

# Soul Care for Intercessors



The best gifts that people can give are those that involve some type of sacrifice – of time, money, or creativity. While you may have never thought of it like this before, **prayer is a gift to others and like any gift, it extracts something from the giver.**

Those who regularly intercede are constantly standing in the gap between man and God, holding up people, events, and circumstances to His notice. It's exhilarating and exhausting all at the same time.

## **Pulse of the Prayer Team**

At a recent prayer meeting, my pastor did something a bit unusual. He took the pulse of the prayer team to see what kind of shape the pray-ers were in. We split into small groups and honestly shared what was on our hearts. Many of us were feeling beat up. It was a comfort to admit it and realize we weren't alone. Right or wrong, some of our struggles revolved

around these issues:

1. **Low-grade fever.** One intercessor said he felt like he had a constant fever of needs going on in his spirit. Not enough to sideline him, but enough to wear on him. Similarly, a woman said she felt like the petitions were hovering around her like a cloud all day.
2. **Guilt.** Some intercessors were dealing with guilt because they felt inadequate to meet the heavy needs that were presented to them.
3. **Spiritually drained.** Some people admitted to being drained. Frequent intercession had extracted a toll on them that they weren't recovering from.
4. **Overwhelmed.** A few confessed to feeling overwhelmed by a prayer list that had grown to huge proportions.

Sharing these struggles with each other exposed the wounds to God so that he could start the healing process. It was clear that we pray-ers needed some TLC ourselves.

### **Soul Care for Intercessors**

Some guidelines to soul care for intercessors emerged from our meeting:

1. Intercessors need a time of rest and retreat to recharge spirits and souls. When possible, periodically attend a weekend or daylong retreat for some TLC.
2. Pray for intercessors. We were so busy praying for others, that we were neglecting to pray for those who were interceding. Remembering to cover each other in prayer can supply a needed boost to a battle-weary pray-er.
3. Periodically debrief with other intercessors. Sharing each other's burdens can be a help. This is not meant to be a gripe session but a place to air any concerns or stress you may be carrying.
4. Pray with a partner. For protection, when possible

intercessors should pray deliverance type prayers over others in the safety of a small group of other pray-ers.

5. The most important point to remember is that prayer time needs to be built on the strong foundation of personal time spent with God. **We can't be effective intercessors if we aren't grafted on to the vine.** In John 15:4 Jesus says "Remain in me, and I will remain in you. No branch can bear fruit by itself; it must remain in the vine. Neither can you bear fruit unless you remain in me."

Several times a week, I have added quiet listening to my devotional time with God, and I journal what God brings to my mind. It keeps me connected to Him and opens me up to His plans. No matter how long your prayer list may be, don't neglect sitting at Jesus' feet. That takes priority over prayer requests and actually feeds into the ability to be directed by the Holy Spirit in knowing how to pray and which requests to pray for. You do not have to pray for every request every single day. Let God direct to what is most important for that day.

[Remember that God is calling you to Him first and to pray for others second.](#)



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**Overall, remember that God is calling you to Him first and to pray for others second.**

### **5 Tips for Intercessors**

At the end of our prayer meeting, some common helpful tips emerged.

1. **We are standing on holy ground.** Offering ministering prayer or intercessory prayer for others is a privilege, and we are treading on holy ground by letting the Lord

use us to bring his healing and comfort to others. We are ushering the person into His presence.

2. **God knows even more than the “prayee” about the situation.** Sometimes the people we’re praying for have a hard time articulating their need. God knows what is going on, and we can pray in confidence that He understands, even when we don’t.
3. **The Holy Spirit is interceding with us.** We’re not by ourselves in this prayer venture. Romans 8:26 tells us that “The Spirit himself intercedes for us with groans that words cannot express.”
4. **Praying for others can give us a “prayer shot.”** Although this doesn’t always happen, sometimes God lets us see comfort or healing delivered and received. How wonderful!
5. **Remember, the results are not up to us.** We need to take the pressure off of ourselves. God promises us that He is working. How he does this is up to Him. Our calling is to pray.

Taking the time to care for yourself and other intercessors will strengthen you and fill your prayer tank back up, allowing you to continue to bless others with the powerful gift of intercession.

Pray on!

*Jane*

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# Expect the Mosquitoes

Recently I attended a prayer retreat with the prayer team at my church. For the first hour we met to discuss a book we had been reading, and then we split up to spend the rest of the time in solitude with God. We were free to go into the chapel, into private rooms, or we could also wander the grounds outside. I headed out into the sunshine, deciding between a trail through the woods, the flower gardens, a prayer labyrinth or the stations of the cross.



My feet led me down a trail into the woods, a cool, peaceful refuge from the heat of the summer day. I settled on a bench and quieted myself, tuning into my surroundings and the Lord. Birds called back and forth to each other and a light breeze ruffled my hair. A ray of sunshine penetrated the trees and landed on me, warming my skin. "Thank you, Lord, for this beautiful place," I prayed. "Help me to hear you clearly today."

I closed my eyes and breathed deeply. Then I felt it. The irritating bite of a mosquito. I slapped it away and refocused my thoughts on God. Zing. Another bite. And then another. I snapped my eyes open to see mosquitos swarming around me. Flies soon joined the mosquitoes. Under the bench I saw beetles and a centipede. Ugh! So much for focusing clearly on God. Sheepishly I remembered that before I left that morning, I had slathered on peach lotion. Good grief! The sun was

warming my skin, broadcasting the peach scent on the morning breeze to every nearby insect.



I was going to have to move along and find a spot free from pesky insects. I gathered my things when the thought hit me: **“Isn’t this what our lives as Christ-followers are to be like?”**

## **The Scent of Jesus**

The more we become like Jesus, the more we will emanate the scent and lusciousness of Jesus to everyone, just like a ripe piece of fruit advertises its scent to all who walk by—people and mosquitoes alike. We may sometimes feel that we attract the wrong kind of attention—people antagonistic to our faith may frequently cross our paths. If you’re a person who always seems to be attracting antagonistic or needy people, maybe it’s because you’re doing something right, and they’re being drawn in by the Jesus they sense in you. As God gives you the opportunity, you can then point them to Jesus.

That’s what happened to Jesus. Everywhere He went, people flocked to him. And He loved them all—the tax collectors, the adulterers, the lepers, the little children. All the people groups that society said were outcasts or unimportant, Jesus took the time to love and bring life to.

**God impressed upon me that day how important it is for us as Christ-followers to have patience, grace and love with everyone we meet.** He allowed me to see that at many different stages in my life, I myself have been a “mosquito” to a believer—and may even be right now!

I think through this little analogy God was telling me we need

to expect the mosquitoes in life, and that if we don't have any, then maybe that's the real problem, because that means we don't smell any different from anyone else in the world.

What do you think?

Pray on!

*Jane*



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