
PRAYER, INTERCESSION, INTERRUPTION AND INVITATION

How are these connected?

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live magazine continues the conversation with Jill about touchstones for doing mission that began in the January-February 2020 issue.



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WHY ARE PRAYER AND INTERCESSION so important to both authentic experience of God and intimate connection to mission? (These are our taglines for CBWOQ’s vision and mission.)

Mission, of course, starts in the heart of God. God went on mission—Jesus came down to where we were to rescue us. Mission is not about us; it’s about God. If mission is about God then He’s the resource. He’s the one who strengthens our heart for mission.

We need to be looking at who God is so we have the right perspective about what’s going on in the world, a God-consciousness that He is King over it all. He is unfolding His redemptive purposes, and it’s not about us fixing the world. It’s about Jesus making all things new and we get to go along with Him on the journey.

And this all starts with prayer, listening to God and talking to God. We discover that worship is so important to mission because we need to remind ourselves how strong and smart God is; we need to stop gauging our abilities to do mission by our natural capacities.

Read *Letters of a Modern Mystic* by Frank C. Laubach. He was a missionary in the Philippines during the 1930s and these are letters he wrote to his father about what he discovered doing mission—that God is the heart of the whole matter.

Let me put it this way. Jill can go out and do Jill-sized things but without intercession I won’t see God-sized things flowing out of my life. At

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this point I'm too small and too old to have only Jill-sized things flow out!

In your book *Even The Sparrow*, you share lessons you've learned about how God works with us when we make ourselves available for mission. You write that He interrupts us, calls us out (gives us an identity) and invites us on a journey (mission). You link interruption to invitation.

God interrupts Abram, Moses and Gideon. He interrupted them to invite them to take part in what He was doing in the world. Jesus' ministry was characterized by interruptions. Think of all the people who got in His path—the blind beggar; the woman who touched His garment. Jesus Himself interrupts Peter and James. The question becomes: Are we “interruptable?”

What are some helpful pointers for small groups whom God has interrupted and invited to do mission?

Count the cost. You will have to do an assessment as a group and ask, *Are we ready to die or not?* Mission isn't a hobby, self-improvement process or a way to self-actualize. There's a cost involved. There's also an inherent sweetness and joy in giving God the costly gift, and an interior freedom you get when you do. A small example: We had regular GOHOP community dinners every Tuesday night and forks from my wedding set began disappearing one by one. I went to

Value Village and got more. They started going too!

Don't confuse success or productivity with fruitfulness. If you do, you will try to be a strong group, in control, somewhat respectable, ready to scale up your efforts. Instead, lean into the vulnerability of being fruitful.

Don't get wrapped up in the quick change. Your group will get discouraged when members don't see differences in people's lives right away. You're not operating a spiritual drive-through. You will see transformation but it will come slowly. Is your group committed to accompany people; to the slow work of God? Jesus used farming imagery in His teachings for a reason—farming is slow work.

“If you don't love it, you won't fight for it,” you write. How do we fight for our communities well? Where do we start?

Go on a tour of beauty and fall in love: do a prayer walk through your neighbourhood. You walk and ask God, *“What do you see? What are you doing?”* You'll begin to see the nooks and crannies where God is up to stuff—all the little signs of life.

“Live in the place of encounter and build out of response to revelation.” You emphasize this in your book and it's one of the fundamental principles shaping how you respond to God's call and do mission. Why do Baptist women need to grasp this

insight?

Jesus said that He only said and did what He saw His Father saying and doing. Jesus did mission this way and so, if we are attentive to mission, then this is how we are also to do mission.

How did Jesus know what the Father did?

He modelled how a human can live with and before God. First, He went to lonely places to pray, taking time out to orient Himself to His Father. He did this regularly.

He also did it for extended periods of time—before He picked His disciples He spent the whole night in prayer.

Jesus also modelled fluidity. We may not know everything all at once, all the time. Think of the wedding at Cana. Things were revealed to Him as He did ministry. ■

*We've added Jill's book *Even The Sparrow* | A Pilgrim's Guide to Prayer, Trust and Following the Leader to our book club list.*

Order it online at [ReadOn Bookstore](#) and enjoy free shipping. \$18

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