

Called to Intercede

By Onie Kittle

"A man had a fig tree, planted in his vineyard, and went to look for fruit on it, but did not find any. So he said to the man who took care of the vineyard, 'For three years now I've been coming to look for fruit on this fig tree and haven't found any.

Cut it down! Why should it use up the soil!' Sir, the man replied, 'leave it alone for one more year, and I'll dig around it and fertilize it. If it bears fruit next year, fine! If not, then cut it down.'" (Lk. 13:6-9)

Pam Olberg of At His Feet Ministries gives a wonderful illustration that I have not forgotten. She says that when she has procrastinated about watering her hanging plants the surface becomes crusty and cracks. When she waters them the water pours right through the cracks and out the bottom. So long as she keep them moderately moist and cultivates the surface, the soil will soak up the days fertilizer and get it to the roots.

This morning I took my letter opener and dug around the crusty soil of my window plants before feeding them as I prayed:. Lord I submit to the cultivating of Your Holy Spirit. Search me and see if there is anything in me that is not pleasing to You (Ps. 139). Allow the life-giving river from Your throne to pour through your Word as I read it that it may fertilize and cause deep roots to be produced. And O, Master Gardener, allow the abundant fruit to come forth . Do not allow me to retreat or withdraw and "only use up the soil." In Jesus' name and for the glory of God.

My Call to Intercession

In the '70 and '80's (Church Growth statisticians tell us) the Lord invaded the lives of many calling us to spend greater amounts of time in prayer.

As is the case, the greatest thing to happen for me was what happen to me. As I sought the heart of God; to be fully committed to Him, I was led to study about the priestly garments and submit myself to being reclothed in His righteousness. I longed to stand before Him in absolute integrity. I understood that I come into the throne room boldly by the blood of Jesus (Heb. 10:19). But, my response to His grace was the Christlike desire to say and do as did Jesus, "I have come to do your will" (Heb. 10:7).

For days I hungered and pressed in and longed to know the heart of God. The full time "call" that came from this time of seeking was to intercede for ministry leaders who would effect the kingdom of God. It has been my greatest joy to pray for pastors who are role models . . . leaders who mentor those who will mentor others.

It is an awesome privilege to be in the private/secret prayer closet and watch the Holy Spirit perform through them what you have been given to pray and then to hear the Father say, "Well done." Even when nobody knows. Especially when it is only known around the throne room. Joy Dawson always says, "The Intercessor is one who is the bridge over which others cross into notoriety."

This year I feel to add to my intercession, pastors who are just "using up the soil."

Church Growth statisticians tell us that over 70% of all pastors would leave their churches today but for two reasons:

1. They are not trained to do anything else.
2. They would bring shame to themselves and their families.

Many in ministry in the local church and the mission field abroad only want to be kept. They no longer bear fruit . . . or have never born fruit. Mainline denominations perpetuate the problem with no overseeing or accountability system. Usually happy with a warm body to fill a pulpit, they move them from church to church trying to find a "good match." Week after week pulpits are filled by uninspired, unprepared speakers who are just "using up soil."

Lord, I repent for my lack of prayer . . . for every critical remark I've ever spoken or agreed with and ask you to remove those curses and be set free from the bondage of my curses.

I pray, with thanksgiving, that they would be given a hand to "Come up here" to a new place of vision.

I release prayers of blessing and grace to them, their ministries and families. Pour out upon them favor that they do not deserve so that your kindness will lead to salvation.

I cry out for them to be renewed, refired, people who have been with Jesus (Acts 4:12).

Lord,
I pray for mercy. Father do not "cut them off" but give one more chance for Your will to be released onto the earth, even as You have already prepared it in heaven. I know that you have not energized me to pray in order to waste my time but because you plan to answer.

Lord, let them choose Spirit filled, Spirit fired Spirit empowered ministry.

I will not speak anything negative that I see but only what I know to be the will of God according to the Word of God. I will speak of the hope at hand and allow that hope to stir up faith and love. I will watch with believing faith to see you answer in ways far above what I've been able to ask or could imagine.

Lord, I also pray for those who are Spirit filled speakers and trainers and mentors. May they be willing to invest their time to see these dry bones live. I pray for hope to rise up in them for the awakening and renewal that you want to release through unlikely, barren ministers. Let them preach like Peter, encourage like Barnabus, challenge like Paul. As I lift the rod of Moses into the throne room, let the Joshuas go forth into victory. In Jesus' name and for you glory.

You did not choose me, but I chose you and appointed you to go and bear fruit--fruit that lasts.

Then the Father will give you whatever you ask in my name (Jn. 15:15-16).

"Proclaiming the wonders of our Lord"