



My Name is Intercessor

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Beginning thoughts...

MY FATHER was a disabled World War II veteran, a quiet, gentle giant of a man, who sacrificed much for his country and family. I loved him and would have done anything for him; I knew he loved me completely. Because of injuries suffered during the war, he was a stay-at-home dad long before that term became popular. However, that did not stop him from working from daylight to dark in the fields during gardening season. He also helped my grandfather with his used car business. As a young girl, I remember him returning from a car auction in Chicago with a gift for me. This was unusual as he wasn't a *gift-giving* person. That gift—a necklace with a tiny mustard seed in a little container—remained a very treasured possession for many years. At first, I didn't understand its significance; but he had me look up the Scripture it represented and told me the necklace was to remind me of the faith I needed to cultivate in the Lord.

Now, after many years, I still realize how precious this promise is. Jesus requires us to possess great faith in Him in order to intercede for others. Millions of people in this world never think of prayer or praying. Or, if they do, it's only a one-time quick fix. Think of times in their lives or in your own when you've felt the need to pray. What if you hadn't interceded? We must offer up prayers for our family, friends, church, country, and so many things. Pray not only for our generation, but also for future generations, God honors prayers when we have a heart of faith, devotion, sincerity, humbleness and obedience.

Intercessor needed help; her daughter needed help. Her one mission was getting Jesus to listen to her. His kindness and power met the challenge she presented Him. I love that Jesus prays for us. He knows our needs better than we do. Just as He prayed for those He loved on earth, for His enemies, for the Comforter to come, and for the Church, He prays for you. He sees your concerns; trust Him to intercede on your behalf. Be an intercessor for others. By faith believe in the power of prayer. Your prayers make a difference in your life and the lives of others. My dad knew I needed to believe and develop a strong faith. I am so thankful for his intercession for me.

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WHO SHE WAS

Key Verses: *"For a certain woman, whose young daughter had an unclean spirit, heard of him, and came and fell at his feet: The woman was a Greek, a Syrophenician by nation; and she besought him that he would cast forth the devil out of her daughter"* (Mark 7:25-26).

Key Thought: Intercession for others begins with a right relationship with Jesus Christ, acknowledging His power and position and making Him Lord of our lives.

- ❖ Write the key verse in your journal.
- ❖ Go over the questions and answers for p. 37, in *Treasure*.
- ❖ Intercessor recognized that Jesus was a Jew, and she, a Gentile. Was she going to let tradition keep her from interceding for her daughter?
- ❖ Do you have children?
- ❖ Can you picture the scene described in the Key Verse? Review the details given us in this verse. (1. A Greek woman; 2. She had a young daughter; 3. Daughter had an unclean spirit; 4. Woman had heard of Jesus; 6. She found Jesus and fell at His feet; 7. She begged Him to heal her daughter.)
- ❖ Was this a common occurrence wherever Jesus was? (*Yes, often people came to Him with requests.*)
- ❖ It's interesting that this woman had *heard* of Jesus and believed. (*John 12:47; Romans 10:14; Isaiah 55:3; Acts 4:4*)
- ❖ Isn't that how we come to know Him, also? When did you *hear* of Jesus?
- ❖ Could the key verse pertain to your life or the life of someone you know?
- ❖ Have you ever pled with Jesus for your child or children?
- ❖ Does Jesus give comfort even when the answer is not what we asked?
- ❖ Do you believe in the power of prayer?
- ❖ Whom does the Lord hear? (*Psalms 34:17*)
- ❖ What must we have alongside prayer? (*Faith-James 1:5-6; Hebrews 11:6; John 6:28-29.*)
- ❖ Why is it so hard for most people to pray? (*Some examples might be: 1. Not letting go of pride; 2. Takes time; 3. Lack of faith; 4. Allow circumstances to hinder; 5. Belief in self-sufficiency.*)
- ❖ Write the name for God: *Lord* in your journal.

Reflection: Dismiss in prayer by praying Psalm 111.

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WHAT SHE ASKED

Key Verse: “And, behold, a woman of Canaan came out of the same coasts, and cried unto him, saying, Have mercy on me, O Lord, thou son of David; my daughter is grievously vexed with a devil” (Matthew 15:22).

Key Thought: Intercession, coming to God on behalf of others, is both our responsibility and our privilege.

- ❖ Go over over the questions and answers on p. 39, in *Treasure*.
- ❖ Read Luke 11:2-4; Matthew 6:9-13; “The Lord’s Prayer.” Why did Jesus give us this in Scripture? (*For an example of how we are to pray.*)
- ❖ What else did he teach about prayer in this sermon? (*Not to be a hypocrite—Matthew 6:1-5; To pray in secret—Matthew 6: 6; Not to use repetition—Matthew 6:7.*)
- ❖ Why? (*Matthew 6:8*)
- ❖ Does God promise to answer prayer? (*Yes—Psalm 91:15; Isaiah 58:9; 65:24; Luke 11:9; Mark 11:24.*)
- ❖ Did Intercessor come to Jesus with the right intent and attitude?
- ❖ She had a specific request of Jesus. Do we, always, know what to pray for?
- ❖ Do we have an intercessor? (*Yes, Christ—Romans 8:34; Hebrews 7:25.*)
- ❖ What was her request? (*To get rid of the devil in her daughter—Mark 7:25-26.*)
- ❖ In modern terms, what could this have been? (*Epilepsy, mental illness, demon possession*)
- ❖ Do we see others in the Bible asking Jesus for specific things? (*Matthew 9:27-29; Mark 7:32-35, Luke 17:12-14*)
- ❖ Read of the perseverance of these men in Luke 5:18-20. What was their motivating factor? (*Faith*)
- ❖ In every incident, what does Christ honor? (*Sincere faith.*)
- ❖ How are we to come to Jesus? (*Humbly—2 Chronicles 7:14; In earnest—Mark 11:24; With faith—James 1:6; In obedience—I John 3:22; With righteousness—James-5:16; Whole-heartedly—Jeremiah 29:13.*)
- ❖ Write the name *Jehovah Rophe* for Christ, Almighty to heal.

Reflection: Dismiss in prayer. Thank God for your salvation and His healing touch.

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HOW SHE RESPONDED

Key Verse: *“But he answered her not a word. And his disciples came and besought him, saying, Send her away; for she crieth after us...Then came she and worshipped him, saying, Lord, help me” (Matthew 15: 23, 25).*

Key Thought: God honors worship and persistence in prayer.

- ❖ Work through p. 41 in *Treasure*, together.
- ❖ Did you note that *thankfulness* should be a result of your prayers?
- ❖ Does it mean that if we are thankful, all prayers will be answered? (*Not necessarily; but be thankful that all prayers will be answered one way or another. It may just not be as we would want.*)
- ❖ There are many instances in the Bible where intercessory prayer brings about change. Look at some of these: (*Prayer for Miriam–Numbers 12:13; Samuel’s prayer for Israel–1 Samuel 7:5,12; Hezekiah’s prayer for himself–Isaiah 38:1-6.*)
- ❖ Are Christians to be intercessors? For whom or what? (*Sinners–Isaiah 53:12; Weak believers–Luke 22:32; Enemies–Luke 23:34; Salvation–Hebrews 7:25; The Church–John 17:9.*)
- ❖ Do you believe that our persistence in prayer should mirror Intercessor’s? (*Ephesians 1:16*)
- ❖ Do you pray for yourself, family, friends, others? Does prayer change things? (*Job 42:10; James 5:16*)
- ❖ Why did the disciples want Jesus to send the woman away. (*She was being loud, making a scene and wouldn’t stop trying to get Jesus’ attention. He wasn’t prejudiced, but the disciples were. Jesus often had to teach them lessons. They were also impatient–Luke 9:54.*)
- ❖ Should Intercessor have gone away and not bothered Jesus anymore?
- ❖ Do we stop praying when we don’t get immediate answers?
- ❖ Look at some of God’s promises regarding prayer: Psalm 91:15; Isaiah 58:9; Luke 11:9; John 15:7.
- ❖ Just imagine how Intercessor reacted when Jesus told her that her daughter was whole again. (*I believe she had a “Hallelujah Party” right there in front of everyone.*)
- ❖ Do you find it hard to express your faith in public places? Why?
- ❖ Write in your journal this name for Christ: *The Bread of Life.*

Reflection: Dismiss in prayer and thank God for providing us with everlasting life.

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HOW JESUS RESPONDED

Key Verse: “Then Jesus answered and said unto her, O woman, great is thy faith: be it unto thee even as thou wilt. And her daughter was made whole from that very hour” (Matthew 15:28).

Key Thought: We should pray faithfully and in faith for the sick as well as for other concerns, knowing God hears and answers in ways far beyond our comprehension.

- ❖ Write the questions and answers on p. 43 in *Treasure*.
- ❖ Jesus gave Intercessor a delayed blessing. Have you ever received one?
- ❖ Did she see the results of her intercession immediately? (*No, she had to go back home—Mark 7:30.*)
- ❖ Do we always see the results of our intercession for others?
- ❖ If you could measure your faith, how much would you have?
- ❖ Read Matthew 17:20. What is the word picture here? (*tiny mustard seed*)
- ❖ Memorize Hebrews 11:1: “Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen.”
- ❖ What is Hebrews 11 known as? (*The Faith Chapter or Roll Call of the Heroes of Faith.*) Why are so many heroes of the faith listed? (*To give us examples and goals to live by.*) How did they all die? (*In faith—Hebrews 11:13.*)
- ❖ Can we have enough faith to go through life knowing that this world is not our home?
- ❖ Why does God expect us to be faithful in this life? (*Because He's faithful—Deuteronomy 7:9; 1 Corinthians 1:9; and because of Jesus—Revelation 1:5.*)
- ❖ What is Jesus called in Revelation 9:11? (*Faithful and True*)
- ❖ So then, does Jesus hear and respond to prayer? (*Yes—Hebrews 10:23; Matthew 21:21-22.*)
- ❖ What do these verses say will hinder our prayers? (*Doubt and unbelief*)
- ❖ What happened: to Peter when he tried to walk on water—*Matthew 14:29-31*; when the disciples were powerless to heal—*Matthew 17:14-17*; to the disciples in the storm—*Mark 4:35-40*; and to the two on the way to Emmaus—*Luke 24:25-32*?

*What is the bottom line when all is said and done concerning conditions for prayer? (*Jesus responds to faith.*)

*In your journal, write this name for Christ: *Faithful and True*.

Reflection: Dismiss in prayer asking God for more dedication and for Him to increase your faith.

Closing thoughts...

One of the worship songs we sing at church is “Mighty to Save.” I love the lyrics of this song but in particular the line that says, “He can move the mountains!” When I sing this song, I remember the necklace with the mustard seed and a faith that was instilled so long ago to believe that my God can do anything. He moves mountains so that I can be saved and live a victorious life. It’s not always easy and, yes, sometimes, I forget that promise because I’m human. But underneath my frailties is a mighty God who saves and conquers the grave. I pray future generations will know and experience the legacy of faith left behind by those of us who know where our strength comes from. Faith, as small as a mustard seed, is all it takes for Jesus to do mighty things in our lives. Intercessor found Jesus and because of that encounter, she and her daughter had a future they could spend together.