

Chapter 35. The Power of Intercession.

"Please tell me where your great strength lies." – Judges 16:6

This is the question we want answers to from the men and women of old who, as intercessors for others, had power with God, and have prevailed. More than one who has desired to give himself or herself to this ministry of prayer, has wondered why he or she found it so difficult to rejoice in it, to persevere, and to prevail. Let us study the lives of the leaders and heroes of the prayer world, maybe some of the elements of their success will be revealed to us.

The true intercessor is a person who knows that God knows that their heart and life are **wholly surrendered to God and His glory**. This is the only condition on which an officer at the court of an earthly king could expect to exert much influence on his sovereign. Moses and Elijah, and Daniel, and Paul, proved that it the same in the spiritual world. Our Lord Himself is the proof of it. He did not save us by intercession, but by self-sacrifice. His power of intercession is rooted in His sacrifice. It claims and receives what the sacrifice had won. It is so clearly said in the last words of Isaiah 53: *"He poured out His soul unto death, And He was numbered with the transgressors, And He bore the sin of many, and made intercession for the transgressors."* (**Isaiah 53:12**). He first surrendered Himself to the will of God. There He won the power to influence and guide that will. He gave Himself for sinners in all-consuming love, and so He won the power to intercede for them. There is no other path for us. It is the man who seeks to enter personally into death with Christ, and gives himself wholly for God and men, who will persevere in prayer like Daniel or Paul. Whole-hearted devotion and obedience to God are the first marks of an intercessor.

You complain that you do not feel able to pray like this and ask how you may be fitted to do so. You speak a lot of the feebleness of your faith in God, lack of love for souls, lack of delight in prayer. The person who is to have power in intercession must stop these complaints. He must know that he has a **nature perfectly adapted to the work**. An apple tree is only expected to bear apples, because it has the apple nature within it. *"For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works."* (**Ephesians 2:10**). The eye was created to see. How beautifully fitted it is for its work! You are created in Christ to pray. It is your very nature as a child of God.

The Spirit has been sent into your heart – to do what? To cry: Abba, Father! To draw your heart up in child-like prayer. The Holy Spirit prays in us with groanings that cannot be uttered, with a divine power which mind, and feelings cannot understand. Learn, if you need to be an intercessor, to give the Holy Spirit much greater honour that is generally done. Believe that He is praying in you, and then be strong and of good courage. As you pray, be still before God to believe and yield to this wonderful power of prayer within you.

But there is so much conscious sinfulness and defects in our prayer? True, but have you not learned what it is to pray **in the Name of Christ**? Does the Name not mean the living power? Do you not know that you are in Christ and He in you? That your whole life is hidden and bound up in His? And His whole life is hidden and working in you? The person who is to intercede with power, must know that Christ and he are one in the work of intercession, not only in words and concepts, but in actual, living, divine reality. He appears before God clothed with the Name and the Nature, the Righteousness and Worthiness, the Image and Spirit and Life of Christ. Do not spend your prayer time only by repeating your petition, but in humbly, quietly, confidently claiming your place in Christ, your perfect union with Him, your access to God in Him. It is the person who comes to God in Christ, bringing to the Father the Christ in whom He delights, as his life and his law, and his only trust, who will have the power to intercede and prevail with God.

Intercession is predominantly a work of faith. Not the faith that tries only to believe the prayer will be heard, but the faith that is at home amidst the heavenly realities. A faith that does not worry about one's own nothingness and feebleness, because what matters is that you are living in Christ. A faith that does not hope or depend on feelings, but upon the faithfulness of the Triune God to answer the prayer brought to Him. A faith that has overcome the world and let go of the visible world to be wholly present in the spiritual, to take possession of the heavenly and eternal realities. A faith that knows that it is heard and receives what it asks, and therefore quietly and deliberately perseveres in its supplication until the answer comes. The true intercessor must be a man or woman of faith.

The intercessor must be a **messenger** – one who keeps himself ready, who earnestly offers himself personally to receive the answer and to dispense it. Praying and working go together. Think of Moses – his boldness in pleading with God for the

people was no greater than his pleading with the people for God. We see the same in Elijah – the urgency of his prayer in secret is equalled by his jealousy for God in public, as he testified against the sin of the nation. Let intercession always be accompanied, not by more diligent work, but by the meek and humble waiting on God to receive His grace and spirit, and to know more definitely what and how He want us to work. It is one thing, a great thing, to undertake the work of intercession – the drawing down to earth the blessings heaven has for every need. It is a greater thing as intercessor to personally receive that blessing, and go out from seeking God's face, knowing that we have secured something that we can impart. May God make us all whole-hearted, believing, blessing-bearing intercessors.

Prayer: Father, here am I. I give myself to You as an intercessor for people who are lost, people who need help. I believe that Christ, the Intercessor, dwells in me; that the Spirit of Intercession prays through me. Open my eyes so that I can see who I must pray for, and who around me needs You. Amen.