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_____Programs 37_____

“Royal Priest”

The Ascended Christ

“Two New Testament letters celebrate the Ascended Christ: Ephesians and Hebrews. Ephesians opens our eyes to what evidently to Paul’s eyes had only been progressively opened, for there is no mention of it in his previous letters. The Cross cut us off from our union with Satan; the resurrection gave us union with Christ in our personal living; the ascension gives us union with Him in His world Savior-hood. Here is the panorama of history. We stand on the Mount and view it. We are already out of this world in spirit, and in the heavenlies. See it, says Paul, and may the eyes of your understanding be enlightened.

It starts with God’s foreordination. It ends with the final reconciliation of all things. Its marvelous middle term of grace is the formation of the Christ of eternity by the union of many sons with The Son. With spirits in heaven, but bodies on earth, the sons go to release other captives, millions of them.

Paul’s triumphant song for the Church is **a throne shared now**—a throne in spirit, while the body that contains it bears the scars of war. It is Christ’s throne. **See** the amazing power which lifted Him from the grave to the right hand of God in actual historical fact, both body and spirit. **Believe** that the same power has lifted us to the same exalted place in an actual spiritual fact, though not yet in our bodies. Then **act** not as if this was a glorified experience still to come, not as if this is some mystical throne millions of miles away that we are told we share, but as a throne shared where we are in our own spirits, and in our own defiant world.

Actually the enthroned Christ is everywhere; His throne, His lordship, His accomplished victory is in every square inch of the universe. Did He not say, “Go...teach all nations...and lo, I am with you always...”? And it is not the resurrected Christ, but the enthroned Christ who is with and in us. Let us get into the habit of recognizing this. I have found this to be the key to all situations—just when they are difficult, when all seems against deliverance, when the knots of disagreement seem beyond untying—to recognize Christ actually reigning there in the situation, and to take it for granted with thankfulness that we shall see that He is reigning.

When we turn from the Ascended Christ in Ephesians to Him in Hebrews, we find a concentration on Him in His office as High Priest rather than on the fact of His enthronement. Nothing is said in actual words about our enthroned relationship with Him. But I suggest that to the eye that can see it, a relationship is etched in, so sensitive and profound that it fully rounds out the high priestly ministry of the enthroned Savior, and our relationship to Him in it. It actually carries us on beyond the Ephesians revelation to the fullness of the significance of the ascension.

Now we mount up “with wings as eagles” to the ascended life. The Ascended Christ, the Great High Priest, is seen as the dynamic Savior doing His saving work, as much as ever, through His Body. The Ascended Christ lives the ascended life over and over again, in and through us”.¹

Commission: The Call

- **Ex.3:10** I will send thee unto Pharaoh
- **Jud.6:14** Have I not sent you?
- **Isa.6:9** Go, and tell this people
- **John1:6** There was a man sent from God
- **Acts9:15** He is a chosen vessel to me

The Bodily Cost:

- **Isa.53:12** He has poured out his soul unto death
- **2Cor.1:8** We were pressed out of measure above strength, inasmuch that we despaired even of life
- **2Cor.1:9** We had the sentence of death in ourselves
- **2Cor.2:4** Out of much affliction and anguish of heart
- **Phil.1:29** But also to suffer for his sake
- **2Cor.7:5** Our flesh had no rest, but we were troubled on every side without were fightings, within were fears
- **2Cor.6:4-10** In much patience, in afflictions, in necessities, in distresses, in stripes in imprisonments in tumults, in labors, in watching, in fasting, by honor, by dishonor, by evil report, by good report, as known, as dying and behold we live; as chastened, and not killed. As sorrowful, yet always rejoicing, as poor, yet making many rich, as having nothing, and yet possessing all things
- **2Cor.11:23-27** In labors, in stripes, in prisons, in stoning, in shipwreck, a night and a day in the deep; in journey often, in perils in waters, and by robbers, in perils by my own countrymen, by heathen, in perils in cities, in wilderness, in the sea, among false brethren, in weariness and painfulness, in hunger, thirst, in cold and nakedness.

Completion and Fruit Bearing:

- **Heb.2:10** Bring many sons to glory
- **John12:24** If it die, it brings forth much fruit
- **John15:16** He has chosen you to bring forth fruit and that your fruit should remain
- **Prov.11:30** The fruit of the righteous is a tree of life
- **2Cor.4:12** Death works in me, life in you
-

Redemption for Others

“What we are talking about is **not** the Cross for our redemption, but for the redemption of others. This is adulthood, not adolescence. This kind of cross is constantly repeated in our daily lives whenever we are in situations which independent-self would be rid of; but instead of remaining in hurt self, we recognize them to be part of some redemptive purpose of God through us in others. So, Paul says, we accept them as something we have been “delivered unto,” and our “dying”

¹ Ascended Life by Norman Grubb

which is said to be the dying of the Lord Jesus in us is our heart acceptance of them, although that may not be lightly, or easily, any more than the Savior could accept His cross without a Gethsemane.

Here is a principle of constant “dyings,” daily maybe, affecting every kind of normal situation in life, not by any means in which we might call our religious activity. Anything which hurts, disturbs our status quo, or challenges, be it what we may call small in our personal lives, or big in some public affair, is a place of dying when we change from self’s resistance to acceptance as a step in God’s saving plan.

Without such dyings, Moses could never have seen that he was not to be a possible, ephemeral Pharaoh, but a savior of God’s chosen people; Gideon could never have changed from challenging God’s apparent indifference to accepting the challenge to be himself the deliverer. Abraham could never have exchanged his laughter at the idea of a couple their age having a son for a productive faith. David could never have resisted the chance of killing Saul to wait in patience for God’s day of his own coronation. So it is through every aspect of achieving or enduring faith in all biblical history. Everyone had to start by disturbed, resisting self which saw God in the tough situation and then died to his self-resistance.

Then comes the resurrection—which is the Spirit in us causing us to see things from His point of view. We can begin to be intercessors. We can see what God is after, and the first effect is a joy, release, sense of adventure, praise where there seems nothing to praise for, for we now see the redemptive purposes, something by us for others. Its immediate effect, as Paul says, is a quickening in our own selves: “the life of Jesus manifest in our mortal flesh”—burdens, fears, the sense of a hurtful, not joyful cross, is gone, and others watching can see a release and ease which is not what the world experiences in its tough spots. Resurrection life is manifested in our mortal bodies, and that by itself is God coming through us to others.²

WE ARE CROSS OPERATORS **INTERCESSORS**

We take up our Cross! (Luke.14:27)

We are called Kings and Priests! (Rev.1:6)

KINGS operate on a universal Spirit level. “We call the things that be not as though they are!” (Rom. 4:17)

WE SPEAK THE WORD OF FAITH

(Mark 11:23)

Peter calls us a “Royal Priest.”

(Isaiah 53)

PRIESTS operate on a local body level. “Present your bodies a living sacrifice.” (Rom. 12:1) Laying our lives down, and taking them up again. (John 10:17)

THE WORK OF FAITH

² Dying Daily: THE SPONTANEOUS YOU; Norman P. Grubb—Chapter 18; pg. 105-106.

We are "Kings and Priests" "You are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people; that you should show forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into His marvellous light"(I Peter 2:9).

We are united with God in His one world purpose, which is to bring His precious creation, Man, back into the pure harmony of the Garden of Eden glory. He subjected us unto vanity (Romans 8:20) hoping to train us in what isn't the truth, to then deliver us from this vanity through the Cross of Christ, and cause us to know our deliverance and glorious liberation. So, we, as co-saviors and co-creators, have the same heart that God has, which is always and eternally for others.

Glory comes out of suffering the same way that the light comes out of darkness, II Corinthians 4:6. That is why as sons, not children, we are not delivered from trials and temptations (James 1:2-3) but delivered **unto** them. For by doing so we can take on the sufferings of others as co-saviors and co-creators with God. Peter calls us "royal priests" in I Peter 2:9: "But ye are a chosen generation, a **royal priesthood**, an holy nation".

We are called "royal" because as Kings we reign with Christ far above all principality, power, might, and dominion. For the devil and all his evil forces are already under the feet of Jesus, even though we don't see it yet (Heb.2:8b). We know for ourselves the "power of His resurrection" and have the "keys of the kingdom." With this knowing, we dare break the bondage that chains our brothers and sisters to satanic lies and false satanic identities. We do this by speaking "**the word.**" Jesus said, "**Say** unto that mountain be thou removed and cast into the sea, for you shall have whatsoever you **say**. Therefore, I say unto you, What things so ever ye desire, when you pray, **believe** that ye receive them, and ye **shall** have them" (Mark 11:23).

We are also called "Priests" because we present our bodies as living sacrifices, and doing so is our reasonable service. That simply means that we give ourselves to our negative Crosses, instead of fighting them. Our bodies don't belong to us, they belong to Christ. "You are bought with a price." There is a rest that comes when you finally accept your situation as from the Lord and as "the Father's cup." For by doing this we enter into what God's eternal purposes are for others.

We cannot experience suffering without its positive counterpart, glory. "Always causing us to triumph" (II Cor. 2:14); "Suffering cannot be compared with the **glory**" (Rom. 8:18); "Our light afflictions worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of **glory**" (II Cor. 4:17). Suffering and glory are different forms of the same thing, like a pencil has a point on one end and an eraser on the other. They are opposite ends of the same thing. So the life of Christ manifests itself in opposite but unified forms: a sacrificial lamb, a conquering lion, and they both rest together as harmonious friends. The prophetic scripture is fulfilled, "The lion will lie down with the lamb."

We all have one ministry and that is "the ministry of reconciliation" (II Cor. 5:18). None of us can fully rest until the whole body of Christ comes into "the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ. From whom the whole body fitly joined together and compacted by that which every joint supplieth, according to the effectual working in the measure of every part, maketh increase of the body unto the edifying of itself in love" (Eph. 4:13 & 16).

The battle is already won in Christ. The Ephesian (6:14) warriors battle cry is to simply stand by faith and in the truth of who we really are. Jesus in us doesn't have to fight evil, he has already defeated Satan. When we know the secret of Christ suffering **as us**, we see all suffering as, "a light affliction which is for a moment, working in us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory. For we look not at the things which are seen, but at things which are not seen; for the things which are seen are temporal; but the things which are not seen are eternal"(II Cor. 4:17-18). We Christians spend all our time trying to get **outer** deliverances and miss the true **spiritual** deliverances for our loved ones; that comes by the privilege of laying down our lives for others.

What Is an Intercessor?

"That God seeks intercessors but seldom finds them is plain from the pain of His exclamation through Isaiah: "He saw that there was no man, and wondered that there was no intercessor"; and His protest of disappointment through Ezekiel: 22:30: "I sought for a man among them, that should make up the hedge, and stand in the gap before Me for the land....but I found none."

Perhaps believers in general have regarded intercession as just some form of rather intensified prayer. It is, so long as there is great emphasis on the word "intensified"; for there are three things to be seen in an intercessor which are not necessarily found in ordinary prayer: identification, agony and authority.

The identification of the intercessor with the ones for whom he intercedes is perfectly seen in the Savior. Of Him it was said that He poured out His soul unto death; and He was numbered with the transgressors; and He bare the sin of many, and *made intercession* for the transgressors. As the Divine Intercessor, interceding for a lost world, He drained the cup of our lost condition to its last drop, He "tasted death for every man." To do that, in the fullest possible sense, He sat where we sit. By taking our nature upon Himself, by learning obedience through the things which He suffered, by being tempted in all points like as we are, by becoming poor for our sakes, and finally by being made sin for us, He gained the position in which, with the fullest authority as the Captain of our salvation made perfect through sufferings, and the fullest understanding of all we go through, He can ever live to make intercession for us, and by effective pleadings with the Father "is able to save to the uttermost them that come unto God by Him." Identification is thus the first law of the intercessor. He pleads effectively because he gives his life for those he pleads for; he is their genuine representative; he has submerged his self-interest in their needs and sufferings and as far as possible has literally taken their place.

There is another Intercessor, and in Him we see the agony of this ministry; for He, the Holy Spirit, "maketh intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered." This One, the only present intercessor on earth, has no hearts upon which He can lay His burdens, and no bodies through which He can suffer and work, except the hearts and bodies of those who are His dwelling place. Through them He does His intercessory work on earth, and they become intercessors by reason of the Intercessor within them. It is real life to which he calls them, the very kind of life, in lesser measure, which the Savior Himself lived on earth.

But before He can lead a chosen vessel into such a life of intercession, He first has to deal, to the bottom with all that is natural. Love of money, personal ambition, natural affection for parents and loved ones, the appetites of the body, the love of life itself, all that makes even a converted man live unto himself, for his own comfort of advantage, for his own advancement, even for his own circle of friends, has to go to the cross. It is no theoretical death but a real crucifixion with Christ, such as only the Holy Ghost Himself can make actual in the experience of His servant. Both as a crisis and process, Paul's testimony must be made ours; "I have been and still am crucified with Christ." The self must be released from itself to become the agent of the Holy Ghost.

As crucifixion proceeds, intercession begins. By inner burdens, by calls to outward obedience's, the Spirit begins to live His own life of love and sacrifice for a lost world through His cleansed channel. We see it at its greatest height in the Scriptures. Watch Moses, the young intercessor, leaving the palace by free choice to identify himself with his slave-brethren. See him accompanying them through "the waste and howling wilderness." See him reach the very summit of intercession when the wrath of God was upon them for their idolatry and their destruction was imminent. It is not his body he now offers for them as intercessor but his immortal soul: "If Thou wilt forgive their sin--; and if not, blot me, I pray Thee, out of Thy Book"; and he actually called this "making an atonement" for them (Exod. 32:35).

See the Apostle Paul, the greatest man of the new dispensation as Moses was of the old. For years his body, through the Holy Ghost, is a living sacrifice that the Gentiles might have the gospel; finally,

his immortal soul is offered on the altar. The very one who was just rejoicing with the Romans that nothing could separate him and them from the love of God (Rom.8) says a moment later, the Spirit bearing him witness, that he could wish himself "accursed (separated) from Christ for my brethren, my kinsmen according to the flesh" (Rom.9).

This is the intercessor in action. When the Holy Ghost really lives His life in a chosen vessel there is no limit to the extremes to which He will take him in His passion to warn and save the lost. Isaiah, that aristocrat, had to go "naked and bare-footed" for three years as a warning to Israel. We can hardly credit such a thing! Hosea had to marry a harlot, to show his people that the heavenly Husband was willing to take back His adulterous bride. Jeremiah was not allowed to marry, as a warning to Israel against the terrors and tragedies of captivity. Ezekiel was not allowed to shed one tear or the death of his wife, "the desire of his eyes." And so the list might be continued. Every greatly used instrument of God has been, in his measure, an intercessor: Wesley for backsliding England; Booth for the down-and-outs; Hudson Taylor for China; C. T. Studd for the unevangelized world.

But intercession is more than the Spirit sharing His groanings with us and living His life of sacrifice for the world through us; it is the Spirit gaining His ends of abundant grace. If the intercessor knows identification and agony, he also knows authority. It is the law of the corn of wheat and the harvest; "If it die, it bringeth forth much fruit."

Intercession is not substitution for sin. There has only ever been one substitute for a world of sinners, Jesus the Son of God. But intercession so identifies the intercessor with the sufferer that it gives him a prevailing place with God. He moves God. He even causes Him to change His mind. He gains his objective; or rather the Spirit gains it through him. Thus Moses, by intercession, became the savior of Israel and prevented their destruction; and we can have little doubt that Paul's supreme act of intercession for God's chosen people resulted in the great revelation given him at that time of worldwide evangelization and the final salvation of Israel (Romans 10 and 11), and is enabling God to bring it about.

Mr. Howells would often speak of "the gained position of intercession," and the truth of it is obvious on many occasions in his life. It is a fact of experience. The price is paid, the obedience is fulfilled, the inner wrestlings and groanings take their full course, and then "the word of the Lord comes." The weak channel is clothed with authority by the Holy Ghost and can speak the word of deliverance. "Greater works" are done. Not only this, but a new position in grace is gained and maintained, although even then that grace can only be appropriated and applied in each instance under the guidance of the Spirit.

Mr. Howells used to speak of it, in Mr. Mueller's phrases, a centering "the grace of faith," in contrast to receiving "the gifts of faith." What he meant was that, when we pray in a normal way, we may hope that God of His goodness will give us the thing. If He does, we rejoice; it is His gift to us; but we have no power or authority to say that we can always get that same answer at any time. Such are the gifts of faith. But when an intercessor has gained the place of intercession in a certain realm, then he has entered into "the grace of faith"; along that special line the measureless sea of God's grace is open to him. That is the gained place of intercession.

Mr. Howells referred to George Mueller's experience. Mr. Mueller had never gained a place of intercession over sickness, but on one occasion God raised up a sick person for whom he had prayed. On another occasion he prayed for another sick person, but there was no healing. Mr. Mueller, however, said that this was not a failure in prayer because he had never gained a place of intercession over sickness, and therefore the answer to the first prayer was merely "a gift of faith," which would not necessarily be repeated. On the other hand, he had gained a place of intercession for the orphans. He was always ready to be the first sufferer on their behalf; if there was enough food for all except one, he would be the one to go without; and in this realm of supply, God held him responsible to see that the needs were always met, for the doors of God's Treasure had been permanently opened to him, and he could take as much as he needed.

Pastor Blumhardt of Germany, on the other hand, was a man who had gained a place of intercession for the sick. In his first struggles with evil spirits it took him more than eighteen months of prayer and fasting before he gained the final victory. Complaints were lodged against him of neglecting his work as a minister and devoting himself to the healing of the sick, but he said the Lord had given the parable of the friend at midnight and the three loaves and, though unworthy, he was going on knocking.

Pastor Blumhardt prayed through, and God did open. Not only were hundreds blessed, but he raised a standard for the church. After the final victory he gained such ease of access to the Throne that often, when letters came asking for prayer for sick people, after just looking up for a single moment he could find God's will as to whether they were to be healed or not. The sufferings of others became so painful to him that he was pleading for them as if for himself. That was intercession!"

What is the "call of intercession?" God said to Moses, "I will send you to Pharaoh (Ex. 53:12); God said to Isaiah: "Go, and tell this people (Isa. 6:9); God said to Jeremiah "This day I have set you over the nations and over the kingdoms, to root out, and to pull down, and to destroy, and to throw down, to build, and to plant" (Jer.1:10). God said of John the Baptist, "There is a man sent from God" (John 1:6); and God said of Paul, "He is a chosen vessel to me to bear my name before the gentiles, and kings, and the children of Israel: For I will show him how great things he **must suffer** for my name's sake" (Acts 9:15).³

The Call

All intercession starts with a call from God. The call usually is so overwhelming that you immediately know that only the Holy Spirit Himself can fulfill the intercession. Sometimes it is so overwhelming that you, like Jonah, want to run from it. Or like Jesus Himself have it removed from you, "take this cup from me." That is normal, because it **is** impossible for you to undertake. The impact of its immensity is scary and too big for anyone. Why me, and how can I? These are our first questions. Sometimes the Holy Spirit doesn't even show you what He is going to accomplish through you. I've had Him say to me, this is none of your business. Looking back, if I had known, I couldn't have taken it anyway. The last point to consider is that you need not look for our intercessions, they will find you.

How do we know that we are being called? It all starts with desire, God's desire in you. He/you desires someone to be saved. He/you desires for this situation or our marriage to be healed. He/you wants someone to be set free. Or, maybe it is bigger than your loved ones, maybe He/you desire for people to know the truth of union; maybe your church is still preaching legalism and you want more for them. It will be suited just for you. For it is the Holy Spirit's groanings in you desiring transformation and liberation.

For me, I know of two intercessions: One is a commission to take the pure gospel of Christ, Our Life, to the world and the other, which was unknown to me at the time, but was linked to the first. It was my husband, he was not a free man. He was bound by *his* ferocious temper, *his* total control over the family, *his* flirtatious lust towards women and young girls, and *his* total control over *his* hard earned money. Does that sound like your husband, or someone you know? All this is pretty common behavior for un-discovered independent-selves.⁴

He was a Christian, that was for sure, but he did not operate from who he really was, as Christ. Nor did he see anything wrong with his behavior; at least if he did he surely wouldn't tell me. But I got glimpses of how much he lived in self-condemnation. Every problem that he had, he blamed me. It is pretty typical of people who condemn themselves to take their frustrations out on others. But you

³ What is an Intercessor? From [Rees Howells Intercessor](#) By Norman P, Grubb chapter 12

⁴ My precious husband has given me permission to say all this. His comment was, "I never say no to God." "This might help others to know how to believe the impossible." I believe I have a miracle man for a husband.

know, I just loved him. I know, that kind of love had to be supernatural, and it was. That didn't mean that I escaped the pain of dark days and restless nights. No intercessor does that. Pain is a part of it. "If you suffer with me, you will reign with me." That did not mean that I was a doormat either. No, Christ as me is no doormat. Jesus said that, "No man takes my life from me, but I will lay it down of myself" (John 10:18). I wouldn't let Scott take my life from me, I couldn't. One day, he was reprimanding me for losing a renter's check. I took the responsibility, but he wouldn't stop preaching at me. I didn't need to take that so I said, "The only reason that you condemn me like this is because you condemn yourself. I don't deserve this kind of treatment and neither do you. Stop taking condemnation from the devil." He stopped immediately. My part was just to tell him the truth in love, nothing else.

What did I tell myself? I told myself that Scott was perfect for me, just the way he was. I based that on the fact that God ordains all things in our lives for our good, not because God ordains evil for evil's sake. That would make God sadistic. God means all things to work together for our good, just as I took my husband's behavior as God's very best for me. Then I had peace with God, and peace about Scott. Some would say, "Well then that justifies Scott." Scott is responsible for Scott. My faith stand doesn't justify any of his wrong behavior. And if he would dare say that I am perfect for him too, there wouldn't be much fight left.

One of the first things I had to learn was that I was not his Holy Spirit. He was really strong willed and prideful, so thankfully he wouldn't let me be his Holy Spirit anyway. Actually, I always say that the greatest gift God ever gave me was a man who I could not even in the slightest way, change. He was my impossible brick wall. However, this impossibility is the perfect condition for producing desire in me. A desire so strong that I cried out one day, "Lord, you have to set Scott free, whatever it takes, he must be set free. If it takes my life, I will give it, if it takes our children's lives, then take them. If we all need to suffer, then let it be, but set my husband free."

The intercessor, the Holy Spirit has to do a cleansing work on the one who is called to intercede. That meant that I had to be transformed first. I had walked through my own dark night of the soul some years earlier. I was set free from fear, uncontrollable jealousy, self-hatred, and deep insecurities. Christ was my life now and, He filled all the holes of insecurity, and scares of self-hatred with the presence of Himself and I knew it. My life was complete in Christ, I was satisfied beyond my wildest dreams. It was a miracle. But, I reasoned with the Lord, "what good is it if I have all the glory and my husband is still bound?" I want the same thing for him. But how? "

My own journey had been a journey of faith. When I was in my craziest darkness, I began to just confess who I really was. That was absurd in the condition of madness that I was in, yet it was my only hope. I spoke, and I spoke, and I spoke the truth about myself, and by the law of faith, what I took by faith, took me and Christ and I were one. A law or principle only means, "how a thing works" All of life works by faith, and my life certainly proved that. All my fears, insecurities, jealousies, and self-hatred were swallowed up in Christ who was my life, my breath, my food, my mind, He as me was the new me, and I experienced glory.

Now if the way for me was simple faith, then that was the way for Scott, except he couldn't believe for himself. I had to believe for him in his place. I remember thinking at one point, "The only way for me to be free was for him to die, and I pictured him in a casket, dead". But little did I know that I had the wrong person in the casket. I had to die. Actually there is a verse in Romans 6:7 that says, "He that is dead is freed from sin." The only way for me to be free is for me to die to how I saw him which had been in unbelief. It is a real death because all my flesh would scream out to me, "he is the problem, not you." Yet, if I hadn't died to looking at him in separation, he would never be free. Sometimes I think we hold people in their place of bondage because we refuse to see them as God sees them. So it began there, I had to die to my own understanding, my own hatred of his actions, and my own rights. I had to die to myself reactions regarding him and his behavior.

Scott was a junk collector, not by trade, but simply due to childhood fears of losing and not having. The junk was everywhere. I won't bore you with the details. Needless to say, I hated it. One day I cried out to the Lord, "why does he have to have and save all that junk?" The Holy Spirit said to me, "*The junk is in you.*" What? The junk is in me? I didn't understand, but I was open. Several months later I was going to paint some cabinets with his stuff in it. I knew better than to move his stuff, so, I asked him very carefully to please put all his stuff in boxes and place them on our back porch. After I painted the cabinet, then he could move it all back. He went nuclear. I thought that reaction was totally uncalled for in the face of my reasonable request. I was crushed, and went to my room. I declared to the Spirit, "His identity is his stuff." When will he see who he is?" The Spirit quickly answered, "When will *you* see who he really is? Is that stuff really his identity?" Oh, I see, no, it isn't. So, I am the one who gets to sweep away the cobwebs of unbelief in myself, and clean up the junk in me. Ok, I will confess who he is, and I will not say who he is not.

Another problem was his uncontrollable temper and uncompromising demands which he used to control the whole family. I believed that he would even scare God with his threats and temper tantrums (just kidding, but it was that bad). The first thing that happened to me was I was no longer afraid of him, and that was a total miracle. Christ took away all my fear. Scott would scream, and I was calm and fearless. I was not trying to get back at him, acting like he did. I was loving him in the middle of his fits, and they were ferocious temper fits. It almost made him madder when I wouldn't react in fear, because he was beginning to see that I wasn't being controlled by his fits of anger. I would quietly say, "Scott this is not who you are." He would stop almost immediately and get humble and sorry, but I would never hold any of this against him, or condemn him for his behavior. How could I, I had been the same way in my own crazy time. God didn't see my fits, he saw who I really was, how could I do anything less for Scott.

Once, Scott told me that I would no longer have his money to do ministry travel. He was tired of having me gone ministering to others. Quickly, I said, "Oh, Scott, you *really* do want to give me the money, I couldn't bless others without your part." He stormed out of the room. Two weeks later without any other words said about it, we were shopping. He said to me, "Mom, I have a surprise for you". "What is it"? I said, "I have opened up a savings account in your name. Money will be taken out of my check each week for your travels." The Holy Spirit transforms the problems in His time when we dare to believe what we do not see, and call into being that which doesn't exist in the visible.

The Holy Spirit gave me a rod of strength in my back, given to me by the Holy Spirit. The rod helps me not take what the devil was pouring out, but instead speak the truth in love, and God would defeat the devil's activity in him. I love the verse in Psalm 149:6, "Let the high praises of God be in their mouth, and a two-edged sword in their hand." When all goes crazy, let praise be in your mouth, but do not give place to the devil's lies, cut them to pieces with the truth of who we really are in Christ.

All this faith for Scott has been wonderful and it has taught me what intercession is all about. The day came for him to see it for himself. I was carrying him on eagles wings, but he must fly himself.

Final deliverance comes when we personally take the truth about ourselves against all that we see, and do, and stand on the truth of who we really are in Christ.

That day came for Scott. It began by him seeing that all of his carnality must come to the light, and not be denied anymore. The Holy Spirit does that in stages; too much would make any of us want to commit suicide. The exposures must come to us by the Spirit, and the inner revelation must then say, "Yes, it was me doing the sinning, and acting out independent-self. But praise God, independent-self isn't the real me, it is Satan disguised as me." "My true identity is Christ!" Scott has done that and seen that. I am amazed at the transformation. He is now a partner with me in

Christ, Our Life Ministries. We travel together, we have the same burdens, we believe together for fruit. He personally began my radio ministry, which by the way is reaching thousands into 6 different cities. He is all that I could have ever wanted, and even more.

Recently Scott apologized to his whole family on Father's day. He said, "I am sorry that I didn't know that Christ was my life when I was raising you all, but I do know it now. Forgive me." The children were so loving and forgiving to him. I know that some real Holy Spirit healing came into being that day.

Does the old still pop up occasionally? Oh, yes, but it is now our opportunity to see the glory of God come through these slips, not to justify anything, but to see that God is greater in us than any of our puny flesh slips. We don't major on the slips. They happen with both of us, but we major on who we really are.

This testimony is a testimony to God's faithfulness, and *His* keeping power. There is no way that any of us can keep ourselves, nor can we keep each other. Scott and I praise God daily for keeping us and causing us to walk in His ways. Our good friend Brian Coatney says, "I will commit any sin, unless God keeps me, God can keep me, He will keep me, and by the leap of faith, He **is** keeping me." It is not until we stand by faith and declare that "*HE IS KEEPING me,*" that our confidence is totally in *Him*, and not in what we see, feel or think.

The miracle is that God actually uses these weaknesses in us as a calling card of faith. Now we can co-create with the Lord, as God rightly uses our weak humanity-filling weakness up with strength (II Cor.12:11) and creating opportunity for His glory to be manifested. What the devil misuses, God rightly uses for His glory. By the way, this year we will be married 46 years, and it is greater than ever before.

I use to think that there is no way that Scott and I can work together. He would be too demanding and I would resent him. Irony comes around through a miracle. Scott is a new man, and the Lord has put us together in Christ, Our Life Ministries. The Spirit has made us totally compatible. We work together, we pray together, we minister together, we are a team like I could have never imagined. Our intercession and calling is the one in the same, it is: "The Whole Gospel, to the Whole Man, to the Whole World". And I am expecting at least Gideon's 300 "Apostles" for Christ. This will not be easy, but "faithful is He that called us, and He will also do it," (IThes.5:24) and He will and is doing it.

Who Can Fix It?

A word to all you Dr. Phil buffs: Yes, Scott was an adult child of an alcoholic, and that is why he was so controlling, and yes, I was never loved by my mother and was withdrawn and co-dependent and that is why I tried to get my identity from Scott. Well, so what! Who doesn't have a dysfunctional beginning? Jesus had to die for something; it might as well be dysfunctional families. Knowing all the psychological reasons for our behavior does help us to understand our behavior patterns, but insights concerning our behavior patterns don't heal us, nor does our ability to change ourselves (impossible anyway). By the way, some form of self-change or pharmaceutical help is the recommended method used by most psychologists today. However, self-transformation is not recommended by the Holy Spirit, nor by me. Most so-called pseudo transformations end up in vain, and lead to even more defeat and discouragement. Try God's way instead of man's way. It takes time, but what is that to you? You are an eternal person.

I'm not knocking psychology, nor Dr. Phil. Psychology is God given and God used, but it is not the healer. We can not heal each other, nor ourselves.

I told Scott the other day, "Dad, you can fix anything, just think of it; electrical, plumbing, build anything, design anything, fix and maintain all the machinery, wall paper, and paint. You name it

and he can fix it. But, you can't fix me, or yourself, or your children. It doesn't work that way, not in the kingdom of God.

Jesus in his own body took all the sinful dysfunctional behavior patterns and died to them at the Cross, and in His resurrection, we were made free from all family dysfunctions (the Bible calls them iniquities): "He was bruised for our iniquities" (Isaiah 53:5). Apprehending these facts by faith alone, heals all our dysfunctions and makes manifest in us this healing reality today.

The Cost

We have considered the **call** of intercession, and let us look at the **cost** of intercession. The perfect pattern and example intercessor is our champion, and hero of faith, our Lord Jesus Christ. I Peter 2:20-24 says, "For what glory is it, if when you be buffeted for your faults, you shall take it patiently? But if, when you do well, and suffer for it, you take it patiently, this is acceptable with God. For even hereunto were you *called*: because Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example, that you should follow His steps; Who did no sin, neither was guile found in his mouth: Who, when he was reviled, reviled not again; when he suffered he threatened not; but committed himself to him that judged righteously; Who his own self bare our sins in his own body on the tree, that we, being dead to sins, should live unto righteousness; by whose stripes you were healed."

God said of Jesus in Isaiah 53, the great intercessory chapter: "He was smitten of God: He has poured out his soul into death; He was wounded for our transgressions; He was bruised for our iniquities, the chastisement of our peace was upon Him; and with his stripes we are healed. Yet it pleased the Lord to bruise Him; he hath put him to grief; When thou shalt make His soul an offering for sin; He shall see of the travail of His soul and shall be satisfied; by His knowledge shall my righteous servant justify many; for He shall bear their iniquities; He was numbered with the transgressors; and He bare the sin of many and made intercession for the transgressors."

Numbers 11:11 says of Moses' intercession: "Moses said unto the Lord, Wherefore hast thou afflicted thy servant? And wherefore have I not found favor in thy sight, that you laid the burden of all this people upon **me**?" And of Ezekiel in chapter 4:4, "Lie thou also upon thy left side, and lay the iniquity of the house of Israel upon it: according to the number of the days that thou shall lie upon it, thou shall bear their iniquities." And God said to Ezekiel, "I sought for a man among them to stand in the gap, but found none"(22:30). The point of God looking for a gap filler, intercessor is that He doesn't want to judge us. He wants to have *mercy* on us. God has declared that "the wages of sin is death," therefore an innocent pure intercessor must take the place for us in order to atone for our sins; otherwise we would hopelessly die in our sins. There was no man to be found, so God the Father had to send Himself, the man Christ, Jesus. What a God, and What a Savior!

Jesus said in Matt. 16:24 "If any man come after me let him deny himself and take up his cross and follow me." And then in Luke 14:26 Jesus said again, "If any man come to me, and hate not his father, and mother, and wife, and children, and brethren, and sisters, yea, and his own life also, he cannot be my disciple." Pretty strong words, yet they are hardly ever preached. What does it mean to hate father, mother....? The key is not hating the person, but hating "my own life" that tries to possess my family members for myself. There is a HOLY detachment which comes to us preparing us for intercession and detaching us from "me" and "mine." Although, the Holy Spirit might want you to intercede for one of your family members, as He did in me, but first the cleansing preparation detaches us from "MY" husband, and "MY" son, that is the point.

Emotional soul-ties often keep us as intercessors, from going to the depths with the Holy Spirit. All has to be laid on the altar, and the Holy Spirit, Himself, will detach and cleanse us where necessary.

Once I was ministering to a seminary student and his wife. I loved them dearly. However I knew that he wasn't hearing the depths of what I was saying. I pleaded with the Lord, "If I tell him, I will

lose him as a friend." Immediately, I knew that I had to tell him, so I asked the Lord, "Will you please send me someone who can tell him, I don't have the heart to." God had mercy on me and soon sent me Brian Coatney, my dear friend of 25 years. Brian told Rufus the spiritual depths that we know. I lost Rufus, but gained Brian's friendship for life. I believe that sometime in Rufus' life, he too will see.

The cost of intercession or discipleship is proclaimed by Jesus in Matthew 16:24-25: "If any man come after me, let him deny himself and take up his cross and follow me. For whosoever will save his life shall lose it; and whosoever will lose his life for my sake shall find it."

Many are saying these days that God wants to prosper us according to the scripture in III John verse 2, "Beloved, I wish above all things that thou may prosper and be in health, even as your soul prospers." It is much like the commonly used statement today, "I hope that you're doing well." I don't think that we Christians can make a whole doctrine around that kind of small-talk comment, do you? John, the Apostle was giving a casual greeting to the Christians who were connected to Gaius, hoping to regain their respect after Diotrephes, a trouble maker had rejected John's authority as an Apostle. I'm not saying this to condemn anyone, but I think we had better take another look at that verse and in its proper context.

Most of the New Testament contradicts what is taught today about outer prosperity. Jesus said, that "in this world you shall have tribulation, but be of good cheer, I have overcome the world" (John 18:33). Jesus warned the disciples that they would be killed, hated and defamed (John 14-16). Paul said in Romans 8:17-18 that if you are to mature into son-ship, you **will** have to suffer with him. Then God promises that any suffering that we endure is "not worthy to be compared to the glory that shall be revealed in us." In Paul's epistle to Timothy he actually sited suffering as the prerequisite to reigning with Christ (II Tim. 2:12). Paul also told us that he himself filled up that which **was**, left behind of the afflictions of Christ, in his flesh, for Christ's body's sake (Col. 1:24). He also said that he was in great conflict while he was in Laodicea, and that it was his privilege to suffer for the church.

II Corinthians is the model epistle for the **cost** of an intercessor. Paul reluctantly validated his apostleship, not by his great victories, but instead by what he greatly suffered. He said that he was pressed out of measure insomuch that he despaired even of life, for he had the sentence of death in himself so he would not trust in himself (1:8-9); He had much affliction and anguish of heart with many tears (2:4); He was troubled on every side, persecuted, and cast down. Always bearing about in his body the dying of the Lord Jesus, for he was always being delivered unto death for Jesus' sake (4:10-11).

Paul's credentials as a "minister of God" were "by much affliction, in necessities, in distresses, in stripes, in imprisonments, in tumults, in labors, in fasting, by dishonor, by evil report, as deceivers, as unknown, as dying, as chastened, as sorrowful, as poor, and having nothing" (6:4-10). He was whipped with piercing lashes on five different occasions with 39 stripes; He was beaten with a rod three times; He was once stoned and left for dead; He suffered shipwreck; he was oftentimes in perils from the Jews, from the heathen; He was in perils in cities, in the wilderness, at sea, and by false brethren. Paul was in weariness, painfulness, hunger, thirst, suffered being cold, and even naked at times (11:24-27). But even more than that, he inwardly suffered with fatherly concern for the fledgling churches, who were being invaded by false teachers perverting God's grace with false doctrines of legalism.

Do you see the pattern for the cost of following Jesus that the early church laid down for us? If you don't see it in the New Testament, then you probably haven't read the book of "Acts." Suffering has always been a part of the normal life of God's Saints. The Old Testament Prophets suffered...the Patriarchs suffered... Remember Jacob is "favored" by God over Esau (Rom. 9:13). Read Jacob's story and see what being "favored" really means to God (Genesis 25-36)-... Jesus

suffered... Paul suffered...and the early Apostles all suffered. Why do you think that we Christians are so special and privileged today that we don't have to suffer? On the contrary, we wouldn't be God's special family if we never suffered, because it is certainly a privilege to suffer for His name sake (Heb. 12:8).

So, be like Jesus who was "a man of sorrow, acquainted with grief," and know that it is a part of God's redeeming plan. Anyway, all suffering is redeemed as God uses it all for His glory as well as for our faith maturity and advancement in the Kingdom. Paul's original commission and calling after his conversion in Acts 9:15-16, "He is a chosen vessel unto me, to bear my name before the Gentiles, and kings, and the children of Israel; For I will show him how **great things he must suffer for my name's sake.**" Are you beginning to see that we are all on the wrong foot by seeing "favored with God" so named by our material goods, financial statements, and big ministries? No, it is not true at all.

The whole purpose of our existence now as intercessors is to be for others, and that means as Jesus said, "taking up your Cross." It may cost you your reputation, your ambitions, your family's understanding, your fellowship's understanding, your personal possessions, your marriage, or even your health. But as Paul says, in II Cor. 5:14 "the love of God constrains me." In a sense we can't help it. The new nature is an other-lover, and God's love drives us to be sacrificial.

FRUIT BEARING

The only intercessor on earth today is the Holy Spirit, and we co-intercede with Him. You don't have to look for your intercession, it will find you. However, God will only take you as far as you will go. He will not force anything on you, unless you say to Him, "I want to go with you in this, but I also want to shrink at the same time. So, you take me there, anyway." He will do the work, but remember the glory always out-weighs the sorrow, and even when you are gone, as the scriptures say, "Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord from henceforth: Yea, saith the Spirit, that they may rest from their labors; and their works (of faith) do follow them" (Rev. 14:13).

I wonder if the Apostle Paul saw all that the Lord accomplished through his life's intercession. History tells us that he was in Rome some years before he was beheaded by Caesar. What did he leave behind? Well, all he knew from his point of view, are maybe only a few fledgling churches scattered around, but what about the rest of the world. Always, he probably wanted to do more. I don't think that it was even in his mind when he wrote the epistles that they would end up being the major part of the New Testament. Maybe, he felt defeated, and wanted so much more. Remember, many times he was frustrated, disappointed, and in despair. His young followers left him; the legal Jews sought his life; and the other apostles didn't fully understand him. So, I believe, he hardly knew what the Holy Spirit would accomplish through him. Yet did he bear fruit?

My goodness, yes, and much more than he could have ever realized in his life-time. Just think of it, millions and millions have understood the gospel in its fullness because of Paul's intercession. None of the other apostles could present the gospel in its fullness like the Apostle Paul. Through the ages there are countless unknown Christians who owe their faith to this one faithful Apostle. So my point is, maybe we won't fully know what fruit the Lord will bring through our intercessions either until we see it in eternity.

When Jesus comes in His glory He will separate the "sheep" from the "goats." He will tell the sheep, "Come, you bless of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world; For I was a hungry and you gave me meat; I was thirsty, and you gave me drink; I was a stranger, an you took me in" (Matt. 25:31-45) and so on. The interesting thing is that they didn't even know when or what they had done for Jesus. Jesus said, "Insomuch as you did it unto the least of these, you did it unto me". When the Holy Spirit is ministering through us, most of the time we will not even be aware of it. Yet, earlier in Matt.7:22 the ones who Jesus refused to know,

remembered all their great deeds and good works that **they** had done in his name, but He didn't know them.

I think we are all going to be surprised at the celebration we are going to have at the "Judgment Seat of Christ". I picture sitting on a stool in front of Jesus, as he tells me all that he accomplished through me. Wow, what a day. We always think of judgment as downward and incriminating, but not so at our judgment, it will be a celebration. Jesus will tell us all that He accomplished through us, and we will tell him that we didn't do it, He did it through us. We will as it were, argue with each other. "You have inherited the crown, no, you were in me living my life, so, you get it", and around we go in perfect self-giving love, nobody wanting to take the credit or glory. But we know that eventually, "no flesh shall glory in His sight" (1 Cor. 1:29).

Faith

The human mind despises mystery, yet we are surrounded daily by it naturally as well as spiritually. The mystery of Christ, the divine one, joining Himself to our frail humanity stuns our reasoning mind, yet faith looks beyond what seems unreasonable and declares it to be fact. Faith is saying yes, when everything else is saying no. Faith is believing all things are possible in the midst of impossibilities. Faith sees the presence of light in darkness, and the presence of God in all. Faith gives inner substance to things hoped for, and faith gives inner evidence to things not seen. Faith can truly move mountains, and it does.

"Ho, every one that thirst, come ye to the waters, and he that hath no money; come ye, buy and eat; yea, come, buy wine and milk without money and without price. Wherefore do ye spend money for that which is not bread? And your labor for that which satisfies not? Hearken diligently unto me, and eat ye that which is good and let your soul delight itself in fatness. Incline your ear, and come unto me: hear, and your soul shall live; and I will make an everlasting covenant with you even the sure mercies of David" (Isa.55:1-3). "The Spirit and the Bride say come"

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The Treasures of Darkness

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The Citadel of Self-Dependency

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