**Standing in The Gap**

Ezekiel 22:30 I sought for a man among them, who should build up the wall, and stand in the gap before me for the land, that I should not destroy it; but I found none.

Today we are going to talk about God’s call to standing in the gap or interceding on the behalf of others.

The word “intercede” is used to describe someone who acts as a go-between, pleading to God on behalf of those in difficult circumstances. So, If you think about it, Prayer is a way that we can release the power of God to help those around us.

We read in Galatians 6:2 that we are to “carry each other's burdens.” One way to do that is by lifting up others to God in prayer. When the circumstances of those around us become overwhelming, we can stand in the gap and intercede on their behalf, calling out to God for His help.

1 John 5:14-15 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.

So if the Bible promises that if we pray to God He will hear us and if we pray in His will He will give us what we ask then why wouldn’t we pray for others?

The enemy is always looking for gaps or weakness in our spiritual armor. These gaps may come in the form of pride, lust, guilt, doubt, anger, addiction or health. The enemy knows which triggers to pull to have the greatest impact and cause us to falter in our faith. The enemy won’t target areas where we're strong just our vulnerabilities.

So, when we intercede for one another, our chief purpose is to fill in those gaps in one another's spiritual armor and hold up that person so the enemy can't gain an advantage over them. Likewise, when we fail to intercede for one another, we're virtually giving them over to the enemy to wreak havoc, to steal that person's peace or joy or health.

Listen to this verse again Ezekiel 22:30 I sought for a man among them, who should build up the wall, and stand in the gap before me for the land, that I should not destroy it; but I found none.

This verse tells of a very sad time in Israel’s history. Jerusalem was in a horrible state and the Lord was searching for someone who would intercede (pray) on behalf of Jerusalem but He found no one willing to intercede for the nation and the city.

There are times when we are in sad shape, because of life’s circumstances, and all we need is for someone to pray for us. To hold us up and encourage us. We may not even be able or willing to pray on our own behalf because of our situation.

God calls Christians to pray on behalf of others. This kind of praying requires commitment. Most of the time this is not just a quick one-time prayer, but rather a request that is brought before the Lord over and over until the person being prayed for sees results.

We are also called to stand in the gap for those who have not yet found salvation in Christ. If you know someone who is lost, do not stop praying for them. Jesus told us 'No one can come to me unless the Father who sent me draws him, and I will raise him up in the last day' (John 6:44). Pray for the Lord to draw their hearts to Him.

If you are walking with Christ today, chances are that someone has stood in the gap for you already (Parents, Pastor, Friends.) Your prayer could be the one thing that brings salvation to someone who is lost.

**🡪God is still seeking those who will stand in the gap for others.**

Intercession is not just for people but also for our city and nation. God seeks intercessors that will pray for the nation, and for each other. The Apostle Paul urges us to praying for those in authority

### 1 Timothy 2:1-4 “ I urge, then, first of all, that petitions, prayers, intercession and thanksgiving be made for all people for kings and all those in authority, that we may live peaceful and quiet lives in all godliness and holiness. This is good, and pleases God our Savior, who wants all people to be saved and to come to a knowledge of the truth.”

We find examples in the bible of those that stood in the gap.

* Moses begged God not to destroy the Hebrews when they had worshipped the golden calf

### Psalm 106:23 Therefore he said he would destroy them— had not Moses, his chosen one, stood in the gap before him, to turn away his wrath from destroying them.

* Esther stood in the gap with prayer and fasting for her people, saving them from Haman who wanted them destroyed ([Esther 8](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Esther+8&version=ESV)).
* King Hezekiah, In 2 Chronicles 30:17, prayed for the Israelites that had broken God's law concerning the Passover. They ate the Passover while they were unclean because they had not cleansed themselves as the law required. In the past, many had died for less than this but Hezekiah prayed for them and the Lord heard him, then healed the people. In this scripture, the prayer of one man who was living right, made the difference between life and death, between judgement or a pardon from God, for the other people who were not.
* Abraham interceded with God in the case of Sodom and Gomorrah. The Lord agreed to spare the city if only ten righteous people were found in it, because Abraham asked Him (Genesis 18:23). Unfortunately, God couldn’t find 10 righteous people but it was Abraham that stopped at ten maybe God would have kept going as long as He had someone to intercede for them.
* In 2 Samuel 24 we find that the Lord was angry with Israel and struck them with a plague but David cried out and the lord stopped the plague
  + [2 Samuel 24:17](https://bible.knowing-jesus.com/2-Samuel/24/17) Then David spoke to the LORD when he saw the angel who was striking down the people, and said, "Behold, it is I who have sinned, and it is I who have done wrong; but these sheep, what have they done? Please let Your hand be against me and against my father's house."
* Jesus is the ultimate intercessor who stands before God on our behalf. He offered himself as the sacrifice for the sins of all humanity, making intercession between the Father and his creation. We now have the privilege of spreading the news of Jesus' intercessory work to call all people to Christ.
  + 2 Corinthians 5:19-20 God was reconciling the world to himself in Christ, not counting people’s sins against them. And he has committed to us the message of reconciliation. We are therefore Christ’s ambassadors, as though God were making his appeal through us. We implore you on Christ’s behalf: Be reconciled to God.

Clearly, God’s heart is moved to act when people cry out on behalf of others. In fact, this verse indicates that God is searching and waiting for people to stand in the gap so He may respond mercifully.

Ezekiel 22:30 I **sought** for a man among them…

When God created the earth and man there was no divide between God and man; however, after Adam and Eve disobeyed, sin created a gap between God and humanity, cutting all future generations off from God’s blessing. Fortunately, God Himself stood in the gap for us by sending His Son, Jesus, in human form, to live as a man, die for our sins, and rise from the dead so we could be restored into a personal relationship with Him.

Hebrews 7:24-25 but because Jesus lives forever, he has a permanent priesthood. Therefore, he is able to save completely those who come to God through him, because **he always lives to intercede for them**.

So, the bible tells us we should take on the character of Christ and act as he did so we should be willing to intercede for others.

You may ask why doesn’t God just help people? Why do we need to ask him? God will not force himself in your life! He wants to be invited in. Throughout the Bible we are told over and over that God waits for us to ask or “cry out” for his help

* Psalm 34:17 The righteous **cry out**, and the Lord hears them, he delivers them from all their troubles.
* 2 chronicles 20:9 “We will stand before your house and before you and **cry out** to you in our affliction, and you will hear and save”

**How can your intercession help?**

Charles Finney was an American preacher and leader in the Second Great Awakening in the United States back in the 19th century. Finney is called the "father of modern revivalism” and he paved the way for later mass-evangelists like Dwight L. Moody, Billy Sunday, and Billy Graham leading thousands to Christ. But behind Finney’s success was a man named Daniel Nash who served as Charles Finney’s intercessor. Very few knew about Daniel.

He was key to the revival that followed Finney’s ministry. Daniel Nash is an example of how important prayer is. Every time Finney would have a revival meeting scheduled, father Nash would slip quietly into town to engage in fervently prayer for God to move in the community.

Finney wrote “On one occasion when I got to town to start a revival a lady contacted me who ran a boarding house. She said, ‘Brother Finney, do you know a Father Nash? He and two other men have been at my boarding house for the last three days, but they haven’t eaten a bite of food. I opened the door and peeped in at them because I could hear them groaning, and I saw them down on their faces. They have been this way for three days, lying prostrate on the floor and groaning. I thought something awful must have happened to them. I was afraid to go in and I didn’t know what to do. Would you please come see about them?’ Finney responded “‘No, it isn’t necessary, they just have a spirit of prayer.'”

### Romans 8:26 Likewise the Spirit helps us in our weakness. For we do not know what to pray for as we ought, but the Spirit himself intercedes for us with groanings too deep for words.

### Have you ever wanted to pray for something so bad but you just couldn’t find the words? This is where the Spirit can intercede on our behalf.

### I heard a sang once that said: Never look down on someone unless you are helping them up!!!!

**So how can we pray for others**

### *Paul Prayed for the Colossians with this great prayer. See if you can catch the key points of what makes this prayer so good*

### *Colossians 1:9-12 since the day we heard about you, we have not stopped praying for you. We continually ask God to fill you with the knowledge of his will through all the wisdom and understanding that the Spirit gives, so that you may live a life worthy of the Lord and please him in every way: bearing fruit in every good work, growing in the knowledge of God, being strengthened with all power according to his glorious might so that you may have great endurance and patience, and giving joyful thanks to the Father, who has qualified you to share in the inheritance of his holy people in the kingdom of light.*

### *Or how about something simple* <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pZFTX5wR1k4>

### How often do you find yourself in fervent prayer for those around you? When someone ask for prayer do you take it seriously? If not why? Are you afraid your prayers won’t be heard or make a difference? Or maybe you think that the people asking for prayer don’t really need it. What if you knew your prayer was the difference in saving someone’s life, saving someone’s marriage, Leading someone to Christ? What would it take for you to pray?

### God is looking for people all the time to stand in the Gap. He may be bringing someone to mind right now. Is He calling you to intercede on someone’s behalf? It may only take just one prayer. It may take a life time of prayer but if it saves someone’s life from eternal damnation wouldn’t it be worth it?

### What if that someone was you? Would you want someone to pray?

### *Ephesians 6:18 Praying at all times in the Spirit, with all prayer and supplication. To that end keep alert with all perseverance, making supplication for all the saints.*

### *Remember Jesus is the ultimate intercessor who stands before God on our behalf and we are called to be imitators of Christ*

# *Philippians 2: 3 - 5 Do nothing out of selfish ambition or vain conceit. Rather, in humility* ***value others above yourselves****,****not looking to your own interests but each of you to the interests of the others****. In your relationships with one another,* ***have the same mindset as Christ Jesus***

### I was wondering if I could ask you to tack a few minutes and get together in groups of 2 or 3 and just ask how you can pray for each other and then spend a few minutes Praying. There is a peace you get when you know there are others praying for you!

### Highs and Lows: share a highlight of your week and something which has been difficult or disappointing then take turns to pray for each other, thanking God for the good thing and asking for help for the difficult.