

The Way to a Life of Intercession

by G.W. North

To become an intercessor, a man must be born of God, have the spirit of Christ, walk in the Spirit, and be led by the Spirit in liberty and without fear.

Scripture: Romans 8:14

Topics: "Intercession", "Spiritual Growth"

Description

G.W. North emphasizes the essential steps to becoming an intercessor, starting with being born of God and receiving the Spirit of adoption. He explains that a true intercessor must embody a Christ-like spirit, live by the law of the Spirit, and be led by the Spirit in freedom and nobility. The sermon highlights the importance of dying to sin and being continually led by the Spirit to fulfill the ministry of intercession, which is characterized by selflessness and a focus on others. North concludes that intercession is a divine calling that requires a deep understanding of one's own spiritual journey and the transformative power of the Holy Spirit.

Transcript

The steps by which a man becomes an intercessor are these:

1. He must be born of God Himself. The proof that this has taken place is that he will have received into his heart the Spirit of adoption, crying 'Abba, Father' within him. This is very necessary and fundamental to all the Spirit's future works or ministries in a man.
2. He must have the spirit of Christ; the only proof of this is that the man has a Christ-like spirit. Other than that, the fundamental change of spirit necessary to sonship has not taken place, and except this has happened no man can live the life of Jesus Christ. The Holy Spirit will not cry 'Abba, Father' unless the Son of the Father has come, lest a man copy and repeat the cry, and it be false.
3. He must live by the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus in order to be free from the law of sin and death. The new son of God has to live and walk in this world according to human / divine law, and he cannot do that if he is the victim of warring elements; it is not possible to live a divided life and be an intercessor. If a man is constantly struggling against his own bondage to sin he is not able to intercede for others, despite the fact that he may wish otherwise; he will be, because he must be, concerned about himself.

4. He must be after (Gr. 'down to') that is, concentrated upon, the Spirit. The walk in the Spirit requires all a man's attention; he must observe the Spirit's movings and ways; for this he must have the mind of the Spirit so that he may give his mind to this. No man can go after the Spirit if he is in two minds about it. The intercessor must be spiritually-minded and not carnally-minded. If a man minds his flesh and not the Spirit, his spirit will become concerned with and give its energies to the satisfying of his flesh; he cannot do otherwise.

5. He must know the effectiveness of the death of Christ in his mortal body so that it is brought to death; that is, rendered unresponsive to sin. Because of Christ's righteousness a man's spirit is alive, but it is not the source of that life; the Spirit of Christ in his spirit is the source of his life. He is not Christ, he has the spirit of Christ and in consequence is the image of Christ in spirit. By reason of this his body must be put to death; he must die very personally to the law and principles and workings of sin. The law of sin must be broken and replaced by the law of the life of Christ; the principle of sin must be neutralized and replaced by the principle of righteousness; the workings of sin must be stopped and expurgated from the body, and its members re-energized by the power of God. This is the mortal body's resurrection, called here quickening, which is to say, life-giving. This is the body's original purging, the initial death and resurrection by which men are made sons of God. This is the way God makes men free from sin, free from its dominion, free from its law, free from its principle and free from its workings in spirit, soul and body. By this a man is initiated into the life that, in the heart of God, is begotten unto intercession. Each one granted this experience is a possible intercessor, and if he perpetuates his freedom he will speedily become one.

This regeneration is completely comprehensive; it encompasses the whole man throughout the whole of his life on this earth in his present human estate, for it is entirely of God. But a man must not rely upon an initial experience to keep him in the state to which that experience brought him. The death by which sin was brought to an end in him was the death of Christ; this must be followed up by his own dying to sin constantly. Christ was dead to sin in all states of His existence on earth. He did not die to end sin in Himself, He died to bring it to an end in others. He died to sin once; as far as He was concerned He did not need to keep on dying to sin as do others, for He was dead to it all the time. The death He died was the death of sin for us; on our behalf He rendered it powerless, that is, as dead, so that it should not have part with us or have dominion over us. Having appropriated this to himself, a man must then know the continuing death of Christ; he must, through the Spirit, mortify (that is bring into death) the deeds of the body. Unless this is done he cannot live the life into which he was brought. In order to live the life that God calls life, that is, to be alive unto God, a man must be alive in spirit and in mind and in body.

6. He must be led by the Spirit. Granted that these first five steps have been taken, this one should not be difficult. The phrasing of this verse surely indicates that the viewpoint here is chiefly retrospective. Although it implies following, this word is not used because its true emphasis is 'having followed' up till now, to this point. It embraces the past, 'having been led', it includes the present, 'being led', it indicates the future, 'being continually led'. In terms of the exposition so far, Paul is saying this is how the Spirit leads, by these steps, and if you have followed Him, this is the kind of life you have; in spirit, mind and body you are free from sin and the flesh; you are spiritual, not merely spiritous. With unmistakable voice and undeniable intention he is telling us that only he who is led by the Spirit in this way, with these results, is a son of God.

7. He must be led in the liberty of the nobility into which all God's sons are born, and be without fear. The Spirit leads by impulsion rather than by compulsion. For the sons of God the 'must' of God is within a man's spirit; it is 'I must', not 'you must'; each son must know glorious liberty, or he will never be an

intercessor. Unless he has liberty to choose, he cannot be an intercessor as Christ is an intercessor; everything must be voluntary, even though at times to do God's will may cost him sweat like drops of blood. Being granted ability, a man must know liberty also; men who are slavish in mind, because they are bondslaves in spirit and habit-bound in body, cannot take position as intercessors. Although a man may know of it, and desire it, being aware of its fruits and rewards and coveting its power, no soul in bondage is free enough to intercede. Pray in hope it may and ought, but intercede it may not, because it cannot. A man must know he is neither in sin nor in death, nor in the flesh nor in debt to the flesh, nor in any way in bondage to the flesh, nor in fear about any of these things or their power -- he is God's free man. This is what the advent of the Spirit of adoption into his heart testified unto when He came crying His cry, authorizing the spirit of the man into whose body He came to cry it also.

These are the seven steps of the way along which the Holy Spirit leads to that highest and most blessed ministry unto which He Himself has been sent from the Father. Like Christ, on whose heels He has followed and with whom He is one, He has come to this earth under commission from the Father; He is the great helper. Primarily His present work is that of co-operation. He is here to assist the Father to bring forth His sons; the Father begets them, the Spirit bears them. Everyone of God's children must know and be able to say, as Christ the Son knew and was able to say, that he has come from God and goes to God.

It is not the intention of God to debar His sons from having some share in the bringing forth of His children. They cannot take part in their own birth, nor can they have any part in the actual birth process of others; each one has to be born from on high directly from God, as Jesus said. Nevertheless God grants all His children who will accept the privilege, the honour of sharing in the exercises of His Spirit as the hour of another's birth approaches. There is no birth without travail; there must be labour pains or birth pangs; no child has ever been born without causing sorrow to its mother. Jesus said a woman when she is in travail has sorrow, and as it is in the flesh, so it is in the Spirit. This is law in nature, whether it be human or divine, and it is in association with this law that the ministry of intercession has come into being. Intercession, in its highest form, is travail, the labour pains which precede birth. To have this knowledge is vital and instructive to the would-be intercessor. It is most impressive for any man to enter into an understanding of why the Spirit of God has led him this way, and to realize that his own personal blessing was not the only thing God had in mind.

When the craving for self-benefit dies in a man, he has reached a place of usefulness to God which he may never have dreamed of, save in his moments of most daring hope. One of the most wonderful things and highest compliments ever spoken about Christ was said by someone standing by His cross, 'He saved others, Himself He cannot save'. Nothing truer was ever spoken of Him. Others: always He thought of others. Others must be saved; it did not matter about Himself. He didn't care what happened to Him in the immediate. He was safe, and in His security He spent Himself entirely for others. The Holy Spirit can never forget that. He came from the Father through Jesus Christ, bent upon doing the Father's will, with this same concern and purpose of the spirit of Jesus Christ about Him -- others; and when He enters the spirits of men to be the Spirit of sonship in them, He speedily imbues them with this desire, and sets about educating and leading them on to the fulfilment of it within themselves.

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