

ENJOYABLE INTERCESSION: UNITY WITH GOD AND OTHERS ***LIFE OF PRAYER CLASS – SESSION 5***

I. ABIDING INTERCESSION: ENJOYABLE AND INTIMATE

“If you abide in Me, and My words abide in you, you will ask what you desire, and it shall be done for you.” (John 15:7)

“But you received the Spirit of adoption by whom we cry out, “Abba, Father.” The Spirit Himself bears witness with our spirit that we are children of God...but the Spirit Himself makes intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered.” (Romans 8:15-16, 26)

- A. Abiding intercession is prayer that is birthed in encounter with God and it is a posture of heart during intercession. Jesus connected abiding in Him to answered prayer. In Romans 8, the Holy Spirit gives us a heart cry for Abba, testifies of our sonship and prays through us in intimate intercession.
- B. The primary foundation for a strong prayer life is the revelation that God is beautiful and enjoys us. The religious obligation to pray and desperate needs can awaken people to pray more, but they won't be a sustaining reality in most people's lives. People will pray more when they get a revelation of God's beauty and His desire for them. Enjoyable prayer begets more prayer. In Isaiah 62, God releases promises over Jerusalem, sets intercessors in place and then fuels their intercession by declaring His delight over them.
- C. Prayer, or intercession, can be intimate and enjoyable. What is it about prayer meetings that makes you not like them? It is possible that some of our mindsets are based in wrong paradigms of God and old ways of praying that were not rooted in intimacy. Intercession is not a gifting or a personality type. It is a possible for every believer to experience intimacy with God in the context to praying for others and their city. Intercession is not a “necessary evil” in God's kingdom that “must be done” in order to see God's plans established. That thought process is rooted in a wrong paradigm of God.

“I have set watchmen on your walls, O Jerusalem; they shall never hold their peace (not be silent) day or night. You who make mention of the Lord (you who remind the Lord), do not keep silent, and give Him no rest till He makes Jerusalem a praise in the earth.” (Isaiah 62:6-7)

- D. A simple principle to intercession is that we pray back to God what He tells us to pray back to Him. We experience tremendous heart benefits as we do this consistently. Prayer is agreement with what God wants to do.
- E. Combining worship and prayer enhances our heart connection to God in prayer. A simple definition of our prayer room is, “Worship based intercession for the harvest that is rooted in intimacy with God.” Worship and prayer flow together in God's heart, as seen in the book of Revelation and the book of Isaiah.

- F. A privilege of being a son or a daughter is the ability to ask your Father to do things. We are co-heirs with Jesus, and the way the Father releases His power is by us asking Him to do things. We remain in a trusting posture as we simply ask the Father to do things.
- G. We touch the deep places in God's heart for us, others and the nations when we pray for them. Jesus is still asking the Father to do things in the nations, and Jesus has an intimate relationship with the Father (Psalm 2).
- H. The persistent asking keeps us in a vulnerable position before the Lord, which is good for our hearts. Every time we ask Him to do something it opens up our hearts to believe in Who He says He is. Most of us stop asking God to do things because our hearts can't stay vulnerable anymore to that prayer request and because He isn't answering the way we thought, or at least not in our desired timing.
- I. We connect to God's desires/will by pray-reading the Word consistently (John 15:7), and in this we connect to His heart during times of prayer. We actually get to pray the things that Jesus prays to the Father. Jesus wants His Words to abide (deep agreement and activity) in us in a way that unites our hearts to His.

II. BENEFITS OF INTERCESSION

- A. Intercession causes us to wrestle with the ideas of who God is, how He relates to us and what His desires are. These questions cause us to search His Word and ask more questions of the Holy Spirit, which leads to a greater revelation of God.
- B. God imparts His ideas, desires, emotions, love, zeal and grace to us during the actual times of praying for us and others. The conversation is the context for supernatural transformation on the inside. There are so many transactions taking place between our heart and Gods in our prayer times that we can't identify or measure, but they are significant.
- C. God releases prophetic insight into His plans and His timing during times of prayer.
- D. We become the answer to our prayers. Our persistent asking in prayer causes us to confront everything that hinders that prayer being answered in our own lives. A holy resolve is placed in our own hearts as we pray for.
- E. God wants to fascinate us and surprise us with answered prayers. Answered prayer, in a semi-dramatic storyline, is one of the most exhilarating things we can experience as God's children. Answered prayer can lead us to an encounter with God.

III. HOW TO ENGAGE IN PERSONAL PRAYER

- A. Develop a personal prayer list that you can pray from consistently. This will give you some direction and language to start out your prayer times. I truly believe you will pray more often and find more of a heart connection with God if you have a prayer list.

- B. Find biblical prayers, biblical promises and grow in using biblical language. Let the Bible inform your prayers.
- C. Spend time cultivating a real picture of God's throne room in your imagination (Revelation 4-5, Exodus 19:16-20, Daniel 7:9-10, Ezekiel 1:4-28, Isaiah 6:1-5). Continually set your mind on this scene because this will connect you to Him as a Person, which produces faith that He hears and will answer you. I used to have these chapters open during almost every prayer time and intercession set at IHOP, so that I could set my mind on them and talk to God about His throne room. I would declare what He looks like and what His throne looks like and then I would make my requests known in prayer. I had a consistent experience of awe and faith when I did this.
- D. Pray like you would when you're pray-reading the Bible. You can pray quietly, pause often and even repeat your short prayers often. Focus on connecting to Him, not in praying loud, fast or having awesome prayers. If it helps you, journal your prayers out in between saying them and singing them.
- E. Ask/Thank/Declare – There are various ways to pray for yourself and others. Some people focus on one or two of them, but they are all biblical and effective. You can ask the Father to do things, thank Him for what He is about to do or already doing, and you can declare or release His power in a certain circumstance. None of them take more faith or display more faith than the others.
- F. Set your mind on praying for a certain topic and then pray with your spirit as well. Flow between praying with your spirit and your understanding.
- G. Be persistent with your prayers until you see the manifestation of your prayers. Jesus said to "ask, seek and knock," which means to "keep asking, keep seeking and keep knocking."

IV. HOW TO ENGAGE IN CORPORATE PRAYER

- A. Corporate prayer can be a powerful experience and it can have dynamic impact in the spirit realm. God loves family and unity, so when we gather together to pray God releases a greater blessing (Psalm 133, Matthew 18:19, Ephesians 2:20-22, James 5:16, Acts 1:14, 2:1).
- B. Unity is found in consistent agreement, so continually set your heart to agree with the prayers that are being prayed. Resist letting your mind be distracted and bring your mind back to the topic that is being prayed for by those around you.
- C. It's not enough to just listen and have a general heart agreement in corporate prayer meetings.
- D. Repeat the phrase. Prayerfully repeat phrases that others are praying. This simple act will help connect you to the person praying, their prayer and God's heart. Pray anointed phrases over and over again until you're ready to move on.

- E. Sing your prayers to the Lord. Sing spontaneous prayers to the Lord that are in the same vein as the person praying. Sing prayer choruses over and over again until your done. This is especially easy in our UHOP context because we have worship playing and singers developing choruses. Sing the choruses that the worship teams develop. Choruses can be the most powerful, enjoyable, and unifying parts of the entire prayer meeting.
- F. Many people are not comfortable praying out loud in a small group prayer time or praying on the microphone at UHOP because they don't have much language to pray. Every sincere prayer is powerful and desired at UHOP, but it would also help you to pray out loud in your personal times in order to develop your own prayer language with the Lord.
- G. We can pray the same verses, the same words and the same topics as many times as we want to. I've had people sit down before they even prayed on the mic because the person in front of them prayed their verse or prayed in the same direction as they were going to.