

Faithful in Prayer... Rom. 12.12

Supplication — Intercession



The mnemonic ACTS helps us to remember a number of the important elements in praying – **A**doration (or Praise), **C**onfession, **T**hanksgiving and **S**upplication (including intercession, our prayers for others, and petition, our prayers for ourselves).

Intercession

Paul wrote to the Philippian Christians, “Do not be anxious about anything, but in everything, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God.” (Phil. 4.6).

Supplication (here translated “petition”) refers to our specific prayer requests. We are here looking at “intercession” – our specific prayers for other people.

In 1 Timothy 2.1-4, Paul wrote, “I urge, then, first of all, that requests, prayers, intercession and thanksgiving be made for everyone – for kings and all those in authority, that we may live peaceful and quiet lives in all godliness and holiness. This is good, and pleases God our Saviour, who wants all men to be saved and to come to a knowledge of the truth.”

We are not robots. God has created human beings with freedom of choice – with the necessity of responding to his love and grace. He “wants all people to be saved and to come to a knowledge of the truth.” Salvation isn’t automatic. It can be received or refused. God doesn’t over-ride human freedom of choice, but, in ways we scarcely understand, he uses the faithful prayers of his people to cooperate with his Spirit in bringing people to salvation and the knowledge of his truth.

There is often a climate of unbelief, doubt and despair in society – so all-absorbing that many don’t even think of faith as an option. Pray specific prayers for our community and nation and our leaders, including all who exercise leadership in a broad sense – in the police, schools, service clubs...

Pray for specific people we know who do not actively express faith in God. Remember, God wants them to be saved and to come to a knowledge of the truth. Pray for their circumstances – health, work, marriage, family... Be sure that your love reaches from prayer into practice. Pray that they will understand their spiritual need and they will be open to hear and respond to the gospel message. Jesus said that when the Holy Spirit (the Counsellor) comes, “he will convict the world of guilt in regard to sin and righteousness and judgment” (Jn 16.8). In our prayers we are working with the Holy Spirit.

Pray specifically for fellow-Christians, including their circumstances and needs too. The prophet Samuel said to the people, “As for me, far be it from me that I should sin against the Lord by failing to pray for you” (1 Sam. 12.23). Paul wrote, “Pray also for me, that whenever I open my mouth, words may be given me so that I will fearlessly make known the mystery of the gospel, for which I am an ambassador in chains. Pray that I may declare it fearlessly, as I should” (Eph. 6.19-20). The integrity of our life and our words “in season” will be used by God to open people’s minds and hearts and wills to the gospel.