his prayer not to deal with you according to your folly. For you have not spoken of me what is right, as my servant Job has.";

Fellow countrymen ([Romans 10:1](#))
Brothers, my heart's desire and prayer to God for them is that they may be saved;

The sick ([James 5:14](#))

Is anyone among you sick? Let him call for the elders of the church, and let them pray over him, anointing him with oil in the name of the Lord;

Enemies ([Jeremiah 29:7](#))

But seek the welfare of the city where I have sent you into exile, and pray to the LORD on its behalf, for in its welfare you will find your welfare.

Those who persecute us ([Matthew 5:44](#))

But I say to you, Love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you,;

Those who forsake us ([2 Timothy 4:16](#))

At my first defense no one came to stand by me, but all deserted me. May it not be charged against them!;

And all men ([1 Timothy 2:1](#))

First of all, then, I urge that supplications, prayers, intercessions, and thanksgivings be made for all people, .

Unfortunately, there is an erroneous idea in contemporary Christianity that those who offer up intercessory prayers are a special class of “super-Christians,” called by God to a specific ministry of intercession. The Bible is clear that *all* Christians are called to be intercessors. All Christians have the Holy Spirit in their hearts and, just as He intercedes for us in accordance with God’s will, we are to intercede for one another.

([Romans 8:26-27](#))

Likewise the Spirit helps us in our weakness. For we do not know what to pray for as we ought, but the Spirit himself intercedes for us with groanings too deep for words. ²⁷ And he who searches hearts knows what is the mind of the Spirit, because the Spirit intercedes for the saints according to the will of God.

This is not a privilege limited to a special, exclusive, Christian elite group; this is the command to all. In fact, not to intercede for others is sin. “As for me, far be it from me that I should sin against the LORD by failing to pray for you” ([1 Samuel 12:23](#)).

Certainly Peter and Paul, when asking others to intercede for them, did not limit their request to those with a special calling to intercession. "*So Peter was kept in prison, but the church was earnestly praying to God for him*" ([Acts 12:5](#)). Notice it was the whole church that prayed for him, not just those with a gift of intercession.

In [Ephesians 6:16-18](#), Paul exhorts the Ephesian believers—all of them—on the fundamentals of the Christian life, which includes intercession "*on all occasions with all kinds of prayers and requests.*" Clearly, intercessory prayer is part of the Christian life for all believers.

Further, Paul sought prayer on his behalf from all the Roman believers in [Romans 15:30](#)

*I appeal to you, brothers, by our Lord Jesus Christ and by the love of the Spirit, to
strive together with me in your prayers to God on my behalf,.*

He also urged the Colossians to intercede for him in [Colossians 4:2-4](#)
Continue steadfastly in prayer, being watchful in it with thanksgiving. ³ *At the same time, pray also for us, that God may open to us a door for the word, to declare the mystery of Christ, on account of which I am in prison—*
⁴ *that I may make it clear, which is how I ought to speak.*

Nowhere in any biblical request for intercession is there any indication that only a certain group of people could intercede. On the contrary, those who seek others to intercede for them can use all the help they can get! The idea that intercession is the privilege and calling of only some Christians is without biblical basis. Worse, it is a destructive idea that often leads to pride and a sense of superiority.

God calls all Christians to be intercessors. It is God's desire that every believer be active in intercessory prayer. What a wonderful and exalted privilege we have in being able to come boldly before the throne of Almighty God with our prayers and requests!

TEN KEYS TO POWERFUL INTERCESSION FOR OTHERS

Powerful and effective intercession is the result of believers learning, and living, the principles of faith, obedience, and righteousness. Consider these ten qualities as you stand in the gap for others and position your heart and mind to see powerful and lasting impact.

1. Come in Relationship

Draw near to God, and he will draw near to you. (James 4:8a).

Prayer is first and foremost relating to our Heavenly Father. It is from our position as His son or daughter that we talk with Him, meditate on His Word, and interact with His work on earth. Though there is a place for warfare and intercession, our first priority should always be to fellowship with the Father.

2. Come in Love

Above all, keep loving one another earnestly, since love covers a multitude of sins. (1 Peter 4:8).

We cannot pray effectively or have any spiritual authority concerning anyone we do not love as God does. It is the love of the Father that provides the needed perspective to pray for those who do not know Him or cannot see Him. We may not like what others do or agree with their decisions, but God's heart for them is unchanging and is always redemptive.

The Lord is not slow to fulfill his promise as some count slowness, but is patient toward you not wishing that any should perish, but that all should reach repentance. (2 Peter 3:9)

3. Come in Faith

And without faith it is impossible to please him, for whoever would draw near to God must believe that he exists and that he rewards those who seek him. (Hebrews 11:6).

Faith comes by reading, listening to, and embracing His Word. It comes as we worship and praise Him. It grows as we focus our heart and attention on what He has already accomplished in our lives. Getting rid of anxiety or fear and nurture a faith that is unshakeable, enabling effective intercessors to move mountains and displace strongholds.

4. Come in Obedience

If you abide in me, and my words abide in you, ask whatever you wish, and it will be done for you. (John 15:7).

The fruit of our prayers is often determined by our own walk of obedience to His Word. He will entrust spiritual authority to those who follow through with His commands. Effective intercessors determine to walk in personal obedience and pray from that place of total surrender to His will and purpose.

5. Pray with proper authority

I will no longer talk much with you, for the ruler of this world is coming. He has no claim on me (John 14:30).

In the days of his flesh, Jesus offered up prayers and supplications, with loud cries and tears, to him who was able to save him from death, and he was heard because of his reverence. (Hebrews 5:7).

Jesus had authority over the enemy because there was nothing the accuser could bring against Him in the Courts of Heaven. Because Jesus was in submission to His Father and was free of sin and compromise, He had legal authority over the evil one. Intercession has enhanced power when one is submitted to God's appointed spiritual authorities, both in Heaven as well as on earth.

6. Pray for Holiness

Strive for peace with everyone, and for the holiness without which no one will see the Lord. (Hebrews 12:14).

Jesus is preparing for Himself a Bride that is without spot or wrinkle. His goal is to make us holy so that we might truly see Him and know Him. This may involve pruning and discipline, but we can pray with the assurance of His redemptive purpose in setting apart a people to display His glory and shatter the darkness.

7. Pray for the Heart

The good person out of the good treasure of his heart produces good, and the evil person out of his evil treasure produces evil, for out of the abundance of the heart his mouth speaks. (Luke 6:45).

Ultimately, any sin issue is a heart issue. As we intercede for those struggling in sin and darkness, effective prayers will go straight to the heart, asking that it would be hungry and thirsty for Truth. Praying for this deep region of the soul can bring the Father's healing touch and convert even the hardest of hearts.

8. Pray for Truth

But when the Helper comes, whom I will send to you from the Father, the Spirit of truth, who proceeds from the Father, he will bear witness about me. (John 15:26).

Truth is what sets the heart free. People are held captive by the Father of Lies. Lack of information and ignorance of God's Word can be displaced when we pray for accurate facts and a clear presentation of Truth. Jesus is the Living Word that reveals the Heavenly Father's heart to those searching for answers.

9. Pray for Right Agreements

This is the third time I am coming to you. Every charge must be established by the evidence of two or three witnesses. (2 Corinthians 13:1).

There is power in agreement. Our spiritual adversary knows this and works to unite the ungodly in order to accomplish his plans. Godly prayers work when believers come into oneness of heart and spirit, in order to resist the enemy's schemes, and stand firm in God's righteous purposes. Spiritual power is multiplied where God finds agreement as seen in Matthew 18:19, *Again I say to you, if two of you agree on earth about anything they ask, it will be done for them by my Father in heaven.*

10. Pray for Tangible Evidence

And my speech and my message were not in plausible words of wisdom, but in demonstration of the Spirit and of power, (1 Corinthians 2:4).

Many who are lost and wandering are looking for evidence of a loving God. The church was birthed in signs, wonders, and miracles, in order to display God's power and love to those who were truly seeking. Effective intercessors believe that the power of God's love should be experienced in personal and tangible ways. Prayers are offered with great expectation in a supernatural God who moves in love and power to give hope to a dying world. John 14:12 Jesus tells us that, *"Truly, truly, I say to you, whoever*

believes in me will also do the works that I do; and greater works than these will he do, because I am going to the Father.

A Sample of Intercessory Prayer

This is a prayer that we can pray each day for the Holy Spirit to empower and enlighten us.

“Ephesians 1:17–19 (ESV):

17) that the God of (my/our) Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give (me/us) the Spirit of wisdom and of revelation in the knowledge of Him,

18) having the eyes of (my/our) heart(s) enlightened, that (I/we) may know what is the hope to which He has called (me/us), what are the riches of His glorious inheritance in the saints,

19) and what is the immeasurable greatness of His power toward (me/us) who believe, according to the working of His great might.”

I/We need the Spirit of wisdom and revelation to open my/our eyes to all that I/we have in Christ and to this great reality of the power of intercession!

Example Intercessory Prayer

Father, I/we come to You today and thank You for the privilege of praying for others. I/We have been the recipient of other’s prayers so often, I/we understand how powerful intercessory prayer can be. I/We ask You first to cleanse my/our heart(s) and show me/us if there is any unconfessed sin in my/our own life/lives so that my/our prayers for others will not be hindered. I/We thank You that through the name of Your son, Jesus Christ, I/we can come boldly before You and pray with confidence, according to Your will and know that You hear me/us.

I/We lift up those in my/our neighborhood, in my/our city, and in my/our church. Begin with those who follow You and help them influence others for good. Let them be salt and light, pointing others to You. Deepen their love for You and for the people around them. Guard them from hypocrisy or from giving in to temptations that could harm the cause of Christ. Raise up leaders who will serve You faithfully at all costs. Turn the hearts of fathers toward their children, and families toward You. Help them to exemplify Your

values and make them bold in their faith. Strengthen my/our own family, and those closest to me/us, Lord. May my/our love for You help me/us to love and forgive others and make a difference in my/our world.

I/We pray for teachers, for students, and for all those in authority and leadership, both locally and throughout the world. Give them Your mind and surround them with godly counselors who will exercise integrity and work for justice, morality, and freedom. Help them to esteem You, not dismiss You. Send revival, Lord.

I/We pray for the lost, the hurting, the lonely, the sick, the bereaved, and those who are imprisoned—behind both visible and invisible walls. Send Your comfort, Your peace, and Your calming presence to those who are without hope. Protect the defenseless and hold them close to Your heart. I/We pray for laborers to tell the good news of Jesus to people around our world. Father, my/our heart(s) cries out for persecuted believers, too. Make them brave and give them Your powerful protection. I/We pray You will bring swift justice to those who want to destroy the innocent and those who carry Your name. Bind the power of Satan and strengthen believers everywhere.

So many needs, Father, but you are adequate for every need. Your name is powerful, and Your power is great. So, it is in Jesus' name that I/we pray—and believe.

Amen