

Session 6 - Praying the Prophetic: God's Invitation to Intercession

1. Introduction

- a. Intercession is prayer in which we bind ourselves to the reveal heart of Christ regarding a specific situation and hold onto His word until He releases His kingdom on earth as it is in heaven. True intercession is the great exchange of God's will and life with the will and life of man so that the purposes of God can be brought forth.
- b. For many years I thought of intercession as the type of prayer for the "strongest" or most mature believers. Now, ten years into my life of prayer, I realize that intercession is for those who will voluntarily embrace weakness.
- c. Powerful intercession starts the moment when a man or woman recognizes their inability to change a given situation and then turn to the Lord in whole hearted belief that He can and will do what only He is able to do. Intercession is a person's full embracing of the weakness of their own ability in faith that God will show forth His strength.

*"O my soul, you have said to the Lord, 'You are my Lord, My goodness is nothing apart from You.'" -
Psalms 16:2*

- i. True intercession does not start with strategy or program but with the giving up of self to the Holy Spirit. This death to self is the beginning place of all intercession because before we can gain anything of eternal value or significance from God we must first willfully relinquish our grip on the temporal.
- ii. In order to receive more of God in the great exchange of prayer we must be willing to give more of ourselves. And in order to receive more of God, who is eternal in nature, we must be willing to give up more of this world and the things that are in it.
- iii. It is impossible to be filled with the things of this fallen temporary world and dramatically impact eternity through prayer.
- iv. The exchanging between God and man rests entirely upon our willingness to surrender our wills to the Holy Spirit so that He give us His will. But without surrendering first how can God give us His will? Can a man have two wills that drive his life? Surely not! A man can only live by one will, either his own or the Lord's; but not both.

"Can two walk together, unless they are agreed?" - Amos 3:3

- d. This type of praying was demonstrated in flesh for us by our Lord Jesus Christ in the garden of Gethsemane the night of His betrayal into the hands of sinners. It was there amidst the olive trees that the Lord submitted His will to the crushing will of His heavenly Father.
- e. It was from this humble obedience that Christ was able to receive a name that is above every other name. Death to His own will is what positioned Him to receive the blessing of His Father and see the desire of His heart come to pass.
- f. The submission to the Father's will is what positioned Christ to obtain His will. This is the example we must follow in intercession. We, like Christ, must submit ourselves entirely to the will of God and in return Christ will fulfill all the righteous desires that He has placed with us.
- g. However we must not forget the order. Only those who humble themselves will be exalted and only those who serve will rule.
 - i. **This is the rule of intercession**: submission leads to exaltation, humility leads to dominion, and weakness leads to the releasing of power.

2. Prayer and the Prophetic

- a. Prophecy and prayer are twins, siblings that are inseparable and indistinguishable from one another. They have an unusual connection that few other things do and will always gravitate towards one another.
- b. In fact they need each other, they complete each other in many ways, you cannot truly understand one without understanding the other. They have been linked since the days of Adam and will always be thought of in the same breath.
- c. They form a dynamic cyclical relationship with each side feeding the other and supporting the collective effort. Prayer sustains the prophetic while the prophetic fuels prayer. These two realities were never meant to be separated.
 - i. Unfortunately many denominations in the Church today disregard the prophetic as goofy or even unbiblical. Although they sincerely love Jesus and have a heart to see change and transformation in the world they have, in my opinion, broken the symbiotic relationship that is catalyst for the change that they so badly desire.
- d. Prayer and the prophetic give life to one another in the most fundamental way that it is virtually impossible to accomplish anything long-term in the place of prayer without the prophetic fueling your efforts. Likewise the prophetic becomes almost pointless without

the backing of persistent intercession.

- e. We have already defined prayer as the following:

“The connecting and exchanging of hearts between God and man primarily through the speaking of words.”

- f. To see the relationship between prayer and prophecy we must also come to a basic working definition of prophecy.
- g. Throughout Scripture we see that those who prophesied did one a few things:
- i. They spoke of forthcoming events
 - ii. Revealing the thoughts, heart, and feelings of God concerning a specific situation, people, or nation.
 - iii. Reveal the secrets of men’s heart to bring faith into their heart (either saving faith in an unbeliever or fresh faith in a believer).
- h. Put together we can come up with a fairly simple definition that will serve our purposes here in discussing prophecies relation to prayer.

“The divine revealing of something that was hidden pertaining to the heart and intentions of God for humanity.”

- i. The prophetic is simply the “revealed will” that the Spirit gives to a person. God desires to reveal His heart and intentions to us concerning specific people, places, and moments in history. When He does so, in a very basic way, we have received a prophetic word from God.
- j. By this definition the prophetic becomes absolutely essential to the ministry of intercession.
- i. Other forms or types of prayer (i.e. supplication, meditation, or petition) do not necessarily require the same revelation. This is because those forms of prayer deal almost wholly with things already revealed in the Word of God.
 - ii. While intercession is also built upon the foundation of the Word of God it unique in that the ministry of intercession has laser type focus and a pin point target in mind.
 - iii. The intercessor is dealing with a particular assignment, mission, person, city, or time period. The intercessor is not so much concerned about everything else just the assignment he or she has been given.

- iv. Because of the specificity of the mission an intercessor needs particular revelation on how to deal with this specific scenario. For example, Joshua was given special revelation from God to defeat the city of Jericho.
 - 1. What was needed in the battle of Jericho was not the Torah and a list of proper prayers. Although they should not be disregarded by any means the Scriptures in general did not have the specific battle plan to overtake this city.
 - v. Similarly Christ could not die any way that He wanted. Rather there was a revealed plan and will that His Father had given to Him. It was not only death, but death by a cross in the hand of sinners that was needed to properly make intercession for the world.
 - 1. This is why Isaiah calls the very act of Christ dying upon the cross an act of intercession, because you cannot separate the prophetic from the ministry of intercession. They are one in the same. This is why both the statement, "Father forgive them..." and the physical act of carrying the cross beam are labeled as intercession.
 - 2. Christ made intercession for when He bore that rugged piece of wood upon His mutilated back. He was not only bearing a wooden beam but He was also bearing our sins.
- "...having wiped out the handwriting of requirement that was against us, which was contrary to us. He has taken it out of the way, having nailed it to the cross." - Colossians 2:14*
- vi. Likewise, when Ezekiel laid upon his side all those days it was not only the words that he spoke but the very command he obeyed and acted out that itself was intercession. Even as he lay there in silence he was interceding for the city of Jerusalem (Ezekiel 4:4-6).
 - vii. Ezekiel would have been unable to properly accomplish the will of God without both the prophetic and intercession. Meaning he could have prayed, repented, and fasted all he wanted to but without obedience to the revealed will of God it would have been powerless for what God was looking to accomplish.
 - k. One could go all throughout the Bible, both Old and New Testaments, and see that all of redemptive history hinges upon the obedience of the praying prophet. Without men obeying the revealed will of God and taking it up in the place of prayer our faith would have ceased long ago.

*“Likewise the Spirit also helps in our weaknesses. For **we do not know what we should pray for** as we ought, but **the Spirit Himself makes intercession for us** with groanings which cannot be uttered. Now He who searches the hearts knows what the mind of the Spirit is, because He makes intercession for the saints according to the will of God.” - Romans 8:26-27*

3. The Invitation

- a. This truth goes back all the way to the very beginning of time. It is abundantly clear that God has entrusted His plan for humanity into the weak yet faithful hands of prophetic intercessors.

“History belongs to the Intercessor.” - Lou Engle

- b. From the very beginning of redemptive history we see the prophetic word of God acting as an invitation offered to man to partner with Him to accomplish the Lord’s will on the earth.
 - i. The very nature of the prophetic is such that it beckons us to continue seeking, knocking, and calling out to God. It is, in a very real and tangible sense, a teaser that pulls on the heart of man to dive headlong into the adventure God is laying before him.
 - ii. The prophetic is at its core nothing more than an invitation by the Lord to work and accomplish something together. It acts like a type of party or wedding invite. Messages are expressed through the various components of the invitation, from the paper, to the font, to the decorations; everything on the invite is speaking about what we should expect at the party.
 - iii. This is how the prophetic works. It has various dimensions, layers, and insights that all speak towards both God (the sender), the receiver and the task He is inviting us to partake in.
 - iv. The prophetic word is not the party itself. No one gets dressed up or dances when they receive the invitation. Those things are reserved for the party. The invitation informs us that we should rearrange our lives and prepare for the upcoming day.
 1. Many in the Charismatic movement yell, holler, and dance when the prophetic is released in their midst or when a word comes to them. Although thankfulness should be found in our hearts and joy over the Lord speaking, these experiences are not guarantees of God’s moving, only invitations into a journey.

2. Our primary joy should not be on the receiving of a prophetic word but in the day when that word is fulfilled. This is why it says:

*'Therefore we also, since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and sin which so easily ensnares us, and let us run with endurance the **race that is set before us**, looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith, who for **the joy that was set before Him** endured the cross, despising the shame, and has sat down at the right hand of the throne of God.' - Hebrews 12:1-2*

- v. The invitation is about vision (what the party will be like) and preparation (how do we get ready so that we can fully enjoy it). The prophetic is the same way. It unlocks our wildest holy imagination and creates an expectation for the day to come. It also calls us to live consecrated lives of preparation so we are found ready on the day of the party.
- c. This invitation was given, and accepted, by the very first generation and family to walk upon the earth. For all the negative and evil that Adam and Eve brought upon the earth and the human race this one thing they did get right.
- d. Immediately following the fall of man we see God, in a outlandish demonstration of His grace and mercy, extend His hand back to humanity and offer them an invitation to partner with His heart again. Although the terms had changed it is abundantly clear that God's desire for fellowship, companionship, and partnership was not changed at all by their sin.
- e. Unwavering in His desires God hands the first and greatest of all prophetic invitations to fallen Adam and his darkened wife while in the same breath uttering the fate of the evil serpent.

*"And I will put enmity between you and the woman, and **between your seed and her Seed**; He shall bruise your head, and you shall bruise His heel." - Genesis 3:15*

- f. This is the first prophetic word ever given to humanity and it was the start of redemptive history. In this one word God begins to reveal that which was hidden, that Christ would come, through Adam's descendants, to destroy sin and death and reconcile humanity back to Himself. The whole Bible is found in this one prophecy.
 - i. The fact that our salvation and redemption started with a prophecy all the way back in Genesis 3 should inform us about how God operates and accomplishes His purposes in the earth.

- g. This promise of a “Seed” that would come and crush the head of the vile serpent who just got them kicked out of the Paradise of God was a promise that surely brought at least a sliver of hope back into their depraved souls.
- h. From that day forward the first parents started having kids believing that one of them would be that promised Seed. Their first hope seemed to be in their second son Abel. This hope was dashed when Abel’s older brother rose up in rage and murdered Abel in cold blood.

*“And Adam knew his wife again, and she bore a son and named him Seth, ‘For God has appointed **another seed** for me instead of Abel, whom Cain killed.’” - Genesis 4:25*

- i. With their first hope destroyed Adam and Eve now hope that their third son Seth would be the Seed that crushes the head of the serpent.
 - i. You can hear and feel the longing of Adam and Eve’s heart to be reconciled back to their God and Father. They once walked in the Garden surrounded by the glory of God and now they were forced to wander the wastelands of sin.
 - ii. Disconnected from the One who gave them life they longed to return to glory. All of life now was centered around the coming Seed that would crush the serpent and restore them back to their rightful place in the Garden of Eden.
- j. With their hopes rejuvenated the family begins to give voice to their hopes and dreams for redemption and they take the promise of God and begin to pray with it.

*“**Then men began to call on the name of the Lord.**” - Genesis 4:26*

- k. This is the first prayer meeting recorded in the history of mankind and it was started from the prophetic promise of a Deliverer that would come and restore Eden to the earth.
- l. This marriage between the prophetic and intercession sets the tone for how God was going to bring about the Seed. It was going to be through a nation praying, holding on to the promise of Genesis 3:15. Thousands of years later the nation would actually give birth to the Promised Messiah as they still clung to this prophetic word.
 - i. The incarnation of Christ was a direct result of prophetic prayer accumulating over time.

*“And, behold, there was a man in Jerusalem, whose name was Simeon; and the same man was just and devout, **waiting for the consolation of Israel:** and the Holy Ghost was upon him. And **it was***

revealed unto him by the Holy Ghost, that he should not see death, before he had seen the Lord's Christ." - Luke 2:25-26

- m. Thus prayer and prophecy were connected from the beginning. They have never been separate entities or "callings" rather they are, like we have said from the very beginning, siblings that cannot be divided.

4. The Prophetic Process

- a. The prophetic word of God is above all an invitation, not a guarantee. It is a window into the desired future God has in store for a particular person, region, or generation.
- b. This invitation is unique in the sense that it is centered around a journey just as much, if not more, than a particular event. The prophetic word of God beckons the intercessor not to simply partake of an activity but to embark on an epic journey.
 - i. Whenever we are given a prophetic word from the Lord or some sort of promise regarding what He desires to do in and through us the worst thing we could do is minimize or underestimate the gift that was just given to us.
 - ii. To devalue the prophetic word of God is a grave and costly mistake that has real ramifications on our lives. To trivialize the Spirit's revelation by not properly responding to what was heard is nothing short of sin.

*"For I say to you, among those born of women there is not a greater prophet than John the Baptist; but he who is least in the kingdom of God is greater than he." And when all the people heard Him, even the tax collectors justified God, having been baptized with the baptism of John. But the Pharisees and lawyers **rejected the will of God for themselves**, not having been baptized by him. And the Lord said, 'To what then shall I liken the men of this generation, and what are they like? They are like children sitting in the marketplace and calling to one another, saying: "**We played the flute for you, and you did not dance; We mourned to you, and you did not weep.**"'" - Luke 7:28-32*

- iii. By taking a prophetic word lightly we are taking God lightly. In the same way that a person disregards the instructions of a friend and by doing so he actually devalues the entire friendship, so we devalue our relationship with the Spirit by not heeding the prophetic word when it comes.

*"But on this one will I look: On him who is poor and contrite of spirit, and **who trembles at My word.**" - Isaiah 66:2*

- c. Every prophetic word comes with a prophetic journey; a road that is only traveled on through prayer, fasting, and obedience. Each journey is unique and distinct having a number of different variables that make it special from other believer's journeys.
 - i. The greatest of all tests is the test of time. How long will the prophetic word take to come to pass? Will it be weeks? Months? Years? Decades? Or am I setting off on a journey that goes beyond my lifetime? These are all questions that run through our minds when the prophetic word comes.
 - ii. Every prophetic word speaks about the future and therefore the greatest pressure that you will face along your journey is the pressure of time. Whether it is one year or one decade that greatest test anyone will need to face in the prophetic journey of God is that of time.
- d. Prophecy is not only an invitation from God but it is a tool in the hands of God that takes us through the process of preparation needed to actually fulfill the word spoken.
- e. Once the prophetic word is released and we accept the invitation of God that word suddenly transforms into a type of tool, a grinding stone of sorts, by which God widdles us down to a state of utter humility and meekness.
- f. What was once our source of greatest joy, excitement, and anticipation quickly becomes a source of pressure, hardship, and anguish as day after day passes without the materialization of the promise.
 - i. This process and journey is different for all believers but the one constant is that of time therefore the greatest need for anyone carrying a prophetic word is enduring faith.
 - ii. The question quickly becomes, **"Will I believe God today?"** This all-important question is one that you ask almost daily in the face of disappointment, frustration, and setback.
- g. The test of time, the grinding of the promise upon your soul and mind, becomes the weight that a prophetic intercessor has to carry daily into the place of prayer. When you close your eyes to pray and that heavenly vision comes to mind will you continue to give a voice to God's revealed will for your life? This is the question.
- h. Intercession then becomes largely about giving voice to the internal groan within you for what God has revealed about the future. You have been praying for years but will you lift your voice again today? Or will you give up on your promised land?

"Then He spoke a parable to them, that men always ought to pray and not lose heart, saying: 'There was in a certain city a judge who did not fear God nor regard man. Now there was a widow in that

city; and she came to him, saying, "Get justice for me from my adversary." And he would not for a while; but afterward he said within himself, "Though I do not fear God nor regard man, yet because this widow troubles me I will avenge her, lest by her continual coming she weary me." Then the Lord said, 'Hear what the unjust judge said. And shall God not avenge His own elect who cry out day and night to Him, though He bears long with them? I tell you that He will avenge them speedily. Nevertheless, when the Son of Man comes, will He really find faith on the earth?" - Luke 18:1-8

- i. This process is common among any man or woman, whether in Scripture or church history, that did anything remarkable for God. Each had to pass the test of time. They had to endure the pain of their hopes being dashed by *Father Time* while holding on to greater hope that God would raise those dreams from the dead.
 - i. Abraham waited 25 years and then almost had to sacrifice his promise
 - ii. Joseph was sold into slavery, betrayed, and then put into prison multiple times
 - iii. Moses spent 40 years in the wilderness of Sinai
 - iv. David spent years running from Saul hiding in caves after he had been anointed the next king of Israel
 - v. Daniel endured 70 years in Babylon
- j. Prayer becomes the all encompassing tool for sanctification in the hand of God when coupled with the prophetic. Once the prophetic word is released prayer becomes the sandpaper in the hand of God that removes all of our pride and entitlement from our hearts, and it also becomes the very means through which the promise of God is brought forth.
- k. None of it can happen without prayer. Without the binding of our heart to the revealed will of God and enduring in prayer the promise of joy will never come. It is only through prayer that God will bring these things to pass because it is only through prayer that the human heart is brought low enough to receive whatever God has promised to give.
- l. Although years may pass and situations may arise that seem contrary to God's revealed heart for our lives we can trust that God is good and that He does not tie our hearts to dead end dreams!