

“We pray because God so loves the world” (John 3:16)

Intercessory prayer connects us to two things. One is God, the other is people.

When we pray, we grasp the Word of God and stand on His promises.

When we pray, we think about what God is like. We pray, remembering God’s love, mercy, righteousness and faithfulness.

We pray to God for people, for their lives and their works. We come to know that our prayer is the work of God, not the work of man. When we pray, we carry out the work of this great God, with our hearts united with His.

When we pray intercessory prayers, we are not only connected with God, but with people.

When we pray for people, we must think how we can pray for them, we must understand their situation. We pray for them, as we picture their situation in our mind. We imagine what they are feeling.

In our prayer, our love for them will grow. We pray for the salvation of our family and friends. Through our prayers, our love for them will grow greater, and that will encourage us to pray even more for them.

And we also pray for Christians in other countries, and our love for them will spread out through prayers.

Today, we prayed for 11 countries. Through prayers, we are connected with them. In the same way, there are people who are praying for us. They are also connected with us through prayers.

Intercessory prayers connect Christians all over the world together, although we haven’t met one another. That way, the body of Christ will be strengthened.

When we intercede, we pray not only for people, but also for the cities and countries.

“Seek the peace and prosperity of the city to which I have carried you into exile. Pray to the Lord for it, because if it prospers, you too will prosper” (Jeremiah 29:7).

Israel was seized by Babylon and carried into exile. There God spoke to Israel, and told them to pray for the prosperity of Babylon. They were told to pray

for the prosperity of not Israel, but Babylon which destroyed Israel and made them captives.

God told Jonah, "Go to Nineveh and preach my Word." But Jonah didn't want to do that.

Nineveh was the capital of Assyria. The Assyrians tortured their captives. They were heartless conquests. Jonah hated them and wanted God to destroy them.¹

But God said, "You are so concerned for that plant even though you did nothing to make it grow. It appeared one day, and the next day it died. Then shouldn't I show concern for the great city Nineveh, which has more than one hundred twenty thousand people who do not know right from wrong, and many animals, too?" (Jonah 4:10-11 NCV)

God's love, His heart is so great. To know it shows me how selfish my prayer is.

"For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son" (John 3:16).

Prayer connects us to this God who is love. In prayer, we will be reminded who God is. God's love, mercy, righteousness and faithfulness will lead our prayers.

When we intercede for people, we will think of their situation. The more we know about their situation, the more we will come to know how small and powerless we are. That leads us to pray more.

Prayer connects us to this great God. And we come to know that prayer is the work of God, not the work of man. When we pray, we carry out the work of this great God, and our hearts are united with His. Our life synchronizes with God's heartbeat.

We prayed and will continue to pray because God so loves the world.

¹ *Children's Ministry Resource Bible*, Nelson, 1993, p.1063