

Pointers for Intercessory Prayer

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Thank you for accepting the call to intercession. Please know that your prayers make an eternal difference. Don't expect this journey to be easy though. Intercession requires that we invest our very souls in the process. Often, we will be asked to make sacrifices along the road. But the journey of intercession is amazing. You will find that participating in the ministry of intercession will transform your life and the one for whom you are praying.

First, an assurance.

You're in the center of God's will.

He is the one that is calling you to intercede. He will teach you how to pray effectively and He will enable you to persevere in prayer.

Now, some practical pointers and insights:

Pray Scripture - Scripture is our safeguard from the attacks of the enemy AND it contains God's power to create worlds and change lives. Also, when you pray Scripture you can know that you are praying according to God's will and that He will delight to answer.

"If you abide in Me, and My words abide in you, you will ask what you desire, and it shall be done for you." John 15:7

"So shall my word be that goes forth from My mouth; it shall not return to Me void, but it shall accomplish what I please, and it shall prosper in the thing for which I sent it." Isaiah 55:11

Surrender - God doesn't always answer prayers the way that we want or in the timing that we want. But He will do what is best!! It is His will for the person you are praying for to be saved for eternity.

"It is God's will that you be sanctified..." 1 Thessalonians 4:3

Listen - Ask God what He wants you to pray for. He will give you His prayers to pray and inspire you with what He wants to see happen. I find this happens

primarily through Scripture - as I read the Bible, God will often cause a verse to stand out in my mind as I think about a certain situation/person. Or He will bring things to mind as I pray.

"The Lord God has given Me the tongue of the learned, that I should know how to speak a word in season to him who is weary. He awakens Me morning by morning, He awakens My ear to hear as the learned. The Lord God has opened My ear..."
Isaiah 50:4-5

Bold, Specific Prayers - When you've listened to God and know what He wants you to pray, then your prayers will be specific and bold. When you pray bold, specific prayers, you will be much more able to recognize when God answers. Remember when Joshua prayed that the sun would stand still (Joshua 10)? There was no mistaking that answer to prayer! God wants to give us answers to prayer that are just as specific and recognizable, even if they are not earth-stopping!

Persevere in Prayer - Intercession is hard work. It will take physical and emotional energy, perseverance, and time. The story of Praying Hyde, a missionary to India, is very inspiring on persevering in prayer. Read his story here:
http://biblicalscholarship.net/Praying_Hyde.pdf

"...Always laboring fervently for you in prayers, that you may stand perfect and complete in all the will of God." Colossians 4:12

"Far be it from me that I should sin against the Lord in ceasing to pray for you." 1 Samuel 12:23

Pray with Others

Recruit others who care for the same person/situation to join you in focused intercession. If no one is readily apparent who shares your burden, ask God to bring you a prayer partner. God loves to answer that prayer!

Throughout the Bible we see many evidences of the dramatic ways God worked in answer to the united prayers of His people. He still works in dramatic ways when we pray together.

"If several should meet together with one accord with hearts burdened for perishing souls, and should offer earnest, fervent prayer, they would be effectual." RH August 1892

Expect Power

God works in mighty ways in answer to united prayer. United prayer opens the way for God to work in ways that He could not otherwise.

“Again I say to you that if two of you agree on earth concerning anything that they ask, it will be done for them by My Father in heaven. For where two or three are gathered together in My name, I am there in the midst of them.” Matthew 18:19-20

“The promise is made on the condition that the united prayers of the church are offered, and in answer to these prayers there may be expected a power greater than that which comes in answer to prayer. The power given will be proportionate to the unity of the members and their love of God and for one another.” Manuscript Releases Vol. 9, p. 303

Focus on Prayer, not the Problems - One of the biggest ways the Devil tries to keep us from praying is by getting us to talk about the problems instead of actually praying about them. When you get together to pray, don't use it as a time to share all the latest "prayer requests". Too often this becomes a time to rehash the problems and the pain. There is no healing in such talk. God is the one that is going to do the healing!!!!!! So talk to Him about the issues and plead for His intervention, rather than just pray and tell Him about the issues. You'll learn all of the story that you need to know.

Expect Trouble

The devil is not happy about you taking on this ministry of intercession. Know that he will attack in some way that is difficult for you. Or it may be that he will keep you too busy or tired to pray. I don't know what form it will take in your life, but I know he will try every way to keep you from praying and interceding.

Proverbs 18:10 - “The name of the Lord is a strong tower, the righteous runs into it and is safe.”

The Battle

It seems things often get worse when we pray for people for a while before they get better. This is because the Devil isn't happy. Also, people often fight hardest right before they surrender. Keep praying! God is working even if it doesn't always look that way to us.

"When the enemy comes in like a flood, the Spirit of the Lord will raise up a standard against him." Isaiah 59:19

Let Jesus Do the Fixing

Don't try to fix things. Your job is to bring people/situations to Jesus. He'll do the work. However, if He asks you to help be the answer to your prayers, be obedient.

"[He] is able to do exceedingly abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that works in us." Ephesians 3:20

Your Time with Jesus - Sometimes we can be so focused on interceding for a difficult situation that we forget to take time to enjoy Jesus' love. I've done that and before long I lose my energy and desire to pray. Fiercely protect your time with Him and let Him delight you with His love each day.

"Cause me to hear Your lovingkindness in the morning, for in you do I trust." Psalm 143:8

Expect Amazing Answers

God will work in amazing ways as you pray. So pray with joy and faith and the holy assurance that you are petitioning the almighty God of the universe who loves us all dearly and wants every one of us to be saved. Our prayers open the way for Him to do what He already longs to do.

"Call to me and I will answer you and show you great and mighty things, which you do not know." Jeremiah 33:3

"...Ask in faith, with no doubting..." James 1:6

"And whatever you ask in My name, that I will do, that the Father may be glorified in the Son. If you ask anything in my name, I will do it." John 14:13-14

"[God] has a use for [you], and He is well pleased when [you] make the very highest demands upon Him, that [you] may glorify His name. [You] may expect large things if [you] have faith in His promises."

Desire of Ages, p. 668