

THE BATTLE IS FOR WHAT CHRIST IS BUILDING

Part 3
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Intercession is for Everyone

When Paul describes intercession in Romans 8:26-34, it is addressed to all the recipients of the letter, not just a select few. The Lord was instructing the entire body in regard to flowing with Him in intercession. Everyone filled with the Spirit of God can, should, and must develop willingness and increasing availability to the Holy Spirit for authentic intercession.

In revealing that intercession is the right, privilege and responsibility of all, God's Word also describes it as a phenomenon we do not fully understand. Therefore, we make ourselves available for intercession by first and foremost being faithful to pray. But if what we call "intercession" does not flow from the Spirit of God according to Romans 8:26, 27 and 8:14, it is just a counterproductive religious labor. As such, it drains us, and increases the likelihood of our becoming fatigued. Unchecked, this is not only impotent but it becomes dangerous to our personal lives and relationships.

"Except the Lord build the house, they labor in vain that build it: except the Lord keep the city, the watchman waketh but in vain. It is vain for you to rise up early, to sit up late, to eat the bread of sorrow..." (Psa.127:1-2).

Striving to intercede without the Spirit supplying Christ's direction, purpose, strength and heart is not really interceding. Instead, we then (at best) petition or (at worst) "*pray amiss*" (Ja.4:3). Petitioning is valid, but even true petitioning spiritually perceives the will of God during prayer through a divine connection which is not only Spiritually activated, but revelationally sensed (1Jn.5:14-15; Jn.15:7-8).

To "*pray amiss*" must be avoided at all costs. It can be described as praying with self-understanding devoid of divine revelation, a seeking apart from the activation of the Spirit within us. In the Scripture above, watching over what the Lord is not looking after is "*vain*." **Shawu** is the word for "*vain*" in the Old Testament. It should be interpreted to mean "for our own purposes," and without the Divine connection of the Spirit, results in the idolatry of "*exalting itself against the knowledge of God*." It is very hazardous to have a lifestyle of prayer "for our own purposes." It will be very dangerous to stand on the prayer efforts which are "for our own purposes." This is because when we are guarding what Christ is not watching, or striving to build what He is not building, not only does it remain unprotected, but when it falls, we will come down along with that very same brick and mortar. Construction efforts that are not Christ's through us will neither be defensible nor able to stand in the day of opposition (Mt.7:24-29).

Prophetic Intercession & Interceding Prophets

The source of all intercession being Christ, this prayer is given to us by the Holy Spirit (Heb.7:24-25; Ro.8:26). Therefore, all true intercession is prophetic in both its source and its mode. Through agreement with Christ, the dynamic of all intercession is one of receiving, releasing and restoring with Him (Ro.8:27; Hab.2:1). The experience of being drawn into intercession with Christ is often considered very similar to the Prophet's ministry. This is understandable; however, it is an incomplete concept. The similarity between prophetic intercession and the intercession of a Prophet is the source and mode in which it flows: with Christ, by the revelational Spirit of God. Whereas the Prophet intercedes by Christ's ministry gift by the Spirit, intercession takes place by the Spirit with Christ.

This is not to say Prophets are not interceding people, for truly they are (Jer.27:18). But those who intercede are not necessarily Prophets. Therefore, being received as an "intercessor" or "leader of intercessors" is not a stepping stone for being "promoted" into the Prophetic office. Prophets may or may not first be identified (as such) from among those interceding. Prophets are such because they were called in Christ through His grace before the world began (Jer.1:4-5). Prophets are those who have been given a measure of the Prophetic grace, lifestyle and equipping mantle of Jesus Christ Himself— to stand and walk with Him as He speaks His Word into the Earth.

Prophesying is Also for Everyone

Although all Christians were called before the world began, not everyone has a Prophet's measure of the Christ's gift (Eph.1:4; 4:7-11). Everyone can, should and must avail themselves to prophesy, however. Prophecy is for "*all flesh*" through the corporate anointing of the Spirit that was promised and first released at Pentecost (Acts 2:17-18). Prophecy is to be the most desired gift, the one the Lord clearly emphasizes more than others and the one revealed to be definitely for all (1Cor.12:31; 14:1,5,37). Whether a Prophet or not, all Christians can, should and must receive the gift as well as the anointing to prophesy. And in the same way, all believers can, should, and must enter into intercession with Christ by the Spirit. This should be standard operating procedure for every child of God (Jn.1:14; Ro.8:14).

God Is After the Church, Christ's Bride

Staying aware of the prophetic source and mode of intercession, its authenticity comes from joining with Christ in Word, Spirit and heart, uttering agreement with Him to the Father. What is the Father's purpose? "*The Lamb slain at the foundation of the world*" was brought forth for the sake of reconciling man to God, creating a new race . . . the Church (Rev.13:8). The Church is who and what God is after. **The battle is for what Christ is building.** All else will be allowed to live and die unwillingly or unknowingly, supporting or furthering that purpose (Isa.43:3-4). Every act of the Father under Heaven will continually coincide with the gathering and establishing of that for which the Son yearns, His Bride (Eph.1:11).

Jesus will come again to receive us and then deploy His judgment and rule (Mt.19:28; 1Cor.6:2-3). This is the culmination of the Apostolic dimension of Christ, and preparing

for this by co-laboring with Christ should be our utmost focus as Christians (1Cor.12:28). It is Christ's Heart, and we are of His Spirit. The Apostolic will be at the center of intercession which joins with Christ's prayer for the fulfillment of His destiny (Psa.110:1-3). And the Apostolic establishment of Christ's Church among every people and in every facet of culture and society is the absolute which must be seen as both Christ's and our continuing goal (Mt.24:14).

Christ will build His Church, and Jesus is calling out to let Him build through us (Mt.16:16-18). And through such Apostolic-Prophetic intercession we will be enabled to receive, release and restore with Christ as we continually participate in the ongoing prayer of Jesus.

Apostolic/Prophetic Intercession is for Everyone

The purpose of my writing has been rooted in defining both the role and place in what we are all to share: Apostolic/Prophetic intercession. My effort has been to demonstrate God's process of recreating us with Christ's image, reforming us the Church into His specific design, purpose, power and plan (Ro.8:29).

In the years to come, many will be flowing into an Apostolic/Prophetic dimension of the church through an authentic intercessory lifestyle with Christ by the Spirit (Eph.2:20). Whether or not they are consciously aware, the Spirit of God will take them on a journey that this writing attempts to chronicle. As a result, they will be reconstructed with true foundation consisting of Apostolic function, priority and form— a truly Apostolic/Prophetic wineskin (1Cor.12:28; Eph.3:4-5).

There will be others who will dispute this word, however. To some, it will not be attractive. Going through processes the world, flesh and devil pressure us to avoid at all costs is never attractive, naturally speaking. So for some this may be privately acknowledged as "radical" or even "ahead of its time," while publicly avoided as threatening to the stability of what now exists, or too divisive to be presented.

For others, this word on Apostolic/Prophetic intercession will not be aggressive enough to religiously accomplish what carnal man desires: self-vindication through great achievements, utilizing God as the means to that end. Others will reject this out of hand because it will not support the quest for societal favor and influence considered a "must" to effectively set the stage and bring about Christ's second coming. Religion always wants to either clean up life by making it come into perfect natural order or send us 'away from it all' to Heaven. There is nothing about God that 'neat and tidy.'

True Intercession Produces Real Sons & Daughters

God designed interceding with Christ to be the means by which we are recreated in His image (Ro.8:29). Without this, we will be bereft of the Christ-likeness that produces His power and purpose in life. Through continual intimacy and agreement with His ongoing prayer to the Father, the church will be empowered to truly move forward with the image of Christ restored. That image restored, the church will then have a legitimate opportunity to experience Christ's victory without the Devil being either the focus or an excuse for

failure. Devil-centered Christianity and "spiritual warfare" will only be overshadowed by a true release and establishment of Apostolic/Prophetic intercession and image conformity. Although many do not want to go forward without the props and crutches society leans on for being accepted and effective, ultimately, the church will have none of these if it is to be truly God's (1Cor.1:25-31).

What God is doing today is often neither Prophetically perceived nor Apostolically responded to. I have sought to address some current fallacies and popular weaknesses of what many consider to be "cutting edge" understandings. But being corrective and re-directive is not fashionable. I also realize it is not without risk; therefore it is done only through much prayer. It is not glad-handed by the "cutting edge" status quo. In fact, this was called for leaders (in its original book form) who later refused or neglected to endorse it. Nevertheless, it is needed. It is my firm belief that this word to the Church will increasingly stand, however, finding more and more agreement as we continue with Christ in the days ahead. Sadly, this may only be established by a new or next generation of Apostles and Prophets that God raises up, ones who can move past self-establishment, "bigger is better," and visibility/popularity concerns.

More than anything, I believe this contributes to a present and progressive revelation of foundation for the eternal Church of Jesus Christ. Told by the Lord in prayer that this was the first writing I was to prepare for publication, it went to print a year and a half after I intended and four years after it was started. Then, after it's first print it was clear that I was not yet finished— that the Lord wanted more. Now, 3 years later— the entire book is being rewritten again. It is yet to be edited for copy. There is always more, but *"let us live up to what we have already attained"* (Php.3:16).

I think the following can be said to hold true for all of us: Delays and revisions in life are a witness to our own process of growth to more completely establish the Apostolic/Prophetic in our lives. No one is "there" yet, but let's not park in the stall marked "partial progress" (Php.3:12-15). Let's continue toward the wide open of His present truth so we will become fully functioning in God. May the Holy Spirit have His way with the Church; may we truly *"grow up into Him in all things, which is the head, even Christ"* (Eph.4:15).