

The Intercession of Christ

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There are only two passages in which this is referred to: the first in Romans 8: 34, and the second in Hebrews 7: 25.

In the Epistle to the Romans the saints are considered in the light of what they were before the grace of God reached them, and then in the light of the position and character granted to them on earth by that grace. They are justified, and are brought into the circle of the love of God. They are indwelt by God's Spirit, who empowers them to suffer now with Christ, even as they will reign with Him hereafter. But, though delivered from condemnation and set free by the Spirit from the power of inherent sin, they are surrounded by pressure. There is groaning in the whole creation, till Christ returns; and there is opposition from men who reckon Christians as sheep for slaughter. The pain of trial on the one hand, and the perils of persecution on the other would depress and discourage the elect of God, did they not learn that their Representative, Christ, both died and rose, and went to God's right hand — there to make intercession for them. Assured of this Friend in the high court of heaven, they are not only enabled to endure, but to triumph whilst enduring.

In the Epistle to the Hebrews, the believing company, associated with the glorious Person of Christ, is seen coming out of old and venerable traditions; quitting Moses and Aaron, Canaan and the temple, law and sacrifice — all to go forth unto Him, bearing His reproach, until the day when the kingdom which cannot be shaken shall be visibly established in heaven and earth. They need, consequently, not only to be led into the enjoyment of heavenly associations, but also to be sustained in the persecution sure to occur from their former religious companions. For them Christ, having superseded all former leaders, has made their final triumph secure, is seated on the right hand of the throne of God; and in calling upon His people to follow, is ever living to make intercession for them. His sympathy with them in all their experiences is most perfect, making them to realize that He is their best and dearest Friend; while He leads their yearnings up to Himself in God's presence, giving them an at-home feeling within the Holiest of All.

These, then, are the two passages wherein the thought of intercession is connected with Christ personally.

Of intercession itself, and what is meant by it, it is plain in these instances that Jesus the Christ is interesting Himself actively in heaven on the behalf of His people on the earth. For their atonement, His sacrifice on Calvary renders them for ever clear in the sight of God. There is no condemnation now to them that are in Christ Jesus; and being once purged they have no more conscience of sins. But His resurrection and ascension did not terminate His interest in His saints. The last action at Bethany, when He lifted up His hands and blessed the disciples, is an assurance that—even the thought of ascension into glory did not obliterate His deep concern in their welfare; while the words "for us" in Romans, and "for them" in Hebrews, both emphasize the truth that He is using His position and His power on behalf of His beloved ones here.

But intercession involves the idea of His speaking to some One about us and for us. Is it not affecting to think of this, that the risen and exalted Saviour, the Great Priest of our confession, sitting on the right hand of God, is closely watching us in our weakness and trial, and is speaking to God about us, incessantly requesting on our behalf what we are often too ignorant or too feeble to ask for

ourselves? One consequence is that no circumstance can be conceived, of things present or to come, which can separate us from the love of Christ. If we think in some weary moment that He has forgotten, or that His intercession has ceased, let us be assured that He is at that very moment more surely soliciting mercy and grace on our behalf; and that in looking to Him we shall be supported beyond ourselves.

Another consequence is that instead of being overwhelmed in an environment of sorrow, or pressure from business care, or loss of friends the very contrary is the case: they are found to be means of loosening our minds from this world, and of setting us free for a fuller appreciation of our Lord and Representative where He has gone. He measures the effect of all such occurrences upon our spirits, and utters our names before God with the suitable request that either the circumstances may be altered for our good, or the ministry of His Spirit and His servants be so directed, as that we may occupy our hearts with His perfections rather than with our own distress.

Thus we see that our Lord (who is over all, God blessed for ever) has taken and retains a place in Manhood for us, in which He still prays even though seated upon the throne. He cannot be other than or less than He is, the Son. He was the Son in the days of creation, He was the Son in humiliation on the earth, He is the Son now upon heaven's throne, and will ever be the Son when He comes to His kingdom for ever and ever, and wields the sceptre of righteousness.