

JCI #166 November 2015 Just Checking In Your Greatest Prayer Warriors

We are coming to the conclusion of a 25 message series on the ministry of the Holy Spirit in the life of every believer. I was so blessed and encouraged as I studied the intercessory ministry of the Spirit that I am compelled to share it with you. May this glorious truth warm your heart and fill you with confidence, joy and thanksgiving as Thanks Giving Day approaches.

Who are your greatest prayer warriors? Who prays for you most personally, fervently and faithfully?

No doubt there are several fellow believers who remember you in prayer regularly. And there is no doubt that God answers those prayers continually as well. Paul frequently asked his fellow believers for their prayers and had confidence that God would answer those prayers for Paul's benefit and blessing. (Philippians 1:19 for I know that through your prayers and the help given by the Spirit of Jesus Christ, what has happened to me will turn out for my deliverance. Philemon 1:22 And one thing more: Prepare a guest room for me, because I hope to be restored to you in answer to your prayers.) And you no doubt thank God and thank those who pray for you as you see those prayers answered so specifically and wonderfully. But I have to ask myself the question: "Do I ever thank the Lord Jesus and the Holy Spirit for their perfect, passionate and unceasing prayers for me?" For there is no arguing the fact that our greatest prayer warriors are the Son of God and the Spirit of God. Let's examine the Scriptures together on this wonderful theme.

Who are My Greatest Prayer Warriors? The Son of God and the Spirit of God.

The Prayer Ministry of the Son of God for His People

His intercession - John 17:9-24 Personal and specific for protection, unity, joy, holiness, fruitfulness, and reunion in heaven

[9] *I am praying for them.* I am not praying for the world but for those whom you have given me, for they are yours. [10] All mine are yours, and yours are mine, and I am glorified in them. [11] And I am no longer in the world, but they are in the world, and I am coming to you. *Holy Father, keep them in your name,* which you have given me, *that they may be one,* even as we are one. [12] While I was with them, I kept them in your name, which you have given me. I have guarded them, and not one of them has been lost except the son of destruction, that the Scripture might be fulfilled. [13] But now I am coming to you, and these things I speak in the world, *that they may have my joy fulfilled in themselves.* [14] I have given them your word, and the world has hated them because they are not of the world, just as I am not of the world. [15] I do not ask that you take them out of the world, but that you *keep them from the evil one.* [16] They are not of the world, just as I am not of the world. [17] *Sanctify them in the truth;* your word is truth. [18] As you sent me into the world, so I have sent them into the world. [19] And for their sake I consecrate myself, *that they also may be sanctified in truth.*

[20] "I do not ask for these only, but also *for those who will believe in me* through their word, [21] *that they may all be one,* just as you, Father, are in me, and I in you, that they also may be in us, so *that the world may believe* that you have sent me. [22] The glory that you have given me I have given to them, *that they may be one* even as we are one, [23] I in them and you in me, that they may become perfectly one, so *that the world may know* that you sent me and loved them even as you loved me. [24] Father, *I desire that they also, whom you have given me, may be with me where I am,* to see my glory that you have given me because you loved me before the foundation of the world. (ESV)

Past Prayer: John 17 is the most wonderful example of the intercessory prayer ministry of the Son of God. Just before going to the cross as our sacrifice, He exercises His High Priestly ministry of intercession for his disciples both present and future. This prayer was, and is, and will be fully answered to the Father's glory.

His heavenly intercession

Present Prayer:

Today our Savior continues to intercede on our behalf, but this focus is for our continual forgiveness.

1 John 2:1 My little children, I am writing these things to you so that you may not sin. But **if anyone does sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous.** [2] He is the propitiation for our sins, and not for ours only but also for the sins of the whole world. (ESV)

Hebrews 7:23 The former priests were many in number, because they were prevented by death from continuing in office, [24] but he holds his priesthood permanently, because he continues forever. [25] Consequently, **he is able to save to the uttermost those who draw near to God through him, since he always lives to make intercession for them.** (ESV)

The devil constantly tempts us to sin. He deceives, blinds, seduces, tempts, encourages, and urges us to sin. And the moment we do the "accuser of the brethren" (Rev 12:10)

The Prayer Ministry of the Spirit of God for His People

His earthly intercession

Romans 8:18-30 THE THREE GREAT GROANS - The Hope-filled Birth-pangs of Creation, Christian and Comforter

[18] For I consider that the sufferings of this present time are not worth comparing with **the glory that is to be revealed to us.** [19] For the **creation waits with eager longing** for the revealing of the sons of God. [20] For the creation was subjected to futility, not willingly, but because of him who subjected it, in hope [21] that the creation itself will be set free from its bondage to corruption and obtain the freedom of the glory of the children of God. [22] For we know that **the whole creation has been groaning together in the pains of childbirth until now.**

[23] And not only the creation, but **we ourselves, who have the firstfruits of the Spirit, groan inwardly as we wait eagerly for adoption as sons, the redemption of our bodies.** [24] For in this hope we were saved. Now hope that is seen is not hope. For who hopes for what he sees? [25] But if we hope for what we do not see, we wait for it with patience.

[26] **Likewise the Spirit helps us in our weakness. For we do not know what to pray for as we ought, but the Spirit himself intercedes for us with groanings too deep for words.** [27] **And he who searches hearts knows what is the mind of the Spirit, because** [28] And we know that for those who love God all things work together for good, for those who are called according to his purpose. [29] For those whom he foreknew he also predestined to be conformed to the image of his Son, in order that he might be the firstborn among many brothers. [30] And those whom he predestined he also called, and those whom he **the Spirit intercedes for the saints according to the will of God.** called he also justified, and those whom he justified he also glorified.

In this amazing passage we see illustrated the hope-filled anguish of a woman in labor whose pain is indescribable yet hope-filled and survivable in view of the coming joy at the end. Creation groans for its coming glory, the Christian for his coming glory and the Spirit for our coming glory.

The Spirit's intercession is based on two things - the depth of our need and the depth of His love.

OUR NEED

WEAK

He helps us in our weakness.

The word for weakness could be rendered "feebleness." It speaks of a weakness so severe that only outside intervention will ever meet the need.

IGNORANT

We do not know what to pray for as we ought.

This verse says that knowing God's complete and perfect will and praying for it to be done is absolutely essential. But we don't know what God's complete and perfect will is moment by moment. Even the great apostle Paul prayed for relief from the thorn in 2 Corinthians 12:9 and yet God willed the thorn remain and Paul learn humility and dependence on the Lord through it. While Paul did not know God's will, The Spirit did and was interceding continually to accomplish the Father's will in Paul's life. We need that same intercession in our lives because we are feeble and ignorant! That is a humbling yet essential truth to embrace.

HIS LOVE

1) This inaudible intercession is continual and uninterrupted! Until we are glorified He never ceases to pray for us so that the completion of the process of our sanctification is guaranteed.

2) This intercession is perfect! It is in perfect accord with God's will. The Spirit never has to pray "If it is Your will, Father..." since the Spirit knows the Father's will completely and perfectly and only desires and prays what is perfectly in accord with it, thus guaranteeing the outworking of everything will be for God's glory and our ultimate good. Romans 8:28 begins with the word "And..." to show that it is the answers to the intercession of the Spirit that guarantees this good outcome. It is not just the Father's sovereignty but also the Spirit's intercession that is the cause of our confidence that all things will be worked together for our ultimate Christ-likeness.

3) This intercession is passionate! Remember the illustration of labor pain groanings? This groaning indicates the deepest passion and the most severe pain all endured for two reasons... the depth of the need of the one prayed for and the depth of the love of the One who is praying! Rarely do we experience this level of pain-filled praying. But when we do, it is because of the greatness of the need of the one we pray for and the greatness of our love for them. We know that only God can meet the need and we cannot bear to think that the need will be left unmet... and so we agonize in prayer for them. Now consider that the Holy Spirit prays with this depth of passionate love for you every moment of every day. How great must be our need! How great must be His love for us! How wonderful that the Spirit of God is so fully involved in our lives that He intercedes for us, covering every single aspect of our lives in perfect, passionate and continual intercessory prayers! That the Father would choose us, the Son redeem us, and the Spirit intercede for us to guarantee the Father's purpose will be fully completed in our lives... it is beyond explanation. As John says in 1 John 3:1.... "Look at the kind of love the Father has lavished on us!" Look at it and wonder!

Self Check

1. Am I aware of my deep need for the Spirit's continual intercession?
2. What most amazes me about the Spirit's intercession on my behalf?
3. Am I confident in God's purposes being fulfilled in my life as a result of the Spirit's intercession?

For Further Study

REVIEW

Who? The Holy Spirit intercedes for Believers

Your Heavenly Intercessor - Jesus

1 John 2:1-2 Heb 7:25 Jn 17:9-15

Your Earthly Intercessor - Holy Spirit

Romans 8:12-30

Why? Because we are weak, helpless, ignorant, loved, and treasured

Romans 8:12-30

8:26 Weakness - feebleness - utter helplessness

8:26 Ignorance - "do not know..."

8:26 Necessity - "as we must..." intercession is essential

Luke 22:31-34 Peter, weak and ignorant

How? With the deepest passion, urgency, and wisdom imaginable

Romans 8:26-27

8:26 Passionate - deep, unutterable yearning

8:27 Perfect - according to God's will - omniscient, holy

Our two greatest prayer warriors are the Son and the Spirit - the Son who intercedes for our continual forgiveness and acceptance, and the Spirit who continually intercedes for our weakness and ignorance of God's will.

"Father, I praise You for the intercession of Christ at Your right hand that guarantees my forgiveness is continual. I bless you for the intercession of the Spirit within me that guarantees my sanctification is inevitable. I am so weak, so ignorant, so needy, and yet You love me so much that you never cease working in and on me to bring me home to be with You in Your likeness. I am ashamed of my lack of passionate love for You. You are worthy of all love, honor, glory and praise. Fill me with a renewed mind and a rekindled heart on fire for You and Your glorious love and faithfulness. Make me like Your Son more and more each day. I fully depend on Your grace, Your Son's atonement, and Your Spirit's intercession to bring it to completion in me, all for Your glory. I pray in the name of Christ alone, AMEN."

Remember, you are very special to us and we pray for you.

Living with leaving in view.... John 9:4

Ron& Val

Seeing The Invisible, embracing The Unapproachable, declaring The Unexplainable,
changed by The Immutable, running after The Irresistible
with inexhaustible joy in our inexpressible sorrows,
spending our time on eternity,
owning nothing yet possessing everything
that matters and lasts.
We are Pilgrims in Paradox.
Welcome to THE JOURNEY