

Revive Us

Individual Studies

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Adapted from:

Revive Us: A Heart Ready for Revival
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Personal Study 2 – Week 3

Interceding

Harriet Ross Tubman was born enslaved around 1820 on a Maryland plantation, and she resolved to do something about it. After a daring escap, she found freedom in the North, but *her* freedom was only the beginning. Harriet was called to make the way for others to freedom as well.

You may have never thought of an intercessor in this way, but that is exactly what the word means. Intercessors stand in the gap to help others move across it to safety. They give time and energy to help others.

God An intercessor is someone who stands before the Lord on behalf of others.

Who has interceded for you in some way? How did he or she do that?

Who do you feel compelled to intercede for now? How?

Read Luke 4:18 and Romans 8:1-4. How has Jesus acted as an intercessor?

Read Galatians 5:1, 13-18 and 1 Timothy 2:1-6. Since Jesus has already provided the freedom we need, why must we now intercede for others?

An Intercessor Knows God

Read Genesis 18:16-19. What do you learn about Abraham's relationship with God?

Genesis 18 reveals the first example of intercessory prayer. When you look closer, something important happens before that intercessory moment takes place – Abraham was known by God and seeking to know God. Verse 19 contains God's words about Abraham: "For I have chosen him." Another translation of the Hebrew can be "For I have known Him" or "For he is my intimate friend." God called Abraham a friend. That's a title not to be taken lightly (James 2:23)

Who in your life would say embraces his or her calling to be God's friend? What about Him or her makes you think that?

Do you embrace your invitation to be God's friend? What does/would that look like in your life?

Many hunger for spiritual vitality, but they look in all the wrong places. Some wear crystals, keep stones in their pockets, spend money on books, gurus, or coaches. Still, some consult horoscopes or transcendence through any number of supposedly spiritual practices. It is reasoned they have tried religion but want something more. Sadly, for others, Christianity has become a check list of things to do – Sunday has become a day simply to check off on a calendar

Why does intercession necessitate friendship with Jesus? (John 14:6)

The gospel requires no additions nor alterations. Anything or anyone adding to the gospel – anything added to a relationship with Jesus – is no longer Christianity (Galatians 1:6-9). It is entirely possible that those who search for something more than Jesus, sadly, never really met Him in the first place. When we meet Jesus, nothing more is desired or wanted.

Read Matthew 7:21-23. Is Jesus real to you? How do you know?

Knowing about Jesus isn't enough – never has been. Faith in Christ is not just increasing a collection of knowledge about Him. Those who have been born again spend time with Jesus because want to know His heart. True intercessors have conversations with God because they want to grow in their relationship with Him and do His will.

*You'll never be an intercessor without spending time in
God's presence*

What are some activities you are tempted to choose over spending time with God?

What is the danger in those temptations?

Being known as and called a friend of God requires being wise and intentional with our time. It is said time is the gift you can give but not hold on to. Time is a limited resource that you are asked to allocate each day. Friendship grows through time and regular intimacy, so it's worth looking at your schedule to see where your time goes. A friend of God who is growing in faith and interceding for others knows God – because they spend time with Him.

An Intercessor Stands in the Gap

Read Genesis 18:20-33. What did Abraham step forward to ask God?

How would you characterize Abraham's question of God in this situation?

(Circle all that apply)

impertinent

prideful

courageous

faithful

untrusting

trusting

humble

surprising

At first glance, it might seem like Abraham has some audacity to approach God so boldly. Deeper examination reveals God's desire for Abraham to press into Him through prayer. God expected Abraham to dialogue with Him, and even expects that from you, me, and everyone Jesus has freed from sin's bondage.

What factors or feelings might have held Abraham back from interceding for people in this way?

What factors or feelings hold you back from interceding for revival on behalf of others?

Intercessors need to be strengthened, because they will:

- Take the arrows of the enemy
- Fight the battle
- Plead with God to move
- Bear the burden of the people
- Risk their own lives
- Keep the flame lit and stoke revival

In Isaiah 59, the nation was falling apart, and God was looking for someone tough to intercede. Read Isaiah 59:14-16. What kind of a culture did Isaiah experience and describe?

In Isaiah's day, religious leaders were corrupt. Conspiracies ruled the day. Rios and violence filled the streets. City officials were wolves in sheep's clothing. The poor and oppressed were being robbed on a regular basis. There was no justice.

How did God respond?

When there is not an intercessor, God Himself becomes an Intercessor.

Jesus took the form of human flesh and stood in the gap because God couldn't find an intercessor. Jesus came because no human could adequately or effectively fulfill that role. We mess up. We are weak. We are insufficient and incapable. We fall short. We can't save ourselves.

So, God sent His Son, Jesus, to stand in the gap when He went to the cross. He continues to stand in the gap and intercede for us still today.

Read Hebrews 7:25. What does Jesus live to do?

On your own, you cannot be tough enough to take the arrows of the enemy, bear others burdens, fight the battles, risk your lives, plead with God to move, keep the flame lit, and stoke revival. On your own power, you cannot be the intercessor the world needs, *but Jesus can through you.*

When the words escape you in what to pray, the Spirit will intercede for you. When you don't know how to pray, the Holy Spirit does . . . and will.

This is the gospel. We have One who intercedes for us. We have One who absorbed our sins. We have One who died in our place.

Read Acts 1:8. What does the Holy Spirit intercede for you to receive?

Prayer, powerful prayer, is the key to a victorious Christian life. Our assistance or input is not needed by God. God desires our attention. He is looking for men and women who will commit to pray. Will you be the one to tell others to mind the gap? Will you be the one to stand in the gap and intercede for others to receive revival?