

How should we pray? (Part IV)
Intercession, The Call to a God Who Works
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Introduction: Why should a man pray?

- A. Sadly many do not believe that God answers prayer.
 - 1. The difference between a dead faith and a living faith is action. (**Jas 2:18**)
 - 2. When we see the need for something, we will act. But what if we do not see the need? (**Luke 18:1, 8**)
- B. In our previous studies we learned that prayer may be divided into four components: Praise, Confession, Petition and Intercession.
 - 2. When we have a wrong concept of God and we will not see our real needs.
 - 3. The proper motive in prayer and in all we do is simply to glorify God.
- C. If there was to be an imbalance in the time spent in our four areas of prayer, it would be in intercession.
 - 1. Why did the apostles require a great amount of time in prayer? (**Acts 6:4**)
 - 2. If a faithful man regularly goes to God in prayer, why then would ne need others to pray for him? How would you answer this question?

I. Do we need God's help?

- A. Yes, but do we really see our need? Did the apostles need help?
 - 1. Consider the power in the gifts bestowed by God upon an apostle. (**2 Cor 12:12**)
 - 2. Paul as an apostle pleaded for the intercession of other Christians!
 - a. Paul credited the prayers of other Christians for his deliverance. (**2 Cor 1:8-11**)
 - b. Paul anticipated that the future prayers of other Christians would deliver him at a later time. (**Phil 1:19**)
 - c. Paul needed the prayers of other Christians to open a door for him to teach others. (**Col 4:2-4**)
 - d. Paul understood his need to make a broad appeal! (**1 Thess 5:25**)
 - e. Paul knew that prayers by others for his deliverance and the spread of the word would make a difference! Do we? (**2 Thess 3:1-2**)
 - f. The Hebrew writer “especially” urged Prayer that might bring about a personal reunion! (**Heb 13:18-19**)
 - 3. If an apostle needed Christians to pray for him, imagine the power within our grasp to do mighty things for the Lord!
- B. It makes sense to ask for God's help in the overwhelming and uncertain work before us.
 - 1. Example: A neighbor who begins a impossible job when help was only a request away. (**Matt 7:7-8**)
 - 2. Because some have lost their faith, they do not pray. If the results are not instantaneous, then some may give up. (**Jas 4:2**)

3. Do you *think of others regularly* in your prayers? Do others need your prayers?

II. Intercession in the life of Paul.

A. Consider the churches that Paul prayed for.

1. **(Rom 1:9)** - He prayed for the Romans “**without ceasing**”.
2. **(1 Cor 1:4)** - He prayed for the Corinthians “**always**”.
3. **(Phil 1:3-4)** - He prayed for the Phillipians “**always in every prayer**”.
4. **(Col 1:3, 9)** - He prayed for the Colossians “**always**” and later affirmed that those with Paul “**do not cease to pray for you**”.
5. **(1 Thess 1:2)** - He prayed for the Thessalonians “**always**”.
6. These were not just generic prayers: "Lord bless all Christians". He made mention of them!
7. What other churches did Paul pray for by name *not mentioned in the Bible*?
8. Have you ever prayed for other churches?

B. Consider *the individuals* Paul prayed for.

1. Paul prayed for Timothy “without ceasing.” **(2 Tim 1:3)**
2. Paul prayed for Philemon “always.” **(Philemon 1:4)**
3. How *much time did Paul need* for intercession on behalf of others?

III. What our Intercession can do.

A. In areas like this the fruit is not easily seen.

1. It may have been our prayer that made the difference, but it will *not be revealed to us in this life*.
2. God wants us to do this on the basis of trusting His promises alone! What is *the present condition of our faith*? **(Luke 5:5)**
3. How much time *out of your schedule will you take*? Do you believe it will do good?

B. What are the *greatest needs* in the Lord’s church today?

1. Greater *evangelism*. **(2 Thess 3:1-2)**
2. Greater *knowledge*. **(Col 1:9-11)**
3. More *love for one another*. **(Phil 1:9)**
4. A *wise leadership* that leads and protects the sheep. **(Phil 1:9-10)**
5. *Strong homes*.

C. When you combine a belief in a living God with an unselfish service to others, there you will then find others that intercede on behalf of others. *Is it I?*

1. Let us never forget where *the real power lies*! **(Eph 3:20-21)**
2. Numbers never wins the battle but *a living faith will make the difference*!

Conclusion: May the promises of God become real in our lives.