

# Praying 'One for Another'

by Samuel Chadwick

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*The sermon emphasizes the importance of intercession, or praying for others, as a vital aspect of Christian prayer and a means of bearing the burdens of others.*

**Scripture:** Ezekiel 22:30

**Topics:** "Intercessory Prayer", "Bearing Burdens"

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## Description

Samuel Chadwick preaches on the powerful role of intercession in the Bible, highlighting how various praying individuals like Abraham, Moses, Samuel, David, Daniel, Christ, and Paul interceded for others. The absence of intercessors surprised God, emphasizing the importance of believers standing in the gap for others. Intercession is a mystery that requires us to pray for others even when we may not fully understand their needs, reflecting the interconnectedness of life and the necessity of bearing one another's burdens.

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## Transcript

The praying people of the Bible are intercessors. Abraham pleaded for Sodom and Gomorrah. Moses made intercession for apostate Israel. Samuel prayed all night for Saul and continually for the nation. David entreated God for his people. Daniel prayed for the deliverance of the Lord's people from Babylon. Christ prayed for His disciples, and made special intercession for Peter. Paul was an example of his own exhortation "that supplications, prayers, intercessions, thanksgivings be made for all men." The one thing that is said to have surprised God is that the voice of intercession had ceased. "And he saw that there was no man, and wondered that there was no intercessor" (Isaiah 59:16). His delivering mercy depends upon intercessors, who will put their shoulders under the burdens of others. "And I sought for a man among them, that should make up the fence, and stand in the gap before me for the land, that I should not destroy it: but I found none" (Ezekiel 22:30). The normal function of prayer is to make intercession with God for others.

### The Mystery of Intercession

That we may pray for others is the deepest mystery and the crowning glory of prayer. If we do not know how to pray for ourselves as we ought, how can we know how to pray for other people? If we know so imperfectly our own needs, how can we know the needs of others? Who are we that we should presume to interpret the needs of another to God? He alone knows, and may not His knowledge and love be trusted? The answer is that prayer cannot be solitary. It must be personal, but it cannot be isolated. Life is

relative and interdependent, "For none of us liveth unto himself" (Romans 14:7). Prayer cannot stop at personal need. Even in the inner chamber there is no escape from the impact of those who impinge upon us in the home, the church, and the world. The law of prayer is that each stands alone in the Presence of God, just as surely as "each one of us shall give account of himself to God," each bearing his own burden, and yet every man bearing the burden of others. There is always a burden. Intercession is vicarious. The Savior made intercession because He bare the sin of the transgressors (Isaiah 58:12). So it is in all prayer that entreats for others. Moses made the cause of Israel his own. (See the prayers in Exodus 17; 22; 33; 34; Numbers 11; 14; 21; 27.) Isaiah identified himself with the people of "unclean lips" (Isaiah 6:5). Daniel made confession for the nation (Daniel 9). The despairing father of the epileptic boy (Mark 9:22) and the distracted mother of the devil-possessed daughter (Matthew 14:21-28) each made the affliction of the child a personal plea. So it has been in the history of the Christian Church. Carey bore the burden of India, Hudson Taylor of China, Livingstone of Africa; and so does everyone bear the burden of those for whom he prays.

### The Intercession In Heaven

Prayer is central in heaven. The interpretation of the mystery of intercession begins there. It is fellowship in the ministry of our Great High Priest at the right hand of God. "He ever liveth to make intercession" (Hebrews 7:25). That our Lord should need to pray in the days of His flesh is a mystery of humiliation; that He should need to make intercession in heaven is a mystery of glory. It is a light that transcends our vision. The "why" and the "how" are beyond our understanding, but it is because He so lives to make intercession that He is able to save to the uttermost all who come to God by Him. The truth revealed is explicit, and its effect in experience assures its certainty. The ascended Christ is the Priest-King at the right hand of God. As High Priest He represents man to God; as King He represents God to man. He entered in by the one offering of Himself as a Sacrifice for sin. Having entered by His own blood, He is the One Mediator between God and man, and humanity's Advocate with the Father. He intercedes for men (Hebrews 7:25, 27; 9:24). Prayer finds its expression and availableness in terms of Christ and His finished work. He takes the prayers of the earthly altar and adds to them the fires of the heavenly, and they become acceptable and effective through His name (Hebrews 13:15; Revelation 5:8; 8:3). So much is revealed, and we have no authority to go beyond, but it makes clear that in the fellowship of the saints there is prayer in heaven, and there is no logic by which the redeemed can be excluded from the ministry of intercession.

### The Intercession of The Spirit

There is a twofold intercession. The High Priest intercedes for us in heaven, and the Holy Spirit intercedes within the temple of the consecrated soul. "The Spirit also helpeth our infirmities: for we know not what we should pray for; but the Spirit itself maketh intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered; and he that searcheth the hearts knoweth what is the mind of the Spirit, because he maketh intercession for the saints according to the will of God" (Romans 8:26,27). There is such unity of purpose and harmony of method in the two intercessions that the two are one, and what is prayed by the intercessor on earth is prayed by the Intercessor in heaven. The Spirit takes of the things of Christ and reveals them unto us. He takes of the deep things of God and interprets them to us. He knows the purpose of God, and makes intercession according to the divine will. In this way He works in us both to will and to do the good pleasure of His will. The unutterable groaning is in our imperfect humanity, but the inarticulate groaning of the Spirit within us finds complete expression in the terms of the heavenly Priesthood.

Intercession through the Spirit implies a Spirit-filled temple. He can only interpret spiritual things to the spiritually minded, for the carnal mind cannot know the mind of the Spirit. He cannot intercede in the heart of an unyielded will. The pure in heart see God. The heart must be sensitive to light and obedient to the heavenly vision. It takes a saint to be in the ministry of intercession. There are many kinds of service that make no demand upon spirituality for their success. Preaching may be an art in which there is no power of the Spirit. The ecclesiastical ministry of outer-court stewardship may be rendered by the gifts of the office and the counter. Social service may make a fair showing official returns without any glow of spiritual mindedness. Church music may be of a kind that does not call for the travail and anguish of intercession. The man of prayer must be a man of God.

#### The Intercession of The Secret Place

We are called unto the fellowship of this twofold intercession. The terms that are used to describe it indicate sacrificial labor and sustained intensity. Nothing costs so much. Saint Paul speaks of being in travail, striving and laboring in prayer. There is always the sweat of blood in prevailing intercession. The reason is not in God's reluctance, for He inspires that He may fulfill. There are many adversaries in the human will, as well as spiritual forces and personalities. God waits to bless; and that means that He is always ready and always waiting. The answer to Daniel's prayer was delayed for three weeks by some mysterious conflict in the realm of spirits (Daniel 10: 12-14). "For our wrestling," says Saint Paul, "is not against flesh and blood, but against the principalities, against the powers, against the world-rulers of this darkness, against the spiritual hosts of wickedness in the heavenly places" (Ephesians 6:12). Jesus said, "Satan hath desired to have you, that he may sift you as wheat: but I have prayed for thee" (Luke 22:31, 32).

For whom and for what may we pray? The general answer is, for all and for everything. The real answer is, according to the intercession of the Spirit and according to the will of God. There are those who have a natural right to our prayers, such as our families, our friends, our fellow believers, our minister and colleagues, our fellow workmen and our masters, as well as those whom we know to be in circumstances of need.

The prayer of intercession calls for intelligence, understanding, watchfulness, as well as for sympathy, intensity, and sacrifice. There is often a severe discipline of patience and faith. Sometimes the answer comes immediately, and sometimes it tarries. The one truth in which faith rests is that it comes. The Spirit that assures is acquainted with all contingencies, and His assurances are YEA and AMEN in Christ Jesus.

I have been more mindful to set forth the sanctuary of my own faith than to give rules and quote examples. The subject is in all the Scriptures, and its range is without boundaries. Its mysteries are unsearchable, but its certainties are infallible. The blessings are immeasurable and invaluable. Who can tell the influences that have come into his life through the intercession of those who have prayed for him?

Who can measure the work of those whose ministry is that of laboring in prayer for others? The great need of God is of intercessors. "Ye that are the Lord's remembrancers, take ye no rest, and give him no rest, till he establish, and till he make Jerusalem a praise in the earth."

He still saves by them that sigh and that cry.

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