

# Keys to Experiencing God

## Part 5—Intercessory Prayer

July 20, 2014

### Defining Intercession, Discovering the Intercessor

#### Deciding if we will join Him in His work

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#### Abraham's Cave

- **Defining Intercession, and Discovering the Intercessor — through a story of three caves**

#### Genesis 23:7-9, 20

- Abraham needs an Intercessor to help him buy a cave to bury his Beloved Bride
- To get this cave he must also buy the whole field
- This is the first and only property Abraham ever owns in the promised land
- This cave is the future home of his family — a special resting place awaiting the resurrection

#### John 8:51-53, 56-58

- Abraham was looking forward to Jesus' day, the resurrection life He would bring, and rejoiced when it came!

**Jesus tells the Jews that He is conquering death, and Abraham is rejoicing over that. Then a few chapters later, He demonstrates it at another cave.**

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#### Lazarus' Cave

#### John 11:20-21

- Lazarus had been dead and buried for several days
- Martha seeks an intercessor, wants Jesus to do something
- Jesus gives her a preview of what is coming
- He describes part of the larger role He plays in bringing eternal life

#### John 11:32-38

- Mary and the other Jews present are still looking for an intercessor, and are feeling Jesus was too late

#### John 11:39-44

- Jesus redefines intercession, and the power He has to bring an ultimate resolution to our eternal need

**Jesus paints a deeper picture of intercession, and begins to reveal Himself as The Intercessor**

**Old Testament pictures and definitions of Intercession: To represent someone like a lawyer, to have authority on their behalf, to hold a legal meeting, a meeting to complete a financial transaction, or even to meet in battle; it also means to bear a burden.**

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## **Jesus' Cave — Empty!**

**He is the Ultimate Intercessor**

**Luke 24:1-5**

- Jesus' cave is empty; he fulfilled what he spoke about Abraham, and demonstrated with Lazarus!

**Isaiah 53:6, 12**

- Made intercession for the transgressors
- He bears our burdens

**Colossians 2:13-15**

- He defeats our enemy

**Romans 8:31-35**

- We are not condemned because He is our representative.
- His cave is empty! He is risen! He is at the right hand of God, making intercession for us

**Hebrews 7:25**

- He now lives in a continual state of intercession on behalf of all who will come

**Jesus, by entering, and later leaving His cave, bore our burden of sin, defeated our enemy, and now and forever is representing us before the Father as the Ultimate Intercessor!**

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## **Decide — will we intercede?**

**I Timothy 2:1-6a**

- We are called to be intercessors — praying on behalf of all men, kings, and all who are in authority!
- Our prayers of intercession are made because we have the ultimate Intercessor

**Jesus gave Himself as a ransom for all. Remember Abraham and his cave? He bought a field to bury his treasured bride.**

**Matthew 13:44**

- "Again the kingdom of heaven is like treasure hidden in a field, which a man found and hid; and for joy over it he goes and sells all that he has and buys that field." (NKJV)
- Jesus bought a field for buried treasure — His Bride!
- He laid down His life — spent all He had to buy that field.
- He is no longer dead and buried, but alive forevermore!

## Luke 16:19-31

- Abraham and Lazarus are together in this story, with a rich man crying out in desperation for an intercessor
- When we choose to intercede on behalf of men to God, something is going to shift in us

James Hastings writes, “If there be no other result of our prayer, it will certainly have its effect in a changed attitude on our own part. No one can pray honestly for another without working for him, and so helping to answer his own prayer.”<sup>1</sup>

**No revival comes without our hearts breaking in desperation for lost souls, and that can't happen apart from spending time in intercessory prayer with The Intercessor!**

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### Our Role as Intercessors

**Going to God on behalf of sinners, and going to sinners on behalf of God.**

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### Discussion Questions

1. Why did Abraham feel it necessary, why did he want to, purchase a whole field for only one burial place?
2. In John 8:56 Jesus says that Abraham rejoiced to see His day. How was that possible?
3. At the tomb of Lazarus, Martha and Mary were both interceding with Jesus, asking him to answer their prayers in a certain way. Does our understanding that Jesus had bigger plans for Lazarus, affect the way we intercede with Him today?
4. Isaiah 53:6, 12 tells us that Jesus bears our burdens. What can we do to actually give our burdens to Him daily?
5. Colossians 2:15 tells us that Jesus has defeated our enemy. Do we really act like we believe — that if God is for us, who can be against us?
6. Why is it hard to pray on behalf of all men, kings, and all those who are in authority?
7. Jesus often retreated from the disciples and the crowds, to go away to a quiet place to pray with His Father. If even Jesus felt the need to pray, and to intercede for us, how much more should we do the same?
8. In Luke 16:19-31, the rich man in Hades cries in desperation for an intercessor to go to his five brothers, but it was too late. Is it too late for us today to intercede for the “brothers” who are still alive?
9. How has our own sincere intercession changed attitudes in our own lives?
10. There are two parts to being an Intercessor. One is to go to God on behalf of sinners. The second is to go to sinners on behalf of God — how is that intercession different?

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<sup>1</sup> James Hastings, *The Christian Doctrine of Prayer*, (London: Forgotten Books, 2013), 118-9