The Characteristics Of Effective Prayer
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Lisa Butler
“The prayer of a person living right with God is something powerful to be reckoned with.”
   James 5:16

The Message
“Lord teach us to pray”
Luke 11:1
Dedication

Lovingly to my family, who willingly gave up their mother and wife for one summer to work on this project: Duane, my husband, best friend and greatest encourager, and our children, Derek, Brent, and Bethany.

To my mentors in prayer:
My mom, Pastor Doris Clutter,
Pastor Sharon Johnson,
And Elianna Almeida,
May your wisdom be imparted to others.

To my Dad, Robert Clutter,
Who sat by my bed and listened to my prayers.

To the Prayer Team of the World Lighthouse Worship Center,
Your faithfulness to pray inspires me daily.

To my Lord,
The true author of The Characteristics of Effective Prayer,
By your grace and for Your glory.
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Introduction
The ministry of intercession, and prayer in general, seems to have taken on a mystical quality in the church. Religious tradition has given us a picture of prayer that seems unattainable. Like the medieval paintings that portray kneeling saints with grave faces and cherubs floating above their glowing halos, our picture of prayer is often misguided. Effective prayer is not about marathon sessions of speaking in lofty King James English. Nor should your prayer life consist of just praying over your meals and “I lay me down to sleep”.

What is effective prayer? What does it mean to be an intercessor? How do I know if I am one?

In the next few pages we will answer these and other questions regarding prayer and intercession. We will peer behind the religious mask of prayer and equip you with the tools you need to become an effective intercessor. Come join us as we explore the powerful ministry of prayer.
Frequently Asked Questions
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What is prayer?

Prayer is simply communication with God. There is no formula to follow; it is simply talking with God. You can speak to Him out loud or silently in your thoughts. You can pray in English, or your native language, or you can pray in tongues, your spiritual language. You can talk to God for a long time or a short period of time. God is timeless. He is not bound to time like we are. God created us to have relationship with Him. We experience our relationship with Him in prayer.

What is intercession?

Intercession is simply praying on behalf of another. Intercession is a selfless act. You are not praying for your own needs to be met, but praying for the needs of another. According to Hebrews 7:25, Jesus always lives to make intercession for us. He is our Great High Priest continually going before the Father on our behalf.

All intercession is prayer, but not all prayer is intercession.

What is an intercessor?

An intercessor is someone who prays on behalf of another.
He saw that there was no man and wondered that there was no intercessor. Isaiah 59:16

“So I sought for a man among them who would make a wall, and stand in the gap before Me on behalf of the land, that I should not destroy it; but I found no one.” Ezekiel 22:30

God is looking for an intercessor, someone who will stand in the gap between God and man. Jesus is the ultimate intercessor and the example we follow.

Who is called to prayer and intercession?

All of us are called to prayer and intercession. God created us for relationship. Relationship is built through times of fellowship and communication. Prayer and time spent reading the Word of God builds our relationship with God.

As new believers, our prayer lives are often self-centered. We are just beginning to trust God with our needs and we are discovering His faithfulness. As “infants and children” in the Lord, it is all about me! However, as we mature and grow we discover that prayer is not just about getting my needs met, but that I can be a mediator, or an intercessor, and see others’ needs met.

Why do we need to pray?

Relationship requires communication. Prayer is simply our mode of communication with God. Our relationship deepens as we spend time in prayer. God also needs us to pray His will and purposes into the earth. We are the Body of Christ, operating with the leading of the Holy Spirit, in the earth. When we pray
according to His Word, we are proclaiming His will in the earth.

What are the characteristics of an effective intercessor?

According to the New Webster’s Dictionary, a characteristic is “that which distinguishes a person or thing from another; an essential feature; nature; the total of qualities making up an individuality; moral excellence.”

Being an effective intercessor encompasses more than knowing just the right words to say when you pray. Our effectiveness in prayer is not only related to how we pray the principles of God’s Word, but how we live them. In order to pray effectively we must live right before God. The characteristics of an effective intercessor include praying and living according to God’s Word and displaying the character of Christ.