

JESUS OUR INTERCESSOR

“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**)

“My little children, these things I write to you, so that you may not sin. And if anyone sins, we have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous. And He Himself is the propitiation for our sins, and not for ours only but also for the whole world.” (**1 John 2:1-2**)

Prayer:

“Jesus, you are our magnificent Intercessor and our High Priest before our Father. We declare you, Jesus, as our Mediator, our most excellent Advocate, our Intercessor. We thank you as we draw near your throne of grace where we receive mercy and may find grace to help us in our time of need. We thank you for calling us to share in your priestly ministry, of offering the incense of intercession, which is close to your heart.”

Today we will study Christ as our intercessor and our responsibility to partner with Him in intercession. He filled Himself with the will of His Father and we ought to fill ourselves with the same will and partner with Him in intercession to the glory of God, the Father.

I. JESUS OUR INTERCESSOR

Scriptures on the prayer life of Jesus

Luke 22:32 – But I have prayed for you, that your faith may not fail.

Hebrew 7:25 – He always lives to make intercession for them.

John 17:20 – I do not ask in behalf of these alone, but for those also who believe in Me through their word; that they may all be one; even as Thou, father, art in Me, and I in Thee, that they also may be in us; that the world may believe that thou didst send me.

II. DEFINING INTERCESSION

A. Defining Intercede

From to Latin words, *inter* and *cedere*.

Inter- meaning between, among, involved and intervention.

Cedere – meaning to go, to yield, to move and to pay the price of.

Intercession therefore means:

1. “To go between” as when stepping between someone and his enemy in battle.
2. “Yield himself”, among those who are weak and need assistance.
3. “Moving in the direction of involvement”, regarding the needs and hurts of others (Good Samaritan). Luke 10:33
4. “To pay the price of intervention”, as with Christ and the Cross, “To go between”. Mediation – “entreaty for another – intercession”.

B. Webster's Dictionary

1. Intercede – (Latin *intercede*: *inter* – between; *ado* – to go; literally, to pass between); to act between parties with a view to reconcile those who differ or contend; to plead in favour of another; to interpose, to mediate or make intercession.
2. Mediate – being between extremes; to interpose between parties at variance with a view to reconciliation; to mediate a peace.
3. Mediation – entreaty for another, intercession.

C. Greek Lexicon

1. In the New Testament, there are three references for the word “Intercede” or “Intercession”.
 - a) Romans 8:26-27 - *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.*
 - b) Hebrews 7:25 - *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.*
 - c) 1 Timothy 2:1-2 - *Therefore I exhort first of all that supplications, prayers, intercessions, and giving of thanks be made for all men, for kings and all who are in authority, that we may lead a quiet and peaceable life in all godliness and reverence.*
2. First definition – (“come in line with”) – properly, to *light upon (happen)*; literally, “bending over” to *intercede*, “confer benefit”.
3. Second definition – refers to the Holy Spirit interceding in every scene of our lives so we can “come in line with” the Lord's *eternal purpose*. The content of these intercessions goes beyond human language and includes bringing *sacred mysteries* into our daily walk with Christ.

D. Hebrew Definition

1. The Hebrew word for intercession is *paga*, which is only translated a few times as intercession in the Old Testament. When you compare the many different pictures, words, and interpretations of the *paga*, you glean many wonderful understandings of what it means to intercede. *Paga* – “to meet; to light upon (by chance); to fall upon, attack, strike down, cut down; to strike the mark, laid upon”.
 - a) To meet – Isaiah 64:5. A meeting with God for the purpose of reconciliation.
 - b) To light upon – Gen 28:10-17. By God’s working of grace, our divine “Helper” is standing by, ready to aid us in our intercession, moving us from the natural to the supernatural, from finite ability to infinite ability, taking hold of situations with us so as to accomplish the will of God.
 - c) To fall upon, attack, strike down, cut down. 1 Samuel 22:11-19; 2 Samuel 1:11-16. Intercession is the readiness of a soldier to fall upon or attack the enemy at the command of his lord, striking and cutting him down!
 - d) To strike the mark – Job 36:32. Intercession releases the flashing forth of His glory/lighting, directing it to the desired situation and allowing it to strike the mark.

e) Laid upon – Isaiah 53:6 (laid upon), Isaiah 53:12 (intercession). Intercession reached its fullest and most profound expression when our sins identify with us, having the totality of our condition placed upon Himself; then as the scapegoat, he carried it far away. There is an aspect of this form of intercession into which we as His body can enter.

Colossians 1:24 calls us to share on behalf on His body (which is the church) in filling up that which is lacking in Christ's afflictions.

III. CHRIST: THREE EXPRESSIONS OF INTERCESSION

A. Examples from His Earthly Prayer Life

1. He prayed all night before the choosing of the twelve.

Luke 6:12-13 - *Now it came to pass in those days that He went out to the mountain to pray and continued all night in prayer to God. And when it was day, He called His disciples to Himself; and from them He chose twelve whom He also named apostles.*

2. His fervency with loud emotional prayer.

Hebrew 5:7 - *In the days of His flesh, when He had offered up prayers and supplications, with vehement cries and tears to Him who was able to save Him from death and was heard because of His godly fear.*

3. His prayer of compassion for His friend.

John 11:33-38 - *Therefore, when Jesus saw her weeping, and the Jews who came with her weeping, He groaned in the spirit* and was troubled. And He said, "Where have you laid him?" They said to Him, "Lord, come and see." Jesus wept. Then the Jews said, "See how He loved him!" And some of them said, "Could not this Man, who opened the eyes of the blind, also have kept this man from dying?" Then Jesus, again groaning in Himself, came to the tomb. It was a cave, and a stone lay against it.*

*Groaned in the spirit defined:

- a) Strong's concordance – *enbrimaonai* – “to snort with anger, to have indignation on, to sigh with chagrin (which implies being distressed), to groan, and to murmur against”.
- b) American Heritage Dictionary – “a snort: as a ‘rough, noisy sound made by breathing forcefully through the nostrils’, to make and abrupt noise”.

B. His Position at the Right Hand of God the Father

1. 1 John 2:1b – *And if anyone sins, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous.*

2. At the right hand of God

a) Matthew 26:64b – *You shall see the Son of Man sitting at the right hand of power and coming on the clouds of heaven.*

b) Mark 16:19 – *So then, when the Lord Jesus had spoken to them, He was received up into heaven, and sat down at the right hand of God.*

3. He is ever positioned between us and God, the judge if all.

C. His Ongoing Activity in Heaven

1. Hebrews 12:22 – *And to Jesus, the mediator of a new covenant, and to the sprinkled blood, which speaks better than the blood of Abel.*

2. Quote from Charles Spurgeon on the blood, "... Many keys fit many locks, but the master key is the blood and the Name of Him that died and rose again, and ever lives in heave to save unto the uttermost".
3. Hebrews 7:25 – *Hence, also, He is able to save forever (to the uttermost, AMP) those who draw near to God through Him, since He always lives to make intercession for them.*

IV. THE INVITATION TO JOIN WITH CHRIST IN INTERCESSION

A. Our Spiritual Position in Christ

1. Ephesians 2:6 – *Raised us up with Him, and seated us with Him in the heavenly places, in Christ Jesus.*
2. Colossians 3:1 – *If then you have been raised up with Christ, keep seeking the things above, where Christ is, seated at the right hand of God.*
3. Isaiah 61:6a – *But you will be called the priests of the Lord; you will be spoken of as ministers of our God.*

B. Our Authority to Call Forth Targets in Prayer

Intercession releases the flashing forth of His glory, light, or lighting which covers His hands and directs it to the desired situation allowing it to strike the mark. Job 36:32-33 – *He covers His hands with the lightening, and commands it to strike the mark (v.32).*

C. Quote from Andrew Murray

Jesus, on heaven's throne today, is till our High priest as well as our King. His priesthood is permanent (Hebrews 7:24). He is still the Son of Man. He reigns today and intercedes today as the Son of Man. When He comes again, He will come as the Son of Man.

As Son of Man, where does His priority lie? As enthroned Son of Man, what does Jesus live to do? Does He live to welcome the saints to heaven at their death? I am sure He welcomes them, but the bible does not say so. Does He live to grant interviews to saints and angels? He most probably does this, but the bible does not say so. Does He live to enjoy heaven's music? I am sure He thrills to do it. He created us to be able to enjoy music along with Him, but there is something more important than listening to music. Does He live to reign? Most certainly He does and He will reign forever and ever.

The bible emphasizes one role of Jesus today above all others: He is priest forever (Hebrews 5:6; 6:20; 7:17, 21). His sovereign throne is a throne of grace, both because of His atonement and because He ever lives to intercede for us. His is a priestly throne (8:1).

Romans 8:34 associates two facts: Christ at the right hand of God, and Christ interceding for us. What does this intercession for us imply? Many commentators feel that His very presence seated on the throne of heaven is sufficient in itself as a glorious intercession. They doubt that He is actually praying. They feel that He does not need to make any requests of the father; His sitting on the throne is all the request that is necessary.

But Jesus is the same yesterday, today and forever (Hebrews 13:8). While on earth, He loved us, yearned for us, and prayed for us (John 17). He prayed for Peter personally (Luke 22:32). As Son of Man, He is as intensely concerned about and interested in each one of us as He ever was. He is still as sympathetic as he ever was (Hebrew 4:15). The Greek word used here, *sympatheo*, means "to suffer with".

The whole argument of Hebrews 4:15-16 is that we are to come to the throne of grace (where Jesus is interceding) with confidence because He does sympathize and suffer with our pain, He is touched and moved by our need and feels its pain He feels for us as infinitely as he ever did.

His throne of intercession for us is a throne of feeling intercession, as pained intercession. We sing in the hymn, “Does Jesus care when my heart is pained?” And then we sing the chorus, which resounds our profound conviction, “Oh yes, He cares, I know He cares. His heart is touched with my grief”.

D. Closing Summation

I agree with Andrew Murray that every blessing we receive from God, every answer to prayer, bears this divine stamp upon it: “Through Christ’s intercession, Christ is not sitting passively in blissful royal dignity, unmoved, while you intercede. No! Never! You intercede because He intercedes”.

Reflection Questions

1. In Luke 22:32, Jesus says – “I have prayed for you that your _____ may not fail”.
2. The latin words for intercede are _____ and _____.
3. The Hebrew word for intercessions is _____.