

Christ Our Mediator Our Intercessor

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Over the years if we have read the news from time to time, we hear of a labor union going on strike and they are there with the placards and marching in circles because there is an issue. You often hear of a mediator to be called in to work out the variance or the difference between two separate parties. He is called in to try to reconcile the two parties and stop the strike and get everybody back to work. In fact, there is an independent agency of government just dedicated to reconciliation. It's the Federal Mediation and Conciliation Service. It's headquartered in Washington and it was established in 1947 and it provides mediation services to industry, to government and to communities worldwide to try and get two opposing parties back together. They send out an expert to come in and intercede between, in many cases, parties that are at each others throats to reconcile their differences. Obviously it's necessary because human conflict as we know is just unending. You read the paper every day or watch the news and human conflict just does not end and the only way it is going to end obviously is the return of Jesus Christ.

God's Word tells us of the existence of a spiritual mediator or intercessor. And I use the word mediator and intercessor almost simultaneously because if you look up the definitions (and we will find this out as we go through the sermon) the word mediator and intercessor have almost the same definition. In some cases, even in the dictionary, they are used interchangeably and that is true of the English, it's true of the Hebrew, it's true of the Greek.

The Catholics identify a mediator in their teaching, in their religion, and that is Mary. They call her the mediatrix, the woman, the Mother that mediates. They teach that Mary is the one who intercedes on behalf of mankind to God and Christ. She is kind of the go-between. From the book, Roman Catholicism by Alfonsis Legory, (a good Italian) and this is from page 147. I'll just paraphrase, he proposes and says that it was easier for sinners to go through Mary than through Jesus Christ. Legory was sainted in 1839 so this teaching has been around for a long time. Legory and his book describes an imaginary scene where there are two ladders hanging down from heaven and a sinner is at the bottom. Mary is at the top of one ladder and Christ is at the top of the other ladder. So when the sinner tries to climb the ladder where Christ is at the top, what happens according to Legory, he sees the angry face of Jesus Christ and he falls down defeated. Then he picks himself up and starts to climb the ladder where Mary is at the top and he ascends easily and she welcomes him into her arms and then takes him to introduce him to Jesus Christ and then all is well. The story, this image that he portrays, is supposedly to show how much easier it is to get to God through Mary than through anyone else, including Christ.

Now, we know this is not true, but we need to ask the question: what does the Bible actually say about the subject? Do we have a mediator or intercessor, if so who is it? What does the Bible say? We don't want to rely on the teachings of any group or Catholic Church or whatever, we rely on God's Word. So what does God's Word say about this? We're going to examine that subject today, and it ties in with two of the roles of Jesus Christ: Mediator and Intercessor. Several months ago, I had promised as we approach Passover we would look into the roles of Jesus Christ and today we're going to look into two; Mediator and Intercessor because both of those roles as we're going to see are basically two parts of the same definition. So the title of the sermon is

Christ Our Mediator, Christ Our Intercessor

1: Christ our Mediator.

We want to look into the Bible and see what the Bible says about it. Let's go to 1 Timothy 2:5. It couldn't be more clear. You'll notice that Mary's name is not here and Christ's name is here. Notice what it plainly says:

***1 Timothy 2:5** For there is one God and one Mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus. (KJV)*

Beginning in verse 6, and this gives us a hint of how this mediation occurs.

6) *Who gave Himself a ransom for all ... (KJV)*

One mediator between God and man. Now the Greek word for "mediator" is Strong's #3316 and Strong's says it means a *go between* or *by implication a reconciler* or *intercessor*. So we see here in the beginning that mediator and intercessor, Strong's is telling us are synonyms. Zodiates in his Complete Word Study Dictionary, The New Testament says "one who mediates between two parties". Then going to Webster's 1828 Dictionary which is very helpful because it gives us an idea of what the English words mean at least half way back to the King James Bible. Webster's 1828 says about a mediator, "one that interposes between two parties at variance for the purpose of reconciling them". Again, one who interposes between two parties at variance with an effort to reconcile them. Now let's look at the scriptures that tell us that Christ is the Mediator of the New Covenant. Let's go to Jeremiah 31:31 and see a prophecy that was written over 2500 years ago about Christ being a Mediator of the New Covenant. There is a New Covenant coming, Jeremiah talks about, Jeremiah 31:31.

***Jeremiah 31:31** Behold, the days come, saith the LORD, that I will make a New Covenant with the house of Israel, and with the house of Judah ... [jumping to verse 33]. (KJV)*

33) *But this shall be the covenant [now we have a definition of it] that I will make with the house of Israel; After those days, saith the LORD, I will put My Law in*

their inward parts and write it in their hearts; and will be their God, and they shall be My people. (KJV)

A prophecy of a new agreement, a New Covenant that would come. Now with that in mind let's go to the New Testament and see the details of this. Let's go to Hebrews 8:6 talking about Jesus Christ. I'll be reading out of the King James unless otherwise noted.

Hebrews 8:6 *But now hath He [referring to Christ] obtained a more excellent ministry, by how much also He is the Mediator of a better covenant, ... (KJV)*

So we see two facts here, He is a mediator and it is a better covenant than the one that existed before.

6 continued) *... which was established upon better promises. (KJV)*

This New Covenant has better promises than the old.

13) *In that He saith, A New Covenant, He hath made the first old. Now that which decayeth and waxeth old is ready to vanish away. (KJV)*

Now let's go to the next chapter, Hebrews 9:15.

Hebrews 9:15 *And for this cause He [again referring to Christ] is the Mediator of the New Testament ... (KJV)*

And now we begin to see how He does that.

15 continued) *... by means of death, for the redemption of the transgressions that were under the first testament, they which are called might receive the promise of eternal inheritance. (KJV)*

This promise of eternal inheritance is the better covenant, that is the reward. The Old Covenant never promised eternal life. It promised physical blessings yes, but not eternal life. Now let's jump to Chapter 12:22 talking about Christ being the Mediator of this New Covenant.

Hebrews 12:22 *But ye are come unto Mount Sion, and unto the city of the Living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to an innumerable company of angels, 23) To the general assembly and church of the firstborn which are written in heaven and to God, the Judge of all and to the spirits of just men made perfect. (KJV)*

And notice verse 24

24) *And to Jesus the Mediator of the New Covenant, and to the blood of sprinkling, that speaketh better things than that of Able. (KJV)*

So we are seeing here very plainly that God's Word tells us that Christ is our Mediator. Not Mary, not any other being and that Christ as Mediator is reconciling us to God by the blood that He shed when He willingly died for our sins. So, point number one we've seen Christ as our Mediator.

Now the second word that we talked about is intercessor.

2: Christ as our Intercessor

So, let's go to Romans 8:32 we'll begin there. I'm going to read verse 32 out of the NIV because it's more clear and then we'll go back to the King James.

Romans 8:32 *He who did not spare His own Son [obviously referring to God and Christ] but gave Him up for us all, how will He [referring to God] not also along with Him [meaning Jesus Christ] graciously give us all things? (NIV)*

Verse 33, back to the King James

33) Who shall lay any thing to the charge of God's elect? It is God that justifieth. (KJV)

The Greek word for "justify" is to *render innocent*. When we have our sins washed away by the blood of Christ, then we in God's eyes are innocent. It is God that justifies.

34) Who is He that condemneth? It is Christ that died, yea rather, that is risen again, who is even at the right hand of God, who also maketh intercession for us. (KJV)

Christ at the right hand of the Father makes intercession for us. Now the word intercessor going back to Webster's 1828 says, (notice this) this is the definition of intercessor, "a mediator, one who interposes between two parties at variance for the purpose of reconciling them". That's almost the identical definition word for word of mediator and this is the definition of intercessor. Webster's goes on, "one who pleads in behalf of another", makes a case for another person. Now with that in mind let's go to Hebrews 7:25 talking about Christ making intercession for those that God calls.

Hebrews 7:25 *Wherefore He is able also to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by Him, seeing He [referring to Jesus Christ] ever liveth to make intercession for them [for us]. (KJV)*

In other words, that is one of the reasons one of the jobs that Christ has (if you can call it a job, we can't even comprehend that); one of the things that Christ lives to do is to make intercession.

Now, I'm going to speculate so please discount everything I say if you don't agree, but I can easily imagine that God and Christ in a given day and a given hour are looking down on say a married couple. One of the two is tired, hasn't slept well for several days and is maybe frustrated or job problems or whatever it might be, but through sleep deprivation and frustration one lashes out at the other, snaps and just says things that are uncalled for, but does so because of lack of sleep, frustration on the job, whatever it might be. Now I could easily see in my mind Christ and the Father are sitting side by side and Christ at His right hand and Christ telling the Father, "you know when I was on the earth, I felt that powerful urge. There were days that I didn't sleep and there were days that I had all this opposition and people saying lies about Me" and He said, "I felt this powerful urge to lash out. You know with your help with the help of the Holy Spirit, I obviously didn't do that" (because Christ we know is sin free). But Christ is saying "I know what's going through this person's head, I know what's going through their mind, I know what the emotions are that are going through their body" and He says also, "see Satan is right there provoking. Satan's putting thoughts, images, emotions into somebody's head." And sure enough, we've all done it. We've all lashed out under certain circumstances like this, but I can easily see where Christ would intercede because He has been human and He and God talk about it. And They are both looking at the same event because They love us and They care about us. So ending the second point, we've seen that thus far, that Christ is both Mediator and Intercessor. He does so, He is qualified to do so (if you want to put it in human terms like that) by the blood of His resurrection, of what He has done for us.

Now let's go to a third area that we want to talk about.

3: How is Christ our Mediator or our Intercessor?

How is He? How does He mediate between God and mankind by way of the New Covenant, because after all, He was the one that made it possible through His death, coming to earth, living a sinless life and then dying? Christ does so in two ways. We'll talk about this under this third point.

3A: Christ is the Mediator or Intercessor between God and mankind in general.

Not talking specifically about God and mankind, but all people who have ever lived. Now we have to say if a mediator is necessary there's got to be a gulf between God and mankind. There's got to be a division between God and mankind, this giant gulf needs to be reconciled or mediated or interceded over. Now what is that gulf? I think we know, let's go to Isaiah 59:2. The Bible is really clear about what separates God from mankind. We know what that is. Isaiah 59:2 and this is a principle that applies to all humans that have ever lived.

Isaiah 59:2 [Isaiah says] *But your iniquities have separated between you and your God. [latter part of the verse] ... and your sins have hid His face from you, ... (KJV)*

Now the margin in the King James says, “that your sins have made Him hide from you that He will not hear.” Because of our sins prior to the coming of Jesus Christ, mankind had no access to God — no access at all, other than those that God called during the Old Covenant to personally deal with. We are talking about humankind in general. That was why there was a veil in front of the Holy of Holies because it wasn’t open access, the door wasn’t opened: there was a veil there. As we know, the High Priest could only go through that veil once a year on the Day of Atonement. There was a separation between God and mankind — that gulf at some point had to be reconciled, that division had to be reconciled; with that in mind, let’s go to 1 John 4:14. This is how that division has been reconciled. The answers are very simple and they are in the Bible, but there is a progression here if we want to understand Christ as our Mediator and our Intercessor. We are talking about mankind in general now.

1 John 4:14 *And we have seen and do testify that the Father sent the Son to be the Savior of the world. (KJV)*

The world needed saving because there was this gulf between God and the world — God and humankind. The gulf was started in the garden of Eden when man decided I know better than God, I’m going to do what I think is best; now the separation occurred. Notice what happened at the end of Christ’s early life. We’ve talked about this before, but in the context of mediator and intercessor let’s go to Matthew 27:50-51. I will read this out of the New King James.

Matthew 27:50-51 [Jesus is being crucified] *And Jesus cried out again with a loud voice, and yielded up His spirit.*

51) Then, behold, the veil of the temple was torn in two from top to bottom; and the earth quaked and the rocks were split. (NKJV)

We see here His death caused a miracle of this curtain and if you read some of the histories, the curtain could have been a foot thick and weighed hundreds and hundreds and hundreds of pounds and it was split top to bottom. That is a symbol of the fact, now as we know, that there is access to God through the death of Jesus Christ. Let’s go to Hebrews 9:1. Paul here is contrasting New Testament, New Covenant promises with the Old Covenant law — He is drawing a contrast.

Hebrews 9:1 *Then verily the first covenant had also ordinances of divine service, and a worldly sanctuary [meaning the temple later or the tabernacle earlier].*

2) For there was a tabernacle made; the first [now he’s talking about the Holy Place which was the first two thirds of the tabernacle] wherein was the candlestick, and the table, and the shewbread; which is called the sanctuary.

3) And after the second veil, [that is the veil between the sanctuary and the Holy of Holies] the tabernacle which is called the Holiest of all;

4) Which had the golden censer, [keep that in mind because we are going to come back to that] and the Ark of the Covenant overlaid round about with

gold, wherein was the golden pot that had manna, and Aaron's rod that budded and the tables of the covenant. (KJV)

Let's look at this notation here of the golden sensor. The Greek word for "sensor" is Strong's 2369, the definition is interesting, it says *the place of fumigation*. That is the altar of incense in the temple. Paul obviously was trained at the feet of a Gamaliel and was a Pharisee of Pharisees and had been to the temple. He knew the arrangement of the temple. He knew the arrangement of the tabernacle, the dimensions, what utensils and altars, that were in the tabernacle. Exodus 30 tells us the altar of incense was outside the veil — not in the Holy of Holies. But we just read here that the altar of incense is inside the Holy of Holies. Now what's going on? Paul knew, there's no question that Paul knew where the altar of incense was during the Old Covenant times, but he is describing now an altar of incense inside the Holy of Holies. Why did he do that? What was his purpose? Why the symbolic change? Keep your marker or your finger here in Hebrews 9, we're going to come right back. Let's go to Revelation 8:1. See that looking forward, there is a synergy if you want to call it that between incense and our prayers.

Revelation 8:1-3 *And when He [referring to God] opened the seventh seal, there was silence in heaven about the space of half an hour.*

2) And I saw the seven angels which stood before God; and to them were given seven trumpets.

3) And another angel came and stood at the altar, having a golden censer; and there was given unto him much incense, that he should offer it with the prayers of all saints upon the golden altar that was before the throne. [the throne of God].

4) And the smoke of the incense, which came with the prayers of the saints, ascended up before God out of the angel's hand. (KJV)

Paul is showing now that there is an altar of incense right in front of the throne of God in the Holy of Holies in heaven. We see that incense is likened unto the prayers of the saints that come directly to God. We're putting it in physical terms, of course, God could smell the incense and, in that cloud of incense let's say, (in physical terms not attempting to try to describe something spiritually) inside that cloud of incense were the prayers of the saints. This is another symbol that those who are called have direct access to the Father. As Paul said in his telling us, that the altar of incense is now before the throne of God inside the Holy of Holies. Let's go back to Hebrews 9:7.

Hebrews 9:7 *But into the second went the high priest alone once every year, [into the Holy of Holies] not without blood, which he offered for himself, and for the errors of the people.*

8) The Holy Ghost, this signifying, [now notice this] that the way into the holiest of all was not yet made manifest, ... (KJV)

In the Old Covenant it wasn't apparent how you could get to God directly. The high priest only went in once a year. Let me read that again.

8 continued)..the way into the holiest of all was not yet made manifest, while as the first tabernacle was yet standing. (KJV)

Christ had yet to come.

9) Which was a figure for the time then present, in which were offered both gifts and sacrifices, that could not make him that did the service perfect, as pertaining to the conscience;

10) Which [referring to the tabernacle of the temple] stood only in meats, and drinks, and divers washings, and cardinal ordinances, imposed on them until the time of reformation. (KJV)

Reforming something is making it new, changing it.

11) But Christ being come an High Priest of good things to come, by a greater, and more perfect tabernacle, not made with hands, that is to say, not of this building. (KJV)

We have talked before, one of Christ's roles, one of Christ's titles is High Priest.

12) Neither by the blood of goats and calves, but by His own blood He entered in once into the Holy Place, having obtained eternal redemption for us.

13) For if the blood of bulls and of goats, and the ashes of an heifer sprinkling the unclean, sanctifieth to the purifying of the flesh: [in the Old Covenant times, just the flesh]

14) How much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the Eternal Spirit offered himself without spot to God, [totally sinless] purge your conscience from dead works to serve the Living God? (KJV)

What this tells us is that by Christ's sacrifice, this gulf between God and mankind has now been removed; it was symbolized by the tearing of the veil, of course. Man now can jump the gulf, so to speak, because there is no gulf, because of Christ's sacrifice. Now look at Hebrews 10:16. I'll read this out of the New Living translation. It starts off quoting Jeremiah 31:33, the prophecy we read earlier.

Hebrews 10:16 *This is the New Covenant I will make with my people on that day, says the LORD: I will put My Laws in their hearts, so they will understand them and I will write them on their minds [so that they will obey them.]*

17) ... I will never again remember their sins and lawless deeds.

18) [Now] When sins have been forgiven, there is no need to offer any more sacrifices. And so, dear brothers and sisters we can boldly enter heaven's Most Holy Place because of the blood of Jesus. (NLT)

The veil is rent, we can go there: Christ has paid the penalty for our sins.

20) [This is the]... *new and life giving way that* [Christ has opened up for us] *through the* [sacred] *curtain* [that's the veil into the Holy of Holies] *by means of His death for us.* (NLT)

We see here that the veil between mankind and God, the gulf between mankind and God has been permanently removed by the sacrifice of Jesus Christ. What a blessing. What a tremendous blessing. When you think about Christ willingly giving up God status, being a God and coming to the earth and doing everything that He did, live a sinless life and suffered and suffered and suffered. To die for us so that we could be reconciled to God; all mankind could be reconciled to God. What a sacrifice. Let's go to Colossians 1:18. I'm going to read this out of the New King James talking about reconciliation, mediation, intercession.

Colossians 1:18 [Obviously referring to Jesus Christ] *And He is head of the body, the church, who is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead, that in all things He may have the preeminence.*

19) *For it pleases the Father that in Him all the fullness should dwell.*

20) *and by Him* [referring to Christ] *to reconcile all things to Himself* [to God]. (NKJV)

That by Christ's sacrifice this reconciliation could occur. Remember that's the purpose of a mediator or intercessor is to reconcile two parties that are at variance.

20 continued) *...by Him whether things on earth or things in heaven, having made peace through the blood of His cross.*

21) *And you, who once were alienated and enemies* [by our sins] *in your mind by wicked works, yet now He has reconciled*

22) *in the body of His flesh through death, to present you holy, and blameless, and above reproach in His sight.* (NKJV)

We see here that Christ has reconciled all mankind to God through what He has done for each one of us. Let's go to Ephesians 2:13. We need to take into account that at this time when the New Testament started after the day of Pentecost the Jews were the ones that first became Christians. Pentecost coming of the Holy Spirit, but then as we know, God had in mind calling the Gentiles, and that came as a shock to the Jews. It was just inconceivable to a good Jew that God would call Gentiles.

Ephesians 2:13 *But now in Christ Jesus ye who sometimes were far off* [he's referring to the Gentiles and there were Gentiles at Ephesus] *are made near nigh by the blood of Christ.*

14) *For He is our peace,* [He is the one who causes peace] *who hath made both one* [meaning Jews and Gentiles] *and hath broken down the middle wall of partition between us;* (KJV)

What is Paul referring to by the "middle wall of partition"? What does that mean? There were four courts in the temple. On the temple grounds there were four separate courts:

there was the court of priests, there was the court of Israel, there was the court of women and, lastly, there was the court of Gentiles. Those courts were separated by a chest high wall. So the inner courts, so to speak, were where the priests were: if you were a Levite you could go past the outer wall, marking that court and you could be inside the court of the priest. If you weren't a priest you could be killed by entering into that court. The next court was the court of Israel. Those were all the Israelite males who were not Levites, they could be in that court. There was a chest high barrier around that court. You see, we are getting farther away from the temple now. Then there was the court of the women. If you were an Israelite woman then you were allowed into that third court; couldn't go into the court of Israel, certainly couldn't go into the court of the priests, but there was a court for the women. Outside of that was a chest high wall and the last court was the court of the Gentiles. It was the farthest away from the temple. These were obviously male Gentiles that had to be circumcised. As an aside, around 30 AD, Caiaphas was the high priest. He instituted selling of merchandise in the court of the Gentiles. It was a revenue stream for the temple. It was the farthest court out so in the Jews mind it was the least holy of the four courts. When Christ overturned the tables in Matthew chapter 21, He was doing so in the court of the Gentiles. Remember, He got a cord with knots in it and He walked in swinging that cord and was kicking over tables and animals were running and doves flying; that occurred in that outer court of the Gentiles.

14 continued) For He is our peace, who hath made both one, and hath broken down the middle wall of partition between us. (KJV)

Meaning in this case between Jews and Gentiles. We know in other cases, in other scriptures the division between men and women was broken down. We are told we are all one in Jesus Christ, there is neither Jew nor Gentile, male or female. Here specifically, we're talking about Jews and Gentiles and that middle wall of partition between us was broken down.

15) Having abolished in His flesh the enmity, even the law of commandments contained in ordinances; for to make in Himself of twain [meaning Jews and Gentiles] one new man, so making peace.

16) And that He might reconcile both [Jews and Gentiles] unto God in one body [What is that? That's the church] by the cross, having slain the enmity thereby: (KJV)

Meaning the division of the hatred between Jews and Gentiles, by Christ's blood all of that is gone. Gentiles were free to come into the church. They were equal in God's eyes, equal in Christ's eyes, as well, as men and women. How did Christ mediate between God and mankind, all of mankind? By His death on the cross, by the tearing of the veil, symbolically giving man direct access to God by the Holy Spirit. We know that was initiated on Pentecost. That is the first, point A.

Now point B is we are bringing it closer to home.

3B: Christ is the Mediator and Intercessor for us individually, for us personally.

Not just for mankind in general, but we're taking it home to ourselves. Let's go to Romans 5:10, this verse talks about us at one point being enemies.

Romans 5:10 *For if, when we were enemies, [remember sin separates] we were reconciled to God by the death of His Son, much more, being reconciled, we shall be saved by His life. (KJV)*

That last phrase "saved by His life" can be understood in one of two ways, not one of two ways but two different ways. You see saved by His life, meaning that Christ lived a life on this earth as a physical human being and He did not sin. So, we are saved by that, but also we are saved by His resurrection back to life because if Christ wasn't resurrected as Paul pointed out, we have no hope. If there's no resurrection there's no hope for any of us. So we're saved by the life He lived, the sinless life He lived, but we're also saved by the fact that God resurrected Him back to life as the first of the firstfruits, the forerunner, and we are privileged and honored to be able to follow in Christ's footsteps. What an honor! Let's go to 2 Corinthians 5:18. Paul is writing this to individual Christians, (it's a letter to the Church in Corinth) but he is addressing individual Christians.

2 Corinthians 5:18 *And all things are of God who hath reconciled us [individually] to Himself by Jesus Christ, and has given to us the ministry of reconciliation; (KJV)*

Paul is telling us very clearly that we are reconciled to God by Jesus Christ and on top of that He is given to all, certainly to the Christians in Corinth but us today, the ministry of reconciliation. The ministry of reconciliation is simply to teach that we can be reconciled to God by the death of Jesus Christ which is what we're doing right now which we read in the Bible. We focus on that as we march towards Passover that we can be reconciled to God by the death, the blood of Jesus Christ. Look at 1 John 2:1. John tells us, he is talking about Jesus Christ, he uses a different word that we'll address here because we're going to find out it's the same meaning.

1 John 2:1 *My little children, these things write I unto you, that ye sin not. And if any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father, [Who is that advocate?] Jesus Christ the righteous. (KJV)*

The Greek word for "advocate" is Strong's #3875 and we've heard this word before, it's parakletos. Notice what the Greek definition of "advocate" is, *an intercessor, a consoler or a comforter*. Webster's says this about an advocate, "one who pleads the cause of another". So we're being told here that Christ pleads our cause as an advocate or as an intercessor and He does so, He mediates, intercedes. How does He do that today? What is the vehicle for that to happen? We have the answer because it uses the same Greek word parakletos. Let's go to John 14 and we'll begin in verse 16. This is hours

before Christ was taken — this was His last night on earth. He's talking about very important things to the disciples.

John 14:16 *I will pray the Father, and He shall give you another Comforter. (KJV)*

That's parakletos, it was translated advocate in 1 John 2:1.

16 continued) [I will give you another comforter] *that he may abide with you for ever;*

17) *Even the Spirit of truth; whom the world cannot receive, because it seeth him not, neither knoweth him: but ye know him; for he dwelleth with you,...* (KJV)

Remember Pentecost hadn't come, so in order for the disciples to understand what Christ was saying God's spirit had to be with them, it wasn't in them yet, but with them.

17 continued) *... but ye know him; for he dwelleth with you and shall be [referring to Pentecost] in you.*

18) *I will not leave you comfortless: I will come to you..*

26) *but the Comforter, [the parakletos, the advocate] which is the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in my name, He shall teach you all things and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you. (KJV)*

So Christ is saying, I've got to go away, I have to go back to my Father; and He said, I'm not going to leave you alone because I will send the Holy Spirit, the comforter, the advocate, the parakletos to be with you to give you comfort and to give you peace. So we see here that Christ is the Mediator, the Intercessor between God and mankind. He is also, the Mediator and Intercessor between God and us personally and it is done through the power of the very Spirit of God and Christ which they share.

4. Christ as mediator and intercessor should be reflected in our prayers.

As we get closer to Passover and we focus on more of the sacrifice of Jesus Christ, we need to reflect that of our understanding to God in our prayers. Let's go back to Christ's very first recorded sermon in Matthew 6:5 talking about the model prayer and then we will see that Christ asked us to do some other things, too. Christ is talking to Jews and, of course, they were noted for praying often.

Matthew 6:5 *And when thou prayest, [He doesn't say if you pray] thou shall not be as the hypocrites are: ... (KJV)*

Let's stop right there. The Greek word for "hypocrite" is hypocrace and it means *an actor under an assumed character*. In Christ's day, they weren't called actors they were called hypocrites. We have a different understanding of the word but if you had to be in the profession of being an actor your profession was being a hypocrite. Meaning you

had your regular life but then when you were up on the stage you adopted a totally different persona: you were somebody else. So, there is a difference here and Christ is bringing that out when He says, when you pray don't be as the actors like today — the movie actors or the hypocrites.

5 continued) ... for they love to pray [meaning now the actors, now He's focusing to the religious leaders of the day; for these hypocrites, these actors] love to pray standing in the synagogues and in the corners of the streets, that they may be seen by men. Verily I say unto you, they have their reward.

6) But thou, when you prayest, enter into thy closet, and when thou hast shut thy door, pray to thy Father which is in secret ; and thy Father, which seeth in secret shall reward thee openly. (KJV)

Don't make a show of your prayers. It's between you and God in a quiet place by yourself and then God will take care of your needs beyond that.

7) But when ye pray, use not vain repetitions, as the heathen do: for they think that they shall be heard for their much speaking. (KJV)

It just amazes me that there are several churches that do the deeds, and repeat over and over and over the same prayers. Christ said in verse 7 clearly, we're not to do that.

8) Be not ye therefore like unto them: for your Father knoweth what things ye have need of, before ye ask Him. (KJV)

We don't have to keep repeating it over and over every few seconds or every few minutes.

9) After this manner, therefore pray ye: ... (KJV)

Christ is saying, here's how I want you to pray:

9 continued) Our Father which art in heaven, Hallowed be thy name. (KJV)

The prayer is addressed to God the Father and we acknowledge His name is holy.

10) Thy Kingdom come. [The Kingdom of God, boy do we need to pray for that now. God's Kingdom come] Thy will be done in earth, as [as we know certainly] it is in heaven. (KJV)

Then verse 11 the prayer is still addressed to God our Father.

11) [God our Father] Give us this day our daily bread. (KJV)

Give us what we need, not what we want but what we need.

12) *And forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors.* [Forgive of us our sins and help us to forgive those who sin against us.]

13) *And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil:* [and we know that can be the evil one, our adversary] *For Thine is the Kingdom, and the power, and the glory, for ever. Amen. (KJV)*

That is the model prayer. Yes, we're to pray to the Father but notice what Christ says in addition in Chapter 15:16. Christ is speaking to the disciples shortly before being taken: He's telling them to do something critical, that's very critical.

John 15:16 *Ye have not chosen Me, but I have chosen you, and ordained you,* [now He gives them the purpose] *that ye should go and bring forth fruit, and that your fruit should remain: that whatsoever ye shall ask of the Father in My name, He may give it you. (KJV)*

Asking God but doing so in Christ's name. Notice the next chapter, it's repeated again.

John 16:7 *Nevertheless I tell you the truth;* [they didn't understand this but they would come to later] *It is expedient for you* [what He's saying is it's best for you] *that I go away: for if I go not away, the Comforter* [the parakletos, the advocate] *will not come unto you; but if I depart, I will send him unto you.*

16) *A little while, and ye shall not see Me: and again, a little while, ye shall see Me ... (KJV)*

He's referring to Acts 1 when He came back and appeared to the disciples before the day of Pentecost.

16 continued) ... ye shall see Me, because I go to the Father [I have to go to the Father].

22) *And ye now therefore have sorrow: but I will see you again, and your heart shall rejoice, and your joy no man taketh from you.*

23) *And in that day ye shall ask Me nothing ... (KJV)*

He was going back to the Father, He wasn't in their presence. They could ask Him questions, they could converse back and forth the years that they walked the dirt roads between cities, between Christ preaching.

23 continued) ... in that day ye shall ask Me nothing [because He's going away, He's not with them physically] *Verily, verily, I say unto you, Whatsoever ye shall ask the Father in My name, He will give it to you. (KJV)*

Christ is making a promise: In your prayers if you ask it in My name, God will give it to you; God will grant it. So we have to ask the question why pray in Christ's name? Why did Christ emphasize that? Why did He want us to end our prayers and during our

prayers to pray in the name of Jesus Christ? After everything we've seen today that it is obvious that we pray in Christ's name because of who He is and what He has done for us. Because how could He do all of that and we not acknowledge it in our prayers, every day to acknowledge what He has done for us. He's right on the right hand of God the Father and to acknowledge the fact that He, (this is what blows the mind) Christ knew from eternity (and that's something we can't get our head around) that someday He was going to have to come, and go through what He was going to go through. I think all of us have been in a situation where, maybe, it was a test we had to go through or some kind of challenge we had to go through and we stew and we worry about it days and days and days before it happens. Christ knew from eternity that He would have to go through this. I'm sure it was on His mind and, of course, He wasn't worried about it, He didn't wring his hands about it. He was willing to do it for our benefit. And then God says, if you ask in Christ's name, He promises us that He will hear. Christ tells us that, look at Acts 4:10. When we pray in Christ's name, when we thank Christ in our prayers for what He has done; we are honoring Him and obviously honoring God because we are following Their instructions.

Acts 4:10 *Be it known unto you all, and to all the people of Israel, that by the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, whom you crucified, whom God raised from the dead, even by Him doth this man stand here before you whole. [This man was healed, it was described in chapter 3]*

11) *This is the stone [referring to Christ] which was set at nought of you builders, which is become the head of the corner.*

12) *Neither is there salvation in any other; for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved. (KJV)*

Pretty clear, pretty direct statement. When we ask in our prayers: that we do so in Christ's name, it's acknowledging what He has done for us; what He means to us. In everything possible, the life that He lived, His willingness to die, the pain that He suffered, the fact that the Father resurrected Him and He is the first of the firstfruits. He is the forerunner for each one of us. We can thank Him for His sacrifice, for being the Intercessor, for being the Mediator. After all He is right there on the right hand of the Father and when we pray He is listening. He is right there. And to say to Christ, "thank you for what you have done, thank you for enduring the suffering for a slob like me". We close our prayer by wrapping it all up saying "everything I've prayed to you God right now, on my knees, I'm praying in the name of Jesus Christ", for everything that means and for what He has done for me.

Now let's conclude: We've seen that we have a Mediator. We have an Intercessor. We know those two words, mediator, intercessor are very very similar. Mary is not our mediator. Mary is not our intercessor. Christ is both, mediator and intercessor between God and mankind in general and between God and us personally, individually. Let's go to John 5:23 — Christ is speaking here. As we get closer to Passover, this is something we should be doing, but we should do it every day in our prayers, in our thoughts.

John 5:23 [Christ is speaking] *That all men* [the word men is in italics, referring to everybody; Male, female, doesn't make any difference] *that all should honour the Son, even as they honour the Father. He that honoureth not the Son honoureth not the Father which hath sent Him. (KJV)*

This is very clear we need to honor both: God as our Father, Jesus Christ as His Son and all that that means. There are warnings in the Bible, we're going to cover two in closing that we need to pay particular attention to: let's go to Jude 4. Jude is the half brother of Jesus Christ. He saw Christ as a young kid from his earliest days, grew up and experienced Christ's life.

Jude 1:4 [This is a warning] *For there are certain men crept in unawares, who were before of old ordained to this condemnation, ungodly men, turning the grace of our God into lasciviousness and denying the only LORD God, and our Lord Jesus Christ. (KJV)*

Here is a warning saying that there are those that think because of God's grace they're free to sin. They can do whatever they want because God's going to forgive me or Christ's blood has wiped it away. So I can live any way I want as long as I give myself to the Lord, to put it into a modern vernacular. They deny the only LORD God our Father and Lord Jesus Christ. They deny that's something we have to be careful about. Look at 1 John 2:22. In years past, we all speculated who is the antichrist. John tells us there's probably more than one (in fact, I know there's more than one) because this verse tells us.

1 John 2:22 *Who is the liar but he that denieth that Jesus is the Christ? (KJV)*

Denying He is the anointed one, the Messiah.

22 continued) *He is antichrist, (now we have the definition) that denieth the Father and the Son. (KJV)*

None of us want to be labeled antichrist. We need to honor both: the Father and the Son for their roles in the plan of salvation whereby we can be saved. They both have their individual roles and Christ died for us to become our Mediator, to become our Intercessor, to become our advocate. As we approach the Passover, let's honor Christ (we talked about Him being our High Priest, yes) as our Mediator, as our Intercessor whose death on the cross, tore the veil and gave us access to God the Father.