



Personal Intercessors: A Guide

Guidelines for Spiritual workers

Having personal intercessors can greatly enhance your ministry. However, just like us, they are fallible. Certain potential pitfalls may come with having a personal intercessor, and it is imperative to choose such a person wisely with God's guidance. An unwise choice may do the spiritual worker more damage than good. Once you have asked someone to fill this role, it may be difficult to reverse the situation.

Be mindful of the following **potential pitfalls** when appointing personal intercessors:

- Gossip and slander may occur. Information may be shared (albeit unintentionally) and used against you. Take every precaution to prevail upon your intercessors the need for trust and confidentiality. Remind them of the destructive consequences of 'loose lips'. Encourage them to approach you directly if they have any negative feelings about you, rather than sharing them with others.
- It is advisable not to have intercessors of the opposite sex, but if you do, be very vigilant of the pitfall of sexual temptation. Do not pray with personal intercessors of the opposite sex alone. If you do develop feelings for an intercessor, take radical steps: Pray with another trusted person until you are free. You may need to terminate the appointment gently, but it is strongly advised that you *do not* share your feelings with the intercessor.
- Avoid power struggles. If an intercessor feels you do not give them enough credit or that you ignore their warnings and revelations, they may try to manipulate you through prayer. Power, leadership and authority are bestowed on the spiritual worker by God. Explain to personal intercessors their role in the relationship very clearly from the outset.
- Be discerning of fleshly prayers. An intercessor may try to manipulate a spiritual worker to teach or do something specific through prayer. This is simply witchcraft. Test every idea/dream/vision/revelation/Scripture brought to you by an intercessor. Ask the Lord for guidance. *Never* simply act on 'a word'; test it, always.
- Another form of manipulation occurs when an intercessor holds the spiritual worker to ransom. For example, "If you don't do as we say, we won't pray for you." This kind of mutiny must be dealt with decisively.
- Empty prayers have little or no effect on the spiritual worker's ministry. If an intercessor takes up the role because they 'feel honoured' or they feel 'it is the respectable thing to do', their prayers will be merely sentimental, not powerful and effective. Such an intercessor will be a burden to the Spiritual worker.

Guidelines for Intercessors

Praying for a spiritual worker is a tremendous responsibility, and one carried onerously before God. By persevering in daily prayer for the spiritual worker, you lift the pressure and burden from him, thus enabling him to do his work. Do not expect to be applauded for interceding; do it for the Lord, and leave it with Him. Don't be discouraged if you don't experience immediate results to your prayers. Research shows that 89% of spiritual workers who have personal intercessors, testify it made a difference to their ministry after a year. Praying for the spiritual worker is a long-term investment. Pray until you are released by the Holy Spirit. When this happens, it is your responsibility to tell them that you feel the Lord is releasing you from the responsibility.

Here are some guidelines to help your personal intercession be of the **most effect**:

- Maintain utmost confidentiality at all times.
- Pray for all facets of the spiritual worker's life. This includes his relationship with his wife and children, friends and the congregation, social and recreational activities, his spiritual life, etc. Prayer for his family and marriage is of the utmost importance.
- The Lord may lead you to pray more intensely for one area of the spiritual worker's life than another. You may have a burden to pray for his children, for example, while another feels led to pray for his marriage, another for his preaching, etc. Be sensitive to what the Lord lays on your heart to pray for.
- Be a servant. Don't make demands on the spiritual worker. He normally has to give all the time. Let him discover what it is like to receive for a change.
- Keep your contact short when you pass on information to him or need to ask for information. Few things are more tiring than an untimely, long-winded phone call.
- When appropriate, give feedback of what God reveals to you during intercession. Only do so if and when the Holy Spirit prompts you to, i.e. don't discuss everything you pray about and sense God is revealing to you.
- Remain humble. Do not fall into the trap of pride, boasting that you intercede for a certain spiritual worker. Such haughtiness has no place in the responsibility of an intercessor.
- Be realistic about your expectations. Do not expect the spiritual worker to have equally intensive contact with all his personal intercessors. It is just not possible.
- Regular intercession is important. One missionary remarked that all would go well in his ministry for 7-10 days, and then it would lapse back to being an uphill struggle with resistance and onslaught. He realised that the 'prosperous times' coincided with when his intercessors received his newsletter. A week later, the burden to pray for him had lessened.
- Do not abuse your position to manipulate or take advantage of the spiritual worker. Fleshly prayers are injurious to him and his ministry. Remain Spirit-led at all times in your intercession.

- Dreams and visions demand extreme caution. It is *your* responsibility to ask the Lord for an interpretation. The vision was given to *you*; you have to interpret it! Be very cautious: God does give dreams and visions, but so does the devil!
- Intercession is of vital importance the day before and after a public appearance or leading a special service. Pray specifically for the spiritual worker's strength and protection, protection from despondency, criticism, physical onslaughts (health) and assaults in the financial area. Continue to pray until you sense the Holy Spirit releases you from this specific prayer assignment and the burden is gone.
- Pray also for your own protection. Remember that the person who stands in the gap will be attacked also. You are the shock absorber, and shock absorbers have to take the knocks. While intercession for a spiritual worker is always a privilege, the cost may be high.