

W_18_Intercession.mp3

[00:00:02] There's no doubt at the moment that we have this treasure in earthen vessels. But the wonder of it is that God uses any vessels, whether they're made of earth or gold or silver. They are all used by him, but without him they would be empty. I was thinking this afternoon. That if anybody had got up and walked out after the first part of the meeting, they would have said, oh, they are putting a man on a pedestal. They go back 53 years and tell you how he started and all the things he did and what a wonderful person he was. I don't think much of that chapel. But if they'd stopped and they heard what Christ meant to us. Then they would have got truth in the balance, wouldn't they? And our brother didn't read from the epistle to the Colossians that Christ is all. Yes. Didn't he? No. He said, Christ is all in all. He didn't say Christ was the head. He said Christ was the head of the body. Don't you see? Or another example of the same spirit. How should they believe on him, of whom they're not heard? Well, how should they hear without a preacher? Well, can't God speak? Don't you see? God in his infinite love and mercy and marvelous purpose. Is never divorcing himself from us. Poor little human elements. And so we got balance. Truth. How I'm standing here this evening after a long interval, and I don't know how long I'm going to last.

[00:02:03] So either this evening or afterwards. But it's a great joy to be back again. At this time. And what are the things that I learned? While I was stretched out in bed, I was told I mustn't move. I couldn't get up. Everything had to be done for me. And I thought, well, at least I can pray. And many a time I got so far as saying, Father, that about all I could say. That's where I finished. And at last I said to myself, Well, what more can I say? If I have the right in Christ to look up to God and call him Father. I've said everything that prayer can possibly be. That's our relationship. I am his child. He is my father in Christ. And I can go on to the end of time attempting to exhaust the meaning of that. But there never be a die, as it were, a divorce between that relationship. Well, now I want to put on record this tape is being recorded, I believe, this evening. I want to put on record the indebtedness of all in connection with this work to those brethren and sisters who, during the interval, while I've been away, I've been away practically six months from this work. Have stepped into the breach and have not really just done the best they could. And you thought, oh, goodness me. But you've been realizing that there has been fulfilled in our very midst.

[00:03:48] That the truth which God has entrusted to us has been passed on to faithful men who have been able to teach others also. I wonder how many churches in London, with their minister suddenly taken away for six months, would have had a complete supply from their own congregation and carry it on as they have? I thought that it was due to the Lord who has enabled and to those who have so willingly filled the gap that that should be put on record. So I won't say all your names, but you will be remembered friends not only in this country, but in the United States, in Canada, in the Antipodes, Australia, New Zealand and nearly every part of the English speaking world. Thou know what a splendid congregation and wonderful testimony we can give to that side of the story. Whenever we read in our lesson. John 17 And it's largely connected with the question of intercession that I want to occupy your attention because that is the thing that I valued and learned most when I was in hospital. Also, what if I can't even get my mind around to pray? I'm having at every turn. He has one come today. United States. Is coming in as I thought the Beckenham hospital would be known all over the world soon. All these folks. Entering into that very gracious ministry, the Ministry of Intercession. Well, now the word intercede is from the Latin origin.

[00:05:47] It's rather a dignified word. But it simply means to go between a go between. Well, that's rather ordinary. Everyday speech intervenes between to intervene or something which is international between and sees like recede go back and intercede needs to go between. So the Ministry of Intercession is a ministry that steps in between. Now, you may remember that job right back in the early days expressed that feeling that is in the heart of us all. That is also expressed by the apostle Paul when he said the one great testimony that belonged to this peculiar witness that he had was the same thing. Shall we turn just to refresh our memories to the Book of Job? And if any, have any difficulty in finding it, It's just immediately before the book of the Psalms and in the ninth chapter, the job makes this statement. And I think most of all could echo it. The ninth chapter, verse 32. For he is not a man as I am, that I should answer him. And we should come together in judgment. Neither is there any days, man or umpire between us that might lay his hand upon us both. Now. Now, enduring glory could step in there. An angel couldn't represent a man fully and an angel couldn't represent God fully. But there is one. Did. And the word was made flesh and dwelt among us. And his name is Emmanuel. God. With us.

[00:08:07] The mystery of his being is beyond us. The facts are on the very surface of the scriptures. Now, if you turn now to the first of Timothy, you'll see how this is used by the apostle Paul, the first of Timothy and the second chapter. I'm going to read the first few verses. I exhort, therefore that first of all, supplications prayers, intercessions and giving of thanks be made for all men. The kings were all the authority that we may lead a quiet and peaceable life in all godliness and honesty. So this is good and acceptable in the sight of God, our savior. Who will have all men to be saved and come unto the knowledge of the truth. For there is one God. And one mediator between God and men. The man. Christ. Jesus. Who gave himself a ransom for all, not needing to be testified in due times, but a testimony in its own peculiar season. And one thing we must never forget, with all our emphasis upon right division and dispensational truth. But without the one mediator. It's just so many empty words. As I said just before, he is the head, but he's the head of the body. Each church has given the name the fullness of him. That said it all. You know what a title. So we're going to look at this mediation. Now, none of us can be a mediator. None of us can fulfill the prayer of Joe that we can lay our hand upon both God and man and fully represent them.

[00:10:20] But we're not shut out from this great mediation in our small measure for this chapter, says Intercessions. And the mediator is an intercessor. Is an intercessor. One that stands between. So you see in our small degree. We can be the ultimate small measure. Although Christ alone is the one mediator. Now, the thing that I would like to bring before us is the way in which this intercession is distributed in the Scriptures. Would you notice, first of all, that we go to the very right hand of God? Romans The eighth chapter. Romans the eighth chapter. This is summing up the glorious teaching of this chapter. In verse 31, the apostle says, What shall we then say to these things? If God be for us, who can be against us? Many may be against us, but it will be ineffectual and will only last for a lifetime if it lasts as long as then. But there's all eternity afterwards who can effectively be against us. He that spared not his own son. But delivered him up for us all. How shall he not with him? Also freely Give us all things. Who shall lay anything to the charge of God's elect? It is called the justify, or it might be a question. God justified. Will he? Who is he? That Condemneth. It is Christ that died. Or will Christ who died? Yea, rather.

[00:12:30] That is risen again. We even at the right hand of God. There is the climax. Who also maketh intercession for us. So you go step by step by step till you get the

right hand of God. And the last word he says there before he gets to the glorious conclusion, who shall separate us? He makes intercession for us. So there's a mediator on our behalf. And there's no night there. Day and night. We never forgotten. Of course, we don't always feel like that. Media time as we feel down and out. That he has said, I will never leave thee nor forsake thee. And I've said in meetings before, but I might repeat it here. That in the English language it is not proper. To multiply your negatives. If a person tells you he don't know nothing, you agree with it. But in the Greek language, they have such a variety of words that they can pile it up together. And there are actually five negatives in that verse. I don't know how to put it in English. I will never leave thee nor forsake thee. And Amanda wrote to him whether he had the five in mind or whether it was merely the beat of the rhythm, he said. The soul that on Jesus hath lean for repose. I will not I cannot desert to his foes. That that soul, though all hell should endeavor to shake. I'll never. No, never, No, never forsake.

[00:14:29] Now I'm speaking from one as one that's well, I am up now, but I don't feel that I'm up very far. And I hope that by the grace of God, however weak I may feel, I may remember that when I am weak, then am I strong? For he hath said, I will never leave thee nor forsake thee. Now, with regard to these this question of the intercession of Christ, not only do we have the intercession in Romans, but we have the intercession of Christ in Hebrews. And I would like you to remember that although we wouldn't be right to exclude holiness from Romans or exclude righteousness from Hebrews, yet the general atmosphere of Romans is law and righteousness. And the general atmosphere of Hebrews is a temple and holiness. But whether it be Romans or whether it be Hebrews, whether it be justification or whether it be sanctification, we have Christ making intercession for us. So if it's a glorious thought to dwell on the passage in Romans eight as it is, it will be equally a glorious thought to dwell on the passage that comes in Hebrews. I think it is Chapter seven. Hebrews. Chapter seven. The whole chapter ought to be read. We shall not have time to do it now. But the whole chapter is contrasting the Melchizedek priesthood with the priesthood of Aaron. Melchizedek comes into the page of Scripture and goes out. We don't know his parentage. He had no beginning of days nor end of life.

[00:16:34] That doesn't mean to say that he had no beginning or was not born. But nobody knows his ancestry. He was made like unto the Son of God. But the Aaronic priesthood. The priest of Aaron. As soon as that man was ordained to the priesthood,

his successor was appointed. And you see, even today in this ministry, I'm not only the principal, but we have another one. Our brother, Stuart Allen, who is so efficiently fills the bill. I wonder whether I dare tell you what I said to him. If you don't like it, we'll forget it. I said, You know, when they abbreviate our titles, they call me the Prince and you the aspirin. It's just you forget that, you see? But that's what ought not to have said. But it may mean that I'm. I'm getting better, you see? Or worse. I don't know. Well, now, seriously, back to Hebrews seven. It says in verse 23 about these priests in the Old Testament times. And they truly were many priests because they were not suffered to continue by reason of death. But this man, he is the contrast. But this man because he continue it ever. This word is going to occur again in a moment in Hebrews. It's one of the strongest words in the Greek language for eternity. It's not really the word usually translated forever. Eyesto Diabetes. Literally translated, is unto perpetuity. And to perpetuity. No possible ending.

[00:18:28] This man because he continues ever hath an unchangeable no an in transmissible. It isn't the priest who won't change it or something else. It's the priest who will never be passed on to anybody else. Christ has no successor. Is that a blessed truth? Wherefore he is able also to save them. To the uttermost. You see, it is not salvation in the initial sense. Those to whom he speaking were saved people. They were partakers of their heavenly calling. But they were saved from the uttermost by his sacrificial death. And they are saved to the uttermost by the fact that he who died for them lives for them. And the word uttermost contains within itself one of the key words of Hebrews, which is perfect. If you go through Hebrews, you'll find perfection perfecting perfect all the way through. And this Pantelis, the word uttermost is unto all perfection. I'll give you another passage that bears on this in a moment. But how is this brought about? Wherefore he is able also to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by him. Why? Seeing he ever live in. He lives in resurrection power. He sits at the right hand of God. He occupies the place where the accuser would stand in a local. The ever living. And what is he there to do? To make intercession. 40. Makes intercession. Now, if you turn to the 10th chapter. You will appreciate that. This brings us to the end of a section because it starts with the words verse 12 that this man.

[00:20:35] You see the apostle writing by inspiration of God didn't forget that he said this man. Now he comes back to this man, rounds it off. He says, verse 12, in contrast to the priests in verse 11, that stands daily. Ministering and offering oftentimes the same

sacrifices which can never take away sins is on a little different ground now. When he first of all said, but this man, it was in contrast to priests that died. Now, he says, but this man is in contrast to priests that never sat down in connection with their work. I think I've told you before that once I was caught out by a child in a little meeting, I was describing something about the furniture in the tabernacle. I said there was no seat. I asked for it, didn't I? Little matches. There was. There was a mercy seat. Yes, but no priest ever sat on it. It was all right. No accommodation was made because it was to symbolise the fact that their work was going over and over and over again and its only value was its type and its shadow. But the real was Christ. So we back now to this man, verse 12. But this man, after he had offered many sacrifices, one sacrifice for sins. And she forever sat down at the right hand of God from henceforth expecting till his enemies be made his footstool.

[00:22:24] So on that throne is ever living to make intercession for us and is continually expecting the end when all enemies shall be under his feet and the last enemy to be destroyed is death. And the son should deliver up the father to the Father a perfected kingdom that God at long last, may be all in all. That's where we're getting. But we haven't got it quite here. But this man, after he had offered one sacrifice for sins forever, sat down on the right hand of God from henceforth expecting till his enemies be made his footstool. Here it comes. For by one offering he had perfected unto perpetuity. That's the same word that we had in Chapter seven. To perpetuity. Perfected forever them that are sanctified, set apart, redeemed, atoned for by that one offering. So I think you'll see that while we say we must back to the cross, we mustn't forget the Ascended Christ and the seated Christ at the right hand. So that makes a completion of his work. Well, now, I don't want to occupy too much time, both for your sakes, and particularly my own. Because I discover that even if I move a bit rapidly and partly dressing myself, my heart does a little war dance and I have to sit down and stop. So I'm coming back again to Romans the eighth chapter because there's another reference to intercession in that chapter.

[00:24:16] You say, But surely if Christ at the right hand of God ever lives to make intercession for us, we need no more. Well, we may think so, but he doesn't. He's provided another one down here. As runners up there. So will you notice? In verse 26. Likewise, the spirit also helpeth our infirmities. This is not to do with our sins. They are set settled by Christ. But our infirmities. All. We got plenty, haven't we? Of course we

can't see them ourselves. But the other folks who live with us, they know all about it. As I said to me once or twice, I said if I wasn't naturally sweet tempered and I don't get much further than that, You see, here is likewise the spirit also helpeth our infirmities. Who we know, not what we should pray for, as we ought. I thought to myself, Here, the nurse says, You mustn't move. You've got to stop here. 24 hours of it. And I tried to pray and all I could get out was father. He says here we don't know how to pray for as we ought. But I wasn't left without an intercessor. No. But it says here. But the spirit itself maketh intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered. And he that searches the hearts knoweth what is the mind of the spirit? Because he maketh intercession. For the Saints according to the will of God. Now, you see, that's where some of us break down.

[00:26:16] We pray. A We may not always be praying according to the will of God. We may ask and not receive. For God cannot answer all our prayers with yes. Otherwise it would be chaos, wouldn't it? So we have now a paraclete here and you know, there's a paraclete there. The word paraclete is used particularly for a title of the Holy Spirit. But the first epistle of John chapter two says, If any man sin, we have an advocate with the father. That's the word paraclete. And the word para means alongside of and carry out means to call. It means someone who is always near at hand. If I'm in trouble. But it doesn't tell you what to do all the time. He waits for you to ask and about you ask. You'll come to your aid. Because you see, if you never let a person start trying to walk, if you always that it will char from 40 down bump, it'll never walk at all. That they never let you go too far. And the moment that need is there is always a call. But it does say that even though we don't know what to pray for as we ought, there's one thing we do know. We know that all things work together for good. To them that love God. Now, all things could include those things which are evil as well as those that are good. But God is on the throne.

[00:27:58] And how he does it, we don't know. So sometimes the very best thing we can do is to just leave it with God and not tell him everything he ought to do. In the Old Testament. Where my heart is overwhelmed. He said, Lead me to the rock that is higher than I. And in that same context, he says, I will cry. Cry. Now there is no grammar, no verbs and adverbs and prepositions and whatnot. The word cry. But a mother who is a mother, indeed, she interprets that cry. Now that's prayer. I suppose you have read in a book. About the finest prayer that was ever offered. To a New York congregation. It's an

awful thing to have to say, isn't it? Offered to a congregation. But our prayers. Our true. They may be brief. God is in heaven. Now what on earth that top words be few. We know not what to pray for as we ought, but the spirit that knows the will of God. He makes intercession for us. Without. That's the Christ at the right hand of God. That's the spirit representing him down here. And the passage we just glimpsed at in one Timothy Chapter two is that we too have this Ministry of Intercession. And that's the thought that comforted me so much when I was in hospital. For nearly every post I was getting this. From the ends of the earth. All remembering me. All remembering me before the throne of grace.

[00:30:07] The intercession of God's people. Was being exemplified the. And I want now to turn to a passage which I think we ought to include because of its context. Two Corinthians chapter. I think it's chapter two, but we'll soon find out. Maybe one. Chapter one. Yes. Chapter one. In my notes, I've left out the chapter that I find that my memory is like a sieve just now and many a time I'm just stuck because I've put something away so carefully that I shouldn't lose it, that we're still looking for it. But that's my infirmity. You see a game coming up. So one the two Corinthians chapter one and the apostle is speaking about the ordeal through which he has passed. But it leads on to a reference to the question of intercession. Well, two Corinthians chapter one, verse eight, for we would not brethren have you ignorant of our trouble which came to us in Asia. That we were pressed out of measure. Well, the apostle was not one to exaggerate. In fact, writing to these very Corinthians. Offering, given them a list and that to swarm anywhere and ten times over. Beaten and flogged and starving and shipwrecked and whatnot. The filth of the world. A scouring, of all things. He said this light affliction. This light affliction, which is but for a moment worketh for us a far more exceeding eternal weight of glory while we look not at things which are seen, but things which are not seen.

[00:32:19] Of course, if you got your eye on the afflictions, well, they look vast. But if you can look away to where Christ sits at the right hand of God, they are getting through perspective. So he says, I was pressed out of measure. About strength. Insomuch that we despaired even of life. So this man who didn't exaggerate. He was in a fix, wasn't he? You can feel that. But we had the sentence of death in ourselves. What for? That we should not trust in ourselves. But in God. Which raises the dead. And it's the God that raises the dead, which is the peculiar character of the God we believe. The first occurrence of that term takes you right back to the days of Abraham. Who though he

and his wife were past the age of having a child by nature. Both, as it were, dead so far. Before whom he believed God who quickeneth to death. That was the faith of Abraham. And that is our faith. One beyond all human gauges or measurements. So it says here. God quickly raises the dead who delivered us? This is in the past. From so great a death and doth deliver us that in the present is going on. In whom we trust that he will yet deliver us. For our idea has a threefold title. Jesus Christ the same yesterday. He did deliver us. Today.

[00:34:15] He a divorce? Hence to come. He will deliver us. But now if I stop there, that would be wonderful enough. But the next verse you say here. Wait. You also helping together by prayer? For. What a context to put your prayer in mind. He is a man who has got the sentence of death in himself. He is pressed out of measure beyond strength. The only trust that he can have that's effective is to trust in a God that raises the dead. And after he said that, he says you also helping together by prayer. For us. So I felt that although I wouldn't be able perhaps to dive very deeply and exhibit all sorts of problems and so on, that this very emphasis upon something which is very precious to us all might be accepted as a word in season. In your actual leisure. You might like to look up 1 or 2 passages in the Old Testament that give you some samples. I won't turn to the passages because you know your Bible enough to know that. In the Book of Numbers. When. Joshua. Was being attacked. Moses went up onto a mountain. And while his hands were lifted up. Joshua down in the valley triumphed, but with his hands dropped through weariness. The enemy triumphed. And so there were two air on one side, her on the other. That held his hands up. Now, we can't hold up our ends in the sense that Christ does and he doesn't get weary.

[00:36:16] But there is that fellowship between us that he intercedes. And we in our small little measure, we also can intercede for one another. And then also, we have that wonderful moment when Abraham comes into the presence of God in the book of Genesis, because God has revealed that Sodom is to be destroyed. And Lot and his family. Abraham's nephew is in Sodom. So he goes into the presence of God with a certain amount of diffidence. He says, I wonder whether I could ask you, would you destroy Sodom if there were 50 there? Now, said the Lord, If there are 50 righteous, there are sparing. My time is now. I don't like the press at this point. I'm standing in the presence of the living God. I'm only dust and ashes. Supposing there were only 45. Supposing. Supposing there were only 40. 35. Oh, my. I believe if ever God's heart

rejoiced, it was to see that man we call this friend standing there like that. And he got down to a certain number. He thought, Well, I can't go any more. That's the God to whom we pray. And then we have other passages which you can find, like Aaron stepping in with his incense between the living and the dead and so on. There's one more further thing that I think I'll leave with you before I sit down. John 17. Gets an session. But there's one expression in John 17 that is never recorded of anyone else in the whole wide world.

[00:38:08] You've often heard people pray, haven't you? Have you ever heard anyone stand up in the presence of the living God and say, Father, I will. I hope you hadn't. Now one of us have the right to say that. But when the Son of God was in communion with his father, he could say, Father, I will. That puts him apart from all the rest of us. And surely this condescension, he has become our head. Our savior and he invites us to share with him this Ministry of Intercession. Now, I'm sure. You would not like me to go on and overdo it. Because I've got all sorts of complaints. I hardly know their names, but I know what they feel like and I didn't want to spoil. But I'm also grateful to think that at long last, I'm able to come back and look you all in the face and stand up because I was with Why don't you sit down and speak to them? I could no longer sit down there and talk. I've got to be up here and. I believe that you will agree with me both this afternoon and I hope this evening. It has been well worth the time spent in coming together in thinking of our risen, glorified seated saviour and thinking of the relationship established between him and us for earthen vessels that nevertheless he stoops to you.