

Praying with Power

Discovering Keys to Effective Intercession



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Foundations of Intercession

“The earnest prayer of a righteous person has great power and produces wonderful results.” James 5:16

“if my people, who are called by my name, will humble themselves and pray and seek my face and turn from their wicked ways, then I will hear from heaven, and I will forgive their sin and will heal their land.” 2 Chron. 7:14

A powerful and effective prayer life is possible, but it takes courage, perseverance, humility and faith. As we learn to listen and discern the voice of God, and walk in greater obedience and surrender, we will experience greater effectiveness and authority in our prayers. God is looking for those who are willing to labour in prayer as He directs, and through this faithful service, experience a life-changing, life-giving adventure that will be more than you can ask or imagine.

Are you ready for this adventure?

1. What is Intercession?

“I urge, then, first of all, that petitions, prayers, intercession and thanksgiving be made for all people” 1 Tim. 2:1

Paul made it clear there are many forms that prayer can take, so our goal here is to understand what the form of intercession looks like, how it differs from petition, and how to grow and strengthen this form of prayer in our personal lives and for the Body of Christ.

Defining Intercession:

According to Webster, *intercede* means “to go or pass between; to act between parties with a view to reconcile those who differ or contend; to interpose; to mediate.” It is often used in legal settings, where the lawyer represents one party to another.

It involves delegation.

It involves authority.¹

“I looked for someone among them who would build up the wall and stand before me in the gap on behalf of the land so I would not have to destroy it, but I found no one.” Ezekiel 22:30

¹Dutch Sheets: *Intercessory Prayer* Pg. 37

Intercession is Standing In the Gap

“Standing in the Gap” is often a term associated with intercession. The intercessor is one who comes before God on behalf of another person, or situation, pleading their case before the Lord. Jesus Christ is the ultimate intercessor; he came to earth to re-present God to humankind. And now His heavenly position and vocation is to intercede on behalf of humankind to God.

“Therefore he (Jesus) is able to save completely those who come to God through him, because he always lives to intercede for them.” Heb. 7:25

Intercessory prayer is an extension of the ministry of Jesus through His Body, the Church, whereby we mediate between God and humanity for the purpose of reconciling the world to Him, or between Satan and humanity for the purpose of enforcing the victory of Calvary.²

As we stand in the gap, we are entering a spiritual meeting place in which we are seeking the guidance and the power of the Holy Spirit to replace what is currently happening with what God desires to happen.

The Holy Spirit also joins in the role of intercessor for us, when we don't know how to pray.

*“In the same way the Spirit helps us in our weakness. We do not know what to ought to pray for, but the Spirit himself intercedes for us with groans that words cannot express. And he who searches our hearts knows the mind of the Spirit, because the Spirit intercedes for the saints **in accordance with God's will.**”*

Rom. 8:26-27

Those last few words in Rom. 8:27 are the key to the difference between petition and intercession. Everything else we have discussed thus far could be said of petitionary prayers. We pray to God on behalf of someone else, or some circumstance. The key to effective intercession or effective prayer is praying according to God's will. This is often very different from our will, even if we think we know what is best, or what the desired outcome should be.

At the heart of intercession is developing the ability to hear and discern God's voice, in order to know His will, and pray accordingly.

1 Chron. 12:32 “...the sons of Issachar who had understanding of the times, to know what Israel ought to do...” The Hebrew word for intercession is *paga*, which means “to strike the mark.” When we understand the times, when we know God's will, our prayers are able to “strike the mark” and have effective results. They are not just good thoughts or wishful thinking, but powerfully active.

² Dutch Sheets: *Intercessory Prayer* Pg. 42

Our primary motive for developing a deeper prayer life is to develop a deeper relationship with God. It is out of this relationship that our intercessory giftings will flow. As we begin to sense God's heart, know His voice and walk in obedience to His promptings He will entrust us with greater assignments.

True intercession is actually two-fold. One aspect is asking God for divine intervention the other is destroying the works of Satan as illustrated in Ez. 22:30; 2 Cor. 2:11; Eph. 6:12.

God reveals to intercessors the intimate needs of those for whom they intercede. This is a precious trust. The things God shares with intercessors are not to be told to others (Luke 2:37). We may have to pray in the middle of the night – maybe all night long.

2. Why do we need to intercede?

“God does nothing on earth except in answer to believing prayer.” John Wesley

“Then God said, ‘Let Us make man in Our image, according to Our likeness; let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, over the birds of the air, and over the cattle, over all the earth and over every creeping thing that creeps on the earth.’ So God created man in His own image; in the image of God He created him; male and female He created them. Then God blessed them, and God said to them, ‘Be fruitful and multiply; fill the earth and subdue it; have dominion over the fish of the sea, over the birds of the air, and over every living thing that moves on the earth.’” Genesis 1:26 – 28

Realizing how much authority God has given to us can be overwhelming because of the responsibility that comes with it. In Adam's case, he relinquished that authority by sinning against God; and Satan – that deceiver and thief – gained a place of power in the earth because of it.

“So complete and final was God's decision to do things on earth through human beings that it cost God the Incarnation to regain what Adam gave away.... Without question, humans were forever to be God's link to authority and activity on the earth.”³

When Jesus quoted Luke 4:8 to Satan, it became poignant with even deeper meaning because Jesus was actually saying, “You (Satan) shall worship the Lord *your* God and Him only shall *you* serve”. Jesus was reminding Satan that although he had authority on earth, God had authority over Satan. Jesus was also serving notice that He had come to legally take Satan's ill-gotten authority away from him. Moreover, Jesus was reminding Satan that though he had temporary authority over earth, God had supreme authority over Satan as well as the entire cosmos. After His death, Jesus descended into hell (1 Peter 3:19). There, Jesus stripped all authority from Satan. Authority to rule the earth was returned to Jesus.

³ Dutch Sheets: *Intercessory Prayer* Pg. 29

Jesus returned the original mandate to the Church to subdue the earth – not the heavens – and to have dominion over everything that moves on the face of the earth, including demonic forces that would infringe upon the Kingdom of God and our subduing the earth. Jesus has delegated limited Kingdom authority until eternity is inaugurated.

So why do we still have problems?

Satan still wants man's authority back. Satan has power, but he does not have authority to stop what God has commanded the church to do. Satan does retain the power of deception and seduction to cause us to think he has authority, but he does not. We are called to exercise our God-given power and authority to destroy the works of the evil one in our proper earthly sphere of authority.⁴

Lest you think that God is somehow dependent on people, the Word is clear that God is completely and perfectly independent of anything outside Himself. He is. Period. And He already has all the resources He needs at His fingertips.

Though He is sovereign and almighty, He has designed the world in such a way that people's choices and decisions impact the course of history. This isn't to negate His power but, rather, to work within His original intention for humanity: that we represent Him on earth.

3. How do I know if I am one?

All believers are called to intercede, but not everyone is called to the ministry of intercession. The difference is that one level of intercession is the responsibility of every Christian and the other is a gift God bestows, part of the ministry of helps.

Intercessors want to pray, live to pray, love to pray.

Here are a few indicators that you might be an intercessor:

- ◆ You love to pray
- ◆ You worry a lot about others situations
- ◆ You carry others burdens (not offenses)
- ◆ You see things beyond the natural
- ◆ You feel God's heart for others
- ◆ You have a fierce sense of justice (right and wrong, black and white)
- ◆ You long to see God's Kingdom come

"Praying is spiritual work, and human nature does not like taxing spiritual work. Human nature wants to sail to heaven under a favoring breeze, a full smooth sea. Prayer is humbling work. It abases intellect and pride, crucifies vainglory, and signs our spiritual bankruptcy, and all these are hard for flesh and blood to bear. It is easier not to pray than to bear them. So we come to one of the crying evils of these times, maybe of all times – little or no praying." E. M. Bounds

⁴ John Paul Jackson: *Needless Casualties of War* Chapter 4

Some facts about intercessors:

- ◆ Roughly 10% of a congregation are intercessors, but usually only half of those are identified.
- ◆ The majority of intercessors are introverts, so often stay hidden, not wanting to draw attention to themselves.
- ◆ The enemy absolutely hates intercessors so will do anything he can to keep you from using your gift.

Different Types of Intercessors

Often you may have one or two specific callings in intercession. This list may help you identify where you might be called. If nothing resonates with you, don't worry, God will reveal in His timing.

1. Issues Intercessors – Standing against injustices

Your issue is what makes you weep and pound the table, but it must always be motivated by love.

2. List Intercessors – Structure and perseverance

List pray-ers passion for structure brings freedom for themselves, encouragement for others and reward of perseverance from above.

3. Soul Intercessors – God's midwives

Standing in the gap for those who have yet to bow the knee to Christ

4. Personal Intercessors – Spiritual Guardians

Personal intercessors are trusted by God to carry confidential information in and out of the throne room for another in order to partner in that person's protection, provision, and prayer priorities.

5. Financial Intercessors – Faith for Funding

Anointed by God to pray in faith for financial blessings for individuals or ministries to further His kingdom purposes.

6. Mercy Intercessors – Good Neighbours of prayer

They hear the root of a person's pain so they can extend the mercy of God to that root.

7. Crisis Intercessors- Paramedics of prayer

They rush in and out of the throne room with urgent requests on behalf of others, acting as watchmen for God's people.

8. Warfare Intercessors – Partners with the Truth

They are the military might of prayer who fight to usher in truth by establishing God's authority in places where Satan has a strong hold on people, problems, and places.

9. Worship Intercessors – Sacred Romancers

They release humanity's comfort and heaven's power, assuming the role of heavy-duty silencers against the terminator of hope.

10. Government Intercessors – Watchmen for Politics and Church

They are watchmen who prayerfully uphold the leaders in church and political arenas where destinies are forged.

11. People Group and Israel Intercessors – Prayer shepherds for Ethnic groups

Praying Gods revelation and protection over specific people groups.

12. Prophetic Intercessors – God's prayer Anchors

They see the unseen and hear the unheard things that have not yet entered people's hearts, so they will know to an even greater depth the love God has for them.

God plants His intercessors in every place to pray for nations. As you grow in intercession you learn to walk and talk with Jesus, staying alert constantly for God's message that someone has an important need. We have a divine link by the Holy Spirit to the heart of God when we realize we are always on call; then we will know God's heart of intercession.

4. Developing a Listening Ear

John 10 tells us that Jesus is the good shepherd and the sheep know his voice. The deeper our relationship with the Father becomes the easier it is to know His voice. We have an enemy who is out to deceive us, and often his voice is more predominate in our ears. Cultivating the practice of listening takes time, but the benefits will change your life.

Here are a few simple suggestions on how to develop your listening ear:

1. We must always begin from the place of knowing we are loved. Any other perspective will skew our ability to hear correctly. Spend time resting in the loving arms of your Savior, confessing and releasing any shame, guilt, or condemnation. Meditate on Ephesians 3:16 – 19.
2. Let the Word of God dwell in you richly. Re-align your thinking to understand the Father's heart with regards to justice, mercy, faithfulness.
3. Choose a posture of humility. Humility means living in the conviction we are loved, and we are saved because of the work of Jesus on the cross, not because of anything we've done.
 - Humility means:
 - we refuse to judge one another
 - we let go of our need to impress
 - we refuse to compare ourselves with others
 - we rejoice with those who rejoice and grieve with those who grieve.
4. Be aware of allowing circumstances or emotions skew your ability to hear correctly.
5. Stay alert: be asking the Lord what you are seeing, sensing, experiencing and how it is impacting you and others.
6. Look for the burning bush: if you come across unusual events and situations, inquire of the Lord to gain greater understanding.
7. Listen to what is being reinforced, confirmed, repeated through many avenues.
8. Inquire of others: Are others hearing the same things you are?
9. Watch your heart: If the Lord is revealing something to you, carry it without becoming judgemental or critical.
10. Stay grounded, everything must line up with scripture.

**** An unused or undeveloped intercessory gift often leads to a critical or judgemental spirit.**

Session 1: Review and Practice

1. Have you identified yourself as an intercessor? What are your indications?
2. In reviewing the types of intercessors, are there any that resonate with you?
3. In what ways are you currently, or planning to work on, developing your listening ear?

4. Steps to get Started

Spend 30 - 60 minutes in focused prayer time with the triune God:

- 1. Thanksgiving:** Ask the Lord to review the previous day with you and show you where He was with you. Thank Him for the blessings and joys of the previous day, no matter how large or small.
- 2. Confession:** Ask the Lord to review the previous day with you again and show you where you missed Him, didn't obey Him, your thoughts, attitudes or actions which were not as they should have been. Ask His forgiveness.
- 3. Meditation:** Focus on one of the questions in the following box, and wait to hear the Holy Spirit's response. Be patient, wait in silence. Journal your responses.
- 4. Intercession:** Ask the Lord what one (or more) things, or people He would have you intercede for this day, and how He would have you pray.
- 5. Guidance:** Review the day ahead of you and all that you have planned, and then ask the Lord to lead and guide you through each part of it.

- | | |
|-----------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------|
| 1. Who are You God? | 16. What in my church causes You grief? |
| 2. What are You like? | 17. What in my church causes You joy? |
| 3. Show me who I am to You. | 18. What in my community causes You grief? |
| 4. How do You see me? | 19. What in my community causes You joy? |
| 5. Do You love me? How much? | 20. What is the best use of my day? |
| 6. Do You like me? Why do You like me? | 21. Where do You want to meet me today? |
| 7. Show me my heart. | 22. Where will I see You today? |
| 8. Do You have a gift for me today? | 23. What promise do You have for me today? |
| 9. What gift can I offer You today? | 24. Who can I encourage today? |
| 10. What gift can I give others today? | 25. Whose burdens do I carry? Will You take them? |
| 11. What is on Your heart, God? | 26. Who have I judged? How do You see them? |
| 12. What in me causes You grief? | 27. Against whom do I hold hard feelings? |
| 13. What in me brings You joy? | 28. Is there anything hindering our friendship? |
| 14. What in my family causes You grief? | 29. Will You guide me? Where are we heading? |
| 15. What in my family brings You joy? | 30. What dreams do you want to awaken in me? |

Preparation for Intercession

1. Our Identity and Authority in Christ

The first principle that determines our *level* of authority in prayer is simply our *relationship to Christ – our salvation*. God has no second class children. We all stand on equal ground and have the exact same potential level of authority when it comes to petitioning the Father in Jesus' name and requesting of Him the biblical promises made to us.

Jesus always endeavored to find out what the Father wanted and then to fulfill His pleasure; we must do the same (John 8:29). Jesus often mentioned that He was always and only doing the Father's will, His inference clearly being that this was what gave Him the ability to act with such authority (John 4:34; 5:30-32; 6:38).

Ephesians 1: 17-23; Eph. 2: 4-7 says we are seated in heavenly places. Because we are sons, God sent the Spirit of His Son into our hearts (Gal 4:6-7). [God] set His seal of ownership on us, and put His Spirit in our hearts as a deposit, guaranteeing what is to come (2 Cor.1; 21-22). Realize and take the authority given to you (Luke 10-19; 1 John 4:4).

We are the body of Christ (Rom 12: 3-8; 1 Cor. 12: 12-26). Those who are led by the Spirit are the sons of God (Rom 8:14).

The truth about who I am as a child of God:

- I am adopted as God's child (Eph. 1:5)
- I am a new creation (2 Cor. 5:17)
- I am a temple of the Holy Spirit (1 Cor. 3:16; 1 Cor. 6:19)
- I am a saint (Rom 1:7)
- I am holy and blameless in His sight (Eph. 1:4)
- I am victorious through my Lord Jesus Christ (1 Cor.15: 57)
- I am free from condemnation (Rom 8:1)
- I have access to the Father (Eph. 2:18)
- I am Christ's friend (John 15:15)
- I am God's workmanship created in Christ Jesus to do good works (Eph. 2:10)
- I am the apple of my Father's eye (Ps 17:8; Deut. 32: 10-11)
- I have overcome the world (1 John 5: 4-5)
- I have the mind of Christ (1 Cor.2:16)
- He will keep me strong to the end so that I will be blameless (1 Cor. 1:8)

“God has given you jurisdiction over your world under His authority. He wants *you*, not sin, demonic powers, negative circumstances, or any other outside force to govern it. According to Webster’s dictionary, govern, is defined as “exercising authority.” *Praying with authority, therefore, is “governmental intercession”. We legislate through spiritual laws, principles, and activities.*” (Dutch Sheets, Authority in Prayer).

You were created to rule, to govern and to exercise authority (Romans 5:17). 1 Peter 2:9 states that we are called a “royal priesthood”, referring to our ruling nature. As children of the King, we are to rule and reign in the world. In order to accomplish this we must learn to pray with authority and govern through intercession. God’s plan is for you to partner with Him in realms of influence and authority. He wants to rule spheres of influence through you and your prayers.

Authority is the “right” to rule. Power is the “strength” needed to rule. Jesus dealt with Satan’s authority at the cross and took back the authority that Adam had lost (John 10:10). If we have been delivered from Satan’s authority and given a higher authority in Christ’s name, then we must exercise that authority over the devil’s works and power. When we do, God’s awesome power will back up our authority using “*our*” authority over Satan’s power (Luke 10:19).

Jesus said we have authority to “bind” the forces of hell (Matt 16:19). Our victory is determined by understanding and exercising this authority (Col 1: 16-17). Governmental prayer is that God gave us the assurance we need that we walk in His authority. We need to use our faith and pray and exercise this authority. Authority releases God’s power and causes the situation to change. As we are convinced that Christ has all authority over the earth and can use us to release it through governmental intercession, it will release us into a dimension of prayer that most of us have never dreamed of.

John 16:33 says that Jesus has overcome the world. As intercessors, knowing the final outcome makes all the difference. God didn’t give away ownership of the earth. He assigned humans the responsibility of governing/stewarding it; beginning with our private world and continuing to our extended and universal ones. He wanted a family born of His very nature, made in His image and likeness, filled with His own breath, with whom He could share His plans. It isn’t about our strength, but His. He wants us to understand our delegated authority and release His kingdom government on earth. We are supernatural sons and daughters of the Most High God, filled with His Spirit and anointed to rule. Not merely human.....1 Cor. 3:3. Matt 16:18-19 says we are Christ’s church - (ekklesia). We ascertain what His will is, then see that it is implemented by operating in the spiritual realm through prayer and other spiritual weapons. We have the authority to insist on His will and stop the plans of hell! We live in a world filled with constant and tremendous angelic and demonic activity. Our natural eyes cannot perceive it (2 Kings 6: 15-18). The Holy Spirit is willing to disclose heaven’s strategy and insight to you. Your destiny is to be a kingly warrior, overcoming in life through the kingdom authority of Jesus Christ.

2. Our Responsibility

With this incredible authority that is given to us also comes great responsibility. The more we walk in obedience to God's Word and freedom from sin, the greater our ability to receive and walk in the blessings and giftings of our Lord.

"Who may ascend the mountain of the LORD? Who may stand in his holy place? The one who has clean hands and a pure heart, who does not trust in an idol or swear by a false god." Psalm 24:3-4

Psalm 24 states that we must have clean hands and a pure heart; that means inwardly and outwardly both our thoughts and our actions are in line with God's Word.

1 John 1:5-10 indicates that we cannot do as we please; we cannot live contrary to God's laws and expect to come before the Father and move into significant intercessory authority for others. As we seek to grow in our intercessory gifting and power praying, we must take seriously the call to ask the Spirit to search our hearts and reveal any wicked way in us (Psalm 139). There is no 'little sin', but all sin is an offense to our Holy God. He isn't asking us to be perfect, but to be authentic. Having a trusted soul-friend, or prayer-partner that we can be completely vulnerable with is an excellent way to grow in humility and purity.

Rest in Him. Obey as we listen. We will be transformed as we abide in Him. He shares His secrets with those who fear Him and listen to Him (Ps 25:14).

3. Experience hearing God's voice:

(Excerpts from *Listening to God Manual* by Donna Jordan)

What it might look like as you pray and hear.

- A. God speaks through the scriptures (2 Tim 3:16). He may give you a verse to read: you may "see" the scripture chapter and verse in numbers in a picture in your mind (you may or may not know from memory), or He may remind you of a portion of a scripture that you know.
- B. The still, small voice.....the gentle whisper (1 Kings 19:12). The Holy Spirit to our spirit communication is light and gentle, but easily cut off by our own thinking. God usually speaks in the first person: "I love you".
- C. Still our hearts and emotions (Ps 46:10). Wait to hear- waiting is active (Ps 27:14; Ps 130:5-6; Isa. 28: 23; Isa. 30: 18-21).
- D. Visions – a personal, pictorial presentation while you are awake. Shows us what cannot be seen with our physical eyes. God uses visions to speak His words within our hearts. In Acts 10:3 Cornelius had a vision. He distinctly saw an angel of God. A few more examples: Isaiah 6:1; Daniel 7:2; Acts 10: 9-15.
- E. Audible voice – can be physically heard (Ex 3:4; Acts 9:3, 5; Matt 3:17).

Five types of visions:

1. A dream or vision in the night (Acts 19:9). While you are sleeping, your spirit is awake and very capable of receiving messages from the Lord (1 Kings 3; Dan. 7; Num. 12:6).
2. "...while in a trance" (Acts 10:10-16). When God cannot get through to us any other way... physical senses are suspended, but you are aware of everything.
3. Spontaneous unsought inner picture (most usual, gentle, normal and simple); seeing a person's face and feeling the call to pray – while driving, walking etc.
4. We can see a scene or written script. God reveals His mind with His creative ways.
5. Angels are ministering Spirits (Heb. 1:14). They can be angelic in form or might look like men (Gen 19:12-24).

Revelation is an understanding originating from the heart or spirit, revealed to us by the Holy Spirit. The spontaneous and specific understanding or strategy for current situations must be interpreted in the larger context of wisdom, a general understanding of God's ways, purposes, and principles learned over time (Eph. 1:17-18)

4. Hindrances to receiving fully all God intends for us:

If we are not experiencing a powerful and effective prayer life, there could be one or more of the following hindrances affecting us. As you prayerfully read this list ask the Holy Spirit to reveal anything that you might need to deal with:

Fear	Fear of man
Lack of love for God and others	Busyness
Unbelief	Not honouring spouse
Unforgiveness	Ungratefulness
Underdeveloped spirit	Unconfessed sin
Calloused conscience	Authority figures
Neglect	Not honouring parents
Pride	Life experiences
Idols	Not knowing your identity in Christ
Immorality	Not knowing His character
Occult	Not speaking truth
Disobedience	Condemnation

Application to rid hindrances.

Ask the Lord to take you back to your childhood and walk through your life with you and show you if there is anything that is hindering you from listening to Him. Write it on a piece of paper. Repent, and if you need to make restitution, do it. Forgive others who have spoken against you, put those words on the paper too. Ask Him if there is anything in your living place that doesn't glorify Him and He will show you. Take this paper and these things and burn them (Acts 19: 18-20).

Consider looking at Neil Anderson's *Seven Steps to Freedom*, or participating in a Set Free Seminar.

5. Opposition in the Spirit

"Submit yourselves then, to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you."

James 4:17

When we 'notice' something we can do one of two things:

- 1) become critical, confused, frustrated, bitter, angry, an accuser, **or**
- 2) become an intercessor that sees that person or situation through God's eyes.

Five areas of conflict:

1. The devil – (Gen 3:15; 2 Cor. 2:11; Eph. 6:12; James 4:7; 1 Peter 5: 8-9; 1 John3:8)
2. The flesh – (Rom 7: 21-25; 1 Cor. 9: 25-27; 2 Cor. 12:7; Gal 5:17; 1 Peter 2:11)
3. Our enemies – (Ps 38:19; Ps 56:2; Ps 59: 3-15)
4. The world – (John 16:33; 1 John 5: 4-5)
5. Death – (1 Cor. 15:26; Heb. 2: 14-15)

The *Word* is a weapon of warfare (Eph. 6:17). We are not to wrestle against flesh and blood... (Eph. 6:12). [*This knowledge is imperative for intercession*]. **Never pray against a person.** Speak out against the sin, not the person.

To prepare for battle:

1. Jesus must be Lord – cast all your anxieties on Jesus. Focus on biblical promises for the problems. Be self-controlled, alert, resist the enemy and stand firm in the faith.
2. Put on the armour (Eph. 6: 10-18).
 - Offense- advancing the kingdom, attacking, not passive.
 - Defense – we already have the victory and we need to defend that victory.

3. Use your weapons: (2 Cor. 10:3-5)

- The Name of the Lord Jesus, His blood, the power of the Spirit and the sword of the Spirit. He speaks through His Word and by His Spirit. His kingdom is not a matter of talk but of power (1 Cor. 4:20).
- Your position, seated with Christ in heavenly realms (Eph. 2: 4-7).
- Take the authority given to you (Luke 10:19; Romans 8:17).
- Take the place of protection (Prov. 18:10; Eph. 6:10; 2 Thess. 3:3).

The enemy's 'holds' on us are:

- Unforgiveness
- Reaction in anger
- Immaturity
- Fear

Respond in the opposite spirit:

- Forgive (2 Cor. 10-11).
- Respond to the Lord and do not react in anger (Eph. 4: 26-27).
- Persevere (James 1: 2-4) which will lead to maturity. When we are mature we will more easily discern what is of God and what is of the enemy (Heb. 5:14).
- Love - perfect love casts out all fear (1 John 4:18).

The enemy keeps us in defeat because of:

- Lack of knowledge of the enemy
- Unconfessed sin - it gives a platform for the enemy
- Sin you have not made restitution for
- Unbelief
- Lack of the 'fear of God' (Prov. 8:13)
- Lack of love for God and each other

Preparing ourselves for a time of Spiritual Warfare:

- ◆ Come pre-prayed.
- ◆ Come from a position of abiding. (Eph. 2:6)
- ◆ Come from a place of intimacy and rest.
- ◆ Plead the blood of Jesus over our family.
- ◆ Pray Psalm 91 over team members.
- ◆ Put on the full armour of God. (Eph. 6:11)
- ◆ Praise to enthrone the Lord, and submit to His leading.

How to battle:

- Resist the enemy (James 4:7; 1 Peter 5: 8-9) taking every thought captive and making it obedient to the Lord. (2 Cor. 10:5).
- Bind the enemy (Matt 12:29; Matt 16:19).
- Attack with the sword of the Spirit using appropriate Scriptures as led and directed by the Holy Spirit (Matt 4:1-11).
- Declare the victory of Calvary (Col 2: 15; 1 John 3:8).
- Confess victory through the Blood of the Lamb and the word of your testimony (Rev 12:11).
- State your authority in the Lord Jesus (Luke 10:19; 1 John 4:4).
- On the authority of the Word of God, smash the enemy's stronghold and loose from bondage the person or situation for whom you are praying (Matt. 16:19).
- Declare verses of victory to give glory to God – prophetic declarations.
- Live a holy life:
 - Guard your mind – your thoughts (Phil 4:8).
 - Guard your attitude/heart (hatred, bitterness, jealousy, envy, anger). The devil watches what irritates you and then keeps pushing on that weakness through your mind and through other people. Respond to the Lord and don't react towards the people.
 - Guard your tongue. The devil wants you to put others down. Instead of grumbling and complaining, have an attitude of praise.
 - Guard what you look at (Ps 101:3). Is there anything in your home that doesn't glorify God? E.g.. CD's, videos, magazines etc. (Acts 19: 18-20).
- Pray – the prayer of a righteous man is powerful and effective (James 5:16).
- Worship and praise: God inhabits the praise of His people and pushes the enemy back.
- Walk in humility and repentance (2 Chron. 7:14).
- Have a fervent love for God and others.

“Our weapons—which include the sword of the Spirit, the love of God, the blood of Jesus, the shield of faith, and prayer and repentance—are far more powerful than anything the enemy has. We can destroy every stronghold we encounter, for we battle not with our own strength, but with the weapons of God, eternal and invisible.”

-John Sandford: A Comprehensive Guide to Deliverance and Inner Healing

Session 2: Review and Practice

1. What areas of identity do you struggle with most taking hold of?
2. Spend time allowing the Spirit to search your heart, and reveal any areas of your life He wants to purify.
3. Do you have a trusted soul friend/ prayer partner? If not, ask the Lord who you should seek out, and then pursue it.
4. What hindrances are you aware of in your life?

Prayer of application:

Dear Lord, is there anything in my heart that hinders me from hearing from you? Please show me as I wait in your presence.

Jesus, you are my Lord and it is written in your Word that if I am submitted to your Lordship, I can resist the enemy (James 4:7). Therefore, Satan and demon powers, you have no power over me or my thinking and you must be gone in Jesus' name.

Lord, I die to my ideas, desires and what I want. I just want to hear from You and be led by You.

Holy Spirit, fill me, lead me and guide me. I know that you will.

5. Summary:
 - Make sure your heart is clean before God by giving the Holy Spirit time to convict (Ps. 66:18; Ps 139: 23-24; John 9:31; James 4: 1-12 – wrong motives; 1 Sam 8:6-22; 1 Peter 3: 7, 12).
 - Die to your own imaginations, desires and burdens (Prov. 3: 5-6; Prov. 28:26; Isa. 55:8). Give Him your burdens (Ps 68:19; Gal 6: 1-2; Phil 4:6; 1 Peter 5:7).
 - Acknowledge you cannot really pray without the direction and energy of the Holy Spirit (Rom 8:26). Ask God to control you by His Spirit, receive by faith that He does, and thank Him. How much more will your Father in heaven give the Holy Spirit to those who ask (Luke 11:13; John 16: 12-15; Rom 8: 26-27; Eph. 5: 15-20).
 - Resist the enemy. Submit therefore to God. Resist the devil and he will flee from you (Eph. 4:26-27; Eph. 6:11; James 4:7; 1 Peter 5: 6-9).
 - Wait before Him in silent expectancy, listening for His direction (Ps 27:14; Ps 62: 5; Ps 81: 11-13; Ps 130: 5-6).
 - In obedience and faith, speak or write what God brings to your mind, believing (John 10:27). Keep asking God for direction, expecting Him to give it to you... He will. (Ps 32:8).
 - Have your bible with you when waiting on God. He may give you direction through His written word (Ps 119:105).

Understanding the Holy Spirit

1. Who is the Holy Spirit?

In the midst of the disciples' fear and uncertainty after Jesus' death, the resurrected Jesus comforted them about His imminent ascension to heaven by promising them that He would send another one to be with them on earth. He told them that they would receive another Helper or Comforter. The Greek word is *parakletos*, from which we derive our English word "paraclete," which means one who is summoned to someone's side to assist and to give aid, even to be a legal assistant or an advocate before a judge (see John 14:12-18, 25-26; 15:26; 16: 5-15).

His promise was to the disciples, and it is for us to this day. As Jesus promised, the Paraclete will do all of the following:

- ◆ He will be with us forever to comfort and strengthen us
- ◆ He will dwell in us; he will teach us all things
- ◆ He will bring to our remembrance the words of Jesus
- ◆ He will bear witness to Jesus
- ◆ He will convict the world of sin
- ◆ He will guide us into all truth
- ◆ He will glorify Jesus
- ◆ He will give us power

He will do all of these things because of His nature. He is always making the connection between Himself and believers, in whose heart He dwells.

2. Names for the Spirit in Scripture

The Holy Spirit is known by many names in the Bible, and each one of them portrays a particular aspect of His nature. Among many descriptive names, He is known as:

- Spirit of the Lord, of Wisdom, of Understanding, of Counsel, of Might, of Knowledge and of Fear of the Lord (often called the seven fold Spirit of God; see Isa. 11: 1-3).
- Spirit of Christ (1 Peter 1:11)
- Spirit of Prophecy (Rev. 19:10)

- Spirit of Glory (1 Peter 4:14)
- Comforter (John 14:26)
- Eternal Spirit (Hebrews 9:14)
- Spirit of Promise (Eph. 1:13)
- The Promise of the Father (Luke 2:1-49)

3. Third Person of the Godhead

The Holy Spirit is not a mere “influence”; he is not just an amorphous power or a force. He is the third personality of the Godhead. “So there are three witnesses in heaven: the Father, the Word and the Holy Spirit and these three are One” (1 John 5:7 AMP).

Because He is a person, He does things that persons do. He *speaks* (Acts 13:2), He *works* (1 Cor. 12:11), He *teaches* (John 14:26), and He *guides* (John 16:13).

As a person with a personality, He possess a *mind* (the mind of God; Rom. 8:27). A *will* (the will of God; 1 Cor. 12:11) and *intelligence* (Neh. 9:20). The Holy Spirit *loves* (Rom. 15:30). He can be *grieved* (Eph. 4:30).

4. Prophetic Symbols of the Spirit in Scripture

Because He is an invisible spirit, the Bible uses metaphorical symbols to describe the Holy Spirit.

He is compared to a *dove* (Matt. 3:16), *water* (John 4:14; 7:38-39), *rain* (Joel 2:23), *oil* (Ps. 89:20), and also to *wind* (John 3:8; Acts 2:2) and *fire* (Luke 3:16; Isa. 4:4; Acts 2:3). All of these comparisons tell us something about the nature of the Holy Spirit, and about how He wants to relate to us.

When you are baptized in the Holy Spirit, you can expect to be able to exercise one or more of the nine gifts of the Spirit listed in 1 Corinthians 12: 8-12. This is how the Spirit works in and through the believers He indwells. When you are baptized in the Spirit you can also expect to see the nine fruits of the Spirit: love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control (the character traits of God; see Galatians 5:22-23) more prominently in your life.

It is important to *invite the Holy Spirit to fill you*. The rest is up to Him. He will even give you the desire to ask.

5. Filled and Fulfilled

Jesus spoke with his disciples after His resurrection:

On one occasion, while he was eating with them, he gave them this command: Do not leave Jerusalem, but wait for the gift my Father promised, which you have heard me speak about. For John baptized with water, but in a few days you will be baptized with the Holy Spirit (Acts 1:4-5).

Today our lives are part of the same story line. *I will pour out my Spirit on your offspring and my blessing on your descendants (Isa. 44:3).*

6. Authority and Power

The main purpose of the baptism in the Holy Spirit is that we might receive supernatural power. The new birth gives us the *right* to be God's children, while the baptism in the Spirit brings us the *power* to live effective lives as His children. Being born again gives us an inheritance in the Kingdom of our Father (Rom. 8:14-17; Eph. 1). A very important part of that inheritance is the indwelling presence of His Holy Spirit. Every believer receives the presence of the Spirit at salvation. But each must ask for His continual infilling and renewal. Jesus had the Presence of the Spirit in His life as a child and as a young man. But at His baptism, at the beginning of His ministry, He was filled with the Spirit and endued with God's Power. Luke 4:14 tells us "*Jesus returned to Galilee in the power of the Spirit, and news about him spread through the whole countryside.*" He was empowered to perform signs and wonders, to proclaim the kingdom of heaven in the face of opposition, and to resist the enemy through spiritual warfare (Matt 3:16-17; Acts 10:36-38).

7. Common Manifestations of the Baptism of the Holy Spirit

What should we look for as evidence of being baptized in the Spirit? We can use the account in the book of Acts as a starting point. When the 120 believers were all filled with the Holy Spirit, everyone, even the strangers in the street, witnessed these manifestations of the power from Heaven: the fire of God, obvious power beyond human power, the appearance of drunkenness, speaking in unknown languages (tongues), prophesying, great conviction, boldness to testify.

Also:

- The love of God is poured into our hearts (Rom. 5:5).
- The Holy Spirit intercedes in our prayers and helps our weakness (Rom. 8:26).
- We abound in hope (Rom. 15:13).

- We speak and preach by the inspiration of the Spirit (1 Cor. 2:4).
- Manifestations of the nine gifts of the spirit (1 Cor. 12).
- The Holy Spirit works mighty signs and wonders through us (Rom. 15:19).

Peter told them to repent and get baptized in the name of Jesus for the forgiveness of sins. *“And you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. The promise is for you and your children and for all who are far off, for all whom the Lord our God will call”* (Acts 2:38-39).

Peter said, “The promise is for you and your children and for all who are far off.”

That includes you and me. It includes our children and our grandchildren. It includes anyone who hears the call of God and who responds to it. This supernatural life, this empowering of the Holy Spirit was not only for those who happened to be in Jerusalem that day. It is for everyone, to the farthest corners of the earth, in whatever generation they are born into. What does the promise include? That everyone, young and old, can receive the same Spirit, the Spirit of the Lord, wisdom, understanding, counsel, might, knowledge, prophecy, glory, comfort and much more.

8. The Holy Spirit - Key to living the Christian Life

From every side of the Christian spectrum, men and women of God agree that the Holy Spirit is utterly necessary to living a fully Christian life. You cannot expect to accomplish supernatural feats without supernatural power. Nobody can do it without the Helper. Nobody can fulfill even one of Jesus' commands without the help of the Spirit. Can you do something as “simple” as loving your enemy (Matt. 5:44) without the empowering love of the Holy Spirit?

God's Spirit guides us (John 16:13), empowers us (Mic. 3:8), makes us holy (Rom. 15:16), comforts us (John 14:16-26), and gives us joy (Rom. 14:17). As the teacher of spiritual truths, the Holy Spirit illuminates our minds with insights into the mind of Christ (1 Cor. 2:12, 13) and reveals to us the hidden things of God (Isa. 40:13, 14). As you are filled with the Holy Spirit, the bible becomes alive, prayer becomes vital, your witness becomes effective and obedience becomes a joy. As a result of your obedience in these areas your faith grows and you become more mature in your spiritual life.

9. How to be filled with the Spirit

In the bible, we see ways by which the Holy Spirit was imparted to believers:

1. Infilling may be simultaneous with salvation or water baptism (Matt. 3:16-17; Acts 19:2-7). Jesus our saviour; Jesus our sanctifier.
2. Through the laying on of hands, as in Acts 8: 14-17 (NKJV)

“Now when the apostles who were at Jerusalem heard that Samaria had received the word of God, they sent Peter and John to them, who, when they had come down, prayed for them that they might receive the Holy Spirit. For as yet He had fallen upon none of them. They had only been baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus. Then they laid hands on them and they received the Holy Spirit.”
3. As a sovereign move of the Holy Spirit as on the day of Pentecost, or times of Revival (Acts 2).

You may have never been filled; or know that you have been filled. The question is: are you filled today? Are there manifestations of the gifts and fruit of the Spirit in your life? Sanctification means "continually being filled," (Phil 2: 12-13). We need to ask for refilling and refreshing because we 'leak'.

A believer who desires to be filled with the Spirit must only meet certain very basic conditions:

1. Believe that it is God's promise for you today (Acts 2:39; Acts 1:8).
2. Prepare your heart through repentance (Acts 2:38).
3. Ask (Luke 11:13).
4. Have faith to receive (John 7: 38-39).

When Jesus baptizes someone in the Holy Spirit (love and power) and with fire (refining and purifying) (Matt. 3:11; Mk. 1:8; Lk. 3:16; John 1:32-33), they are immersed, or filled with the power of the Spirit (Acts 1:8). It is important to be baptized in the Holy Spirit and to use the gifts that come with that filling (1 Cor. 12; Acts 2:4; Acts 11:15-16; Acts 19:6).

10. Roadblocks to receiving the Holy Spirit

- Idolatry – thinking that anything beyond our 'normal' may not be God; reasoning of our mind; control; think we don't need any more than what we already have.

- Unbelief and Fear of the unknown.
- Pride – head knowledge has trumped our heart knowledge.
- Inadequacy – bound in guilt and shame – God won't give me anything because of the way I see myself.
- Religious Spirit – rules and regulations; seeks to take the place of intimacy with God in our lives.

Cautions:

Do not put out the Spirit's fire (1 Thess. 5:19)

And do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God... (Eph. 4:30)

11. And the Greatest of These is Love

“If I speak in the tongues of men or of angels, but do not have love, I am only a resounding gong or a clanging cymbal. If I have the gift of prophecy and can fathom all mysteries and all knowledge, and if I have a faith that can move mountains, but do not have love, I am nothing.” 1 Cor. 13: 1-2

Love must be the foundation of all of our exercising of our gifts. First and foremost we have to personally dwell in the love of our Triune God. If we are not personally centered in that love we will not be able to clearly hear His voice for ourselves or for anyone else. Second we must have God's love in our hearts for those to whom we are ministering. God's primary purpose for giving us these gifts is to build up His body, the church.

*“But the one who prophesies speaks to people for their **strengthening, encouraging and comfort**” 1 Cor. 14:3.*

12. Anointing vs. Giftedness

The bible uses the term *anointing* to refer to two separate instances. The first is material anointing – as with oil. The second is spiritual – with the Holy Spirit. We are just looking at the second for this purpose.

A gift is a Spirit-endowed ability; an anointing is a Spirit-filled ability (or inability). A gift is a skill or capacity that God gives someone to build His church and advance His kingdom. An anointing is God's power in and on someone for the same purpose (see Acts 10:38). The difference is that we can use a gift completely in our own strength. But an anointing is, by its very nature, God's strength flowing in us and through us, and it functions even in our weakness and ineptitude. See 1 Corinthians 2:1-5, which was written to a church boasting in their spiritual gifts.

Gifts of the Holy Spirit

“Now, (today) concerning spiritual gifts, brethren, I would not have you ignorant (untaught)” (1 Cor.12 KJV).

Spiritual gifts are the weapons of (our) warfare for the Church. The gifts of the Spirit are for all God’s children (Acts 2:38-39). He will disperse them (the gifts) “severally” (God gives individually, his several gifts) as He wills (1 Cor. 12:11). We receive the *ability* to operate in all nine gifts when we ask for the infilling of the Holy Spirit (1 Cor. 12:4-7). The Lord prompts their use at different times through different people in different circumstances. They are to be used for the edification of the body of believers (1 Peter 4:10-11; 1 Cor. 14:12, 26). The gifts are given by the indwelling Holy Spirit, motivated by love for others through faith and obedience to the commands of the Lord (Mark 9: 22-24; Acts 14:9). They are to remain in use until Jesus comes for us (1 Cor. 13:8-10). Once you have received them, they are in you (1 Tim. 4:14). They are differentiated from “spiritual gifts” or “motivational gifts” found in Romans 12 such as...helps, administration, hospitality etc. They are also distinct from the nine fruits of the spirit (Gal. 5:22).

The gifts of the Spirit are nine in number. They are enumerated, in 1 Cor. 12:8-10. They divide by their nature into three groups. These headings are suggested by the various characteristics of the gifts and, are commonly used to designate the groups.

Revelation or instructional gifts:

The gift of the word of knowledge

The gift of the word of word of wisdom

The gift of discerning of spirits

Power or Impartation gifts:

The gift of faith

The gift of healing

The gift of the performing of miracles

Utterance gifts: These three are referred to as “utterance” gifts because that is their mode of operation. Also commonly called “inspirational” as their use inspires both the user and they that hear.

The gift of tongues (personal and public)

The gift of interpretation of tongues

The gift of prophecy

1. Descriptions of the Nine Gifts

We will discuss the nine gifts further in the order they are listed in 1 Cor. 12.

1. The gift of the word of wisdom:

- The gift of the word of wisdom is the God-given ability to receive from God a word of wisdom, this being a revelation of **what to do** about a situation when you know the facts concerning the case (Gen 41:33-36; Ex. 18:17-23; Dan. 4:27; Deut. 34:9; Acts 15:1-33).
- It is not human wisdom increased, sanctified, or blessed of God. It has nothing to do with becoming wise, discreet, or shrewd in understanding. James 3: 13-18 describes the difference between “earthly” wisdom and wisdom “from above”. Wisdom of God is known by its attributes: it is pure, peaceable, gentle, reasonable, and full of mercy, full of good fruits, without partiality and without hypocrisy.

2. The gift of the word of knowledge:

- The gift of the word of knowledge is the God-given ability to receive from God a word of knowledge; this constituting a revelation of facts concerning something, anything, about which it is humanly impossible for you to know (Gen, 40:13-19; 2 Sam. 12: 1-14; 2 Kings 5:26; Luke 3:15-16; John 4:17-18; Luke 19:30-31; Gal. 2: 1-2; Acts 5: 1-11).
- It is not human knowledge sanctified
- It is not an increased capacity to acquire understanding
- Revelations from God regarding moral or spiritual problems in the lives of our brothers and sisters in Christ are not given us to exploit, but rather that we may restore in the spirit of meekness (Gal. 6:1).
- Because of the very nature of this gift and the gift of prophecy, love is required in the hearts of those to whom it is entrusted (1 Cor. 13:2).

3. The gift of faith:

- The gift of faith is the God-given ability to not only believe for the fantastically impossible to come to pass, but also to pass on – impart and inspire faith in the hearts of others (Mark 11:12-14; Mark 11:22,23; Acts 11: 22-24; Joshua 10:12; Mark 5:28; Matt. 8:8; Matt. 9:18; Heb. 11; Mark 9:23; John 4: 46-53).

4. Gifts of healing:

- The gift of healing is the God-given ability to impart the healing virtue of Christ to others (Gen 20:17; 1 Sam. 1: 10-19; 2 Kings 5; Matt. 8:7; Luke 4: 38-39; Luke 8:46; Luke 6:19; Mark 1: 32-34; John 4: 46-53; Acts 3:6; other numerous scripture in the book of Acts).
- Christ’s healing ministry was attestation to the fact that he was the Christ (Acts 2:22; Acts 10: 38).
- Healing virtue of Christ is the life of Christ (Rom. 8:11).

5. The gift of the performing of miracles:

- The gift of the performing of miracles is the God-given ability to perform miracles, i.e., an act or occurrence that is contrary to or beyond the realm of the laws of nature (Ex. 4:1-4; 7:10; 7: 14-21; Chpts: 7, 8, 9, 10, 12; Joshua 10: 12-13; 1 Kgs. 17:1; 8-16; 2 Kgs. 2:8,14; 2 Kgs.4:42-44; John 2: 1-11; John 6: 1-14; Matt. 17: 24-27).

6. The gift of prophecy:

- The gift of prophecy, the product of the operation of which constitutes the testimony of Jesus, is the God-given ability to bring forth in the language of the speaker, by inspiration, a message right from the heart of God, received as you are giving it forth. A message from God to the people, that is **always** unto edification, exhortation and comfort (1 Cor. 14:3).
- To *edify* is to build up, to strengthen. To *exhort* is to incite to a more worthy cause, to lovingly encourage to a more noble endeavour. To *comfort* is to console, to encourage; it also signifies a state of quiet enjoyment, of consolation.
- You do not know the message ahead of time. Prophetic utterances are not premeditated, neither are they the meanderings of your own mind. It is an inspirational gift, not a revelation gift; not an outlet for the secret plans and ambitions of your own heart.
- True prophecy runs parallel to the scriptures, sometimes consisting entirely of portions of scripture.
- We are urged to earnestly desire to prophesy above all else (1 Cor. 14: 1, 5, 31, 39).

7. The gift of the discerning of spirits:

- The gift of the discerning of spirits is the God-given ability to detect the presence and ascertain the identity of spirits; whether they be the spirit of man, the Holy Spirit or angelic spirits. This also is accomplished by revelation received from God for spiritual warfare (Luke 6:18; Mark 5:8; Mark 5:9; Luke 9:42; Luke 7:21; Luke 11:14; Luke 13:11-16; John 8:44; Matt. 12:34; Acts 13:6-11; 1Tim. 4: 1-3).
- God is a spirit (John 4:24).
- Man is spirit (1 Cor. 2:11; Gen. 2:7; Job 32:8).
- A Christian is one in whom a new spirit exists (Rom. 8:9); this is the new Spirit of Christ, a new creation (2 Cor. 5:17).
- Angels are spirits (Hebrews 1:7).
- Satan is Lucifer, fallen from heaven (Isa. 14:12).
- Satan is captain of the angels who fell with him (Rev. 12: 7-9).
- Hell is prepared for the devil and his angels (Matt. 25:41).

8. The gift of speaking in tongues:

Personal

- The gift of tongues is the God-given ability to speak, *at will*, in a tongue that is not known to you; a tongue that you do not understand (1 Cor. 12:10; 1 Cor. 14: 2, 4, 13, 14, 19, 27).
- It is not linguistic ability; it is entirely supernatural in its operation (1 Cor. 12:11).
- It is not *the (sole)* evidence of having received the baptism of the Holy Spirit. But, the baptism of the Holy Spirit *is* evidenced by speaking in other tongues as the Spirit gives utterance.
- Tongues are a sign that shall follow believers (Mark 16:17). Paul spoke with tongues a great deal (1 Cor. 14:18).
- It is referred to by Paul as “your spirit praying” (1 Cor. 14:14).
- It is for the express purpose of talking to God (1 Cor. 14:2).
- It is to edify yourself (1 Cor. 14:4). Jude calls this “building yourself up on your most holy faith” (Jude 20). How it produces this result in us is largely by causing us to exercise faith. It requires a deliberate act of faith to speak in tongues. You can deliberately speak to God anytime in tongues.
- Speaking in tongues *to* God is praying in or with the Spirit; *your* spirit (1 Cor. 14:2).
- Speaking in tongues to God strengthens you with might, by His Spirit, in your inner being (Eph. 3:16). The inner man is the new man or new creature (2 Cor. 5:17). The natural man can pray out of the will of God. It is possible for our understanding to clutter up the way. When we pray in tongues we pray according to the will of God; our understanding being laid temporarily to one side (1 Cor. 14:14).

Public

- Tongues is also used for the purpose of bringing messages *from* God to the people (Acts 2:11). This is not fruitful, and is prohibited, unless there is interpretation after the second, or at the most the third attempt (1 Cor. 14:27-28).
- We have control of the operation of the gift, always (1 Cor. 14:32). We may have a sense of a “welling up” inside to bring forth a tongue. Our hearts may start to race and we sense the Lord wants to use us to bring a word. When we begin, by faith, to speak in another tongue our voice raises in order for all present to hear (unlike personal tongues which are between us and God). It draws attention and the assembly is quiet and listens. When we are finished bringing the tongue we wait for an interpretation. This may come from the giver of the tongue or someone else.

9. The gift of interpretation of tongues:

- The gift of interpretation of tongues is the God-given ability to bring forth in the language of our understanding the *sum and substance* of what has been spoken in another or unknown tongue. It is the *gist* of what has just gone forth in another tongue, whether that message in tongues came via your lips or those of another.

- It is not an ability to understand that which has been spoken in another language or tongue (1 Cor. 14: 2, 4, 13-14, 19-27).
- It is an inspirational gift. That which you bring forth not knowing what you will say next. It is given as you are inspired. The interpretation is not received by revelation. You speak as you are moved by the Spirit of God. In other words, the interpretation is not in existence until it is uttered. It is received word by word and phrase by phrase as you speak.
- If after bringing a message in two, or at the most three tongues, and there has been no interpretation given, you are to keep silent, speaking to yourself and to God (1Cor. 14:27-28).
- Tongues with interpretation of tongues equal prophecy in that the church of Jesus Christ is edified (1 Cor. 14:4-5).
- We are told to pray for interpretation (1 Cor. 14:13).

We are not to forbid speaking in tongues (1Cor. 14:39).

2. Manifestations of Intercession

We should regularly experience one or more of these Holy Spirit gifts as we grow and develop in our intercessory prayer. Whether we are praying privately, or with or for another person, oftentimes the Holy Spirit power comes upon us in different ways.

There are times in intercession when we seem to feel or identify with the sorrow of the person for whom we are praying. Sometimes we will know the grieving of the Holy Spirit over a person's situation. The Holy Spirit affects us in different ways.

Travail

There is a deep groaning inside which may be audible or which cannot be uttered as described in Rom. 8:26. Travail in Greek is "odino" which means to experience the pangs of childbirth. These are times when we will be called of God to pray strong prayers and help to birth the will of God into that area. (Isa. 53:11) In the garden of Gethsemane Jesus sweat drops like blood while in intercession.

Weeping

As we weep in intercession life comes into situations that God wants changed and made whole. John 11:33 & Luke 19:41 are two times Jesus wept. Often in our intercession we will physically be weeping but not mentally. Our minds are thinking clearly as we intercede for the situation.

Laughter

In prayer laughter is a sign that God's will has been accomplished or that the answer is on the way, or that the enemy's plan has been averted. Eccl. 3:4. If we are to allow God to laugh then He must laugh through us just as He speaks through us.

Shaking

Sometimes under the influence of the Holy Spirit our physical body may start to shake. Oftentimes it will start with a hand or a leg, sometimes we will feel the weight of His glory, and be bowed over. We are always able to control ourselves physically, so we should not be afraid.

Silence

Often time a Holy hush will come over us as we intercede. During these times the presence of the Lord can be felt in a tangible way, as we wait and listen and experience his presence.

These emotional displays, travailing, weeping, laughing or shaking are God directed. As we let Him lead He will take us to a new place of experience. Letting Him lead is always the key to intercession.

Areas of Vulnerability for Intercessors:

1. Ignorance—Two extremes:
 - No such thing as the devil
 - Seeing demons behind every door
2. Fear—Satan and God are not two equal opposing forces.
3. Underestimating the Enemy:
 - Taunting the enemy
 - Stepping beyond your level of faith or authority
4. Spiritual Arrogance
 - Expecting God's power without humility
 - Acting in presumption
5. Poor Timing
 - We need to be disciplined and patient
6. Stepping out Alone
7. No Covering
 - Pastoral covering is key.
8. Unfocussed Prayer

* From *Intercessory Prayer* by Debbie Verreault

Session 4: Review and Practice

1. Which of the 9 gifts most intrigues you, or do you desire?

2. Which ones have you personally experienced, either yourself, or in the presence of another?

3. Have you experienced any manifestations of the Spirit in your intercession?

4. Take time and ask the Lord what He would have you specifically intercede for:
 - Family members
 - In your community
 - In your workplace/ school
 - Nationally
 - Globally

5. Consider developing a prayer schedule which works for you, and be diligent for 30 days of prayer.

Corporate Prayer

1. Why Is Corporate Prayer So Important?

1. Jesus' Promise: In Matthew 18:19 many who study that verse agree that what Jesus is saying is: When more than just one person prays, there is greater spiritual effect than when we pray alone. Why is that true?

a) Corporate prayer keeps our praying from being selfish. Selfish and self-willed prayer cannot find an answer from God. It is harder to pray selfishly when we are praying openly with others.

b) It is humbling to pray with others. We have to lay aside our pretenses and humbly submit ourselves to God, for our praying to be blessed (James 4:6).

c) As others pray with us, it often helps to clarify what God wants. Corporate prayer helps us to more clearly discern God's will through the greater objectivity that comes through others (Proverbs 11:14).

2. Spiritual Warfare: When the Bible describes the challenges Christians face, it uses the language of war (2 Corinthians 10:3, 4; Ephesians 6:10-20). Paul and other Bible writers warn us our conflict is not between human beings but against the unseen spirits of darkness. Our weapons are not material but spiritual—primarily the weapon of prayer. When we “agree together,” this gives even greater force to our praying.

3. Missed Opportunities: James 4:2 simply states, “You do not have, because you do not ask.” We often complain because a need is not being met or a problem resolved. Often this is due to our own failure. We don't ask God, who is the source of all solutions and blessings. This is true for us as individuals as well as for churches.

4. Protection against Pride: Often churches become ineffective because of pride. Ministries which once were greatly used begin to take credit for what God has done (Daniel 4:28-38). Corporate prayer serves as a protection against forgetting who the source of our power and blessing is.

5. Support for The Leadership: A famous Christian leader was once asked the secret of his success. He humbly replied, “My people pray for me.”

2. The Power of Corporate Prayer

“If my people, who are called by my name, will humble themselves and pray and seek my face and turn from their wicked ways, then will I hear from heaven and will forgive their sin and will heal their land.” 2 Chronicles 7:14

1. Affirming our identity in Jesus Christ “If my people, who are called by my name...”

We focus our prayers on who we are in Jesus Christ! There is no other name under heaven worthy of praise! We thank you for Jesus Christ, who is our salvation. By faith we receive the Spirit’s testimony that we are Your children. We are filled with the Holy Spirit and no longer slaves to sin. We recognize that some of us are married, divorced, never married, or separated. We are employed, unemployed, underemployed and retired. We reject labels society places on us. We are fearfully and wonderfully made. We are all your children. We lift up our hearts and voices to you in joyful thanksgiving, requesting by prayer. Galatians 5:1 – “It is for freedom that Christ has set us free. Stand firm, then, and do not let yourselves be burdened again by a yoke of slavery.”

2. Abandoning attitudes that are not Christ-like “Will humble themselves...”

We focus our prayers on being humble in every aspect of our life! We will not seek to be great or to promote greatness in others. We take authority over every thought to make it obedient to Christ. (2 Cor. 10:5) We honor and encourage each other. We will lift up and not tear each other down. Lord, we need each other. We will help each other to grow spiritually. As men and women of God, we pray for noble character, to treat our wives and husbands, friends and all people in ways that honor You Lord. We choose to have the same attitude as that of Christ Jesus. We humble ourselves before you and we submit ourselves to each other. Philippians 2:5-8 – “Your attitude should be the same as that of Christ Jesus. Who, being in very nature God, did not consider equality with God something to be grasped, but made himself nothing, taking the very nature of a servant, being made in human likeness...he humbled himself and became obedient to death - even death on a cross!” Luke 14:11 – “For everyone who exalts himself will be humbled, and he who humbles himself will be exalted.”

3. Asking God according to His will “and pray and seek my face...”

We focus our prayers on asking anything according to Your will. Father, above all things, we seek Your will not our own. You know the plans You have for us. You plan to prosper us and not to harm us, plans to give us hope and a future. We call upon you and seek you with all our heart. (Jer. 29:11-13). We ask and believe by faith. We pray that Your word will grow deep in our hearts so that we will know Your will and Your ways. We pray that you will direct our footsteps according to Your word (Psalm 119:133). 1 John 5:14 – “This is the confidence we have in approaching God: that if we ask anything according to his will, he

hears us. And if we know that he hears us – whatever we ask – we know that we have what we asked of him.” 1 Chronicles 16:11 “Look to the Lord and his strength; seek his face always.”

4. Agreeing with God “And turn from their wicked ways...”

We focus our prayers on confession and repentance. We come to you to worship You in the beauty of holiness. You are the everlasting God and Your love endures forever. We confess our sins to You. Have mercy on us, O God. Cleanse us from our sins. We walk in holiness and truth with the help of Your Spirit. We claim victory in the name of Jesus over everything that is not like You. Wash us in your blood. Forgive us for ignoring kingdom expansion work through evangelism. Forgive us for judging those who are not like us. Forgive us for not sharing with others about the hope that lies within us. Help us to see the world through the eyes of Christ. Hosea 14:2 – “Take words with you and return to the Lord. Say to him: “Forgive all our sins and receive us graciously, that we may offer the fruit of our lips.” Acts 3:19 – “Repent, then, and turn to God, so that your sins may be wiped out, that times of refreshing may come from the Lord.” Psalm 51:1-4 – “Have mercy on me, O God, according to your unfailing love; according to your great compassion blot out my transgressions. Wash away all my iniquity and cleanse me from my sin. For I know my transgressions, and my sin is always before me. Against you, you only, have I sinned and done what is evil in your sight, so that you are proved right when you speak and justified when you judge.”

3. **Foundation Scripture**

Matthew 18:19 - 20, "Again I Tell you, if two of you on earth agree (harmonize together, together make a symphony) about - anything and everything - whatever they shall ask, it will come to pass and be done for them by My Father in heaven. For where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them. (Amplified Bible).

- A.** Corporate prayer is probably one of the most neglected and misunderstood forms of prayer we find described in the Bible. Usually when Christians get together to pray, a whole array of prayers are offered by each individual instead of the group simply bringing a few focused prayers in complete unison before the Lord.

Despite some of the misconceptions that exist, proper corporate prayer is extremely powerful when we truly appreciate its value and perform it correctly.

In Acts 2:1 - 2 we read a very famous account of corporate prayer and its powerful result, "And when the day of Pentecost was fully come, they were all with one

accord in one place. And suddenly there came a sound from heaven as of a rushing mighty wind, and it filled all the house where they were sitting."

The term "one accord" carries the meaning of having the same mind, or being in agreement mentally about the same thing. It also means to be of "one passion".

(Acts 4:24 - 32 gives another account of how effective corporate prayer is)

- B.** The word "agree" in Matthew 18:19 not only carries the meaning of being in one accord, but goes further; Strong's #G4856 *sumphōneō* - soom-fo-neh'-o from Strong's #G4859; to be harmonious, agree (together, with)

The word *sumphōneō* is the root of our modern English word, symphony. Symphony carries the meaning of "harmony of sound" such as one would experience when a Symphony Orchestra plays a symphony of music or symphonic musical composition.

On their own, each individual musical instrument may make a wonderful sound, however, when all the instruments play or symphonise together, they form one beautiful harmonious sound carrying with it much deeper emotion and meaning. The same happens when we agree or symphonise together in corporate prayer. When we all pray together at the same time for the same thing, the power of the Holy Spirit is released in a much greater way, bringing swift breakthroughs and answers to prayer.

Psalm 133:1 - 3, "A Song of degrees of David - Behold, how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity! It is like the precious ointment upon the head, that ran down upon the beard, even Aaron's beard: that went down to the skirts of his garments; As the dew of Hermon, and as the dew that descended upon the mountains of Zion: for there the LORD commanded the blessing, even life for evermore."

- C.** Towards the end of Matthew 18:19 we read, "... whatever they shall ask, it will come to pass and be done for them by My Father in heaven."

The word "done" is defined by the Strong's Concordance as follows: Strong's #G1096 *ginomai* - ghin'-om-ahee - means to generate, to become or come into being, to come into existence, begin to be, receive being, be assembled, come to pass, be finished, be fulfilled, be made, ordained to be, be performed, be wrought. The meaning conveyed here strongly suggests something which had not yet taken place will take place. I think it even goes further in that it implies something which had not existed before will come into being or into existence.

This may not only denote that a re-creative miracle may take place such as when a person has lost a limb, but also in areas where God's people may need breakthroughs, where a breakthrough situation did not exist before, God will

bring a breakthrough into being. Areas in our lives where provision is required will also fall into this category.

- D.** Corporate Prayer takes place when at least two or three Believers are present in one place, their unity of faith and prayer being of such a degree that when they harmonize or symphonise together in agreement with God's Will and His Word, God intervenes and brings to pass the specific request. Matthew 18:19 - 20 states Believers may ask for anything and He will command His blessing!

Verse 20 affirms when we gather together in this manner, Jesus is in our midst, He is in our midst not only to fellowship with us, and we with Him, but He is in our midst to personally bring into being and manifestation the answer and result of our prayer request.

The following points illustrate how we should pray corporately and what we should pray for:

1. According to God's Will 1 John 5:14-15 (also Proverbs 10:24; Psalm 37:4-5)

"And this is the confidence - the assurance, the [privilege of] boldness - which we have in Him: [we are sure] that if we ask anything (make any request) according to His will (in agreement with His own plan) He listens to and hears us, And if (since) we [positively] know that He listens to us in whatever we ask, we also know [with settled and absolute knowledge] that we have [granted us as our present possessions] the requests made of Him." (Amplified)

2. Pray with all kinds or types of prayer Ephesians 6:18 (also read Luke 1:1-8)

"Pray at all times - on every occasion, in every season - in the Spirit, with all [manner of] prayer and entreaty ..." (Amplified)

"Praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit ..." (KJV)

"Pray in the Spirit at all times with every kind of prayer and request there is ..." (International Standard Version)

"Pray in the Spirit in every situation. Use every kind of prayer and request there is ..." (God's Word Translation)

3. Pray with our spirit and with our understanding 1 Corinthians 14:12-15

"... Then what am I to do? I will pray with my spirit - by the Holy Spirit that is within me; but I will also pray intelligently - with my mind and understanding; I will sing with my spirit - by the Holy Spirit that is within me; but I will sing (intelligently) with my mind and understanding also." (Amplified)

"... What is it then? I will pray with the spirit, and I will pray with the understanding also: I will sing with the spirit, and I will sing with the understanding also." (KJV)

4. Pray for all men 1 Timothy 2:1-5 (also see Psalm 33:12)

"First of all, then, I admonish and urge that petitions, prayers, intercessions and thanksgivings be offered on behalf of all men ..." (Amplified)

5. In Conclusion

As Christian Believers we must seek the Lord corporately and apply the principles of corporate prayer diligently and accurately.

Corporate prayer for all people will bring the Presence of God into manifestation on the earth and bring change and revival where religious and demonic strongholds have held cities, nations and continents captive for thousands of years.

Jesus paid the price in full, so let us come into agreement with Him:

Colossians 2:15, "And having spoiled principalities and powers, he made a show of them openly, triumphing over them in it ..."

4. Seven Spheres of Influence

God introduced the strategy of reaching people groups through spheres of influence to Francis Schaefer, Loren Cunningham and Bill Bright in 1975. As leaders of L'Bray Fellowship, Youth With a Mission (YWAM) and Campus Crusade for Christ respectively, they have shared this strategy with many people around the world. Sometimes this strategy is referred to as Seven Mountains of Culture.

To pray using these seven topics:

a. First select a group of people who will benefit from your prayers.

Examples are ethnic people groups; a geographical area such as a country, city, region, or neighborhood; an organization; your local church congregation; your family; your coworkers; or even just yourself.

b. Pray through some of the seven topics for that group of people. The subtopics listed are just a few to get you started considering the numerous things that may influence our lives. Let God lead you to the things he wants you to pray about today.

c. Repeat with a different group of people, if you wish.

d. But do not stop with prayer. Act to make one of your prayers a reality.

1. Business, Economy, Science, Technology, Sales, Service

Operate with integrity and fairness

Productive and efficient

Innovation and invention

Provide for needs of more and more employees and partners

Strategic generosity with profits

Culture of life, excellence, encouragement, vision, and caring

Fund the mission of God instead of the works of the Devil or self-centered greed

Bless people, blessed to be a blessing

2. Celebration - Arts, Entertainment, Music, Film, Sports, Fashion

Creativity and excellence

God-honoring message (not necessarily verbal or explicit)

Integrity and fairness in play and business

Honorable opportunities for all skill levels

Environment of encouragement and praise for good efforts

Perseverance in challenges and times of slow improvements

3. The Church, The People of God, Religion

Unity among believers, love for one another, encouraging daily

Teaching compatible with written word in Bible, example of Jesus, God's values and perspective

Experience compatible with written word in Bible, example of Jesus, God's values and perspective

Followers of Christ present a life that attracts and intrigues secular and religious people of all types

Respect for the past with a bold vision for all God wants to do today and in the future

Meaningful participation for all ages

On earth as in heaven where all worship the Lord and God's power and love are displayed

God is present, day and night - sometimes in physically tangible ways

Both the fruit and the gifts of the Spirit are displayed as evidence that God is here

4. Education

Elementary schools, middle schools, high school, college, corporate training, daycare and after-school programs

Caring leaders, role models

Fresh ideas, insights, and teaching materials

Creativity

Speak truth without secular agendas

Responsible stewardship of resources, funds, time, facilities, and children

Business partnerships, especially in colleges

Student ministries and opportunities for Christian influence

5. Family

Children - legacy, training, care, conflicts, discipline, playfulness, elderly parents

Marriages - commitment, bonding, faithfulness, time together, etc.

Roles - single, husband, wife, employment, child care, time, etc.

Sexuality - intimacy, pornography, homosexuality, temptations, media, etc.

Communication - honesty, openness, honor, respect, care, romance, etc.

Declare blessing instead of curses for our generation and generations to come

6. Government

Successfully help society by guiding and encouraging honorable behavior

Maintain order through laws and organizational structures

Integrity

Service oriented and servant leadership

Strategically effective and efficient in roles within society

Success in maintaining peace, protecting people and best interests of the society

Recognizes Christian church as an effective partner for a healthy culture

7. Media, Public Communication, Internet

Truthful information is communicated.

The good news, the problems and challenges, and the hope are communicated realistically with a perspective of what God is doing and wants to do in each situation.

People are honored and respected, even if some of their actions are not honorable. Personal privacy of newsmakers and their families is respected.

Christians with spirit-led discernment and supernatural insight will be writers and editors.

The news stories of the goodness of God will greatly outnumber the mentions of negative "acts of God".

Safety for reporters in cultures where news is controlled by government or other groups of people retaining power through deception and lies

Sources: 1. Various messages by Loren Cunningham and others concerning the spheres of influence 2. Mostly personal insight by Ron Hedberg3. Interview with Loren Cunningham on Reclaim 7 Mountains web site. Copyright © 2009-2010 Ronald G. Hedberg. User submitted text is copyrighted by the submitter.

Session 5: Review and Practice

The most important component of corporate prayer is unity. "Unity in prayer increases effectiveness and authority."

Sara Maynard

"May the God who gives endurance and encouragement give you a **spirit of unity** among yourselves as you follow Christ Jesus, so that with **one heart and mouth** you may glorify the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ."

Romans 15:5&6

1. Always begin with a time of silence.
2. The smaller the group the easier the unity. As a group grows it becomes more difficult, but more effective if unity is maintained.
3. Choose to be engaged with the prayers being prayed, even if you don't care for the style. Do not just be a spectator, pray along in agreement. Listen, be attentive, don't let your mind wander, or be thinking up what your next prayer will be.
4. Avoid 'wrestling matches':
5. If you don't agree 100% with what is being prayed it is not your job to 'even it out' by praying in the opposite fashion.
6. First ask the Lord what it is that is causing the tension in you, is it stirring a conviction.
7. Is it a prayer of 'little faith' and you need to pray for the pray-er to increase in faith. Can you affirm part of the prayer, and then increase the faith level.
8. If it is something you totally can't agree with, choose a time to speak with the person and share your heart and pray together.
9. Humility is crucial. We cannot insist our own agendas, preferences or opinions. Seek first the kingdom.
10. Grow in unity with the body of Christ. Let go of offenses and deal with unresolved issues.
11. Watch for the 'oil'. Where is there an unusual sense of God's presence. Stay there and keep pressing in to what He is showing you. Keep your prayers short and focused. Don't move on to another topic until you have fully prayed into this matter.

Qualifications to Look for in a Prayer Leader:

1. Are they discreet?
2. Do they have a servant's heart?
3. Do they exhibit a need to control?
4. Are they teachable?
5. Are they emotionally healthy?
6. Do they set time apart for personal prayer and Bible Study?
7. Are they able to bring correction in a loving way?
8. Do they tithe?

* From Cindy Jacobs "*Possessing the Gates of the Enemy*"

Appendix 1: Suggested Reading and Other Resources

Intercessory Prayer	Dutch Sheets
Authority in Prayer	Dutch Sheets
The Beginner's Guide to Intercession	Dutch Sheets
Needless Casualties of War	John Paul Jackson
Can You Hear Me?	Brad Jersak
Rivers from Eden	Eden & Brad Jersak
Power Through Prayer	E.M. Bounds
Praying in Style	Alice Smith
Power Praying	David Chotka
The Power of Persistent Prayer	Cindy Jacobs
Possessing the Gates of the Enemy	Cindy Jacobs
Voice of God	Cindy Jacobs
Rees Howells Intercessor	Norman Grubb
The Voice of Jesus	Gordon T. Smith
Called to be Saints	Gordon T. Smith
Steps to Freedom	Neil Anderson
Red Leaf House of Prayer	www.rlhof.c Praying with intercessors across Canada
Freedom in Christ Ministries	www.ficm.or

Appendix 2: Fasting

“Is not this the kind of fasting I have chosen: to loose the chains of injustice and untie the cords of the yoke, to set the oppressed free and break every yoke?” Isa. 58:6

Fasting is an important practice for intercessors to incorporate into their spiritual disciplines, and yet it is often one of the most overlooked or under-utilized weapons of warfare. The most common reason Christians fast in these days is to obtain a breakthrough – to add another dimension of power to their prayers. This is of course scriptural, but also regular fasting as a part of our spiritual disciplines is scriptural as well.

Fasting, like everything we do must be done unto the Lord (Col. 3:23). It is embraced out of a heart that longs for the Lord; undertaken from a heart that is desperate for more of God and more of His presence. It is a declaration that we want Him, even need Him, more than our daily bread (Luke 4:4).

Why Fast?

- 1. Fasting for Humility:** Fasting weakens the hold of the flesh in our lives and breaks the bondage of sin like no other discipline. Often as we fast we become more aware of areas of sin in our lives, of wrong attitudes or motives of the heart.
- 2. Subduing the Flesh:** The more we are disciplined in fasting, the less hold the flesh has over us. As we starve our flesh, our spirit is given room to grow and develop.
- 3. Fasting for Breakthrough:** Fasting is not a spiritual hunger strike to get God to move for us, rather it is humbling ourselves in an act of surrendered worship.
- 4. Fasting for Discipline:** Adding the discipline of fasting in our lives will help establish other disciplines in areas that we may be weak.

How to Fast:

Fasting might look different for everyone, with regards to regularity and type. The key is to ask the Lord and discern what types of fast He might be requiring you.

Food – You may want to start with one meal a week, and work yourself up to one full day a week or month. It may be a type of food (or drink) you need to break the hold of.

Media – Take a 24 hour media fast for your Sabbath each week.

There may be other types of fasts the Lord may lead you in. Meditate on Isaiah 58.

(Excerpts from Cityscape Mentoring Track by Sara Maynard)

About the Authors



Maureen has served as a pastor with the C&MA and a missionary with YWAM. She and her husband Gary have four grown daughters and two grandchildren. Maureen has a deep passion to see all believers walking in their full potential and calling of the Lord. She loves to train and equip believers in kingdom truths and see them set free in Christ through deliverance and inner healing.



Cheryl has a Master of Arts in Spiritual Formation (MASF) from Carey Theological College. She ministers as a Spiritual Director as well as leads Soul Care retreats. Her desire is to help others discover a deeper, richer, more satisfying relationship with God as they learn to listen and discern His voice and presence.

Cheryl and her husband Mark have been married 30 years and have raised 3 children.

Both Maureen and Cheryl have been involved in teaching, training and participating in intercessory prayer ministry both in the local church context as well as internationally.

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