

CHAPTER FIVE



ON EARTH AS IT IS IN HEAVEN INTERCESSION

The conflicting feelings we have of prayer:

- Prayer releases power. As Walter Wink wrote "History belongs to the intercessors, who believe the future into being". Some of us have seen unexplainable things happen as a result of prayers, maybe miracles, maybe coincidences of impossibly small chance. Maybe we have seen healings, provisions or changes of character.
- BUT - we are left with a weird questions as to why on earth God (who is meant to be all powerful, all wise and all good) would need our involvement at all?! Does that not just cloud the matter? What if two of us pray for directly opposing things? Shouldn't God just crack on without my small-minded ideas?
- AND - while we are at it...what about the pain we each carry of prayers which seem to have gone ignored, unanswered or refused? What about the people who never recovered or families which have never been restored or wars which never ended?

All these thoughts are wrapped up together especially when we consider *intercession*.

This is a form of prayer where we pray for the benefit of someone else. The word comes from the latin word *Intercedo* - which means "to come between".

Three Thought Areas...

AUTHORITY

The story we are given in Genesis speaks of the ultimate authority of God to create and protect. God then hands this authority on to humanity. We are charged with looking after all of creation: people, planet and animals... (we have some room for improvement here).

To pray is the medium by which we use our authority and exercise our role.

When we pray in the name of Jesus, we also pray calling upon his power (which, let's face it is greater than our own), and so we can pray with confidence against forces of darkness, pain and evil.

RELATIONSHIP

The story we are given in Genesis speaks of the nature of our interaction with God.

Does god *need* people to pick up some of the slack or somehow compensate for a lack in his character or competence? Is our relationship one of servitude or slavery?

No.

God *chooses* relationship with and co-working with precious children. He *ENJOYS* our prayers.

WHAT CHANGES?

Often we find that as we pray for others, we ourselves are changed by our prayers just as much as anyone or anything else.

"The motive behind all true intercessory prayer is love for the other"

"If we truly love people, we will desire for them far more than it is within our power to give them, and this will lead us to prayer. Intercession is a way of loving others" - Richard Foster

As we pray, we grow in love for others, and we are often also moved to become an answer to our own prayers...linking back to our original role of caring and protecting.