

Alert: Pray for Our Elected Officials

Last night I had a dream about a key leader in Congress. He is a personal acquaintance, so the conversation with him in the dream seemed very real and vivid.

We were at what looked like a retreat center with other congressmen around, but we were sitting away from the rest at a picnic table across from each other. He was sharing confidentially with me about the pressure and pain of his job and how it was affecting him, his family and his walk with God. He looked severely depressed, but there was a love for God in his eyes that I could see shining through. He wanted God to move in his life, but he could barely breathe because his busy schedule, staff members, the constant push and pull from different voices and the deep problems in the nation that need to be solved were consuming him.

I crossed to the other side of the picnic table, knelt beside him and asked if I could put my hand on his heart and pray. He said yes, so I did and started praying gently for his heart to come alive. No one had to hear me. I wasn't praying in a showy way, just saying "Jesus, please come. Jesus, please touch Your son right now who needs you. Jesus, meet him now!"

In that moment, the sweet presence of the Holy Spirit touched him. I could feel fire going through my hand into his heart, and he knew that God was showing up.

Tears immediately began welling up in his eyes—and then pouring over. Within a few minutes, he was weeping uncontrollably. The pressure that had been on him was being released, the presence of God was coming on him and the realization that he no longer cared who was around him or who saw his "undignified" reality was palpable. He needed God, and

he needed God desperately.

In that moment, the world stood still. Nothing else mattered but him knowing that Jesus loved him, God was with him and that he, as a leader in our nation and as a child of God, would make it through this season.

I could see strength and courage rise in his heart as he became vulnerable before the Lord. It only took a few minutes for life to return to him through a simple prayer.

Then I woke up. With the dream came a strong burden to pray.

Prophetic Dreams

As I shared in my book, "Jesus and Politics: One Woman's Walk with God in a Mudslinging Profession," I am not normally a dreamer. Nonetheless, I have had two dreams about elected officials that have come true. With that understanding, I know this dream is a call to intercede with diligence for this national leader and all my friends in Congress.

In addition to my 16 years walking beside members of Congress as a campaign manager and consultant, these dreams have placed a deep burden on me to stir up intercession for our national leaders.

I say this all the time in churches where I speak almost every Sunday: We have elected some godly Christian people to represent us in Washington and in our state houses, but then we forget that they are missionaries going into a hostile environment, and we leave them with no prayer covering.

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Just this morning, I read out of Proverbs, "Some people make cutting remarks, but the words of the wise bring healing" (Prov. 12:18, NLT).

We can all make all kinds of cutting statements against our elected officials and national leaders, but how many of us are doing the hard work of intercession?

How many of us are warring for them against the demonic forces that want to destroy them, their families and our nation? How many still believe God wants to make a way for them to remain steadfast and full of courage?

There are three things you must understand about elected officials to pray for them effectively.

No Time or Privacy

Can you imagine having your whole life scheduled in 15-minute increments? Can you imagine running from meeting with a constituent in your office to a committee hearing, to a quick lunch with a colleague, then a caucus meeting, then back to your office for a meeting with another constituent?

What about after work, when you need to be at receptions or other events three or four times a week? Afterward you might go back to your office (sleeping on an air mattress as some congressmen do) or your apartment. When you should finally be done for the day, your staff expects you to read all the briefing papers, legislative updates and bills you will vote on the next day before you go to sleep.

This is a normal day of a member of Congress. Similarly, your state legislators and local officials are also trying to juggle their regular lives, careers, families and public service at the same time. They are strained for time, and they have no privacy.

Trying to find time to read their Bibles takes commitment from every believer, but congressmen don't have time for deep fellowship with other believers outside the Capitol Bible studies and appearances at local churches when they are in their districts. They struggle to find quality time with their

spouses and children—and when they do, they are mentally distracted by the hundred items on their to-do lists.

Senators are recognized everywhere they go. Members of Congress are stopped at airports, the grocery store and church by people asking them questions or giving their opinions. State and county officials are in the public eye wherever they go because they live in their districts and with their voters. It is called “public service” for a reason. They have opened themselves to both public praise and criticism by holding office.

Imagine dealing with that every day. Could you maintain a close and vibrant relationship with Jesus and your family in the midst of it?

Our elected officials need our intercession. We need them to be healthy.

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Many Critics, but Few Friends

The longer someone serves and the further they progress in leadership, the smaller their pool of deep friendships become. They simply don't have time to maintain as many relationships, and the people who become the closest to them are their colleagues, staff, consultants and the key leaders in their lives. It takes effort to schedule a coffee, a meeting and fellowship even within their church communities.

If you have an established relationship with an elected official, respect their time but try maintain the relationship however you can. Keep encouraging and praying for them.

I recently dropped into a meeting a congressman was leading in his office. He wasn't expecting me, but when he saw me he

launched into a passionate speech about how much our ministry meant to him, and that his most impactful meeting last year was speaking to our Christians Engaged group and getting prayer.

“You know why this meeting was so incredible?” he asked. “It was the fellowship of the brothers and sisters. They didn’t want anything from me. They just wanted to minister to me. I needed the fellowship that day, and I need it now.”

I almost wept right there. Our elected officials need our intercession—badly. We need them to be full and fulfilled in their lives and on the job.

The Warfare Is Real and Unrelenting

Can you imagine making choices that will impact millions of families for decades or even generations? The warfare over our nation’s future is intense, and our national and state leaders are at the center of it.

Offenses, bitterness and anger can take over our elected officials’ hearts as they try to combat the warfare and the public criticism they constantly face, whether deserved or not. Some of them fight it off; some don’t.

Our nation is under spiritual attack, and our elected officials are on the front lines. We need them to be victorious over the schemes of the enemy and the witchcraft-fueled assaults.

Does Scripture tell us to cut our elected officials down or pray for them?

First Timothy 2:1-4 (NKJV) says: “Therefore I exhort first of all that supplications, prayers, intercessions, and giving of thanks be made for all men, for kings and all who are in authority, that we may lead a quiet and peaceable life in all godliness and reverence. For this is good and acceptable in

the sight of God our Savior, who desires all men to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth.”

It is in all of our best interest to pray for our elected officials. We need our brothers and sisters in Christ who are serving in government to stand firmly and courageously. Our nation needs them to be healthy and free.

Today, I am amplifying my prayers and intercession for them. Will you join me?

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