



As a prelude to Archbishop Justin's 'Call to Prayer' next week, we are exploring the concept of 'intercession', which literally means 'to come between'. It is the formal word used for prayers made on behalf of other people in particular need and it carries with it the idea of 'mediation' which means to intervene to reconcile opposing parties. **Rom. 8:28-39**

Jesus the Intercessor.

- Not long ago we were enjoying Easter Celebrations. Then came forty days of Jesus' post-resurrection appearances, climaxing in the Ascension celebrated last Thursday. What is Jesus doing now?
- He intercedes for us, but He does more than pray: He meets with God the Father to speak up for us.
- Jesus' intervention on our behalf always comes within the context of His death and resurrection:
Romans 8:34. Christ became our Mediator before God our Father because of His self-sacrifice:
1 Timothy 2: 5-6b

Jesus the Mediator

- We need a mediator because we fall short of God's perfect standard for the way we should live and behave, i.e. we sin; and sin stands between all of us and God. Jesus represents all who recognise that there is nothing we can do to mitigate our fallen state, and He represents all who have placed their trust in Christ's sacrificial love.
- In His place of honour at the right hand of God (**Ro. 8:34**), Jesus claims us as His own and declares us 'innocent of all charges' in the same way as a lawyer for the defence speaks up for his client to the judge. But for this to work, Jesus has to be what we are – He is still both fully human and fully divine. Look at **1 Timothy 2: 5-6** again
- The Old Testament priesthood had the mediating ministry for the Jews: they sacrificed regularly on behalf of individuals or the nation, they stood between God and the people and worshipped and prayed and pleaded for them.
- Jesus lives for ever, so His is an eternal, heavenly Priesthood. His death on the cross is the once-for-all-time Sacrifice which means that those who believe in Him are 'counted as righteous'. His eternal life means He continues as Mediator for us in God's very presence. **Hebrews 7: 25.**

Jesus' Prayers

- On returning to His Father, Jesus didn't 'take a break' from His rôle as Shepherd to His people.
Romans 5:10
His prayers defend us when Satan accuses us; He prays when we are too weak, dispirited or ill to pray for ourselves. He never forgets to pray for those who believe in Him, he never fails. Your name is on His lips in the presence of the Father every single day.
- Just before His arrest, Jesus prays for Himself, His disciples and then for 'all who will believe in me': that is the future 2,000 years ago, which is our present! If you love the Lord Jesus, you're in that prayer! **John 17: 20 – 26**
 - a) He prays for us to be one – united in love so that the world then recognises who Jesus is and who sent Him.
 - b) Jesus wants to spend eternity with us, he wants us to see Him in Glory. **Romans 8: 37-39 again!**

Questions for discussion

1. Have you ever thought of Jesus as continually praying for you and going into the Father to plead your cause?
2. Do we really understand the seriousness of sin – do we see ourselves as having been rescued by Jesus?
3. Jesus in Glory is still both fully human and fully divine – discuss!
4. What do we mean by 'Christian Unity' and how can it be achieved?
5. Can we share with each other the best way we have found to pray effectively?
6. In what way is our group going to be involved in Archbishop Justin's 'Call to Prayer' next week?

Thought: Just as Jesus' death on the cross saves us by grace, so His living intercessions sanctify us by grace.