

INTERCESSORY PRAYER

“And this is my prayer: that your love may abound more and more in knowledge and depth of insight, so that you may be able to discern what is best...” —PHILIPPIANS 1:9-10

It is from the heart and hub of our prayer, communion and alignment with God that we are able to minister to the world. This involves intercessory prayer and is actually not a simple thing at all. Oswald J. Smith’s book entitled, “I Have Walked Alone with Jesus,” is a book of daily readings, and his entry on January 1st reads:

“Intercessory prayer is without doubt not only the highest form of Christian service but also the hardest kind of work. To the person who is not an intercessor, such a statement seems absurd. Prayer to most people is looked upon as an easy occupation – that’s because they know nothing at all of the ministry of intercession. Their prayers for the most part are centered upon themselves, their loved ones, their own personal interests and an occasional petition for the perishing world. Their prayer life is spasmodic; it is considered a side issue and is readily neglected if other things demand attention. Such a person is in no way affecting the kingdom of Satan – hence prayer, so called, is easy.

But the Christian who enters into the ministry of intercession will pass through a very different experience. Satan will do everything in his power to hinder and obstruct. There will be a conscious realization of his presence and opposition. Then, too,

discouragement will cross our pathway. We continue to pray for a certain time and then because the answer does not come, we grow discouraged and give up.

Thus Satan uses his most successful weapon against us and breaks down our determination to become intercessors. And then when all else has failed, he will burden us with work. Satan would rather have us work than pray anytime.”

Prayer-less work will be powerless and fruitless. If Satan can keep us so busy we do not have time to pray, he will have accomplished his purpose. Intercessory prayer is work. It is a battle. All of Paul’s prayers on behalf of others were for things only the Holy Spirit can give. The world we live in today desperately needs the work of the Holy Spirit. We can turn on the news at any time of the day, and are given plenty of reasons to make intercessory prayer a must in our lives.

PRAYER: Dear Lord, I am saddened by the strife and suffering in this world, and ask for discipline in making much more time for intercessory prayer. Thank You, Lord.

TO REFLECT UPON: Am I moved to spend more time in intercessory prayer?