

# Intercessory Prayer

Anthony Kim

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Good evening everyone. We are going to go ahead and start for this evening's time with God's word. As always before we begin, let's go to the Lord in prayer.

Father, we thank you for this opportunity to come before you that we can receive from you, Lord, spiritual nourishment from your word and strength from your Holy Spirit. Lord, I thank you that you are a God that deeply cares for us not only for our own lives but the lives of those around us.

Lord as I will be speaking on intercessory prayer I pray father that you would guide my lips you would strengthen my soul that your message will come forth with unction and power and transforming lives here for your glory and for your honor. I pray father that Christ would be exalted from this pulpit as I give forth this message. We thank you for all the blessings that will be received in Jesus' name. Amen.

This evening we'll be concluding our discipleship session as far as the sessions that were provided by our missionary pastor Samuel Ry. This is the last topic that he has for us in his book just to kind of go over what we have been going over. We went over the glory of God or rather to glorify God. The second was foundation on the word of God. Third was a life of repentance. Fourth was walking in faith. Fifth water baptism. Six, knowing the attributes of God. Number seven, a life of praise and worship. Number eight, living a prayerful life. Number nine, praying and fasting. And then tonight, intercessory prayer.

So just on this topic of intercessory prayer, I want us to look at the big picture and just kind of look to the world's situation. We can look around and see still there are wars, there's rumors of wars, there's earthquakes, tornadoes, there's in a political realm there's all sorts of confusion and tension. Economically there are good economies and bad economies and everything in between. And then if you just look at our own nation the strife between political sides we have our own economic problems with its inflation and corroding of the middle class. We see the greater divide amongst the rich and the poor.

Now, let's just dial in into our local community here in Monrovia, in the San Gabriel Valley. There's still many people that don't attend church. There's still people that live godless lives. Look at your own local community. Do you ever think about again what is happening on a global scale but on a micro scale? There is always something going on and by default we don't want to go there. We want to just think about our own little world

and think about our problems and our protection, our difficulties. And we often forget like I just did right now, what is happening in the world? What is happening in our own nation? What is happening in our local community?

Because you'll find it doesn't take very long to find what is broken. And that's the idea is we got to understand the human condition as a whole is broken. It's broken. And we know as Christians why things are broken. And I will explain, but you already know what it is. We see the fractured homes. We see the divorce rate increasing, not decreasing. We see more fatherless homes. We see that in the brokenness. We see confusion taught in public education and it's getting worse and worse. It's not getting better. We see a culture that is constantly drifting further and further away from the heart of God. Just want to do their own thing. That's the impulse of a sinful heart.

And then with all of this going on, there is something happening on a massive scale which is something beyond just our world. There is a gaping chasm which is impossible to pass between a holy God and us as humanity. And now I'm going to explain and you already know the answer. It's due to sin. That is the reason why what I just explained what's happening in the world, what's happening in our nation, what's happening in our local communities and within our own homes even is because due to sin. That's what it is. That's why there is this massive chasm that causes the brokenness, the fracturedness, the confusion, the drifting away is due to sin.

And so the question for us as a church family is this. What are we going to do about it? What are we going to do about it? Do we sit back and just criticize? Because that's the default. The default is to just criticize or do we do what God has called us to do. There are only two options here. We join the crowd and just follow the crowd or we do what God has called us to do as Christians.

So what is it then that God has called us to do? It is intercessory prayer. Intercessory prayer. So, I'm going to dive deep into this sacred life-changing spiritual work, not only for the intercessor, but for those you're interceding. It's a powerful life-changing spiritual work that we have been called as every believers to be an intercessor. And I'll show you in the various text we're going to be walking through. You see, God is actively looking for men and women who will step out of their own comfort zones and stand directly in the gap. That is what he's calling us to be to stand in the gap.

So then the first question is what is intercession? You may ask what is intercession? To understand our calling, we have to understand what intercession actually means. So, if you will go ahead and turn with me to Ezekiel 22, and we're going to be in verse 30. Ezekiel 22:30. And here we're going to look at what an intercessor is.

Ezekiel 22:30. God's word says this. And I sought for a man among them that should make up the hedge and stand in the gap before me for the land that I should not destroy it. But I found none.

So here I want us to just dive into the word hedge. Hedge here just simply means a wall. And a wall primarily in ancient days or ancient times would be a primary defense of a city. The wall would separate the enemy from the inside. If a wall had been crumbled, well, enemy comes in. In this case, what God was saying to Ezekiel was that the walls have been fallen. It was due to the people's sins. Another way of putting it, God's protection was being removed because of sin entering in. And then he asks to someone to stand in the gap or act as an intercessor. That's what stand in the gap means. Who would stand before me for the land that he would not destroy that God would not destroy it. But he says, I found none.

So that's the text. Now I want to explain a little bit more about this. So literally what intercession means is standing in between. As I mentioned, in order for the enemy to come in, they will need to find a collapsed wall or some hole in the wall. That was the only way the enemy can advance. And so God was looking for individual to intercede because that was going to happen. Step between his righteous judgment due to sin and the idea was to stand in the gap is to plead for mercy. That is what an intercessor does to plead for mercy. Lord, don't send your judgment. Don't send your judgment.

See, because we know at the backdrop Romans 3:23, what does it say? All have sinned and come short of the glory of God. Sin creates that chasm between a holy God and fallen man. Left to ourselves, we can never cross that chasm. And we know from other parts of the text that he doesn't want this to be the case that there would just be a chasm, a gap permanently. We know texts like 1 Timothy 2:3-4. For this is good and acceptable in the sight of God, our savior, who will have all men to be saved and to come unto the knowledge of the truth. We also know texts like 2 Peter 3:9, The Lord is not slack concerning his promise as some men count slackness, but is long-suffering to usward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance. That word slack means to delay concerning his promise would be the second coming of Christ. And some men count slackness. Why is he delaying it? Well, because God is long-suffering toward us, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance.

The idea is he wants as many people to be saved before the second coming of Christ because it's too late then. So, it's abundantly clear in just these two texts that God desires all people to be saved. And how does he then execute the rescue, pleading for mercy, the judgment not to fall, he uses intercessors to pray between God's righteous judgment and sinful people. So pleading for mercy.

So here's the thing. Ezekiel 22:30 when he says, I have none, it's referring to the only person that can stand a gap. Truly is who? The Lord Jesus Christ. He is the ultimate fulfillment of Ezekiel 22:30. Only Jesus Christ became the man who stood in the breach to reconcile sinful people to God. As Isaiah 53:12 says, Therefore will I divide him a portion with the great, and he shall divide the spoil with the strong, because he hath poured out his soul unto death. And he was numbered with the transgressors. And he bear the sin of many, and made intercession for the transgressors.

If you look there in the text in the first portion of the scripture where he starts off with therefore and ends with the strong. This is the imagery of a conquering king returning from battle. You'll notice this repeated in the Old Testament. Whenever victory was won, you would go and divide up the spoil. You would take those things and that's how the Israelites continued to advance. Here it's talking about the Lord Jesus Christ as the conquering king returning from battle. He won. And then we see because he hath poured out his soul into death. That's how he won. The sacrifice willingness to pay the penalty for sin. And then it says, And he was numbered with the transgressors. Here is the identification with sinners. We as transgressors despite of Christ's innocence. He had no sin in him. He was numbered with us. The Lord Jesus was counted among criminals. Another way of putting it. And we know this because in the crucifixion, he was between two criminals. Two thieves. And then it says in the verse, And he bear the sin of many and made intercession for the transgressors. What this part of the text means is he took on the punishment for sin as our mediator between sinful man and God.

So that's Isaiah 53:12. He is the one, the ultimate fulfillment of Ezekiel 22:30. Now I want you to turn over to 2 Corinthians 5:21. 2 Corinthians 5:21. And here it's a very rich passage explaining a little bit more into Isaiah 53:12. This text reads, For he hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin, that we might be made the righteousness of God in him. Here many scholars call this the great exchange. What does that mean? It means that he is the one that bridged the gap between the sinful people, us as sinners and a holy God. Now, he became sin on our behalf. So, that's one part of the great exchange and it was done legally. He took our place. That's what the legal part of it means. He took our place as the sinner. And then by doing so, God no longer views us sinful or guilty before him. So instead, legally, all our sins were paid for. That was a legal transaction. And then in place, we were given a perfect record as if we've never sinned at all. A perfect record. And that we did not earn. That's why it's the great exchange. It was done completely by grace. Completely by grace. We did not earn it. We did not receive this restoration. We didn't receive this peaceful relationship with God except by what Jesus Christ had done for us.

He took our sin. He stood in the ultimate gap between God's judgment and our guilt. And it was done on his own body. The ultimate punishment. A lot of times I think about what

he experienced on the cross that will bring the love of Christ very quick to your heart. It will bring grace and mercy flowing back to your life. Just think about what he has done for you as a believer. The great exchange. There is no greater thing that a friend has done for us than laying down his life.

Today, the salvation that Jesus bought on the cross is carried to our hearts as believers or others that they may also come to know the Lord Jesus Christ by our intercessory prayers. This is our connection. 1 Peter 2. Go to 1 Peter 2 and we're going to look at verse 5 and 9. 1 Peter 2:5 and 9.

So beginning in verse five, it reads, Ye also, as living stones are built up a spiritual house, an holy priesthood to offer up spiritual sacrifices. So here we see the word holy priesthood. And what are we offering up? Spiritual sacrifices. So instead of animal sacrifices which was the old covenant, we are now offering up spiritual sacrifices. And what is that? It's our prayers. It's our praise and our intercession. We are surrendering our lives to intercede for others. And then he says there in the text, acceptable to God by Jesus Christ. This is acceptable to God. This is what is acceptable to God to be a holy priesthood and to offer up spiritual sacrifices.

And then verse nine says, You are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood and holy nation, a peculiar people that ye should show forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvelous light. It is rich. First, I want us to look at the word royal priesthood. In ancient Israel, only specific priests could enter into the presence of God. Now, every believer in the Lord Jesus Christ is given direct access to God. Direct access to God. And then we are holy nation here. It is an outward focused nation. It's not all about us. It's about others. It's an outward focus, a holy nation. He wants you to think you're not just this one priest. You're not just this one believer, but you are part of a holy nation represented as a nation. Outward. That's what it means. Outward focused. Not just one but you're many. We have many believers in this room. We have many believers all around the world. And then he says a peculiar people. This word peculiar means purchased. And we know whom we've been purchased by. We've been bought with the price. The blood of Jesus Christ. And then he says that you should show forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvelous light. And what is darkness at the root of it? It's ungodliness. Meaning rejecting God and his word and everything he asks us to do. And then it's living in immorality. It's doing everything that is ungodly which leads to immorality. And then it's in his marvelous light which is what light does? It reflects. Darkness attracts inwardly. Light projects out. So you see how it connects with the holy nation outward focused this light. And what are we reflecting? His truth. We're reflecting his truth in our lives. That's what it means.

So God desires us to stand in the gap of our neighbors. So Ezekiel 22:30 is I search for the one who could stand in the gap. See, this is only fulfilled because of what Jesus has done. In him we get to stand in the gap. If it was left to us, we would not be able to do it because we're in him. We can do this. We are now priests. We can now intercede for people because of what Christ has done for us.

So, who are you standing in the gap for is a question to ask yourself. Who are you standing in the gap for? Because intercession means moving past just bless me, protect me, feed me. We are no longer inward focused brothers and sisters. We are outward focused. It doesn't stay with us. Prayers and starting to pray for the lost, the broken, the wandering. Think of your community again, our nation, our world. There's so much we can intercede for.

So this week, think about just one person in your life who does not know Christ and commit to standing in the gap for their soul. We have to constantly remind ourselves why there's problems in the world. It's because of sin. That's the problem. And the only answer is Christ. We know that. And how does he bridge the two? He uses us. He uses us to intercede for others.

So, how do we intercede for others? There are examples of this and we're going to look at two men. We're going to look at Moses and Joshua. This is how an effective intercessor can intercede for others. We're not going to read the whole text, but if you would like to go ahead and look at Exodus chapter 32 and we're going to look at verses 1 and 14, extracting the key parts to how to intercede for others. What you will find in Exodus 32 is Moses up on the mountain getting the law. He's getting the instructions from the Lord. The people down below descend into gross idolatry. They build a golden calf which represents fundamentally sin. Replacing the invisible with the visible. The difference between invisible and visible is faith. They no longer wanted to have faith in God. So they put in place of the invisible God the idolatry of a golden calf. And what is at the heart of no faith is they wanted to see and they wanted to control. But when it comes to God, you can't see him. And we have no control. But that's the fundamental part of sin. We want to see it and we want to control it. That's why we need faith. We need constantly faith to look at the invisible, the unseen which is eternal.

So why did they choose a golden calf? Well, let's just go back a step and go back to what they came out from. They came out from Egypt. And in Egypt, the Israelites were influenced by their idols. And bulls and calves, which they symbolized as strength, fertility, and power. They wanted control of strength, of fertility, and power.

So the text points to three tragic realities of idolatry. Verses 1 to 4 as we see the Israelites falling into foolishness by putting idolatry. The tragedy is foolishness. It makes people

foolish. Instead of worshiping the creator, they worship the creation. What is at the heart of worship then? It's the all-encompassing response to who God is and what he has done. And what do we do in response? We obey him. And by submission to him, he pours out his love to us in our worship. He pours out to us his grace. He pours out his mercy to us.

You see the immediate failure of the people here, the Israelites, is they weren't worshiping God anymore. They were ultimately worshiping a false god. So that's what idolatry leads to is a false god. We got to be very careful with this. It is very easy to fall into this foolishness. Next verse five as we see from foolishness to confusion. The people try to celebrate unto the Lord. They thought they were celebrating unto the Lord while simultaneously bowing down to an idol. The confusion they actually thought they were bowing to God. You see the calf represented God who delivered them from Egypt. But they were doing it in a pagan way. They were just following exactly what the Egyptians did with their idol worship.

So then it progresses from foolishness to confusion to verse 7 the perversity and pride of the Israelites. Idolatry makes people stiff necked and arrogant against God. What is stiff necked? I don't want to bow down to the true and only God. What is arrogance?

Arrogance is simply the antithesis of humility which is inflating self worth, sense of importance and self-sufficiency. So they were falling into these two areas. But they also include here perversely which is living impurely which is they were mixing idol worship with worshiping God they thought and that is a dangerous place to be. One example of perversity is I am a married man. It would be ridiculous to tell my wife, I love you, but I also love other women just as I do you. That's what they were doing. I love you, God, but I love them just as much as love you. It sounds ridiculous, but yet that's what they were doing. That's what perversity is. That's where perverseness leads to.

And you say, Well, that can't happen to me. That's a sign of it might be creeping in because you see God's righteous anger burns and he tells Moses he is going to destroy them. But look at what Moses does in verses 11 to 13. He intercedes. He doesn't excuse their sin here. Instead, he appeals to three things as the intercessor. Verse 11, he tells God that it is your people. It's not Moses's people. It's not the Egyptians people. It is your people. He identifies them as God's people. And then continuing into verse 12, he says, For the sake of his name and for his honor. And then he ends in verse 13, God's unchanging word, which ultimately is an unchanging covenant.

You see, Moses stood in the gap. And verse 14 delivers one of the most powerful words in scripture. God heard his prayer. God heard his prayer and was merciful. That's what relent means. He relented. He was merciful. Moses didn't defend Israel's sin. He defended God's reputation.

So what is the application here? You see, in other parts of scripture, we see in 1 John, if you say that you don't have any sin, you're literally saying you're that God's a liar. And many times we can easily fall into this pattern of well I've been a Christian this many years. I know this much of scripture but where are you spending most of your time in your life? How much are you mixing idol worship? And that's a very subtle thing. And idol worship as we recall is what they wanted strength. So think of something in the world that's drawing your attention. That's going to give me more strength or that's going to give me more reputation or that's going to give me more power or more wealth. We got to be very careful that we don't let worldly influence affect us to the point where we reject God's word.

See, they forgot who God is and what God has done. At the heart of who God is is he is love. And how that love was displayed to us. He gave us his own son Jesus Christ to be our sacrifice to save us from our sin. Many times we can get caught up. Nothing wrong with medication, nothing wrong with being healthy, but we can let that become an idol when we depend on medication and we depend on our health or we depend upon our wealth. Idol is self worship. It's something visible. It's something that we can control or we think we can control because we can see it and we can manipulate it. But we got to be very careful because it's the exactly opposite of stewardship. Who is everything? Time, resources, energy, all of it is God-given. And we are to simply steward them well.

So I briefly say that because we're going to go into what we pray for. If we just focus on ourselves, our prayers will tend to be focused on ourselves. But when we reject that mentality, you begin to start praying for others. And I'm talking about not just your own family, but I'm talking about beyond our own family. I love that we are praying church, but I have this burden that we're not praying enough for the lost. We're not praying enough for the lost. We're not praying for God have mercy. Don't let this judgment come to pass. Don't let this judgment come to pass to this family or that family or that single person. We got to go beyond ourselves. That's what intercessory prayer does. That's why I started off with the world, with the nation, with our local community because by default, we don't want to think about those things. We just want to criticize it. We don't want to actually take God's call seriously of prayer, intercessory prayer.

So let's look at the example of Joshua. Go to Joshua 7:6-12. What we're going to see here is after the great victory at Jericho, Israel suffers a humiliating defeat not by one of the big armies, but it was actually one of the smallest armies that they had to fight, and that was Ai. Joshua falls on his face to intercede. Why did they lose? How they won so many other bigger battles. How could they lose to this small camp? So, he asks a question and before he knows it, he finds out there's hidden sin in the camp. Achan out of his disobedience. We see in verse 21 of Joshua. He stole a robe from a Babylonian. He stole

some silver and a gold bar. What did he see in that? He saw the wealth. He coveted it and then he took it. Wealth. It's an Achilles heel for every person.

Just because we live in a country where we can build wealth doesn't mean it's okay. That was just for ourselves. You see, Joshua similarly intercedes just like Moses did. He learned from Moses first. For the sake of God's name and honor, he repeats that just like Moses and for God's word. You see verse 12, sin ultimately makes us losers. In verse 12, the Israelites lost this battle because of the sins in their camp. Specifically, hidden sin. I want to take note of that. It was hidden sin. Meaning that this person didn't want people to know what was going on in their lives due to sin. Next, we see if you just flip back to verse 11, the sin of one person can cause an entire community to suffer. And then back to verse 12, sin drives the presence of God away from the camp. His presence does not want to remain just for one person.

See, Joshua intercedes based on God's name and honor, but God tells him to get up. Do something about it. Get up because sin must be dealt with. By the way, this is the most difficult thing any leader can do. Because of Joshua's intercession and the subsequent purging of that sin, Israel was finally restored to victory because they had God's presence. They had victory again.

Let me just draw an illustration because we're in right now in a situation of the World Cup and you will understand this if you've been watching the games. If one player breaks the team rules or stops his practicing and his work and working together in the team, the performance of the entire team suffers on game day. You can't ignore another example. If you look at a ship and there's a hole in the bottom of the deck, what do you think is going to happen to that ship? And you might say, Well, just let that person in that cabin deal with it. Let's just shut the door and let him deal with it. It's going to eventually the water's going to creep in and destroy all the cabins. Eventually the whole ship sinks just like the team will suffer if just one person does not follow the team rules. Eventually hidden sin compromises ultimately in the spiritual realm the spiritual power of the whole community.

This is why Matthew 18:15-17 is in scripture. Sin is taken very seriously by the Lord Jesus Christ. That it has to be done orderly. As intercessors of our local church, we must pray ultimately for purity in the body of Christ. I'm talking specifically to members of Calvary Road. Those who first profess to be Christians and number two that you are part of this local body. Purity not only in the Old Testament but in the New Testament is just as important. It depends on our God's presence and his power and for lost people to be saved. That's how crucial this is.

Do we want to see the lost? The ones that don't know Christ, the ones that you have that they don't, that you would want to see more people come to know the Lord Jesus Christ and salvation. Is that the most important thing in your life? Because it is to Christ because he died on the cross for them. It's that important that Joshua would have never won victory if that situation wasn't dealt with. We cannot expect God's presence and power to remain with us if you're harboring secret idols in our own hearts. True intercession requires us to lay our lives bare before God.

Intercession is not something we take casually. It is so important. If there were going to be more leaders, if there were going to be more people saved, more of the church growing, intercessory prayer, it's just as important as praying and fasting. It is the deep spiritual labor. So, we're talking about something not only serious, but it's one of the most deepest spiritual labors. So we're going more deeper from praying life to praying and fasting to intercessory prayer. It just keeps getting deeper but the labor becomes more difficult. Praying requires some labor. Fasting requires some labor. Intercessory prayer is even more. So this is deep spiritual work.

The Holy Spirit provides a specific process to step into this kind of calling. Turn with me to Romans 12:15. The text simply says this, Rejoice with them that do rejoice and weep with them that weep. This is a picture of a local church body. There are going to be amongst us some that are rejoicing and we are to rejoice with them. But there are also some who are weeping and we need to weep with them. The text outlines three distinct ways that manifest in the life of an intercessor in this regard. Number one, to bear the Lord's burdens. God uniquely burdens your heart for a specific place, a specific group of people, or even one person. Rejoice with them that do rejoice and weep with them that weep. You will fulfill often times when God is calling you to intercede a heavy weight upon a specific group or a person or possibly a whole neighborhood, possibly this whole local church. But he will put that burden in you. So we need to be open to that because that is the possibility. How do you weep with those who weep? You enter into this burden. It's the Lord's burden. Didn't he often weep? He wept for Lazarus. He wept for Jerusalem. So one person or even a whole nation and everything in between that is the Lord's burden. Don't take that lightly.

If God presses into your heart to pray in that unique way and then to be aware of other needs again weep with those who weep. God will supernaturally open your eyes to someone or some people to notice specifically their pain because there's weeping and pain. There is weeping in silent struggles. Maybe that person doesn't want to talk about it, but God opens your eyes to that person silently struggling or the problems of people around you so you can pray for them. God shows you a specific problem like he did with Joshua.

I want you to turn to Isaiah 66:8. Isaiah 66:8 reads this. Who hath heard such a thing? Who hath seen such things? Shall the earth be made to bring forth in one day? Or shall a nation be born at once? For as soon as Zion travailed, she brought forth her children.

There were referencing what God can do by the one day shall a nation be born at once. But he says here she brought forth her children. Interesting note here is when God moves, he works in a way like a mother delivers a baby. So the idea is birth pangs. But there's a spiritual application here. There are spiritual birth pangs. There is intercession. There is spiritual labor. Just as a mother expresses intense labor pains before a child is born, an intercessor experiences spiritual birth pains in prayer. To see new souls delivered into the kingdom of God. You see in this text he was talking about will there be such a day when the whole nation of Israel be saved? That word Zion refers to the people of Israel but it also talks about Zion in the New Testament which is the local church. And just like Isaiah was told to have this spiritual birth, we are also called in a way to be involved in spiritual labor.

I don't understand what that is, but I've seen what it looks like. I heard with my ears what it sounds like. It is a painful thing. It is a painful process. The pain is real. There was real agony and it's a messy thing. But why does the mother go through it? She undergoes it because she knows on the other side of all the pain and all the mess and all the agony is a brand new life. That's the picture here. That they will be born at once. A nation born at once. Born again brand new life so the tears and the cries as we see in the natural language of childbirth the same idea the pain the weeping the struggle the pain the problems there are tears behind those. There are cries behind those just like childbirth and they are what is the ultimate spiritual breakthrough? It's a brand new life.

We can pray for breakthroughs in our own lives. We can pray for breakthroughs in others. Those who are amongst Christians. But the true breakthrough, the one that starts it all off is someone who becomes born again. And we are part of that intercession. It's God's timing. Of course, even the birth pangs cannot be created by force. It must be in God's timing. I remember my wife would often say, I'm doing everything I can, but the baby's not coming. The birth pains are not happening because in reality she doesn't have control. And just like the birth pangs, spiritual birth pangs, we don't have control. So, we ask the Lord, Lord, help me to intercede. But know this intercessory prayer is going to be deep spiritual labor. Are you willing to go through that for someone else? Has God given that kind of love that surpasses all understanding that you're willing to travail in spiritual birth pangs for one soul to be saved.

Have you ever felt that sudden burden, that heavy prompting to pray for someone out of nowhere? Don't ever ignore what God has put into your heart. That would change the way you love people. That will change the way you are merciful to people. That will

show God using you to pour out his grace to someone else. See, don't ignore it. This is the maturing work of a believer. The Holy Spirit invites us into this labor. Let your heart pray for what breaks God's heart. Let your heart break for what God breaks in his heart. He wants everyone to be saved.

So, here's something that will comfort you. If God has called you all the way to this point and you feel that invitation or spiritual labor as it were, here are some promises of God. Look at Psalm 56:8. Psalm 56:8 is a great promise. God preserves your tears. He literally has a bottle collecting all of your tears and records the reason for every single one of them in his book. He knows every single teardrop and the reason why you're weeping. That's Psalm 56:8.

You see 2 Kings 20:5, tears move the hand of God. We see in these verses King Hezekiah was sick unto death. He wept bitterly before the Lord. And we see that God responded, I have heard your prayer. I have seen your tears. Surely I will heal you. The promises all throughout in that verse, heard your prayers, seen your tears, I will heal you. And we know that God added 15 extra years to his life because of his tears. So this is a promise. Maybe he gives you more time to pray for others to be an intercessor. What a great privilege it might be for those that have the time to do it.

When we intercede with this level of brokenness, we enter into a high level spiritual warfare. Pastor Ry mentions this in Ephesians 6:12. Not only you going to experience the spiritual labor, but there's going to be a high level spiritual warfare that's going to be going on, just one soul. He reminds us that we are fighting not against flesh and blood in the text, but against principalities. And ultimately all of this stages of wickedness is all powers of darkness. But praise God we have texts like Matthew 12:29 explained that he is the ultimate power who defeats Satan, the strong man. The metaphor of the strong man is Satan in the text in Matthew 12:29. And he is the one, the Lord Jesus that rescues us from the strong man, from Satan, from his grip.

And they have another promising verse. Ephesians 2:4-6. We are seated in Christ with Christ in heavenly places. We live not for victory but from victory. You see, we got to ultimately remember whose authority we follow and who are we under. Although this battle might be your part of it, he is ultimately the one that gives us the victory in all of it. But he calls you to it. He calls you to battle it out. And he will use you as an intercessor.

For one, again, the highest and the greatest breakthrough again is the one that will be from darkness unto light, a born-again Christian. Or it can be interceding for any hidden sin amongst our local congregation and for that to be done in the Matthew 18:15-17 progression and all of that is repentance we want that person to repent so that we will have more victory in our church namely the spiritual breakthroughs more people be lost

and from being lost to be saved and more spiritual growth in these areas that Pastor Ry has shown what a true disciple is.

See, in ancient times, people actually use physical glass vessels to carry their tears during times of deep grief, preserving them. Here's what they preserved them for in the physical sense. It was a token of deep love and remembrance that they would remember themselves. What did I cry for? And they would store those up and remember and recall what that was. See, our heavenly father does that spiritually. As I mentioned, every tear you cry over a prodigal child or a broken situation of a family or single people in our church due to sin. It's bottled up in heaven as a memorial.

Furthermore, when you pray in Christ's authority, not ours, but his authority, we submit to his authority and power. You aren't acting on your own power. So, what does that mean? He's going to carry you through those spiritual labor pains. He is going to carry you through to the high spiritual warfare and you're going to go, you're going to be amazed at what he's going to bring you out of. You see, the more you're in the battle, the more you're going to be able to how to defend yourself. You're going to be able to see how Christ defends you. And that matures you more and more for more battles to get you back in the fight again and again because you want more to see Christ glorified and magnified in your life. Isn't that what a true believer wants? That he uses you in this spiritual work in greater and greater victories and more battles, more souls to be saved, more things that are broken to be restored. Isn't that a wonderful thing to experience as a Christian?

So don't let the enemy create the divisions within our own church family that he would not allow you to stay comfortable and not staying in the battle to choose comfort over victory over true victory. You see we are to stand. We are to look at the situation dead faced squarely in the middle and going from all things in this world is due to sin. That we would declare Christ as our authority to intercede in his name to use us in this glorious work which is which we call intercessory prayer to weep before the Lord for the lost loved ones to stand firm in the victory of Christ already won at the cross we're simply pointing people to the cross not to ourselves but to the cross.

So I ask again to think about just one person possibly ask God to open your eyes and pray an intercessory way so that we would be a church that would truly stand in the gap that more of us would do this because we need more intercessors. We need to see more lost come to know the Lord Jesus Christ. We need more spiritual growth amongst the believers. This is what intercessory prayer will do. Bring more to know Christ and to grow in Christ.

So I want to invite you to do that and give some time tonight as we break up into our prayer groups. Has God shown you already as I've been preaching? Maybe do that

tonight. If he hasn't, maybe you pray as a group that God will show you individually. Maybe you'll have your brother or your sister in your group. Pray that you would be able to stand in the gap. Maybe it's your own lost children. Maybe it's for the lost that have been coming to our church. Maybe it's someone that hasn't come to our church, but God wants to bring him here, but something is stopping them because maybe you are the intercessor to pray for them.

So, it is coming with the heavy heart, but know that that is from the Lord. If you have a heavy heart tonight, that is from the Lord. That means God has impressed something in your heart to realize this is really important. Not to you primarily but to God. He has put this in your heart tonight. May our church community be better in this area that we be more faithful in being intercessors as Christians and may he receive all the glory and the honor just like Moses just like Joshua and through all the ages. It's for his glory. It's for his honor. It's for his word and is for Christ to be exalted. Amen.

All right, let's pray. Father, thank you for this time. Father, as we conclude on this very heavy but very important to you, Lord, of us being intercessors as brothers and sisters in Christ. Lord, I just pray that you would have already opened some eyes already to be standing in the gap. But if there isn't, Lord, I pray for more eyes to be opened to stand in the gap. Lord, that we would see more of the lost coming to a saving knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ or more strengthening of growing in the grace and knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ until he comes again. Father, bless to that end in the church that you have us in. Lord, in this church family as Christ as our head, Lord, help us to listen to the words that were preached. Help me, Lord, to be faithful to the text, to live it out faithfully. And I pray that for every single one of my brothers and sisters in Christ. I ask all these things in Jesus name. Amen.