

# THE CONVERSATION

Let's talk about "The Conversation" between us and the Lord. Call it prayer, devotions or quiet time (not my favorite terms). I'm partial to the term, "Conversation" since it depicts a back-and-forth, an exchange, an interchange between heaven and earth. I think praying is more of a dialogue than we probably know. It's not just us talking and him listening. When we pray, something is coming from him, and then there's something going back up to him from us. Then he sometimes sends something back to us in the form of a response to our prayer. What we have with God is a relationship, a fellowship with him that makes "The Conversation" possible.

In Foundations 101 we learned that prayer is at least three things: Fellowship, Worship, and a Partnership. In this part of 201 we'll take a closer look at the latter aspect of prayer – the partnership part. One of the Bible's terms for it is, "*Intercession.*"

Ephesians 6:18 says, "*Pray in the Spirit on all occasions with all kinds of prayers...*" So, there are many "*kinds of prayer.*" There's prayer that confesses, prayer which praises, prayer which communes, prayer that makes requests, prayer that fights with the devil, and prayer which intercedes of behalf of others. It's the kind of prayer where we're praying for other people to which we're devoting this brief study. We'll talk about the **purpose** of this kind of prayer, the **problem** that it addresses, the kind of **partnership** that it entails, the **persistence** it requires, the **power** that it releases, and the **prize** that it wins.

Think of it this way...

God's will is like a great River (that's the **purpose**) which is impeded by many evil obstacles (that's the **problem**) which are moved by intercession (there's the **partnership**); that kind of prayer requires a tenacity unto its intended goal (that's the **persistence**); which releases the resources of God (that's the **power**); and gets the River of his kingdom flowing in its eternally ordained direction (there you have the **prize**)!

Said another way...

**Intercession begins with a purpose, addresses a problem, expresses itself in a partnership, requires a persistence, releases a power, and receives a prize!**

Let's unpack that sentence piece by piece.

## Intercession begins with a **purpose**...

The Bible's pretty clear about God having purposes, things he's got in his mind to do.

- *Isaiah 46: 10 I make known the end from the beginning, from ancient times, what is still to come. I say: My purpose will stand, and I will do all that I please.*
- *Isa. 55:11 so is my word that goes out from my mouth: It will not return to me empty, but will accomplish what I desire and achieve the purpose for which I sent it.*
- *Luke 7:30 But the Pharisees and experts in the law rejected God's purpose for themselves*
- *Acts 13:36 "For when David had served God's purpose in his own generation, he fell asleep; he was buried with his fathers ...*
- *Eph. 1:11 In him we were also chosen, having been predestined according to the plan of him who works out everything in conformity with the purpose of his will,*
- *Eph. 3:11 according to his eternal purpose which he accomplished in Christ Jesus our Lord.*
- *Rev. 17:17 For God has put it into their hearts to accomplish his purpose ...*
- *1 Tim.2:3-4 This is good, and pleases God our Savior, who wants all men to be saved and to come to a knowledge of the truth.*

God doesn't seem to just be experimenting. He's acting, he's got a purpose, a will. He's not just rolling with the punches; he's got a plan, and he's going somewhere with it. He's pro-active, not merely re-active.

There are certain things which are his will in the earth, and other things which are not. Some things please him and some things don't. He calls certain things, "bad," and other things he thinks of as "good." For instance, he doesn't want people to go to hell. On the other hand, he does want everyone to know him on earth and then live with him in heaven. He doesn't like it when people destroy themselves by breaking his laws. But he does like it when we live in such a way as to bring glory to him and good of others. He hates it when we hurt one another, but loves it when we help each other, forgive each other, serve and love each other... You get the point. God has purposes.

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begins with a **purpose**,  
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The kind of prayer in which we partner with God to further those purposes is usually called, *“Intercession.”* It’s one of the ways we get involved in the things in which God is involved. When we pray, we’re not trying to *change* God’s mind, we’re trying to *discern* his mind and pray it back to him. I like to say that when we intercede, *we’re asking God for things he’s asking us to ask him!* I think it was Reese Howells that said, *“True prayer begins in the heart of God, is communicated to the hearts of praying people, they pray it back to God, God answers, and then they praise him!”* Can you see the back-and-forth of it?

Jesus told Peter, *“On this rock I will build my church, and the gates of Hades will not overcome it. I will give you the keys of the kingdom of heaven; whatever you bind on earth will be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth will be loosed in heaven.”*  
*Matthew 16:18-19*

In essence he’s saying that he’s got an agenda (a purpose); and to advance that agenda he needs cooperative agents. With this agenda there are doors he wants to open and others he wants locked. He has purposes he wants to be “loosed,” and others he wants “bound.” He gives out “keys” to his agents to use for opening some doors and locking others. One of the “key keys” is intercession. This kind of praying prevents hell’s purposes and releases God’s purposes of on earth. We’re responsible to use this intercession key.

I currently carry six keys. One for my car, another for my bicycle lock, one for my house, my office, the church facility, and my friends’ house (they gave it to me for whenever I’m in town). Some of these are rather worn, and others I’ve only used a couple of times. The ones less used still kind of stick when I use them. They’re not very well broken in. How “sticky” is the intercession key on your key chain? It should probably be a bit more broken in... Don’t you think?

Intercession begins with a purpose, **addresses a problem...**

So, we’ve established that God has **purposes**. But wait, there’s a **problem!** The River is often impeded by boulders of one size or another. Some of his purposes seem to be obstructed. Not everything that God wants is done the way he wants it, at least not in the short run. He’s constructed a world in which his will can be at least temporarily thwarted. This is one of the reasons that he calls his agents to intercede.

The three primary obstructions to the River of God’s will are *the world, the flesh, and the devil*. I like to call them, *“Sin, Satan and the System.”* The **“System”** of the world is the world order, the way people attempt to operate without consulting God. John says, *“Don’t love the world or anything in the world. If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him. For everything in the world – the cravings of sinful man, the lust of his eyes, and the boasting of what he has and does – comes not from the Father but from the world.”* 1 John 2:15

Then there's the obstruction to God's purpose called, "**Sin.**" We have this natural disposition to disobey God. It's our nature to be sinful. We do things our way, in our time, for our own reasons - instead of his. We're bent toward evil, and that gets in the way of the River. It has the ability to divert it. Paul wrote, "*Nothing good lives in me, that is, in my sinful nature. For I have the desire to do what is good, but I cannot carry it out.*" Romans 7:18

The third obstacle is "**Satan,**" the devil himself. We're told to resist him, be alert about his activities, and oppose his obstructive works. "*For we wanted to come to but again and again Satan stopped us. Submit yourselves, then, to God. Resist the devil, and his will flee from you... Be self-controlled and alert. Your enemy the devil prowls around like a roaring lion looking for someone to devour...*" James 4:7, 1 Peter 5:8, 1 Thessalonians 2:18

***"True prayer begins in the heart of God,  
is communicated to the hearts of praying people,  
they pray it back to God, God answers,  
and then they praise him!"***

So, what do we do when we see that God's purposes are not being honored and fulfilled? What is our job when it's clear that his will is somehow being hindered? We pray! When we see the will of God being violated is all the cue we need to address it with prayer. When the world, the flesh, or the devil inhibits God's best, we're called to pray.

There will almost always be one or more of these three boulders in the River, trying to dam(n) its flow. We move them by prayer! Untouched by the prayers of God's people the *world* will continue to poison the minds of people, *the flesh* will keep perverting the ways of people, and *the devil* will not stop preventing those people from enjoying the River. But as we intercede, these mountainous rocks are moved, and the flow of God's will continues.

***Intercession begins with a purpose, addresses a problem, expresses itself in partnership ...***

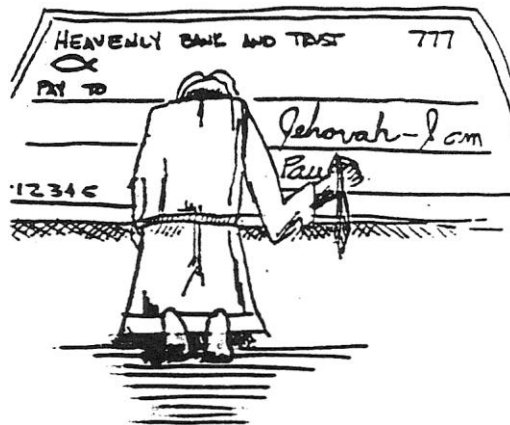
Remember what we said earlier that true prayer begins with God, the burden of which is communicated to us (when we'll listen!), we pray what he's inspiring us to pray, he answers, and we praise him! That's why we call it a *partnership*. When we intercede we are *partnering with God* in the furthering of His purposes. He's letting us in on what he's doing!

Don't think this is because he couldn't do it without us. God's not needy. He's not incapable of getting stuff done without us. It's just that he's chosen to *include us*. In fact,

that's got to be one of his main purposes for creating us to begin with, don't you think? It seems to me that God made us in order to have someone with whom to share himself, and someone with whom to include in his purposes. Read the first two chapters in the Bible again and you'll see that God made man and woman to be like him, to get to know him, to reflect him, and to partner with him in ruling the planet. His plan is to include us in what he's doing. He invites us to be involved with him in the River of his will. One of the chief ways we express that partnership is when we hear his voice, see his purpose, and pray till he answers!

## God's not needy. He's not incapable of getting stuff done without us.

You might think of God's purposes in terms we're familiar with in the business world. He writes business proposals, which become contracts, and eventually must include some expenditure of finance, which is written in the form of checks. In God's case, all of these proposals, contracts, and checks require at least two signatures - ours and his. He shows us what he's up to, some heavenly purpose which needs to be accomplished on earth. He writes his personal check for it, signs, and we sign our name on the check by prayer. We see the document he's drafted, the check he's written and signed. We then decide if we're going to agree, and basically say 'Amen' to what we know he wants. He's brought us a signed check, we send it back to him with our signature. That's intercessory prayer.



*For no matter how many promises God has made, they are "Yes" in Christ. And so through him the "Amen" is spoken by us to the glory of God. --- 2 Corinthians 1 :20*

When we say, "Amen," it isn't just a caboose at the end of our prayers. We say the "Amen" when we see something of the purpose of God and we sign our name to it by agreeing with him prayer.

*Intercession begins with a purpose, addresses a problem, expresses itself in partnership, **requires a persistence ...***

*Then Jesus told his disciples a parable to show them that they should always pray and not give up. 2 He said: "In a certain town there was a judge who neither feared God nor cared about men. 3 And there was a widow in that town who kept coming to him with the plea, 'Grant me justice against my adversary.' 4 "For some time he refused. But finally he said to himself, 'Even though I don't fear God or care about men, 5 yet because this widow keeps bothering me, I will see that she gets justice, so that she won't eventually wear me out with her coming.'" 6 And the Lord said, "Listen to what the unjust judge says. 7 And will not God bring about justice for his chosen ones, who cry out to him day and night? Will he keep putting them off? 8 I tell you, he will see that they get justice, and quickly. However, when the Son of Man comes, will he find faith on the earth?" Luke 18: 1-8*

The boulders of Sin, Satan, and the System often don't move right away. Sometimes it takes time. Sometimes it takes more and more of us to push on in prayer in unison. Too many of us pray like we're playing 'door-bell-ditch' with God. That's the game kids play when they ring a door bell and then run behind the bushes to see how the residents respond. We pray, and then we run away. We need to stick around a little longer until the Lord comes to the door and gives his answer!

## ***We're asking God for things he's asking us to ask him!***

He's trying to teach us to pray and not give up. We can either pray or give up praying. We must persist in prayer. Notice the terms: *"always pray ... she kept coming ... she keeps bothering me ... she's wearing me out... she cries day and night..."*

We usually stop too soon out of ignorance, laziness, or discouragement. Sometimes prayer takes time because God's doing something in and around us we may not be aware of. Sometimes it's because of Satan's influence (See Daniel 10:12-13). Most of the time we just don't know why, but it just takes time. He's got all the time we need to do for him what he wants us to do!

*"When the Son of Man comes will he find faith on the earth?"*

He could've asked, "Will he find people on earth praying?" Praying not only requires faith, it builds faith. That's because when our answers are delayed, we spend more and more time with God asking for stuff. That helps us get to know him better, and thus trust him more. To know him is to trust him. If we quit too soon, we not only don't get our answers to prayer, but we don't get to know him better or grow more in faith. Will he find faith on the earth? That depends on whether or not we're willing to persist in the kind of prayer which builds it!

Intercession begins with a purpose, addresses a problem, expresses

itself in partnership, requires a persistence, **releases a power...**

- James 4:2 *You do not have, because you do not ask God.*
- Luke 11:9 *"So I say to you: Ask and it will be given to you; seek and you will find; knock and the door will be opened to you. 10 For everyone who asks receives; he who seeks finds; and to him who knocks, the door will be opened.*
- Acts 1:14 *They all joined together constantly in prayer, along with the women and Mary the mother of Jesus, and with his brothers.*
- Acts 2:1 *When the day of Pentecost came, they were all together in one place. 2 Suddenly a sound like the blowing of a violent wind came from heaven and filled the whole house where they were sitting.*
- Luke 11:13 *... how much more will your Father in heaven give the Holy Spirit to those who ask him .*
- 1Tim.2:1 *I urge, then, first of all, that requests, prayers, intercession and thanksgiving be made for everyone-- 2 for kings and all those in authority, that we may live peaceful and quiet lives in all godliness and holiness. 3 This is good, and pleases God our Savior, 4 who wants all men to be saved and to come to a knowledge of the truth. ... 8 I want men everywhere to lift up holy hands in prayer, without anger or disputing.*
- James 5:13 *Is anyone of you in trouble? He should pray... 14 Is anyone of you sick? He should call the elders of the church to pray over him and anoint him with oil in the name of the Lord. 15 And the prayer offered in faith will make the sick person well; the Lord will raise him up. If he has sinned, he will be forgiven. 16 Therefore confess your sins to each other and pray for each other so that you may be healed. The prayer of a righteous man is powerful and effective. 17 Elijah was a man just like us. He prayed earnestly that it would not rain, and it did not rain on the land for three and a half years. 18 Again he prayed, and the heavens gave rain, and the earth produced its crops.*

Billy Graham said, *"Heaven is full of answers to prayers for which no one ever bothered to ask."* If we will but ask, God is committed to answering. When we pray according to his will (his purpose) and in his Name, with a righteous life, we can count on his power being released to move all obstructions and get the River flowing again.

*Intercession begins with a purpose, addresses a problem, expresses itself in partnership, requires a persistence, releases a power, **and receives a prize!***

Notice the *Prize* is getting the River "flowing again." The *Prize* leads us back to the original *Purpose* - The Flow of the River of God's eternal purpose. Any true product of prayer will be connected to God's purpose - his will. We don't get to make up the prize of our prayers. The Prize we're looking for is God's Kingdom come, his will being done! Even Jesus prayed, *"Not my will, but yours be done !"*

- *1 John 5:14 This is the confidence we have in approaching God: that if we ask anything according to his will, he hears us.*
- *John 15:7 If you remain in me and my words remain in you, ask whatever you wish, and it will be given you.*
- *Psalms 37:4 Delight yourself in the LORD and he will give you the desires of your heart.*

If we get as close as we can to God's heart, so that our hearts begin to beat in sync with his, then when we pray, we're mouthing his concerns back to him, and he answers!

*The Prize* may or may not be exactly what you originally intended. God always answers prayer, but the answer isn't always what we had in mind at the start. It seems to me that he answers prayer in one of four ways:

Sometimes he says, "**Yes.**" That is, you asked, and he gave. He may answer, "**No.**" That is, he was either not willing or you were not ready (See 1 Kings 19:4; Exodus 33:20; 2 Corinthians 12:8-10). Remember that if he doesn't change the circumstance, he's always anxious to change us, as well as strengthen us to endure the circumstances!

Often times his answer is, "**Wait**" - and so we wait. (Psalm 27:14; 37:7, 9, 34; 62:5). Oswald Chambers wrote, "*Am I close enough to God to feel secure even when He is silent?*"

And then there are times when God responds with the answer, "**My way.**" That's when what he does is hard for us to recognize at all as an answer to our particular requests. We may have had something in mind which was not exactly what *he* had in mind. Nevertheless, he answers with *his version* of what's best for us. Therefore, no prayer has been wasted. "*All prayers are safe in God's prayer bank and will be cashed in his perfect time (in his perfect way).*" (Iverna Tompkins)

The Prize may or may not be what you originally intended, but remember, oftentimes *the prize is in the process*. That is, the most important thing we get out of praying is getting to know the one to whom we pray. It's not just about getting stuff we want from God, it's more about developing an intimacy with our Father. When we pray we're actually looking for more than *presents from God*, we want the *Presence of God!*

For the rest of this paper, we'll look at two important aspects of intercession: *Spiritual Language and Fasting*. These two, though often neglected by followers of Jesus, are keys which unlock much of the resources God provides through intercession.

## **WHEN DO YOU PRAY IN SPIRITUAL LANGUAGE?**

The following is a cursory look at only one aspect of what the Bible calls, "*tongues*" or "*spiritual language*" - depending on the version of the New Testament you're using. The Bible also uses the terminology, "praying with the spirit," and "praying in the Spirit." The



one aspect that we're looking at here is the effect this spiritual language has on one's intercessory prayer life. For a more complete treatment of the general topic of spiritual language, I refer you to the paper on this website called, "[The Spirit-Filled Christian](#)," and more specifically the chapter, "**The Truth About Tongues.**" For now, I'll assume a certain amount of basic knowledge of the subject, and share four reasons for using your spiritual language while praying for other people.

### **1. We pray in tongues when we need to pray over our heads ...**

Paul tells us that when we pray in our spiritual language, we "*speak to God ... we speak mysteries with our spirit, ... our spirit prays.*" (1 Corinthians 14:2, 14) In other words **we pray beyond what we know to pray** when we pray in tongues! It's where we can do business deals with God that are over our heads (remember the analogy used earlier about the two-signature checks?) ... Our mouth becomes a phone line for the Spirit to talk to the Father about Kingdom business...

### **2. We pray in tongues when we want to pray on target...**

We often "*do not know what we ought to pray, but the Spirit Himself intercedes for us with groans that words cannot express,*" ... "*He intercedes for the saints according to the will of God...*" (Romans 8:26-27). When we pray in the Spirit it doesn't seem like we can miss praying in the will of God. We'll always be on target in our prayers when we pray in spiritual language.

Remember that when we pray, in whatever language, we are trying to agree with the Father's plan, signing *his* contracts, making *his* Kingdom-decisions operative and authoritative. And since, when praying in tongues, we are praying beyond what we know, it gives him the opportunity to do, "*exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think*" (Ephesians 3 :20)!

### **3. We pray in tongues when doing spiritual warfare praying...**

*For though we live in the world, we do not wage war as the world does. 4 The weapons we fight with are not the weapons of the world. On the contrary, they have divine power to demolish strongholds. 5 We demolish arguments and every pretension that sets itself up against the knowledge of God, and we take captive every thought to make it obedient to Christ. 2*  
Corinthians 10:3

God is all too willing to provide for us divine means of interceding more effectively against the devil. One of those divine means is praying in tongues.

Spiritual warfare praying is like being on a battle field using a walkie-talkie in combat situations. It's not just a household intercom for convenience. The messages for household use are things like, "Bring up some milk and cookies." But when we're in the middle of a spiritual battle, our prayers are more like, "*This is Unit #77 to Commander and Chief. HELP! Send in the heavy artillery!!!*" When we use our spiritual language, we are speaking a language that only our Commander knows. We'll inevitably do damage to our enemy when we use this line of communication while on the battle field. That's

why the adversary seems to have an aversion to it. It's a valuable intercession language!

## **... presents or The Presence?**

### **4. We pray in tongues when praying for pre-christians ...**

One of the most effective ways of praying for people not yet saved by Jesus is to pray with our spiritual language. We might as well use the most effective means available while plowing spiritual soil! We do untold damage to hell's purposes, and pray on target for our lost friends when we pray with our spirits in the Holy Spirit. Chafer said, "*Soul-winning is more a service of pleading for souls than a service of pleading with souls. The divine order is to talk to God about men until the door is open to talk to men about God.*" Paul said, "*Anyone who speaks in a tongue .... speaks to God.*" We can only wonder about the effect we would have on the lost world if we all consistently prayed in the Spirit for our communities.

### **WHERE DOES FASTING FIT?**

Fasting is where we forego eating food for a season in order to focus on the Lord and his purposes in prayer. Essentially, it's renouncing the *natural* in order to invoke the *spiritual*. As with the treatment of the subject of tongues, this is simply a brief look at how fasting relates to our topic of *intercessory prayer*. For a more complete study of fasting, I refer you to the paper on this site, called, "[What the Bible Says About Fasting.](#)"

The Bible is full of references to this spiritual discipline of fasting. All Israel fasted as a sign of repentance in the days of the Judges... David fasted before being crowned king, when his child was sick, when his people sinned ... Nineveh fasted when turning to God ... Esther called a fast when the Jews were facing extinction in Persia ... Daniel fasted 3 weeks, Elijah fasted 40 days, Jesus fasted 40 days, Moses fasted 80 days... Paul was "*in fastings often*" ... The early Christians fasted as part of their worship and when they ordained and sent off leaders (Acts 13)... To his followers, Jesus said, "When you fast..." not "If you fast..." (Matthew 6).

Here are several thoughts on why fast as part of your prayers for others...

### **1. We fast NOT to get God's attention, but to give him ours...**

In other words, we're not trying to twist God's arm until he does something for us which he doesn't really want to do. Fasting is not a 'hunger strike' until God moves. When we fast we're setting ourselves apart from earthly distractions in order to give God our undivided attention.

Our mouth becomes the phone line

## for the Spirit to talk to the Father about Kingdom business...

### **2. We fast NOT to make Him more receptive to act, but make us more receptive to being acted upon...**

It's as though we are a vessel into whom God wishes to pour his riches so that he can pour those same riches *through us* into others. Fasting (as well as all of the other disciplines) widens the mouth of the vessel so that he can get his wealth in and through us.

### **3. We fast NOT merely to lose physical weight, but to gain spiritual territory...**

Fasting *does* have physical benefits (weight loss, cleansing of the system... ). But when we fast as an aid to prayer, we are looking primarily for the spiritual benefits. We're telling our body, "*You're not my master, I have food to eat that you know not of ... My food is to do the will of him who sent me ...*" (See John 4:34)

### **4. We fast NOT to remind God of our seriousness, but to remind us that we are praying ...**

When fasting you can't hardly forget that you're praying when your empty stomach growls regularly! You decide to fast when you have serious things to pray for. Fasting helps us to stay serious while we pray seriously for serious things!

### **5. We fast and pray if we want an answer or direction from God bad enough...**

David wrote, "*I afflicted my soul with fasting ...*" Fasting has the tendency of getting the soul in gear. It helps us put things in perspective and hear from God more readily. It helps us tune into God's frequency.

### **6. We fast and pray if we want breakthrough in our own personal life bad enough...**

When we're stuck in a spiritual rut, and our reception is fuzzy, it's time to fast to clean out the lines of communication. Many of us say we want to be spiritually free and to go forward, but often don't seem willing to pay the price to get there.

### **7. We fast and pray if we want someone to come to Christ bad enough...**

When we fast we recognize another's conversion is a spiritual battle. They need a miracle, the miracle of conviction and new birth. We posture ourselves to agree with God about doing that miracle when we fast and pray.

### **8. We fast and pray if we want someone to get delivered bad enough...**

*"Is not this the kind of fasting I have chosen: to loose the chains of injustice and untie the cords of the yoke, to set the oppressed free and break every yoke?"* Isaiah 58:6

Fasting is a catalyst to deliverance, whether our own or another's. When the disciples were unsuccessful in casting a demon out of a boy, they asked Jesus what they were

doing wrong. He replied, *"This kind comes out by prayer and fasting."* (Matthew 17:21). Apparently, some demonic forces are overcome only by those who live a lifestyle of prayer and fasting.

### **9. We fast and pray if we want our church to be more spiritually vital, loving, and kingdom extending...**

*'Even now, 'declares the LORD, 'return to me with all your heart, with fasting and weeping and mourning.' 13 Rend your heart and not your garments. Return to the LORD your God, for he is gracious and compassionate, slow to anger and abounding in love, and he relents from sending calamity. 14 Who knows? He may turn and have pity and leave behind a blessing-- grain offerings and drink offerings for the LORD your God. 15 Blow the trumpet in Zion, declare a holy fast, call a sacred assembly. 16 Gather the people, consecrate the assembly; bring together the elders, gather the children, those nursing at the breast. Let the bridegroom leave his room and the bride her chamber. 17 Let the priests, who minister before the LORD, weep between the temple porch and the altar. Let them say, 'Spare your people, O LORD. Do not make your inheritance an object of scorn, a byword among the nations. Why should they say among the peoples, 'Where is their God?'" Joel 2:12-17*

I often say that people in our culture don't *hate us* as much as they're *bored with us*. If we want that to change, my guess is that one thing that we'll have to do is to pray more seriously along with fasting.

### **10. We fast and pray if we want our society to be rid of its greed, violence, lust, racism, etc. bad enough ...**

*From the days of John the Baptist until now, the kingdom of heaven has been forcefully advancing, and forceful men lay hold of it. Matthew 11:12*

The advance of the Kingdom often seems to involve intense exertion. The Kingdom acts powerfully and requires a powerful reaction. That "powerful reaction" and "intense exertion" is sometimes expressed in fasting and prayer. If we want our culture to improve, we'll have to practice the discipline of fasting in order to do our part to partner with God as he brings about that improvement.

## **GETTING STARTED**

- Sometimes the best way to decide what to pray for is where you see the kingdom of God neglected or rejected in some way. How is the rulership of God not honored in the world you live in? You'll probably have to narrow it down, pick one person or situation, and pray about it now. *"Thy Kingdom come, thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven."*

- Picture something that you think God wants to do in your sphere of influence on a check that he's written. Picture also his name on the first endorsement line. Now ask him to do that kingdom thing, and picture signing your own name under his as you pray.
- Do you have a spiritual language in which to pray yet? If you do, use it now as you pray for a friend or family member. If you don't, just ask the Lord to give you this language so you can pray more effectively. When he gives it to you, thank him, and then begin right away using it as you pray for others. Use it regularly.
- Have you ever fasted? If so, plan your next fast, and decide the purpose for this particular fast. If you haven't fasted, plan to do it soon. Begin small (maybe a meal or two) and then work up to longer and regular fasts. When you fast, have a specific purpose in mind (i.e. the salvation of a friend, a deeper walk with Jesus, more spiritual power to advance the kingdom of God...).