



Intercession is Service

By S.D. Gordon

It helps greatly to remember that intercession is service: the chief service of a life on God's plan. It is unlike all other forms of service, and superior to them in this: that it has fewer limitations. In all other service we are constantly limited by space, bodily strength, equipment, material obstacles, difficulties involved in the peculiar differences of personality. Prayer knows no such limitations. It ignores space. It may be free of expenditure of bodily strength, where rightly practiced, and one's powers are under proper control. It goes directly, by the telegraphy of spirit, into men's hearts, quietly passes through walls, and past locks unhindered, and comes into most direct touch with the inner heart and will to be affected.

In service, as ordinarily understood, one is limited to the space where his body is, the distance his voice can reach, the length of time he can

keep going before he must quit to eat, or rest, or sleep. He is limited by walls, and locks, by the prejudices of men's minds, and by those peculiar differences of temperament which must be studied in laying siege to men's hearts.

The whole circle of endeavor in winning men includes such an infinite variety. There is speaking the truth to a number of persons, and to one at a time; the doing of needed kindly acts of helpfulness, supplying food, and the like; there is teaching; the almost omnipotent ministry of money; the constant contact with a pure unselfish life; letter writing; printer's ink in endless variety. All these are in God's plan for winning men. But the intensely fascinating fact to mark is this:--that the real victory in all of this service is won in secret, beforehand, by prayer, and these other indispensable things are the moving upon the works of the enemy, and claiming the victory already won. And when these things are put in their proper order, prayer first, and the other things second; _second_, I say, not omitted, not slurred over; done with all the earnestness and power of brain and hand and heart possible; but done _after_ the victory has been won in secret, against the real foe, and done _while_ the winner is still claiming the victory already assured,--then will come far greater achievements in this outer open service.

Then we go into this service with that fine spirit of expectancy that sweeps the field at the start, and steadily sticks on the stubbornly contested spots until the whipped foe turns tail, and goes. Prayer is striking the winning blow at the concealed enemy. Service is gathering up the results of that blow among the men we see and touch. Great patience and tact and persistence are needed in the service because each man must be influenced in his own will. But the shrewd strategy that wins puts the keen stiff secret fighting first. S.D. GORDON