

Applying the Art of Intercession

We've spent a lot of time talking about the art of intercession—why it's important to pray for others, how to do it, and different types of intercessory prayers. All of this information is good, but if you don't know how to apply it in your life practically, it won't do you much good. So, I want to give you four steps to actually living out the intercessory life.

1. **The first step is to decide in your heart that you will be an intercessor and trust God to meet you in it.** James 4:8 says that if we draw near to God, He will draw near to us. I guarantee you that if you determine to live a life of prayer, God will encounter you and empower you. God is looking for people whose hearts are loyal to Him (see 2 Chron. 16:9) and who will answer His call to intercede for others (see Ezek. 22:30). As you say yes to the call to prayer, God will bring you into greater heights and depths of His presence.
2. **The second step is to be a doer of the Word, not just a hearer** (see James 1:22–25). Hearing teaching is good, but it's not the end goal. God's goal for teaching on prayer is that His church would be equipped in prayer—that they would begin to do it, not just hear about it. So step out and begin to act on what you've learned about intercession so far.
3. **The third step is to know the promises of Scripture.** God makes many promises in Scripture about what He will do and about how He responds to our prayers. For example, Jesus said, *"Ask, and it will be given to you..."* (Matt. 7:7, NKJV) and, *"If you ask anything in My name, I will do it"* (John 14:14, NKJV). Another important promise is: *"The God of peace will crush Satan under your feet*

shortly" (Rom. 16:20, NKJV). The best way to know the promises is to read the Bible regularly.

4. **The fourth step is to know God's will as revealed in Scripture.** Along with knowing the promises of Scripture, we need to know God's revealed will in Scripture. The apostle John said, *"Now this is the confidence that we have in Him, that if we ask anything **according to His will**, He hears us. And if we know that He hears us, we know that we have the petitions that we have asked of Him"* (1 John 5:14–15).

Steps 3 and 4 are very important when we talk about intercession. Sometimes people pray the problem over and over, thinking that's intercession, but they're really just praying themselves into a rut of discouragement. When we pray the problem, we are praying in doubt and unbelief. Instead, we need to pray the solution—based on God's promises and will as revealed in Scripture. That is how we get answers to our prayers.

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