



Training Series for Intercessors

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Introduction to Intercession: The Basics

Changing your point of view

By Cher'rie Marsh

What do you think of when you hear the word *intercessor*? I've been a Christian for about 11 years now. In that time, I've heard people within the church describe an intercessor as:

- A saint who's lopsided in his or her spiritual walk, too busy praying to be any earthly good.
- Someone who doesn't evangelize, but who prays for evangelism.
- A spiritual giant. Treat an intercessor with respect, but secretly say to yourself, "I could never have a walk like that. I'm not good enough."
- A person who treats God like Santa Claus.
- Someone who approaches God with the church's needs.

Only the last definition comes anywhere close to the truth.

I would like to share with you my mental picture of an intercessor:

1. An old man so enraptured by God's presence during their many walks together that – one day – God simply takes him away! (Genesis 5:21-23) *Enoch*
2. A man building an ark because God told him to (Genesis 6:8-17). *Noah*
3. Another man who pled with his friend God over the impending destruction of Sodom (Genesis 18). *Abraham*
4. Another man pleading to save the people God called by his name, even offering his own life in exchange (Exodus 32). *Moses*
5. Men asking God to send more intercessors (Ezekiel 22:30 & Isaiah 6).
6. A man on his knees interceding for his people to be released from captivity (Daniel 9:1-19). *Daniel*
7. I see untold men and women in their secret chambers, praying for a revival that will sweep the world.
8. I see an old woman praying for me as I play at her feet. I listen as she talks about a God who is her best friend – a friend she did everything with – and watch as she nods in and out of sleep between her adventure stories with God. *Corrie ten Boom*
9. **I see a broken, bruised and bleeding man hanging on a tree in order to save all mankind.** *Our precious Savior, Jesus*

Each of these people is an example of intercession. I can think of no greater goal for myself than to walk even half as closely with God as these mighty men and women.

But what exactly is intercession?

Webster's dictionary defines intercession for us this way:

1: the act of interceding; to come into a situation by way of hindrance or modification between parties with a view to reconciling differences: Mediate

Mediate:

1: occupying a middle position

2 a: middle position, **b:** exhibiting indirect causation, connection, or relation

All mediation needs a representative, or agent...

Representative:

1: serving to represent

2 a: standing or acting for another especially through delegated authority, **b:** of, based on, or constituting a government in which the many are represented by persons chosen from among them, usually by election

Represent:

1: to bring clearly before the mind, to serve as a sign or symbol of, to portray or exhibit, to serve as the counterpart or image of to take the place of in some respect

2a: to act in the place of or for, usually by legal right, **b:** to serve especially in a legislative body by delegated authority usually resulting from election, to describe as having a specified character or quality, to serve as a specimen, example, or instance of

3 a: to form an image or representation of in the mind **b:** (1) to apprehend (an object) by means of an idea (2) to recall in memory

Agent:

1: one that acts or exerts power

2: a means or instrument by which a guiding intelligence achieves a result

3: one who is authorized to act for, or in the place of another, as **a:** a representative, emissary, or official of a government <crowns agent> <federal agent> **b:** one engaged in undercover activities (as espionage), Spy <secret agent> **c:** a business representative (as of an athlete or entertainer) <a theatrical agent>

I am reviewing these definitions because they are so important in defining intercession.

So, a good definition of an intercessor is this:

Someone who comes into a situation to mediate between God and his creation. Someone who wants to reconcile their differences, and chooses to occupy the middle position.

Someone who serves as a sign or symbol of another party. Someone who forms the very image or representation of God; someone who is authorized to act for – or in the place of – another man: as emissary, or official of a government of the king of heaven; a representative.

You too can touch the Lord's face!

Intercession happens in our courts everyday. If you have ever bought a house through a real-estate agent, you have experienced the work of an earthly intercessor. If you have ever connected a prospective buyer or seller at work, you have been an earthly intercessor.

In this day and age we have over-spiritualized the art of intercession. God help us, but we have decided that only the spiritual giants intercede. It seems to require a mystical talent that others have, and so we just say, "I'm just not spiritual enough, so I'll leave it to someone else to do it." We read books about intercessors and say, "Maybe they could do that, but I just don't have that kind of relationship with God." Or, "Maybe one day I'll be able to do that, but I'm just a baby compared to them."

Most often we choose to feel sad rather than seeking God for this kind of relationship, rather than refusing to be satisfied with anything less. Oh that the house of God would wake up and see that he longs to walk with every believer this way! He is the same yesterday, today and forever. You too can walk as the godly men of old have. You too can hear his voice. You too can know his deepest, most intimate feelings.

You need only seek him with all of your heart, and desire to touch his face.

It's why you were created!

Then God said, "Let us make man in our image, in our likeness, and let them rule over the fish of the sea and the birds of the air, over the livestock, over all the earth, and over all the creatures that move along the ground." So God created man in his own image, in the image of God he created him; male and female he created them (Genesis 1:26-27).

If you review the definitions, you will see that being 'an image' is very much a part of representing something and, therefore, of being a representative of God. And, being a representative has a lot to do with intercession.

Based on the previous scripture reference, it is safe to say that we were created to be God's intercessors for this earth. However, since Adam sinned and we fell short of God's design for our destiny, Jesus had to come into this world in human flesh to fulfill our role, making him the one true intercessor (1 Timothy 2:5).

When Jesus left, he gave us the same glory that the Father had given him (John 17:22-23).

⁵Thomas said to him, "Lord, we don't know where you are going, so how can we know the way?"

⁶Jesus answered, "I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me. ⁷If you really knew me, you would know my Father as well. From now on, you do know him and have seen him."

⁸Philip said, "Lord, show us the Father and that will be enough for us."

⁹Jesus answered: "Don't you know me, Philip, even after I have been among you such a long time? Anyone who has seen me has seen the Father. How can you say, 'Show us the Father'?" ¹⁰Don't you believe that I am in the Father, and that the Father is in me? The words I say to you are not just my own. Rather, it is the Father, living in me, who is doing his work. ¹¹Believe me when I say that I am in the Father and the Father is in me; or at least believe on the evidence of the miracles themselves. ¹²I tell you the truth, anyone who has faith in me will do what I have been doing. He will do even greater things than these, because I am going to the Father. ¹³And I will do whatever you ask in my name, so that the Son may bring glory to the Father. ¹⁴You may ask me for anything in my name, and I will do it.

¹⁵"If you love me, you will obey what I command. ¹⁶And I will ask the Father, and he will give you another Counselor to be with you forever— ¹⁷the Spirit of truth. The world cannot accept him, because it neither sees him nor knows him. But you know him, for he lives with you and will be in you (John 14:5-17).

As you can see, Jesus was trying to tell his disciples (who wanted to see the Father) that he was the very image of the Father.

In verses 12-14, he then tells the disciples that they will do what Jesus did and more. In this passage, Jesus states that he and the Father "are one." In John 17, he repeats this in a prayer, stating once more that he and the Father "are one." He prays that his believers will be one as he and the Father are one, and that we will be one with Jesus and Jesus will be one with God. Jesus states that this was his glory, given to him by God.

Now, bear with me on this...

- God is the originator, the beginning
- Jesus is the very image of God
- The church is the image of Jesus on earth
- The believer is the image of the church

Hallelujah! We are one with each other just as Jesus is one with God the Father. When we remain in him, we are growing into the image of God (God's representatives here on earth).

Sometimes fallible, sometimes a mess, our tendency is to fall very short of that image. But, for whatever reason, God chose to make us in his image. Being that image is intercession. Representing Jesus Christ to a lost and dying world is why we, the church, were created, and why believers were born into the spirit. We can be that image in what we say, what we do and how we live. But, for this class, I want to show you how to be that image in the way we pray to the Father for a lost and suffering world as well as for the church – for its unity and its life.

Introduction to the Secret Place

Knowing the One you have chosen to represent

If we are truly going to be an image, a representative, of the Most High, we need to know whom we are called to represent in prayer.

Webster defines **intimacy** as: the state of being by inflection mated, or to be made known; familiarity; the quality or state of being familiar; a state of close relationship, an absence of ceremony with one with whom you know well; an informal act or expression; close acquaintance with something or someone, revealing something of a personal or private nature.

I am about to bring you into a place so sweet and treasured with me. A place so intimate that I hesitate at first to do so. I offer you an invitation to my secret chambers with my Father and the lover of my soul. I bring you here not to brag, because he warned us well against that (Matthew 6:5-14). Besides, it would be embarrassing for to me to do so. What I want to do is to show you what my Secret Place looks like so you can create a place of your own for the Father.

You see, you can never be effective as an intercessor until you know him; you can never know him until you have spent time with him; and to spend time with your Lover you need a Secret Place.

Secret Place is used in the Bible seven times...

Psalm 91:1-2 ...

1 He that dwelleth in the secret place of the Most High shall abide under the shadow of the Almighty.

2 I will say of the LORD, He is my refuge and my fortress: my God; in him will I trust.

We see two things in this passage. 1) There is a Secret Place. 2) If you dwell there, you will live in the shadow of the Almighty. Therefore you can say, "He is my refuge and my fortress: my God; in him will I trust." Have you ever been able to say that of anyone you don't know well?

1. Secret Place in Hebrew means-cether {say'-ther} or (fem.) cithrah (De 32:38), {sith-raw'} covering, shelter, hiding place, secrecy, hiding place, shelter, secret place.
2. Shadow in Hebrew is pronounced tsel {tsale}-**b**) shadow, shade (as protection)
3. Almighty-Shadday {shad-dah'-ee}-almighty, most powerful Shaddai, the Almighty (of God)

So, the verse could be translated as:

1 He who dwells in the secret place of the Most High will remain stable and fixed under the shadow of the Almighty [whose power no foe can withstand].

2 I will say of the Lord, He is my Refuge and my Fortress, my God; on Him I lean and rely, and in Him I [confidently] trust.

Jesus is in the Secret Place

Psalm 18:11 – He made [shiyth -to set and appointed, fixed, and set his mind to] darkness [choshek-darkness and obscurity] his **secret place**[cether {say'-ther} or (fem.) cithrah (De 32:38), {sith-raw'}-hiding place, shelter, secret place] his pavilion [cukkah-booth (rude or temporary shelter)] round about [cabyb {saw-beeb'} or (fem.) cabybah {seb-ee-baw'}-in the circuit, from every side] him [were] dark [cheshkah-darkness, obscure, low] waters [mayim-of danger, violence, transitory things, refreshment (fig.)] [and] thick clouds [ab {awb} (masc. and fem.)-thicket (as refuge)].

This verse bothered me until I studied it! God through prophecy is telling us that he set Jesus in the obscurity. The darkness in his secret place is a temporary shelter that is encircled on every side by danger and obscurity. Inside, there is refreshment and refuge. Praise The Lord!

In that Secret Place, we will find Jesus!

I first learned about the Secret Place from Corrie Ten Boom, about six months before she died. She talked about her own Secret Place, and then laid hands upon me, asking the Lord to set me aside for his work. At age 24, I met the Lord in my Secret Place and turned my life over to him. We've walked more than a decade together, and I can call him my Best Friend, my Confidante, my Prize and my Joy. I strain my ears daily to hear his voice. I desire his heart, his emotions, his compassion, his joy, his anger and his pain. I desire to be his friend. He is so good because, even though I fall short of his calling, he never ceases to share with me his heart and who he is.

Praise God that the Secret Place is so vast and deep that I can come again and again. And so can you. I've committed myself to press in, to refuse to be content with a life that doesn't know him whom I've been called to represent. Are you?

Step 1: Be Still and Listen for His Voice

Intimacy is Learned

It takes time to become intimate with another person! The same is true of your relationship with the Lord.

For those of you who are married... When you first met your spouse, did you know everything there was to know about them and decide that you would marry them before you even saw them? Of course not! Your relationship developed over time. You walked together and talked together and laughed together. You held hands. And sometimes you probably just sat together staring at each other and enjoying the love you felt for each other. Perhaps you watched a sunset. Perhaps you lay on the grass and watched the clouds pass by overhead. One thing is certain: You learned to enjoy each other's company, you build up trust, and you began to run to each other in times of trouble.

Intimacy with God is no different! Getting to know God begins with being still in his presence, and looking him in the face.

Daniel 11:32 b (KJV) says, "but the people that do know their God shall be strong, and do exploits."

Intimacy does not occur when one person does all the talking. Intercession then should not begin with a talk (or asking) session. Intimacy begins when we learn to enjoy the Lord's company. So let's learn the joy of finding our Secret place – of finding Jesus within the Secret Place – before we go on. Remember that Jesus often whispers before he shouts. The goal of this step, then, isn't to approach God about the needs of others, but simple to be *with him*.

I remember when he first brought me to this step. I had been in the habit of barging into the Secret Place with my list of needs. I barely even said 'hi' before I began. I felt him patiently listen to each and every need, but then I sensed his disquiet. I was concerned, so I asked him what was wrong. I heard in my heart: "Do you always barge into a conversation (even when there is no emergency) without seeing if your friend is talking to someone else first? Why then do you not extend the same courtesy to me?"

My jaw hung open! I had never considered that perhaps I should just come into our Secret Place and say nothing at all; that I should just wait to see what he was doing before I jumped in with my prayer requests.

So began my time of learning to be still, and knowing my God!

Psalm 46:10:

Be still [raphah -to sink down; relax, abate; withdraw; to let drop, abandon, relax, refrain, forsake; to be quiet], and know [yada`-to learn to know, be acquainted with ; to perceive and see, find out and discern ; to recognize, admit, acknowledge, confess ; to know by experience] that I [am] God [elohiym {el-o-heem'}the (true) God]; I will **be** exalted among the nations, I will **be** exalted in the earth.

Baby Steps

Don't be hard on yourself. Take baby steps first. It takes time to learn to run with the horses of war. If you train to run a marathon, you may only be able to run for five minutes at first. Over the course of a few months, you can run for *miles*. Give yourself time to grow.

One Step at a Time

Please don't rush ahead! Learn this step, and learn it well, before you progress. Do each step for at least three minutes, using your three-minute egg timer.

Step 1. Let go of your worries

Release your desire to hurry. Let go of your "to do" lists, your anxiety about tomorrow.

Step 2. Present yourself

Surrender to the Lord with empty hands and a prepared mind for use in prayer. Surrender yourself as a living sacrifice to God, holy and acceptable to him (Romans 12:1). Lie down on the floor if it helps. Completely surrender to him.

Step 3. Wait!

Just wait. Be still. Quiet your mind. Don't speak or think words. This is a time for silence – to listen to the heart of God. Listen for his heartbeat. He promises in Proverbs 8:17: "I love those who love **me**; and those who **seek me** find **me**." So wait until he joins you.

I have found in my own walk that this step prevents religiosity. See what his day has been like. Then talk about your requests. Now don't become so bogged down with legalism that you can't ever see him without stillness, because in an emergency there **is** room to barge in (Hebrews 4:16). But in this verse there is a clarifier: "**There to receive help in time of trouble.**"

Step 4. Recognize

...that this may take practice!

I remember that this step took me four months, 30 minutes at a time, in order to sit still for just three minutes. You may have an easier time of it; but those who know me know that I am a ball of energy that is constantly on the move! So I had a real hard time of it.

Step 5. Remember that God is waiting for you!

I believe that God is more concerned with this step than any other.

His interest since the beginning of time was fellowship with man! It was his motive for all of creation. He paid a high price for it in his only Son!

If you allow it to, this step can:

Open the very gates of heaven.

Renew your strength.

Give you the ability to rise above adversity.

Allow you to run with the horses of war without growing weary.

Enable you to walk with the Lord without fainting.

*“but those who hope in the Lord
will renew their strength.
They will soar on wings like eagles;
they will run and not grow weary,
they will walk and not be faint” (Isaiah 40:31).*

So How Do We Learn to Be Still?

Set up an earthly sanctuary for your beloved.

Turn off your phone. Place a note on your prayer room door. Tell your loved ones how much this time means to you.

Make it a date with the lover of your soul. Guard it! If you have a spouse who's praying, guard their time with him as well, by watching the kids and helping out with obligations.

Make your earthly spot a peaceful, beautiful and relaxing place to go. Bring paper and pens, your Bible, songbooks, and even your favorite coffee cup.

I have a blanket that I spread out on the floor wherever I am. Here it is!

It's old, worn and has the telltale marks of worth. It's been saturated with my tears and has witnessed laughter and joy that I never believed I could feel. Feel free to touch it, feel it. It's walked with me a long way into my special Secret Place. It is now very precious to me. Just one look at it and I can not help but smile and remember the presence of God.

Fix your eyes on Jesus.

Behold his beauty!

Like the angels and all God's creatures, present yourself to God in stillness. Imagine yourself at his throne, lying at his feet.

Take a few deep breaths.

At first, you may need to take a few deep breaths. Slow your breathing. Hold it for a few seconds. It's amazing how fast your mind will quiet down when your body quiets down. Taking a few deep breaths will quiet down the body automatically.

Just focus on the Lord, and listen for his small, still voice.

It takes practice:

Remember 'S' for step one:

1. Slow down your life. Retire to your Secret Place.
2. Silence your thoughts and words.
3. Sit still. Your body needs to come into submission. Stop fidgeting. Rest in Him.
4. Sit, lie down or kneel before your God, and wait patiently.

Prayer Lifestyle Survey: Introduction

Are you passionately pursuing the Lord? That is my heart's desire for you and why I have made this questionnaire.

Intercession isn't just about asking God to help people. It's a lifestyle.

It is – to quote a famous prayer warrior of the great revival – a man with whom the window shades of his mind are always turned towards the light of Heaven. It's about focusing on the one you are representing until his very image is burned onto your soul and you begin to look like him.

Oh what a lofty goal, and oh that we could achieve it in our lifetime!

This is a general survey of prayer habits. Don't worry about the results or your score as much as the survey's affect on you. If you feel convicted about your prayer life after taking this survey ... if you feel it's not what it should be ... then the survey has served its purpose. Use it to work on what you've learned, and to change your habits.

You can't change everything at once. Instead, choose a few of the disciplines listed here – the ones you desire most – and work on them, one at a time.

There are different levels of maturity in the spirit, just as there are in the flesh. This survey will help you assess your own level of spiritual development. It is not intended to make you feel immature. Your answers are between you and the Lord. No one has to see them. No one needs to even know where you are developmentally in prayer. So please be honest and real before your God.

Prayer Lifestyle Survey

- Do you have a daily quiet time alone with God?
- Do you regularly read and meditate on word of God?
- Do you have a literal Secret Place somewhere in your house?
- Do you pray out loud when you are alone?
- Do you always pray before your meals?
- Do you pray together before leaving on a trip (asking for protection for the vehicle and for guidance and wisdom for driver/pilot/conductor/etc. and all who are in it)?
- Do you regularly ask God to make you hunger him more?
- Do you pray out loud in public?
- Do you regularly praise and sing aloud to God privately?
- Do you have a variety of prayer positions?
- Do you maintain a top ten list (or at least three) of unsaved people?
- Do you pray daily (or regularly) with your spouse?
(if your husband isn't saved or receptive ... do you pray daily for him?)
- Do you pray daily (or regularly) with your children?
- Do you have a prayer journal?
- Do you record your prayer requests and answers?
- Do you pray with people over the phone?
- Do you pray with (not just for) people about their needs?
- Do you ever shed tears when you pray?
- Do you have a prayer partner?
- Do you meet once a week with your prayer partner?
- Do attend a group prayer meeting?
- Do you keep a prayer list?
- Do you ever lay hands on people when you pray for them?
- Do you ever shed tears when you pray (or feel deep passion for what you're praying about)?
- Do you have a prayer calendar?
- Do you fast? Regularly?
- Do people seek you out to pray for them?
- Do you see miraculous answers to your prayers?
- Do the sick recover when you pray for them?
- Do you use a specific prayer pattern as you pray?
- Do you have a strategic prayer plan (a systematic prayer plan)?

- Do you have a prayer accountability partner (a person with whom you can share your faults and strengths)?
- Do you read and study books on prayer?
- Have you ever spent a whole night in prayer?
- Has the Lord ever woken you in the night to pray?
- Have you given him permission to wake you in the night to pray?
- Do you mentor, coach, or teach prayer?
- Do you practice spiritual warfare praying?
- Do you ever dedicate whole days to prayer?
- Do you go on prayer retreats (monthly/quarterly/annually)?
- Do people seek you out to teach them to pray?
- Do you model prayer for others or lead a prayer gathering?

OK, how did you do? (Don't answer out loud.) In fact, you should only share your answers with your prayer accountability partner.

There is no 'pass' or 'fail.' So please don't allow the enemy to beat you up about your answers.

No one should be able to check all of these boxes. There really is no such thing as a perfect prayer warrior, just as there is no such thing as a perfect man or woman. Perfection is found in the constant pursuit of God. Paul said, "I have not yet attained, neither am I yet perfect, but I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of Christ" (Philippians 3:12-14).

Even I fall short in many areas. Yet, there are questions here that should make you hungry to know more of God and to experience more of his power in your prayer life. Make that your goal.

If you answered 'no' to any of these questions, ask yourself, "Why not?" Pray and ask the Lord if you should make it a priority to work in some of these areas.

Now, pick a few and list them below. Lay them before the Lord each day, asking for his renewal and refreshing upon your prayer life. I pray that God will bless you through this survey as he blessed me! I know by faith that he will!

Lord, please change my prayer life in the following areas:

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____

Step 2: Be Worshipful

Intimacy requires a response

To worship God is to seek his face – that is, to see the Lord in his beauty by meditating on him and extolling (proclaiming) his worth. Isaiah saw the Lord lifted up and was forever changed (Isaiah 6:1-8). Jesus said that the Father is seeking worshipers who will worship him in spirit and in truth. God desires for us to seek after him in steadfast worship, beholding his beauty.

The fear (reverence and awe) of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom, and the knowledge of the holy is understanding. - Proverbs 9:10

And the people that do know their God shall be strong and do exploits. - Daniel 11:32

Delight yourself also in the Lord; and He shall give you the desires of your heart. - Psalm 37:4

One thing have I desired of the Lord, that will I seek after; that I may dwell in the house of the Lord all the days of my life, to behold the beauty of the Lord, and to inquire in His temple. - Psalm 27:4

But you are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a peculiar people; that you should show forth the praises of him who has called you out of darkness into his marvelous light. - 1 Peter 2:9

But you are holy, O thou that inhabits the praises of Israel. - Psalm 22:3

Worship Requires a Response in Spirit and in Truth

Have you ever received a compliment from someone that just didn't ring true? Perhaps their words felt phony, hollow or deceitful? If so, you may have responded to the person by offering an equally hollow "thanks," or by deciding that they were out to get something from you and choosing to stay away from them.

Something deep within us knows that a flattering tongue isn't always trustworthy. I'm particularly sensitive to this. As a woman raised in the South, I've received a lot of flattery, and have often been wounded by it. The typical Southern Bell is taught from birth about something we called 'tact,' which is often misused through false flattery. For example, I once received compliments on a dress I was wearing. Later, I overheard that same person gossiping about my same dress. It wounded my heart.

The Bible says in Psalm 12:2: "They speak vanity every one with his neighbor: [with] flattering lips [and] with a double heart do they speak."

Flattery is derived from the Hebrew word **chelqah** {khel-kaw'}, which means smooth part, smoothness, flattery; smoothness, smooth part; slippery places; smoothness, flattery.

So, by the very nature of the words, we see the dangerous position we can get into if we're drawn into giving or receiving such false flattery. If we know this instinctively, how much more so does our heavenly father know it? That is why, I believe, Jesus told the Samaritan woman:

Yet a time is coming and has now come when the true worshipers will worship the Father in spirit and truth, for they are the kind of worshipers the Father seeks. God is spirit, and his worshipers must worship in spirit and in truth (John 4:23-24).

Dear Sisters and Brothers in Christ, let's learn to speak only the words we *truly mean* in worship. Let's learn to worship in spirit *and* in truth.

Spirit [pneuma {pnyoo'-mah}] means:

in, by, with; the third person of the triune God, the Holy Spirit, co-equal, co-eternal with the Father and the Son; sometimes referred to in a way which emphasizes his personality and character (the "Holy" Spirit); sometimes referred to in a way which emphasizes his work and power (the Spirit of "Truth"); never referred to as a depersonalized force; the disposition or influence which fills and governs the soul of any one; the efficient source of any power, affection, emotion, desire; a movement of air (a gentle blast); of the wind, hence the wind itself; breath of nostrils or mouth.

Truth [aletheia {al-ay'-thi-a}] means:

in, by, with; truly, according to truth; what is true in things appertaining to God and the duties of man, moral and religious truth; truth as a personal excellence; that candor of mind which is free from affection, pretense, simulation, falsehood, deceit.

Did you notice that the definition in the Greek for *spirit* refers directly to the Holy Spirit?! A paraphrase of this scripture could then be:

A time is coming and has now come when true worshipers will worship the Father – under the Holy Spirit's leading – with power, affection, emotion, desire, and with a candor that's free from pretense, falsehood, deceit. That's what our Father is looking for.

Learning to Worship in Spirit and Truth

So how, then, do we learn to worship in spirit and in truth? By allowing ourselves to experience the love that the Lover has for us.

Let me give you an example from my own life. I recently gave three full days of prayer to the Lord. During a walk on my first day, the Holy Spirit visited me and kindled a fire in my being. Just as fire makes smoke in the physical world, the Lord's spiritual fire inspires worship as a natural consequence.

As I walked that day, I relaxed and enjoyed the autumn leaves falling to the ground, the cool breeze on my face, and warm coffee mug held in my hand. I listened deeply, quieting my mind until it was completely calm and still. I searched for Lord, the Lover of my soul, and he caught me. My heart filled with joy and I heard in my spirit, "I'm so glad you've set aside three days just for me!"

My heart leapt for joy! *He's pleased with me!* I thought in my excitement. I cried out of happiness, barely able to contain my pleasure at experiencing the Lord's joy.

"Come away with me my fair one!" he continued. "My sister, my bride, you have stolen my heart. With one glance of your eyes. With one jewel of your necklace. How delightful is your love, my sister, my bride! Come with me from Lebanon, my bride. I have come into my garden, my sister, my bride; I have gathered my myrrh with my spice. I have eaten my honeycomb and my honey; I have drunk my wine and my milk."

His passion and love for me was overwhelming. I heard in my spirit, "Come dance with me, my Mon Cher'rie" (French for "Little Love"). So, right there, in the middle of a country road, I began to dance. We swooped and swirled and I cried my eyes out. When we finished our dance, I began to weep. I sensed – as much as this finite body could stand – *his* love for me. I was overwhelmed! Me, a finite piece of dust! He was visiting me in a very real and tangible way. I was humbled. I thanked him for the dance, and then I opened my mouth and all of my passion, love, gratitude and joy culminated in a simple child's song:

*Jesus loves me this I know.
For the bible tells me so.
Little ones to him belong.
They are weak but He is strong.
Yes, Jesus loves me.
Yes, Jesus loves me.
Yes, Jesus Loves me.
The Bible tells me so.*

Then the Lord responded to me with the following scripture:

*Yet a time is coming and has now come when the true worshipers will worship the Father in spirit and truth, **for they are the kind of worshipers the Father seeks.** God is spirit, and his worshipers must worship in spirit and in truth (John 4:23-24).*

He said to me, “My love, I seek the simple song of a child when it is given in spirit and in truth.”

Is it so unusual that the God of all creation would cry out with his heart, “Tell me you love me, because I already have told you that love you!”? That's worshipping him in spirit and in truth. ***So, once you've found him, tell him you love him!*** He longs for you to *long* for *him*. He desires your adoration.

A Lifestyle of Worship

We're not just meant to live in spirit and in truth while worshipping the Lord in church. Our whole life is supposed to be worship. Worshipping in spirit and in truth is about living a lifestyle of worship.

However, we can't enter into a place of worship in spirit and truth when we've been deceitful in any way. I've personally asked God to cleanse my lips of all deceit. He's been faithful in answering that prayer. Will you join me in this heart's cry? Will you pledge to worship him in spirit and in truth – not only in private and in church – but in your day-to-day, moment-by-moment life?

It won't necessarily be easy. It will require patience, healing and submission. But I believe that when his bride, the church, comes to a place where they in a continuous spirit of truth, revival will break forth upon our land!

If you choose to take up my challenge, you choose:

- To live every moment of your life according to the Lord's truth, following in his commands to love the Father, and to love others as you love yourself.
- To live according to God's moral and religious truth.
- To hold truth as a personal value of excellence.
- To live without pretense, contrived emotions or manipulation of others.
- To turn away from falsehood and deceit.

I know it's a tall order. But we have an even bigger God who wants to help us conform to the image of his Son who worshiped in spirit and in truth his whole life. He will show us how! All you need to do is ask.

Behold his Beauty

Worshipping through intercession is how you behold the beauty of the Lord. That means

we need to take time to muse, meditate and focus on God; to admire his splendor, glory and the truth of his greatness until it literally fills us with awe, adoration and love.

True worship means that we must first become quiet, deliberate. It means looking into the kaleidoscope of God's character, and standing in awe of his matchless beauty.

Isaiah saw the Lord lifted up and was forever changed. It was not during a worship service in the temple or synagogue. It was during his private worship – an "on-your-face-before-the-living-God" kind of worship. It's the type of worship that stirs the heart and cleanses the soul.

David said that his one, supreme desire was this:

One thing have I desired of the LORD, that will I seek after; that I may dwell in the house of the LORD all the days of my life, to behold the beauty of the LORD, and to inquire in his temple (Psalm 27:4).

Now, don't think that because worship starts out quiet, it will stay quiet. I have become, as we Southerners call it, "rowdy" in the presence of God. But when it's true worship, it always starts quiet for me.

Too often, people feel that the only place they need to worship God is in the pews. Our worship has stagnated to a Sunday morning, and maybe even Sunday night. I grieve that this is what worship has become. So many of God's children never know the intimacy afforded by private worship. You don't need a formal church service, or even music, to worship God. We've become so dependent on these things that we've forgotten what worship is!

Worship is saying, "I love you." It isn't songbooks, instruments, good vocals or even a chorus. It has everything to do with loving God with all your heart, mind, soul and strength, and expressing that love emotionally and verbally. Jesus said, "The Father seeks such to worship him."

"Worship in spirit" is not referring to the Holy Spirit, but to the spirit of man – his emotions, his soul, his innermost being. Each day of our lives, we – the blood-bought redeemed ones – should seek to fervently worship God in our spirit.

We can only learn the secret of his presence by learning to worship the Lord for who he is, not just for all the things he has done. Too often, our praise is not real worship or adoration but fumbling attempts to "do praise" so that can get on with what we consider is the real business of prayer: the asking.

True worship has nothing to do with asking or getting.

True worship is worship in truth – that is, worshiping God for who he truly is. Who is God? What is he like? God has revealed himself to us in his word. Worship is reviewing

who he is according to that revelation. To know the Lord is to hold him in highest "awe," and to stand amazed in his presence. True worship melts the heart before the heat of God's personal revelation. "No man can look on him and live."

Know the Lord!

Paul declared that his life's goal was to "*know the Lord and the power of his resurrection*" (Philippians 3:10). Daniel describes those who truly know the Lord as those who will do exploits (Daniel 11:32, KJV). He who knows God by praising him will be valiant, and victorious.

It takes practice:

Remember 'L' for step two

1. **Love** songs: Sing him love songs. It makes him smile.
2. **Long** after him, desire his heart above all else.
3. **Lift** up his glory, read him a Psalm.
4. **Love** his worth (attributes) and his names.
5. **Lively** worship before him.

How Do I Worship the Lord?

Worship with actions. Worship is not a quiet thing. It demands both verbal and physical expression. Angels and cherubim do it constantly before the throne. Worship is our invitation to join them.

Read the book of Revelation and you will find physical and verbal declarations of the worth and holiness of God – where people literally fall down and worship the Lord. To exalt the Lord requires your personal investment. It involves all of you. Peter expresses the physical and dynamic declaration of God’s worth when he says, *"But you are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a peculiar people; that you should show forth the praises of him who has called you out of darkness into his marvelous light"* (1 Peter 2:9). We are to SHOW FORTH his praises, not just say praises. The phrase “show forth” is one word in Greek, “exaggello” which literally is “to message forth” or to make known by praising, proclaiming or celebrating. “Aggelos” is an angel or “messenger of God” who heralds God’s glory.

The Shofar is a Jewish trumpet that is used to introduce worship with a loud, long blast. We too are to trumpet God’s praises loudly, just as angels do before the throne. Psalm 66: 1-4 (NIV) is worth our full attention as David instructs us in the art of worship” *“Shout with joy to God all the earth! Sing to the glory of his name; make his praise glorious. Say to God, “How awesome are your deeds! So great is your power that your enemies cringe before you. All the earth bows down to you; they sing praise to you, they sing praise to your name.”*

Psalm 68:4 tells us to, *“Sing to God, sing praise to his name, extol him who rides on the clouds – his name is the Lord – and rejoice before him.”*

Worship with Words - (Loving Appreciation)

Praise - (yadah) - to throw, shoot arrows, cast laud, praise

Give glory - (yahab) - make shine, to give glory, to bring splendor, to ascribe worth

Magnify - (gadal) - to cause to grow, to make great, powerful, to magnify

Worship - (shachah) - to bow down, prostrate oneself, to crouch before a superior in homage

Exalt / Extol - (ruwm) - to rise, rise up, be heave high, be lift up lofty, be exalted above

Sing - (zamar) - to make music, to sing with voice, to play a musical instrument

Ascribe - (nathan) - to give, bestow, grant, permit, ascribe, employ, devote

Bless - (barak) - to kneel, bless, salute, congratulate

Declare - tell of - (caphar) - to count, recount, relate, to number, take account of, reckon

Shout - (ranan) - to cry out, shout for joy, give a ringing cry (in joy, exultation, praise)

Worship with Emotions - (Loving Adoration)

Delight in - (anag) - to be happy about, take exquisite delight, to make merry over

Honor - (tiph'arah) - to glory, of rank, renown, as attribute of God, make beautiful

Behold - (chazah) - (means to wash off one's face) to see, to perceive, to look at

Love - (racham) – to have tender affection, deep love

Clap - (taqa) - to give a blast, give a blow, to strike or clap hands

Lift up hands - (nasa') - to lift, lift up, to bear, hold high

Bow down - (kara) - bow down, sink down to one's knees

Worship with Scripture

Use the scriptures to prime the pump of praise by reminding you of God's greatest. This is especially powerful and blessed when done in group prayer.

Try Psalms 111 - 113, 117, 134, 144, 145, 147-150

There is nothing better than a well-marked Bible to assist you in worship. I have taken the Psalms and highlighted praise and worship passages in a yellow highlighter to call attention to these wonderful praise-filled passages. Prime the pump of worship with the Psalms! There are many more than these. Work your own way through the Psalms, highlighting your favorite praise passages.

Worship His Holy Name

Jehovah-tsidkenu = The Lord our Righteousness
Jehovah-shalom = The Lord our Peace
Jehovah-shammah = The Lord Who is There Ever Present
Jehovah-m'kaddesh = The Lord our Sanctifier
Jehovah-jireh = The Lord our Provider
Jehovah-rohi = The Lord our Shepherd
Jehovah-nissi = The Lord our Banner
Jehovah-rophe = The Lord our Healer
Jehovah-saboath = Lord of Hosts

There are over 600 Biblical names for God and Jesus Christ. It is a wonderful experience to acknowledge his name(s) and exalt him in worship with his names.

If you want a more in depth listing of his names, visit:
www.grovecityalliance.org/chrismons/600namesofjesus.htm

I would also strongly suggest that you to write these passages in the fly leaf of your Bible so that they will be handy when you need them.

Practical Worship Strategies:

1. Read scripture that exalts who he is. (Prime the pump with scripture)
2. Sing songs to the Lord. (Sing out loud!)
3. Exalt his names. (Magnify his names)
4. Remember his mighty works. (Think about them)
5. Tell of his excellent greatness. (Rehearse it to him)
6. Acknowledge his sovereignty, power, wisdom, control. (“Lord, you are...”)
7. Physically express your worship and adoration. (Lift hands, lie prostrate, kneel)

Praise God by his Many Names

There are over 600 biblical names for God and Jesus Christ. It's a wonderful experience to acknowledge his names and to exalt him by name in worship. Use this sheet to praise the Lord by name, using every letter of the alphabet. Come together and praise him by name as a congregation. To rejoice in his name is to know him and to make his splendor known. Believe me, you won't run out of praises.

If you would like to find a more in-depth list of his names, visit:

www.grovecityalliance.org/chrismons/600namesofjesus.htm

- A = Ark, Alpha, Altogether lovely, Almighty God, Advocate, Author, Ancient of Days, Anchor
- B = Bread, Balm of Gilead, Bright Morning Star, Breath, Beauty, Beginning, Best gift, Branch, Bride
- C = Creator, Captain, Comforter, Counselor
- D = Everlasting Father, Everything to me, Earnest of our inheritance
- F = Faithful High Priest, Father, Friend of Sinners, Firstborn, Fairest of 10,000, First and Last
- G = God of All Comfort, Great God, Good Shepherd, Giver, Gift, Guide, Glory and Lifter of my head
- H = Healer, Helper, Health, Holy One, Heir of all, High Priest, Hope of the ages
- I = Immanuel, Invisible, Immortal, I Am
- J = Judge, Jehovah-*, Jesus
- K = King of Kings, King - *, Keeper
- L = Lover of my soul, Lord strong and mighty, Lord *, Lamb, Light Life, Lilly of Valley
- M = Maker, Master, Marvelous One, Mighty God, Mediator
- N = Never-failing God, Name above all names, Nest, New and living way
- O = Omnipotent, Omniscient, Omnipresent
- P = Protector, Provider, Physician, Prince of Peace, my Peace, Passover, Priest forever, Promise
- Q = Quickening One, Quickening Spirit, Quietness and my confidence
- R = Resurrection, Redeemer, Rock, Refuge, Righteous One, My Righteousness
- S = Savior, Sanctifier, Sun, Shield, Shade, Shepherd, Sure, Shelter, Source
- T = Teacher, Tower, Transformer, Truth
- U = Unmovable, Unspeakable Gift, Upholder of all things
- V = Victor, Vine, Vision
- W = Water, Wonderful, Way, Wisdom, Worthy, Wing under which I trust
- X = Xcellent, Xaminer of my heart, X-ray to whom all things are naked
- Y = Yeshua; Yesterday, today, forever
- Z = Zeal of the Lord

Step 3: Be Thankful

"Enter his gates with thanksgiving..." (Psalm 100:4).

Intimacy proceeds from a grateful heart! When we have seen his face, when we have tasted of his goodness, gratitude is a natural response!

In Step 2, we talked about worshiping the Lord in prayer. Today, we will learn how to be thankful in prayer. And I want to be clear from the outset. Worship and thanksgiving are not the same thing. We worship the Lord for 'who he is,' because – very simply – he deserves it.

Thanksgiving, on the other hand, is a distinct act of will. It requires us to recognize the hand of God in our lives and to thank him for it. Through thanksgiving, we give God credit for what he has promised, and what he has done. Through worship, we praise God for who he is.

When I sit in the safety of my Secret Place ... When I gaze into his face ... When I know that I have communed with the Most High ... When I feel his presence and realize the awesome privilege of touching his face... then something happens inside of me. It springs up from the very center of my being like a spring of Living Water. Let me try to do this without tears, because I am rarely able to when I am in that place. I find it hard to express my gratitude.

When I think of the high price he paid for our fellowship, I am humbled to my core and my legs lose their strength. I find myself on my face. I can only remember a song I heard a while ago...

When I survey the wondrous cross on which the Prince of Glory died, my richest gain I count but loss and pour contempt on all my pride.

See now his head, his hands, his feet. Sorrow and love flow mingled down; did e'er such love and sorrow meet, or thorns compose so rich a crown?

O the wondrous cross, O the wondrous cross. Bids me come and die that find that I may truly live. O the wondrous cross, O the wondrous cross. All who gather here by grace draw near and bless your name.

Were the whole realm of nature mine, that were a present far too small; love so amazing, so divine, demands my soul, my life, my all.

The Lord paid the price for our Secret Place. Every wound on his back, every blow to his face, every drop of spittle they flung upon him, the piercing of his breast, hands and feet – he paid it all to purchase for us this Secret Place, this spiritual temple by which we can meet. *Ya'ad* means to betroth and is the same word used in Exodus 29:42-43 when God told the Israelites to build him an altar of sacrifice in the tabernacle courtyard so that he

could 'meet' (ya'ad) with them there. Jesus is the fulfillment of the picture God gave to them. He is the sacrifice that we needed in order to access the Secret Place.

More than any other thing I feel thankful for, I am thankful for his single act of love. The precious price he paid so that we could have sweet fellowship with him.

D. M. M'Intyre said: "The benefits of that gracious Covenant that is ordered and sure are all confirmed for our use and pleasure by the blood-seal. For there is not a gift His hands bestows, but what cost His own Heart a groan.... Let us frequently commemorate our redemption from a bondage more bitter than that of Egypt."

One Easter when I was a little girl, I watched the story of the Cross on TV. When Calvary came and they nailed the Lord's hands and feet to the cross and hung him up, I wept bitter tears. I was angry at the people who could do such a cruel thing. I was so upset that my mom had to carry me from the room and calm me down. "Why," I cried, "did they do that to him? He was such a nice man! Why?" Many years later I sat in the bathroom of a movie theatre after watching the movie *The Passion*. I was a Christian at that point, seasoned with age and love. But I felt that same ache I had experienced as a child. My heart's cry was, "Jesus! My Sweet Jesus! Oh, I love you! Look what they have done to you!"

I grew angry with myself and with all of mankind for sinning and making it necessary for him to endure such pain. "My Jesus, I am so sorry for making it necessary for you to go through that!" Yet, because he loves all of us so much, he was willing – in fact, he said through Paul that he counted it joy (Hebrews 12:2). I can not imagine that! So the Lord's sacrifice should be first and foremost in our gratitude of him. When we forget all his good deeds for us, ingratitude sets in. And then we are on dangerous ground.

Ingratitude

It was Israel's ingratitude of heart – the murmuring, the complaining, the grumbling – that brought on the wrath of God. It was not that God had not blessed them. He blessed them over and over again! It is that men soon forget the goodness of the Lord. We are quick to forget his answers to prayer, his mercies in our troubles, his healings when we are sick, his forgiveness when we fail, his provisions in our need. Well did the psalmist groan: "*O Give thanks unto the Lord, for he is good...Oh, that men would praise the Lord for his goodness, and for his wonderful works to the children of men!*" (Psalm 107).

The Psalms are filled with expressions of thanks to God on every side. Oh, may our lives, our lips, be continual psalms of thanksgiving! The apostle Paul commands the same principle in the New Testament. Regardless of the circumstances, we are to be thankful and think on the good things the Lord has done. "*Be anxious for nothing but in everything by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known unto God. And the peace of God which passes all understanding shall keep you hearts and minds through Christ Jesus.*" (Philippians 4:6-7) Ingratitude and silence shows that we despise what the Lord has done for us and brings shame to his great works (Psalm

106:24).

In Everything, Give Thanks

Thanksgiving should be as much a part of the believer's life as breathing. *"In everything give thanks for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus concerning you"* (2 Thessalonians 5:18). We need to develop a lifestyle of thanksgiving as intercessors.

In prayer we are exhorted to give thanks profusely for the goodness of the Lord, for all his benefits, for his mercies, for his faithfulness, for his steadfast love, for loads of blessings. Psalm 100 is an excellent guide for entering the presence of God. *"Enter his gates with thanksgiving and into his courts with praise: Be thankful unto him, and bless his name."*

Don't Forget His Blessings

Forgetfulness of God's multiplied blessings is sin. Forgetting or neglecting to give him thanks is the sin of ingratitude – at the very least, it means that we're taking God for granted. D.L. Moody said the following about Psalm 103: "I can't remember all his benefits and blessings, but I dare not forget all of them either." Thanksgiving is remembering God's good gifts and giving him the credit due his name.

- *"Bless the Lord, O my soul, and forget not all his benefits: Who forgives all your iniquities; who heals all your diseases; who redeems your life from destruction; who crowns you with loving kindness and tender mercies; who satisfies your mouth with good things; so that your youth is renewed like the eagle's?"* (Psalm 103:2-5)
- *"Blessed be the Lord, who daily loads us with benefits..."* (Psalm 68:19).
- *"Every good gift and every perfect gift comes down from the Father of lights, with whom is no variableness, neither shadow of turning."* (James 1:17).

His Tender Mercies are New Every Morning

Checed {kheh'-sed}: goodness, kindness, faithfulness, mercy, kindness, loving kindness, goodness, kindly, merciful, favor, good, goodliness, pity.

Mary called these mercies "tender mercies" (Luke 1:78). Tender in that verse is a Greek word 'Splagchnon' meaning figuratively: the inward parts, indicating the breast or heart the seat of one's emotions and passions. And mercy is 'Eleos,' meaning compassion, active pity; special, immediate regard to the misery of another.

Remember that the Lord is intimately acquainted with each and every pain, fear, frustration and distraction you feel on any given day. Everyday, before you even get up out of bed, he is already being moved by his pity and compassion for all those tender areas in your life. Later, we will learn to pour our hearts out to him from this tender place. But for now let's remember one thing: He's already moving into action by his

tender mercy on our behalf. Remember his tender mercies, and thank him for them. This is a response to his intimate knowledge of our heart of hearts. It is how he shows us how concerned he is with us in a very real and personal way.

Thanksgiving for our Bodies

This is a particularly difficult area for many women. Most of us believe there is always something wrong with our bodies. The media has implied that we're not thin enough here or voluptuous enough there, that our faces are too lined or sagging...and what's with all those dimples on our thighs, right? So when we're told to thank God for the body we have, we want to scream, "For what!" Let's get real here. When we're in the Secret Place, we all know it's true! Somewhere inside, we may question, "Is this what I have to thank God for?"

Let me ask you a question. Do you believe that God is eternal? I do. I believe God saw my body as it is right now this very second on the day I was born and as it will be the day I die. And yet he says...

¹Behold, thou art fair, my love; behold, thou art fair; thou hast doves' eyes within thy locks: thy hair is as a flock of goats, that appear from mount Gilead. ²Thy teeth are like a flock of sheep that are even shorn, which came up from the washing; whereof every one bear twins, and none is barren among them. ³Thy lips are like a thread of scarlet, and thy speech is comely: thy temples are like a piece of a pomegranate within thy locks. ⁴Thy neck is like the tower of David builded for an armoury, whereon there hang a thousand bucklers, all shields of mighty men. ⁵Thy two breasts are like two young roes that are twins, which feed among the lilies. ⁶Until the day break, and the shadows flee away, I will get me to the mountain of myrrh, and to the hill of frankincense. ⁷Thou art all fair, my love; there is no spot in thee. ⁸Come with me from Lebanon, my spouse, with me from Lebanon: look from the top of Amana, from the top of Shenir and Hermon, from the lions' dens, from the mountains of the leopards. ⁹Thou hast ravished my heart, my sister, my spouse; thou hast ravished my heart with one of thine eyes, with one chain of thy neck. ¹⁰How fair is thy love, my sister, my spouse! how much better is thy love than wine! and the smell of thine ointments than all spices! ¹¹Thy lips, O my spouse, drop as the honeycomb: honey and milk are under thy tongue; and the smell of thy garments is like the smell of Lebanon. (Song of Solomon 4:1-11)

Sister, if he can see your body as fearfully and wonderfully made (Psalm 139:14) than so can we. It's time to throw out that canned stereotype of what a beautiful body should be and see our own bodies through the eyes of God. Thank him for that body he gave you just the way it is today, with no changes whatsoever.

Good Mental Health

Good mental health begins with a thankful attitude of heart. *"A merry heart does good like medicine...He that has a merry heart has a continual feast."* (Proverbs 15:13 / 17:22) Depression and discouragement is the inability to see the goodness of God around you. David frequently expressed his depression, *"I had fainted unless I had believed to see the goodness of God in the land of the living."* (Psalm 27:13) The eyes of faith see the goodness of God even in the midst of adversity. God's purposes, plans and provisions are always good! Remember, he is working it out. Be thankful while he works it out (Romans 8:28 and Jeremiah 29:11).

Thanksgiving is a Sacrifice to God

Hebrews 13:15 points out that thanksgiving is a sacrifice to God. *"A sacrifice of our lips"* that is to be offered up to God continually. Thanksgiving is not easy. It's tough to be thankful and express thanks from the heart for everything. Wouldn't prayer be wonderfully transformed if we would offer ten sacrifices of thanksgiving for every request we make of God?

Here's a good way to begin...

1. Thank God for 5 **Past Answered Prayers and Blessings**
2. Thank God for 5 **Present Circumstances and Blessings**
3. Thank God for 5 **Bad Things That Have Happened**
4. Thank God for 5 **Promises of What Will Happen**

It takes practice:

Remember 'B' for Thanksgiving:

1. Blessings and benefits in your life
2. Bad, sad and broken
3. Body that's been fearfully and wonderfully made
4. Bread of Daily Living, which is his tender mercies!

Helpful Hints for Being Thankful

1. Thank God for his Creation, your own body (Psalm 139:14)
2. Thank God for his provisions, for everything you have. List each thing for which you are thankful.
3. Thank God for people he has put into your life. Call them by name and explain why you are thankful.
4. Thank God for little things. Start with the smallest things you can think of for which you are thankful. From there, work toward the bigger things he has done. Never start with the big, lest you forget the small. Do not despise the day of small things.

5. Thank God for hard things. "In everything give thanks...for this is the will of God..." Thank God for the trials and adversities that make us strong. They are what make us lean on him. So thank him!
6. Thank God for everything. Keep a notebook handy and you write down your thanksgiving list. It helps!

Use the following Psalms to guide your thanksgiving. Pray the Psalms. Mark them as "thanksgiving" in your Bible: Psalm 103 – 105, 107, 111, 118, 124, 126, 136, 139.

Be Thankful

"Enter his gates with thanksgiving and into his courts with praise. Be thankful unto him and bless his holy name" (Psalm 100).

Now it is time to celebrate his specific acts, mercies, faithfulness, kindness, goodness, benefits, blessings and answers to prayer.

- General thanks for all his creation and blessings.
- Specific thanks for blessings and benefits to you.
- Tearful thanks for all things -- the good, the bad and the ugly.

Introduction to Steps 4 – 6

“But we all, with open face beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image from glory to glory, [even] as by the Spirit of the Lord”
(2 Corinthians 3:18).

In steps 1-3 of our training on intercessory prayer, we focused on *intimacy with God*. We talked about who the Lord is and how to draw near to him. We’ve drawn close to him; we’ve basked in his presence. We have, as the psalmist said, tasted and seen that the Lord is good; we’ve learned that blessed is the man that trusts in him (Psalm 34:8).

Now, in steps 4-6, we will look at another part of the intimacy equation: *ourselves*. This can be a tad uncomfortable. We all think we know ourselves better than anyone else. What we have allowed ourselves to see is often not very pretty. This is so true that we often spend our lives running from anyone or anything that points out who we really are.

When I went to college for one semester, I took psychology. I don’t remember very much about that class because I only took a few classes. But what I do remember has stuck with me. In the very first class my psychology professor said that the number one cause of mental illness is *guilt*! That nearly all defense mechanisms are a result of a person consciously or unconsciously trying to keep themselves from seeing the truth they know to be true about themselves. There is a lot of other stuff they taught me in that class and I’m not sure I buy some, if not quite a bit, of it. However, this one statement rings so true.

In fact, I believe the Bible confirms it: *“The heart [is] deceitful above all [things], and desperately wicked: who can know it?”*(Jeremiah 17:9). The answer to that question is in verse 10: *“I the Lord search the heart and examine the mind, to reward a man according to his conduct, according to what his deeds deserve.”*

The only one who can truly know our own hearts is God Almighty! Even this small thing, a seemingly simple thing, can only be done with the eyes of our Father. Without his help, we may see ourselves better than we ought, or worse. Jesus said in John 8:32, *“And ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free.”*

Steps 4-6 are all about being set free enough to pray for other people. When we finish these steps, we will be prepared to enter the Lord’s presence and pray on behalf of those we’re called to serve.

I am praying, on behalf of everyone following these studies, that we will have the faith, trust and boldness to stare deeply into his eyes and see reflected in them the true image of ourselves long enough to be transformed into his very image; and so become an effective tool within his hands to bring about his glory.

Step 4: Confess Your Sins

"If we confess our sins He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness" (1 John 1:9).

Confession enables God to begin working within our hearts to transform us into his image.

Truly, I believe that confession of sin is the first step to being converted into the very image of the Lord we propose to represent through intercession. It is only by confronting our own vile flesh, and permitting God to purify even the most intimate areas of our lives, that we can be transformed into his image.

By no means do I believe that this is easy. It can be one of the most difficult and painful disciplines in a disciple's life. But it can also be one of the most powerfully sweet and joyful times as well. When you are willing to allow God to take you anywhere within your heart and show you what is truly there, you will find the joy of seeing – before your very eyes – the Father transform you into the image of his Son. Hallelujah! I get really excited about that. I want him prying around inside of me if it means that, in my 'tomorrows,' I will look just a tad more like Jesus. I see so much of my stinky old self sometimes that I get sick to death of it!

Be sure not to approach the Lord with pretense, and try to drum up sins to confess in order to fulfill this step!

D.M. McIntyre says...

Above all, we dare not, in confessions to which are addressed to a Holy God simulate an experience which we have never known let us, confess the deep sin of our nature. It has been said with much truth that the only "sign of one's being in Christ which Satan cannot counterfeit" is the grief and sorrow which true believers undergo when God discloses to them the sinfulness of inbred sin... Confession is the first act of an awakened Sinner. When God desires a Habitation in which to dwell, He prepares "a broken and a contrite heart." The altar of reconciliation stands at the entrance of the New Testament temple; from the altar the worshipper passes on, by way of the laver, to the appointed place of meeting – the blood stained mercy-seat.

It is God's job to convict us of sin, not ours. God's conviction is the only way that godly sorrow can bring about the necessary confession to bring about change. When we drum up sins to confess merely for the sake of fulfilling this step, we open the door for the enemy to bring condemnation.

Romans 8:1 says, *"There is therefore now no condemnation for them that are in Christ."*

Conviction is the first step of confession. I can never stress enough how important it is to make sure that what you are feeling is conviction. Ralph Erskine in his diary, dated

January 23, 1733, notes a very important caution to those seeking to enter into this discipline within the Secret Chambers.

“This morning... I was quickened in prayer, and strengthened to hope in the Lord. At the beginning of my prayer I discerned a lively frame in asserting a God in Christ to be the fountain of my life, the strength of my life, the joy of my life; and that I had no life that deserved that name, unless he Himself were my life. But here, checking myself with reflections on my own sinfulness, vileness, and corruption, I began to acknowledge my wickedness; but for the time the sweetness of frame failed me, and wore off. Whence, I think, I may gather this lesson that no sweet influence of the spirit ought to be checked upon pretense of getting a frame better founded upon humiliation; otherwise the Lord may be provoked to withdraw.”

What is he saying here? Simply that – although it is important that God show us our wicked hearts – it is never to the point that we are in danger of losing sight of our assurance of Sonship, or our sense of the preciousness of Christ.

I confess that this has been a very large obstacle for me. I have experienced this hurdle again and again. I am not going to say that I may never have to deal with this again. I will say that God has taken me by the hand and begun to work with me.

Recently, I had to bathe a pet for its own good. This dog is well-known to hate its bath. Knowing how very much it needed the bath (the smell alone was enough to make me gag), I also knew what the pet didn't – without this bath, infection would set in.

I tried to walk over to my pet as if nothing out of the ordinary was about to happen. I smiled and reached out to touch this otherwise nice animal. It seemed to be able to read my mind, because it looked at me in a state of blind panic and bolted as far away as it could. What looked like a chaotic, frenzied, mindless retreat, (I quickly learned) became a methodical attempt to escape its bath. Many minutes ticked by, mind you. Later, I had my pet in my hands (well at least for a second). For, very quickly, I felt its teeth sinking into my hand. I dropped my pet and then realized I would have to catch the bugger again.

Putting on gloves this time, I finally recaptured my pet. Its bites couldn't hurt me now. I walked into the bathroom to place the animal into the bathwater. It was then that I realized mere gloves could not protect me from a pet who obviously didn't want this much needed bath. For, suddenly, I felt excruciating pain as the pet literally began to claw its way up my arm. This creature had found the furthest place from the bathwater that it could find, for it was now standing upon my head, claws digging deeply into my scalp. I reached up, grabbed the little rascal and quickly dunked him in the water, peeled him again off my scalp, soaped him up, dunked him again, and once again peeled him off my scalp.

Finally I wrapped him in a towel, dried him off, threw him on my bed and began tending my wounds. Looking over at him, I noticed he was glaring at me and I sent him a glare back. We sat together in silence and licked our wounds and wounded pride.

However, I have another pet that also needs a bath from time to time. My little girl also is scared of her bath. When I approach, she starts to shake and quiver, but she sits very still waiting for me to begin. I need only tell her to, and she enters the bath. When it's over, she crawls right up into my lap (a sight to see as she is so big that she literally hangs over the edges of my lap) and begs me to hold her and comfort her. I generally do, even though I end up feeling that it was I who had been bathed and not her. Now, my second pet is often clean. My first pet, however, only gets a bath when I absolutely have to; consequently he is often stinky and rarely gets to come out and socialize when others are around.

I say all this not merely for the sake of amusement, but to say this: So often I am like my pet when it comes to confession. Confession is like a bath I need, but often don't want. God has shown me that I have a choice. I can approach my bath like my first pet, or I can willingly enter the bath, like my second, and submit to the washing of the Holy Spirit by the word of truth. Either way, I am in sore need of a bath. I often wonder if that is not why God used the laver in Exodus 38:8 and Exodus 30: 17-21 as a type of confession.

In Exodus 38:8, the Bible says: *"They made the bronze basin and its bronze stand from the mirrors of the women who served at the entrance to the Tent of Meeting."*

How interesting that God ordained for women's mirrors to be used to make the laver that symbolically cleansed the priests and readied them for service.

Picture this with me ... Shaul woke up like any other day. He was a descendant of the house of Levi. His clan was the one called to enter the house of meeting, and to serve there. He began his day much as any man would – with a prayer of thanksgiving that he had awoken from his sleep. It was such a way of life now that it seemed more natural to him than breathing or swallowing. Today was different in one way, however. It was his turn to enter the place of meeting. He started the intense physical cleansing efforts to make sure his body was as clean as possible. Every inch of his body was combed and cleaned. But he would have to go through one more cleansing once he arrived.

Standing in the courts – after making a sacrifice to atone for the sins he had confessed – he walked straight up to a huge bronze bowl. Shaul already knew that the bowl was filled with water. It wasn't the water he feared, it was the bowl itself. You see, Shaul was well aware that the animal just sacrificed had made his hands and feet bloody. With polished bronze as clear as a mirror, it would be plainly visible. He knew that, before he could serve, he would need to be purified of that blood. But first he would have to see it in all its goriness. Timidly he walked up and, sure enough, there in the reflection was all that blood and gore all over his hands and feet. Shaul washed his hands clean and then looked again. There he was clean and fresh, made almost like new. Clothing himself again in his priestly robes, he looked one last time and saw a sight of such beauty and purity that it seemed as if the prior reflection was but a dream. Confident and assured, he entered the place of meeting.

Beloved, this Old Testament picture shows us the purpose of confession, and its hope.

Be Careful Also About an Attitude of Innocence

John, the beloved disciple, warns us against an attitude of innocence before a holy God. To say that we have nothing to confess to God is to call him a liar, and to practice self-deception before our Maker.

David says: "*Behold I was shaped in iniquity, and in sin did my mother conceive me*" (Psalm 51:5). And Isaiah adds to his own unworthiness before a holy God when he says: "*All our righteousness [that is, our best efforts] are as filthy rags*" (Isaiah 64:6). Most of us misread that passage and think that God means "all of our unrighteousness." But it is all our best efforts at living that good and moral life that is still as filthy rags. Even if we could keep all the law and stumble in only one small point we would be guilty of all the law.

Isaiah, a man filled with the Spirit, a prophet of God, a man above reproach, is a good example of this truth. In Isaiah 6 he first sees the Lord in all his beauty, high and lifted up, and glorified. The sight was so awesome that the just and righteous Isaiah fell on his face before God with an acute awareness of his own sinful nature. Oh that it might happen for each person taking this lesson. He was not exaggerating. He was not bemoaning the sinfulness of other people. He saw himself in the light of God's holiness and cried, "Woe is me! For I am undone; because I am a man of unclean lips" (Isaiah 6:1-5).

We are not just to come into God's presence presumptuously, but humbly (2 Chronicles 7:14), contritely, with a sincere perspective of our own nature. Father God, give us a vision of ourselves, our true fallen nature, our minds which are unclean, and of which God knows every passing thought (Psalm 139:1-5).

Until we recognize our own state of bankruptcy before a holy God, we cannot truly lean upon His Righteousness, without which no man will see the Lord (Hebrews 12:14). We would instead come into his presence as the Pharisee, proud, bragging of his kept laws, righteous deeds, and his right to gain the Father's favor. We need to see ourselves as destitute, and totally depraved, without the righteousness of Christ. We have nothing of which to boast. We need to see ourselves as God sees us, like the rich church of Laodicea in Revelation 3:14-22: "Lukewarm ... wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked."

In *The Pursuit of God*, A.W. Tozer says, "We need to admit ... the shallowness of our inner experience, the hollowness of our worship, the worldliness of our lives, our fleshly fallen nature that lives on, yet unjudged within us, uncrucified and unrepudiated, and the hyphenated sins of the human spirit, self-righteousness, self-pity, self-confidence, self-sufficiency, self-admiration, self-love, self-indulgence, and a host of other self-sins. They are not something we do, they are something we are..."

Regarding Iniquity in Our Hearts

"If I regard iniquity in my heart, the Lord will not hear me" Psalm 66:18 (KJV).

To regard iniquity means to actually "cherish sin" (NIV), to know it is there and do nothing about it. It is to hide it, to cover it by excuses, to consider it unimportant, to ignore its dangers.

God considers any iniquity to be an abomination. An abomination is a horrible, disgusting thing. There are no "good guy" iniquities, no little white lies, and no insignificant rebellions of the heart! God calls rebellion in any form "as the sin of witchcraft, and stubbornness as idolatry" (1 Samuel 15:23). God considers sin as sin and all equally appalling to his holiness. Sin in our heart is to the Lord like festering sores and maggots in his holy offerings – slimy, crawling, slithering, disgusting maggots defiling the whole (Isaiah 1:6)!

Confession of Sin

A man that truly enters into the presence of God cannot help but see himself as unclean. Even Scripture admits that "all of our good deeds are as filthy rags" (Isaiah 64:6). So was the feeling of Isaiah before the throne in Isaiah 6, and of Daniel in chapter 9. The holiness of God cannot tolerate the presence of sin! We are exhorted to confess our sins to God (1 John 1:8-9), and even admit our faults to one another (James 5:16) in order to pray effectively and fervently and be healed.

What to Do With Your Sin

- Conviction is seeing sin as exceedingly sinful.
- Repentance is "agreeing with God about my sin," and turning from it.
- Confession is exposing it to God and asking him to forgive and cleanse.

We cannot do penance for our sins; it would do no good. We cannot pay the penalty of our sins. The penalty or "wages of sin is death" (Romans 6:23). Therefore, God has provided a better way...

Jesus paid it all on the cross, so we can then say with him, "It is finished." He asks us to lay our sins on Jesus. He is your sin-bearer. Lay them there and rejoice in what God says he has done with your sins. Confession is asking and receiving forgiveness and the covering of the blood of Jesus. Do not leave the altar of confession without appropriating the provisions of the cross! Be forgiven and give thanks.

What God Did With Your Sins!

Don't leave this step without thanking and praising God for what he has done with your sin. He has cleansed you! Rejoice in that cleansing. Claim it before the throne! Take these promises and write them in the fly leaf of your Bible so as to never forget them, and never be without them.

Paid in full – Romans 5:11 / Isaiah 53:6

Forgave/pardoned – 1 John 1:9

Laid on him – Isaiah 53:6

Washed whiter than snow – Isaiah 1:18

Covered – Psalm 32:1

Cleansed by the blood of Jesus – Hebrews 9:22, 10:4

Blotted out – Isaiah 44:22

Removed as far as east from west – Psalm 103:12

Cast in depths of sea – Micah 7:19

Forgotten forever – Jeremiah 31:34

Praise the Lord for his Redemption

Read Psalm 51 and Psalm 139 as part of your confession of sin. Or, sing a song:

It is Well

My sin, O the bliss of this glorious thought
My sin, not in part but the whole,
Is nailed to the cross, and I bear it no more,
Praise the Lord! Praise the Lord, O my soul.

Daniel's List of "Sin Types"

Daniel was conscious of the subtle ways in which sin surrounds us and creeps into our thoughts, actions and inactions. In his exemplary prayer in Daniel 9, he identifies nine faces of sin.

We have:

1. Sinned (verse 5): Missed the mark, fallen short
2. Committed iniquity (verse 5): Deliberate, conscious sin
3. Done wickedly (verse 5): Lifestyle, habitual sin
4. Rebelled (verse 5/9): Said no to God!
5. Not hearkened (verse 6): Closed our ears, ignored
6. Not obeyed voice (verse 10): Grieved the Holy Spirit
7. Transgressed law (verse 11): Legal term; to know the law and disobey
8. Departed from God (verse 11): Backslidden, wandered away
9. Made not prayer (verse 13): Sin of prayerlessness

Deal With Sin!

Jesus emphasized the need to deal with sin each time he spoke of prayer. In the Lord's prayer, he deals heavily with the need to deal severely with sin. That is, in fact, the primary lesson of the Lord's Prayer. Immediately after citing it, he pointed out the need to forgive as well as to ask for forgiveness. In Matthew 5:23-26, Jesus further deals with sin in prayer by saying that, when we come to God's altar with an offering, we must first repair our broken relationships before we can pray and offer praise! We must attempt reconciliation before our prayers will be heard. 1 Peter 3:7 shows that poor marital relationships can be a hindering factor in prayer.

Unconfessed sin is the greatest hindrance to an intercessor's prayer. As intercessors, we not only suffer for our sins, we affect those we endeavor to pray for as well. To knowingly refuse to deal with recognized sin, and to refuse to repent, is to hinder your ability to pray for another.

Confession Checklist

(Learn to identify and confess your own secret sins)

- | | | |
|------------------------------|-------|-------------------------------|
| 1. Selfish desires | _____ | James 4:3 |
| 2. Secret sins | _____ | Psalm 66:18 |
| 3. Idle words | _____ | Matthew 12:36 |
| 4. Lustful fantasies | _____ | Matthew 5:28 |
| 5. Marriage conflicts | _____ | 1 Peter 3:7b |
| 6. Ingratitude | _____ | Philippians 4:4-8 |
| 7. Unforgiving Attitudes | _____ | Mark 11:25-26 |
| 8. Unresolved conflicts | _____ | Matthew 5:23 |
| 9. Doubt | _____ | Hebrews 11:6a |
| 10. Prayerlessness | _____ | Hebrews 11:6b / Jeremiah 2:32 |
| 11. Indecision & doubt | _____ | James 1:6 |
| 12. Bitterness | _____ | Hebrews 12:15 |
| 13. Rebellion of heart | _____ | 1 Samuel 15:23 |
| 14. Known disobedience | _____ | James 4:17 |
| 15. Temper | _____ | Ephesians 4:26-27 |
| 16. Anger | _____ | Ephesians 4:26, 31 |
| 17. Impatience with others | _____ | Ephesians 4:32 |
| 18. Murmuring/complaining | _____ | 1 Corinthians 10:10 |
| 19. Lying/saying half-truths | _____ | Colossians 3:9 |
| 20. Strife in your heart | _____ | James 3:14 |

My Besetting Sins (Lord, these are areas in which I need cleansing and forgiveness.)

There are sins that "easily beset us," that serve only to weigh us down and cause us shame and hinder our fellowship with God (Hebrews 12:1). Each of us has our own set of recurring sins. Confession is laying it out before the Lord... for "all things are naked and opened unto the eyes of him with whom we have to do" (Hebrews 4:13).

- | | |
|----------|-----------|
| 1. _____ | 6. _____ |
| 2. _____ | 7. _____ |
| 3. _____ | 8. _____ |
| 4. _____ | 9. _____ |
| 5. _____ | 10. _____ |

Once you finish this list and pray for forgiveness, burn it! And it's gone!

Step 5: Clothe Yourself

What is the first thing you do after taking a bath? Get dressed! I am so glad provision has been made for my nakedness! God commands us to "Put on," as elect of God. We are commanded to "Put on the Lord Jesus Christ" (Romans 13:14), "Put on the new man" (Ephesians 4:24) and to "Put on the whole armor of God" (Ephesians 6:11). So put it on! That means dress in it. Reckon it to be so before the throne. Stand in him complete.

If you have it on-hand, please watch the opening scene from the movie *The Passion of the Christ*, during which Christ is praying in the Garden of Gethsemane.

The Passion is a fictionalized account of Christ's suffering; however, the principal scene here has been played out in my own life again and again. A favorite tactic of the enemy when we begin to intercede for others is to come at us with these same two questions:

1. Who are *you* to try to bear this burden?
2. Who is your Father?

This step will establish answers to these questions for you in advance. If you try to stand on your own righteousness at this point, you will fail!

Abraham believed God and it was "imputed" to him as righteousness (James 2:23, KJV). That word imputed means it was credited to his account. Though he was bankrupt himself, God applied it to his account because of his faith. We too who have accepted Christ have had his righteousness imputed to us. Believe God and apply his provision for your nakedness.

The Old Testament book of Zechariah, chapter three, contains a wonderful example of the need to put on righteousness, or to reckon ourselves clothed in the righteousness of God, and in the armor of the Lord. Joshua, the high priest, was standing before the Lord, and Satan was at his right hand accusing him before the throne of God. Everything Satan brought against him was true. However, one fact was even truer. God said, "I forgave him. I clothed him. Leave him alone!" Therefore God commanded the angel of the Lord to take off Joshua's dirty tattered garments and give him a robe of pure white, a turban on his head, and a scepter in his hand. Then God looked at Satan and said, "Is not this the brand plucked out of the fire?"

To "Believe" is to see the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen.

To "Reckon" is to appropriate God's invisible truth as our visible reality.

There Are Two Parts to Reckoning

1. Principle of Position: Seeing yourself in heavenly places as God sees you
2. Principle of Practice: Exercising authority in Christ in heavenly places

1. Principle of Position

There is a "Principle of Position" we must take, and it makes the difference between: 1) having the confidence to stand before the Lord's throne and prayerfully war on behalf of another, and 2) being too frightened to utter a word. You see, our position must be secured in who he has declared us to be, not on our own righteousness. It is the principle that – although we all fall far short of the glory of God – God himself has made provision for us. His provision is that we can put on Christ. We wear his righteousness, his white robe, his crown, his authority. As God sees us in heaven, he sees us through his perfect sacrifice, Jesus Christ his Son. We are brands plucked out of the fire. Reckon it to be so! See yourself as God sees you... "And you are complete in him" (Colossians 2:10).

Faith applies to our hearts the heavenly realities that God already sees.

- Put on the Lord Jesus Christ
- Put on his Righteousness
- Put on the Whole Armor of God

2. Principle of Practice

Using Your Authority

How do we exercise our God-given authority in Christ? How do we address the devil in our prayers? (We certainly don't pray to him.)

Weapons

God has clearly given us "weapons of our warfare" (2 Corinthians 10:4) for the pulling down of strongholds. Our weapons (the word literally is "strategies") are mighty through God to the pulling down of strongholds, casting down imaginations, and every high thing that exalts itself above the knowledge of God, and brings every thought into captivity to the obedience of Christ (2 Corinthians 10:4-6).

Words

The sword of the Spirit is the Word of God. God's word is that which we use as our offense, by speaking it boldly in our prayers. His word cuts, penetrates, convicts, declares, exposes and casts out the enemies of God. Jesus said, "All authority is given unto me in heaven and in earth." That is why whatever we bind on earth will be bound in heaven (Matthew 16:19, 18:18). That authority is in his word, his ultimate authoritative command. We simply wield the sword. Just point it in the right direction.

Prayers

- "Be strong" or be bold, boldfaced, courageous, aggressive, not intimidated (Ephesians 6:10)
- "A hand upon the throne" (Exodus 17:16)
- "A hedge of protection" (Ezekiel 22:30)
- "Boldly to the throne of grace" (Hebrews 4:16)

Who I Am In Christ

Biblical Truths to "Practice Believing"

I AM GOD'S...

- Possession (Genesis 17:8/ 1 Corinthians 6:20)
- Child (John 1:12)
- Workmanship (Ephesians 2:10)
- Friend (James 2:23)
- Temple (1 Corinthians 3:16/ 6:16)
- Vessel (2 Timothy 2:2)
- Co-laborer (1 Timothy 5:18)
- Witness (Acts 1:8)
- Soldier (2 Timothy 2:3)
- Ambassador (2 Corinthians 5:20)
- Building (1 Corinthians 3:9)
- Husbandry (1 Corinthians 3:9)
- Minister/instrument (Acts 26:16 / 1 Timothy 4:6)
- Chosen (Ephesians 1:4)
- Beloved (Romans 1:7/ 2 Thessalonians 2:13)
- Precious jewel (Malachi 3:17)
- Heritage (1 Peter 5:3)

I HAVE BEEN...

- Redeemed by the blood (Revelation 5:9)
- Set free from sin /condemnation (Romans 8:1-2)
- Set free from Satan's control (Colossians 1:13)
- Set free from Satan's kingdom (Ephesians 2)
- Chosen before foundation of world (Ephesians 1:4)
- Predestined to be like Jesus (Ephesians 1:11)
- Forgiven of all my trespasses (Colossians 2:13)
- Washed in the blood of the Lamb (Revelation 1:5)
- Given a sound mind (2 Timothy 1:7)
- Given the Holy Spirit (2 Corinthians 1:22)
- Adopted into God's family (Romans 8:15)
- Justified freely by his grace (Romans 3:24)
- Given all things pertaining to life (2 Peter 1:3)
- Given great and precious promises (2 Peter 1:4)
- Given ministry of reconciliation (2 Corinthians 1:22)
- Authority over the power of enemy (Luke 10:19)
- Access to God (Ephesians 3:12)
- Given wisdom (Ephesians 1:8)

I AM...

- Complete in him (Colossians 2:10)
- Free forever from sin's power (Romans 6:14)
- Sanctified (1 Corinthians 6:11)
- Meet for the Master's use (2 Timothy 2:21)
- Loved eternally (1 Peter 1:5)
- Kept from falling (Jude 1:24)
- Kept by the power of God (1 Peter 1:5)
- Not condemned (Romans 8:1-2)
- One with the Lord (1 Corinthians 6:17)
- On my way to heaven (John 14:6)
- Quickened by his mighty power (Ephesians 2:1)
- Seated in heavenly places (Ephesians 1:3)
- The head and not the tail (Deut. 28:13)
- Light in the darkness (Matthew 5:14)
- Candle in a dark place (Matthew 5:15)
- City set on a hill (Matthew 5:14)
- Salt of the earth (Matthew 5:13)
- His sheep (Psalm 23 / Psalm 100:3 / John 10:14)
- A citizen of heaven (1 Peter 2:11)
- Hidden with Christ in God (Psalm 32:7)
- Protected from the evil one (1 John 5:18)
- Kept by the power of God (1 Peter 1:5)
- Secure in Christ (John 10:28-29)
- Set upon a Rock (Psalm 40:2)
- More than a conqueror (Romans 8:37)
- A victor (1 John 5:4)
- Healed by his strips (Isaiah 53:6)
- Covered by the blood of Jesus (Ephesians 2:13)
- Sheltered under his wing (Psalm 91:4)
- Hidden in the secret place of the Almighty (Psalm 91:1)

I HAVE...

- Access to the Father (Romans 5:2)
- A home in heaven waiting for me (John 14:1-2)
- All things in Christ (2 Corinthians 5:17)
- A living hope (1 Peter 1:3)
- An anchor to my soul (Hebrews 6:19)
- A hope that is sure and steadfast (Hebrews 6:19)
- Authority to tread on serpents (Luke 10:19)
- Power to witness (Acts 1:8)
- The tongue of the learned (Isaiah 50:4)
- The mind of Christ (1 Corinthians 2:16)
- Boldness and access (Hebrews 10:19)
- Peace with God (Romans 5:1)
- Faith as a grain of mustard seed (Luke 17:6)

I CAN...

- Do all things through Christ (Philippians 4:13)
- Find mercy and grace to help (Hebrews 4:16)
- Come boldly to the throne of grace (Hebrews 4:16)
- Quench all the fiery darts (Ephesians 6:16)
- Tread on the serpent Luke (10:19)
- Declare liberty to captives (Isaiah 61:1)
- Pray always and everywhere (Luke 21:36)
- Chase a thousand (Joshua 23:10)
- Defeat the enemy (Luke 10:19)

I CANNOT...

- Be separated from God's love (Romans 8:35-39)
- Be lost (John 10:28)
- Be moved (Psalm 16:8)
- Taken out of the Father's hand (John 10:29)

Spiritual Warfare Checklist

It is only when we stand in our own righteousness that we should be afraid to stand before the enemy; for our righteousness are as "filthy rags," but the righteousness of Christ is called the armor of God. Check off the following verses as you complete them:

- | | | |
|-------------------------------|-------|----------------------|
| 1. Put on the Armor of God | _____ | Ephesians 6:11-18 |
| 2. Be Strong in the Lord! | _____ | Ephesians 6:10 |
| 3. Bind the Enemy | _____ | Matthew 18:18-20 |
| 4. Resist the Devil | _____ | James 4:7 |
| 5. Claim the Blood | _____ | Revelation 12:11 |
| 6. Loose the Captives | _____ | Luke 4:18 |
| 7. Pull Down Strongholds | _____ | 2 Corinthians 10:3-5 |
| 8. Put a Hedge of Protection | _____ | Job 1:10 |
| 9. Command Him to Leave | _____ | Matthew 10:1 |
| 10. Rebuke Him in Jesus' Name | _____ | Matthew 17:18 |

Try it Yourself ... Believe God for Your Position in Christ

I Am...

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____

I Have Been ...

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____

I Can...

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____

I Have...

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____

I Cannot...

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____

My Sins Have Been...

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____

(Now that you have confessed it, do you believe it?)

Identify the Enemy's Strongholds

(Obstacles, hindrances, sicknesses, oppression, fears, torments, etc.)

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____

Step 6: Cast Your Cares Upon the Lord

Psalm 55:22: *Cast your burden on the Lord...He shall sustain you.*

Philippians 4:6: *In everything...let your requests be made known unto God.*

1 Peter 5:7: *Casting all your care upon Him, for He cares for you.*

Job 1:5: *Job rose up early in the morning and offered burnt offerings for all of them.*

Unpacked Baggage

We cannot properly intercede for others until we have cleared away the baggage of personal concerns, needs and cares. We must find a resting place where we can lay down our burdens, in order to bear the burdens of others in prayer. Hearts that are "overloaded" with care will be distracted in prayer and made ineffective in their intercession. In Luke 21:34, Jesus warned his disciples to beware of the danger of three distracting pitfalls:

1. Over-abundance (surfeiting, over-spending, over-charging, too many possessions)
2. Over-indulgence (drunkenness, lover of pleasures, over-eating, over-playing)
3. Overload (cares, burdens, worries, fears of this life)

Take Your Burden to the Lord

The most deceptive and innocent-looking of these pitfalls is that "feeling of being overloaded." We cannot escape the cares of normal living, but we can UNLOAD the OVERLOAD. Jesus concludes the issue in verse 36 by saying, "Therefore watch and pray always..."

Leave it There!

The solution to overload is prayer. That means we must bring excess burdens, cares, concerns, problems, worries, fears, anxieties and troubles TO THE LORD and leave them there! We can – and should – raise some issues to the Lord over and over (see Luke 18), for example, by praying for the health or salvation of a family member. But we need to entrust those cares to the Lord as we go about our day, and allow Him to shoulder the burden of our worries. Too often we lift our concerns to Him, and walk away just as burdened as before we prayed.

Cast, Roll, Dump it!

David said, "Cast thy burden on the Lord" (Psalm 55:22). The word "cast" is the key here. It literally means... ROLL... DUMP... UNLOAD. Picture yourself carrying a backpack of heavy equipment and sliding it off your own shoulders and onto someone who is stronger, and better able to carry the load. You cannot carry your own burdens *plus* the burdens of others! Burdens are lifted from us as we roll them onto the Lord.

Practice ‘Casting Your Cares’

<p>Pray for Yourself:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Your troubles • Your aches and pains • Your faith and faithfulness • Your courage to witness • Your heart’s secret goals • Your needs, provisions • Your finances, funds • Deliverance from temptation • Your enemies 	<p>Pray for Your Family:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Each member by name and need • Salvation of children • Spouse's needs • Spiritual growth of each • Health and safety • Protection from evil • Deliverance from temptation
<p>Pray for Your Future:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Your plans • Your goals • Your ministries • Your vision 	<p>Pray for Your Faults:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Your struggles • Your worries • Your temptations • Your wants and wishes • Your heartaches • Your failures

Exercise (10 minutes max)

We must also "bear one another’s burdens and so fulfill the law of Christ" (Galatians 6:2). No one can help you bear a burden if they don’t know what it is. Share your key burdens, worries and fears with your prayer partners, as you are able.

Discipline Yourself

There will be no time after this point in your intercession to go back to self-petitions. This is the time to lay them fully before God so as NOT to take them up again.

Dumping on God is one thing. It is quite another to dump in faith knowing that you are doing it at his invitation because "HE CARES FOR YOU." So thank him for hearing, and for being touched by your infirmities.

Sing Songs

Burdens Are Lifted At Calvary / Jesus Knows Just What I Need / No One Understands Like Jesus / What a Friend We Have in Jesus / Take Your Burden to the Lord and Leave It There / I Cast All My Cares Upon You

I am learning this lesson now in a very real and down to earth way! I have skipped this step until recently and it has hindered my prayers. Only now have I been able to return to praying for others because I have learned this step so well.

About Pray Dutchess

Who We Are

Pray Dutchess is a group of Christians from varying denominations who have been called by the Lord to pray for revival and community transformation within Dutchess County. Our six-part training series on intercession is meant to bring those of us called to pray for revival into “one accord” (Acts 2:2, KJV; Philippians 2:2; John 17:23) and unite us for round-the-clock intercession (what we’re calling a 24-hour “Prayer Wall”).

How to Join Our Prayer Wall

If the Lord is calling you to pray for revival in this area, please:

- Prayerfully consider a commitment to pray with us for 30 minutes, once a week
- Take our six-step training series
- Talk with your pastor and ask him or her to send us a referral form
- Send us your preferred prayer times (please provide us with three possible timeslots, in case we've already booked a slot for someone else)
- You can also visit www.praydutchess.com or contact Kristal Johnson to find an open slot
- We will provide you with some guidance on what to pray for

God bless you for your desire to pray! Please don't hesitate to contact us with any questions.

Contact Information

Kristal Johnson

Prayer Leader for Pray Dutchess

Web: www.praydutchess.com

E-mail: kristal@praydutchess.com