

INTERCESSORY PRAYER - PART TWO INTERCESSION AS TEAM MINISTRY

Three Goals for Ministry Happening *within* Your Team

*(Ephesians 4:13 NKJV) "till we all come to **the unity of the faith** and of **the knowledge of the Son of God**, to a perfect man, to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ;"*

Goal 1 - Unity: A Command Obeyed and a Lifestyle Displayed

Unity is a word that is overused and under-practiced. God intends it to be a command obeyed and a lifestyle displayed. Intercessors should be bonded in such a way that adversity will never overcome them, and never cause them to take each other for granted. Intercessors in a team are each other's blessings.

Goal #2 - Filled with the Knowledge of His Will

Ephesians 4:13 invites us to come to *"the knowledge of the Son of God."* What does this mean? How will we apply it to our lives? As we spend time together understanding this term, we discover how we can be more like Jesus and more faithful to His desires for our lives. Then, we will see the full power of intercession.

*(Colossians 1:9-12 NKJV) "For this reason we also, since the day we heard it, do not cease to pray for you, and to ask **that you may be filled with the knowledge of His will in all wisdom and spiritual understanding**; {10} that you may walk worthy of the Lord, fully pleasing Him, being **fruitful in every good work** and **increasing in the knowledge of God**; {11} strengthened with all might, according to His glorious power, for all patience and longsuffering with joy; {12} giving thanks to the Father who has qualified us to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in the light."*

1. God is interested in making wise and spiritually discerning intercessors (Verse 9). Times of learning and Bible study together as a ministry team are required. They are not optional. Intercessors should do more than just gather for prayer. Biblical study and instruction is vital.
2. A worthy walk is a fruitful walk (Verse 10). We are to be *"fruitful in every good work."* This term is to be applied both to our inward and outward expressions of intercession ministry as a

team. It also applies to our individual works. The primary consideration here, as with any other portion of our lives, is to ask... Is the work *“fully pleasing Him?”*

3. Take note of the progression of faithfulness to His call in Verse 11; strength, patience, joy, then thanksgiving. The result will be an intercessory team in which the people are *“qualified partakers of the inheritance of the saints in the light.”*

Goal #3 - A Deeper Experience in God

This third goal is the most emotionally attractive, to be overwhelmed by the presence of God... to be smothered in the anointing and swept away by the joy. These are the results of prayer ministry to Him. Collectively, we benefit tremendously as we do this. We become living epistles of the holiness and awesome joys of worshipping God. Individually, we are forever changed. The greatest experiences we ever have are our encounters with God. One touch from His hand... one moment in His glory... One moment in the shower of His anointing... these are the greatest emotional gifts we could ever enjoy on this side of heaven.

When all three goals are achieved, we become what the Bible refers to as *“a perfect man.”* This perfect man is measured by *“the stature of the fullness of Christ”* (Ephesians 4:13). This speaks of our maturity as sons and daughters of God. We assess our maturity through the presence of (1) unity, (2) the knowledge of His will, and (3) the wonders of our ongoing experiences with Him (Ephesians 4:15 & 16).

Accomplishing our Purposes and Achieving our goals as a Team - How do we do it?

Three Identifying Ingredients

First Ingredient: TEACHING for Growth

Teaching for growth requires regular, structured time together, in which team members contribute their gifts to teach the Word to the group. This requires the pastor to be discerning in selecting members of the team to teach. (Be careful not to put a novice or

one who has bad doctrine or spiritual pride into this position.) Teaching may be in the form of topical instruction or devotional interaction. It might occur each time the intercessory team meets for planning or devotions.

Each team member should resist the temptation to dominate the teaching. A regular rotation of those who teach will bring fresh perspectives to the group. Guest teachers and facilitators may to be brought in, to bring perspectives not otherwise available.

Second Ingredient: LIVING for Community (The Intercession Team Neighborhood)

The Scriptures give us significant and precise instruction about the importance of the ministry team living as a community of God's people.

*(1 Corinthians 12:14-26 The New Living Translation) "Yes, the body has many different parts, not just one part. {15} If the foot says, "I am not a part of the body because I am not a hand," that does not make it any less a part of the body. {16} And if the ear says, "I am not part of the body because I am only an ear and not an eye," would that make it any less a part of the body? {17} Suppose the whole body were an eye--then how would you hear? Or if your whole body were just one big ear, how could you smell anything? {18} But God made our bodies with many parts, and he has put each part just where he wants it. {19} What a strange thing a body would be if it had only one part! {20} Yes, there are many parts, but only one body. {21} The eye can never say to the hand, "I don't need you." The head can't say to the feet, "I don't need you." {22} In fact, some of the parts that seem weakest and least important are really the most necessary. {23} And the parts we regard as less honorable are those we clothe with the greatest care. So we carefully protect from the eyes of others those parts that should not be seen, {24} while other parts do not require this special care. So God has put the body together in such a way that extra honor and care are given to those parts that have less dignity. {25} This makes for **harmony among the members, so that all the members care for each other equally.** {26} If one part suffers, all the parts suffer with it, and if one part is honored, all the parts are glad."*

- We grow up (mature, change, become more like Jesus).
- We are joined together (with everyone contributing to the group in the way God has designed.) The result is community, which grows and edifies itself. We care for each other equally. There

are no cliques, no bias or favoritism. We go out of our way to include everyone, to care for everyone, to love everyone in our ministry team. We become a ministry community.

- Our ministry community then broadcasts its “fullness” to the others. New members of the community are attracted, who enter into the same loop as those of us already involved.

The message broadcast is “*agape*” - *God’s kind of love!*

A Neighborhood in the Spirit

Community is always foremost to God. He wants the intercessory team to be community. He wants to cultivate the reality of community in an ever deepening sense. This will result in us accomplishing our goals, both internally and externally. It will bring effective growth, resulting in effective community, with a profound experience of the presence of God. We will go to the next level - the next level of the expression of His love.

Each time the team meets for planning, we meet as a community that submits itself to God, and to each other. We form a neighborhood in the Spirit. The community enters into the exercise and reflection of “*the unity of the Spirit in the bonds of peace*” (Ephesians 4:3). Ways to accomplish this could include the following.

1. **Group Devotional Interaction** - As we meet, we are to involve ourselves in group devotions concerning the things of God.
2. **Accountability Partners** - Every member of the team should have a set time to speak and pray with another member (same gender only) to share their lives with each other, and submit to be accountable to each other. This will take time to develop. We do this by prayerfully submitting one issue to each other and working through that issue until a door opens up for another. There can be no manipulation or pride in this effort or it will destroy the unity of the team.
3. **Covenant Fellowship** - We are to establish and carry out a covenant commitment to be a family of prayer warriors for the seasons we are in the team together. There is to be no spirit of judgment and no rejection. We are to accept each other as a valuable and necessary to our covenant ministry family.

*(Ephesians 1:3-6 NKJV) “Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places in Christ, {4} just as He chose us in Him before the foundation of the world, **that we should be holy and without blame before Him in love, {5} having predestined us to adoption as sons by Jesus Christ to Himself, according to the good pleasure of His will, {6} to the praise of the glory of His grace, by which He has made us accepted in the Beloved.”***

*Take notice of the significance within these thoughts: “**That we should be holy and without blame before Him in love... to the praise of the glory of His grace, by which He has made us accepted in the Beloved.**”*

Third Ingredient: PRAYING for His Presence

(God comes in response to our cries for His presence.)

Consistently strong, anointed intercession and other ways to pray ought to be foundational to every ministry. We are called by God, collectively and individually, to be leaders who pray fervently, as we live and work and prepare for ministry.

God only obligates Himself to come down among us when He hears our cries to going up to Him.

*(Exodus 3:1-8 NLT) “One day Moses was tending the flock of his father-in-law, Jethro, the priest of Midian, and he went deep into the wilderness near Sinai, the mountain of God. {2} Suddenly, the angel of the LORD appeared to him as a blazing fire in a bush. Moses was amazed because the bush was engulfed in flames, but it didn’t burn up. {3} “Amazing!” Moses said to himself. “Why isn’t that bush burning up? I must go over to see this.” {4} When the LORD saw that he had caught Moses’ attention, God called to him from the bush, “Moses! Moses!” “Here I am!” Moses replied. {5} “Do not come any closer,” God told him. “Take off your sandals, for you are standing on holy ground.” {6} Then he said, “I am the God of your ancestors--the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob.” When Moses heard this, he hid his face in his hands because he was afraid to look at God. {7} Then the LORD told him, “You can be sure I have seen the misery of my people in Egypt. **I have heard their cries** for deliverance from their harsh slave drivers. Yes, I am aware of their suffering. {8} **So I have come** to rescue them from the Egyptians and lead them out of Egypt into their own good and spacious land. It is a land flowing with milk and honey--the land where the Canaanites, Hittites, Amorites, Perizzites, Hivites, and Jebusites live.”*

“I have heard their cries... So I have come”

Three specific experiences will follow our prayers, *if* we use our prayer time to seek the face of God.

1. **We will experience an ever-increasing sense of holiness.** This will radically transform our individual relationships with God. It will forever change our intercessory ministries.
2. **We will find a true spirit of repentance to be among us.** This will liberate us to be all that God wants us to be, both as a team and as individuals. It will forever change our abilities and desires to express His agape love.
3. **We will be overwhelmed with the fire of God.** It will fill our hearts and ignite a zeal we previously only dreamed about. It will forever change the power and anointing in our lives!

A Taste of Heaven and a Breakthrough on Earth

We can only imagine what will follow after we have encountered these three experiences, above. We will travel into deep places with God and with each other. We will have a taste of heaven. Our lives will be empowered to pray that taste to others!

- **You won't see the angels until you are filled with a sense of holiness.**
- **You won't hear them until you are filled with a sense of repentance and humility.**
- **You won't sing in concert with the angels until you are filled with the fires of revival.**

We will break through. We will break out. There will be the sound of a mighty army. The Lord will go before us and lead us to great victory! We all need a visitation from God, and we need it now!

Here we are Lord. Send us O God, and we will pray and sing the nations to the footstool of Your throne, where You can receive their praise. Lord, sweep over our souls and melt us to the ground. Come Lord Jesus. Visit us now!

*(Isaiah 49:13 NKJV) "Sing, O heavens! Be joyful, O earth! And **break out in singing**, O mountains! For the LORD has comforted His people, And will have mercy on His afflicted."*