

Intercession: Partnership with God

1. Recap

- a. The Holy Spirit is at work all over the nations. His work is always the same, to lead people to Jesus. Whether it be a sinner coming to saving faith in Christ or a Christian having their eyes opened for the thousandth time His work of revealing Christ in order that He may be glorified is ceaseless.
- b. One aspect of this work is the Holy Spirit's provoking of the church to make Luke 11:1 their primary prayer:

*"Now it came to pass, as He was praying in a certain place, when He ceased, that one of His disciples said to Him, '**Lord teach us to pray, as John also taught his disciples.**'" - Luke 11:1*

- c. God is sovereignly raising up a global prayer movement that is sweeping across every tribe, nation and tongue, and you are a part of it.
- d. He is calling His people back to their first and primary calling as priests who minister to God first and foremost. This ancient calling will also be our eternal identity as both individuals and as a collective global church.
 - i. The scenes of Revelation are crystal clear, at the end of the age the church will collectively stand around the throne of God beholding the Lamb and responding in perpetual adoration.
- e. This collective calling of being priests who minister to the Lord is described in the Bible as being a house of prayer. In one of His most definitive statements revealing His heart, His value system and His desire for His people Jesus declares that His people will be a house of prayer forever.

*"It is written, '**My house shall be called a house of prayer,**'"... - Matthew 21:13*

- f. This global prayer movement serves three main functions:
 - i. It allows Jesus the Bridegroom God to awaken love in His Bride by revealing His glorious heart to her (1 John 4:10).
 - ii. It prepares the church as the Bride of Christ to remain pure and spotless in the darkest days of human history so that she is ready when Christ splits the sky with a host of angels (Matthew 13:36-42).
 - iii. It is God's vehicle to bring about His redemptive purposes across the earth through loving partnership and co-laboring.
- g. In prayer rooms and churches all over the earth God is speaking to His people about His nature, character, heart, desires and intentions for them and for the earth. In response His people are speaking back to Him.

- h. This dialogue is the beginning of prayer. All prayer is a response to the revelation of who God is and continuation of the conversation He has already started with us through His word.
- i. As the days turn into weeks and the weeks into years God is causing the church to fall in love with Him all over again because all He really wants is a Bride that loves Him wholeheartedly (Matthew 22:37-38).
- j. He began by loving us and all He is yearning for is real love in return because true love only loves for love's sake. You being here at this time in history is a witness to this fact, that God is beckoning His people to drop everything they thought they knew about how to do church and simply fall in love with Him all over again.

2. Partnership with God

- a. Prayer is primarily about intimacy. We've already covered this in our previous sessions and so it isn't worth repeated here again except to remember that the First Commandment found in Matthew 22:37-38 is the north star of prayer that guides our way through every season of life.
- b. That love, like all love naturally does, bears the fruit of partnership. Love by very nature seeks to express itself and it always does so unselfishly. One of the marks of true love in any relationship are the selfless expressions of love from one person to the other.
- c. When two hearts become knitted together in love over time a common partnership is naturally formed where the dreams, desires and intentions of each individual person become one so that both parties are fighting for each other's dreams.
- d. This is exactly how intercession works. Many people have very strange views of intercession. When people begin to talk about intercession or being an intercessor they seemingly venture off onto bunny trails and tangents often leaving behind the key component of impactful intercession which is partnership rooted in love.
- e. Powerful intercession is rooted in nothing else but partnership with God that is rooted in the First Commandment. It is simply the overflow and outworking of the love of God in a person's heart and soul.
 - i. Jesus talks about this outworking of love, this partnership immediately after He gives the First Commandment. It's called the Second Commandment:

*"You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your mind. This is the first and great commandment. **And the second is like it: 'You shall love your neighbor as yourself.'** On these two commandments hang all the Law and the Prophets." - Matthew 22:37-40*

- ii. Intercession is simply the prayerful expression of the Second Commandment which we are told is like the first, meaning it is rooted in loving God with all your heart, soul, mind and strength.
- iii. When you sit before the Lord and allow His love to wash over your hearts, souls and minds it produces a response of love that you offer back to Him.

- iv. In that place of receiving and giving love that one realizes, “If this is how He feels about me than that means this is how He feels about my sibling, my parents, my co-workers, my boss and even my enemies. Consequently this is how He feels about my city, region and even the nations of the earth.”
 - 1. It is here that sustainable and powerful intercession is born and continues to live. Prayer that is birthed in the zeal of men will always burn out quickly but prayer that is rooted in the revelation of God and His emotions will endure for a lifetime.
 - a. The empowerment then to pray for revival is not birthed in a desire for revival but in the understanding of how God feels about the lost, broken and dying.
 - b. The grace to pray and forgive enemies is not found in one’s ability to grit their teeth or forget about the painful memories of life but in a living understanding of God’s heart towards those who hurt Him, wounded Him, betrayed Him and left Him.
- v. One of, if not the, primary way you can obey the Second Commandment is through intercession for those around you that is rooted in the First Commandment.
- vi. Intercession does not begin with problems, needs or requests but with the revelation of God’s heart as seen in Christ Jesus.
 - 1. As long as your prayers are rooted in problems you will continue to get discouraged when they don’t seem to move. But prayer that is rooted in God’s heart only grows in confidence and boldness because you are more aware of what He desires to do than you are of what is or isn’t happening.
 - 2. Sustainable prayer, individually and corporately, can never be rooted in problems that need to be answered they be anchored in God’s revealed heart.
- f. A brief survey of Scripture proves this to be exactly the case. All of the great men and women of God in Scripture first encountered God’s heart and desire (First Commandment) and were then thrust into both intercession and works (Second Commandment).
 - i. The Lord encountered Moses in a burning bush and began to speak about the oppression of His people and how He desires to set them free (Exodus 3:1-10).
 - ii. Isaiah has a heavenly vision of Lord, is touched with the fire of God’s love and zeal, and is then launched to go prophesy to the nation (Isaiah 6).
 - iii. Zechariah is given 8 dreams in one night that are to be given to the nation of Israel. Each and every one of them are rooted in God’s enduring faithfulness to Jerusalem and the people of Israel.
 - iv. Hosea is told to marry a prostitute so he knows how God feels about Israel so that he can rightly pray for and minister to the nation (Hosea 1:2).

- v. John the Baptist is described as a “friend of the Bridegroom” who hears the voice of the Bridegroom and then declares to the people (John 3:29-30).
- g. Time and time again in Scripture we see that God first reveals His character, nature and heart to a man or woman and then launches them from that encounter to intercede for and minister to people.
- h. This reality of partnership rooted in love is seen clearly at the beginning of Scripture where God first reveals Himself as a Bridegroom God.
- i. As Adam is having to name all of the creatures of the land, sea and air he realizes something that gives us a clear picture into what Jesus ultimately wants from His people.

*“But for Adam there was not found **a helper comparable to him.**” - Genesis 2:20*

- j. Adam noticed two things that were missing:
 - i. **Helper** - He had no helper. His mission on the earth was meant to be accomplished in and through partnership. Thus God also has a deep desire to accomplish His plans and purposes in the earth through the avenue of partnership.
 - 1. Intercession is the place that humanity partners with the heart of Jesus to accomplish His purposes.
 - a. Jesus modeled this while on the earth even at young age when He taught in the temple at age 12 and responded to His worried parents with the question, “*Did you not know that I must be about My Father’s business?*” (Luke 2:49).
 - b. He also repeatedly said that He only did what He saw the Father doing, intimating that everything He did was in perfect partnership with His Father in heaven.
 - 2. Intercession rooted in the heart of God is our primary means of partnership with God on the earth because right now Jesus’ ministry is that of intercession before the Father.

*“Therefore He is also able to save to the uttermost those who come to God through Him, since **He always lives to make intercession** for them.” - Hebrews 7:25*

*“Who is he who condemns? It is Christ who died, and furthermore is also risen, who is even at the right hand of God, **who also makes intercession for us.**” - Romans 8:34*

- 3. Thus anyone who desires to partner with Jesus will find himself in prayer where Jesus is.
- ii. **Comparable** - This helper was meant to be like Adam. In the same way God is washing, cleansing, purifying and forming a Bride for His Son that is comparable to Him; one bearing His image.

- k. This is why at the end of the age we see this very same reality playing out, this time in the global church.

*“And the **Spirit and the Bride say, ‘Come!’**” - Revelation 22:17*

- l. What is described at the end of the age is the global church fully functioning as the Bride of Christ rooted in the First Commandment in full partnership and cooperation with the Spirit of God as the pray for the return of the Lord Jesus Christ.
 - i. The church’s partnership with Christ in prayer through the Spirit is described a number of other places in more detail.

“For the Spirit searches all things, yes, the deep things of God. For what man knows the things of a man except the spirit of the man which is in him? Even so no one knows the things of God except the Spirit of God. Now we have received, not the spirit of the world, but the Spirit who is from God, that we might know the things that have been freely given to us by God.” - 1 Corinthians 2:10-12

*“He will glorify Me, for **He will take of what is Mine and declare it to you.** All things that the Father has are Mine. Therefore I said that He will take of Mine and declare it to you.” - John 15:14-15*

*“And because you are sons, **God has sent forth the Spirit** of His Son into your hearts, **crying out, ‘Abba, Father!’**” - Galatians 4:6*

*“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 mind of the Spirit is, **because He makes intercession for the saints according to the will of God.**” - Romans 8:26-27*

- m. Intercession is at its very core partnership with the heart of God revealed in Christ Jesus. It is the most natural expression of the First Commandment. Once you are filled with the love of Christ His dreams become your dreams and His heart becomes your heart.
- n. The more He reveals His heart of love, mercy, justice, righteousness, glory and goodness to you the more energized your prayer life will become. Intercession rooted in anything else but the revelation of God’s character, nature and heart as seen Christ will be short lived at best and disheartening at worst.
- o. But those who have their hearts anchored in His will be able to pray through any situation, weather any storm, and, most importantly, endure in the place of intercession for a lifetime.