

**BIBLE BAPTIST CHURCH OF ERIE**  
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**THE POWER OF INTERCESSORY PRAYER**

**EXODUS 32:31-33; COLOSSIANS 1:9-11**

Christian author Philip Yancey in his *book “Prayer: Does It Make a Difference? Ask the question, “Does prayer operate like a pyramid scheme – the more people who pray, the more likely the answer? Does a sick woman with who happens to have praying friends stand a better chance for recovery than an equally deserving person who does not?”* Do you remember what Jesus said in **Matt. 6:5-8**. “*And when you pray, do not use vain repetitions as the heathen do. For they think that they will be heard for their many words.*” (v8)

Intercessory prayer is one of those subjects that the more we think about the subject the more we may have to change the way we view praying for others. This morning I want to deal with three things concerning “**Praying for Others – The Power of Intercessory Prayer.**” So first we note:

**I. THE MEANING OF INTERCESSION**

First, let me say that there is a difference between praying for others and real intercessory prayer. While all intercession involves praying for others, all praying for others is not necessarily intercession. “Intercession, is by nature, where an individual positions themselves between two parties – one with a need and one with the answer – and seeks to bring the two parties together.” God has given us a biblical pattern for intercession in the life of Moses in **Exodus 32**.

True intercession faces the facts; Moses does not minimize the circumstances. He doesn’t plead that there were mitigating circumstances. He doesn’t argue that the people did what they did because Moses had been gone so long. He doesn’t imply that God should “understand” their sinful actions. There are no excuses.

The word “**intercedes**” from the Latin means “to go or pass between” so as we have seen intercession is act whereby an individual positions themselves between two parties – one with a need and one with the answer – and seeks to bring the two parties together.”

Secondly, we note . . .

**II. THE PURPOSE OF INTERCESSION**

What is it exactly that we hope to accomplish by interceding for someone with God? What is it that we want to happen? Is intercessory prayer placing our burdens on God’s heart or is it allowing God to place His burdens on our hearts? There are several truths we need to understand the **PURPOSE** of intercession.

- ⇒ **True Intercession Desires to Find the Will of God.**  
Sometimes unknowingly we try to push God into handling a situation in the way in which we wish to see it handled.
- ⇒ **True intercession is the desire to see the object of our prayers come into a close fellowship with God by whatever means and circumstances he decides is best.**

The world’s greatest intercessory prayer was the prayer that Jesus prayed in **John 17** for his disciples and all those in the future who would believe. Jesus prayed for their **unity** “that they also may be one in Us” and **usefulness** “that the world may believe.”

**III. THE PROCESS OF INTERCESSION**

In looking at how to go about praying a prayer of intercession, I want to look at one Old Testament example from Moses (**Exodus 32**) and one New Testament example from the Apostle Paul (**Colossians**).

- ⇒ **The Intercession of Moses**  
First, I want to return to the account given in **Exodus 32** to see how Moses interceded for Israel.
- ⇒ **The Intercession of Paul (Colossians)**  
**Colossians 1:9-11** Notice what he intercedes for **SEVEN THINGS**:

There are two things I do not want to do this morning.

- ⇒ **First**, I don’t want to give you a formula for prayer. There are not three simple steps to better prayers. But praying effectively is not a matter of praying louder or using more “holy sounding” words. Matter of fact often in prayer we cannot even speak the words as we learn in **Romans 8:26**.
- ⇒ The **second** thing I don’t want to do is present myself as a model of what a prayer warrior should look like. I struggle with prayer just like you do. Like you, I am often guilty of wanting what the Father can give me, rather than wanting the Father Himself.

**In closing, may I remind you that the prayers of Jesus verbally reported in the Gospels are not many in number and are few in words; but the indications of his habit of intercession are abundant and convincing.**