

Demolish This Ungodly Belief if You Want to Grow in Intercession

I have a startling confession to make. Until a few years ago, I was actually awful at prayer.

I knew I was supposed to pray but had a difficult time doing it. I was fine whenever I was interceding alongside others in a corporate prayer service but was lost when trying to pray at home.

I remember conversing with some friends who woke up at 5:00 am and prayed before leaving for work. One guy said, "It's like clockwork for me, I drop to my knees every morning before the crack of dawn." I have always had a hard time with that.

I also had a friend with a ragged prayer journal who systematically scribbled out his prayer requests. He felt like prayer was a discipline to master. If it wasn't difficult, then you probably weren't doing it right. Although I bought my own prayer journal, most of the pages remained blank.

Don't misunderstand me, I prayed, but it was sporadic. If there was a crisis, or I was in sin, then it wasn't hard to drop to my knees. Yet, if things were going well, I didn't know what to do.

For me, it was hard to escape the specter of sin. I saw God as an angry judge who was displeased with humanity. Those who were truly holy and set apart could pray—but that wasn't me.

Intercession was not only challenging and unpleasant; it was also a reminder of my personal failures and inability to perform.

When I did pray, it often took on a "transactive" nature. I usually focused on forgiveness or petitioning for things that I lacked. It was all about sin or personal needs, and not much

else.

It took a number of years and some amazing encounters, but my understanding of prayer finally began to change.

In the midst of God's wonderful presence, I finally started to break off the shackles of my harsh, constricting religion. Moralism and performance no longer colored everything I did.

It became apparent that God—through the death and resurrection of Jesus—was restoring me back into the family.

Everything changed when I discovered prayer is a natural expression of the sons and daughters of the Most High. It is a beautiful way of knowing and expressing the inexplicable wonder of our benevolent heavenly Father. {eo}

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