

Good Morning Friend,

The ‘heart’ of this letter is found in the fourth paragraph below, introduced with triple stars ***. It illustrates a powerful testimony about a friend of mine on the power of intercessory prayer. You will want to read and re-read that paragraph several times. But before getting to that paragraph, I must give you some explanatory background.

For a number of years I have had a lot of pain in my right shoulder. Doctors have attempted to deal with the pain through therapy and cortisone shots. Neither has given me relief. The pain has continued to increase. X-rays have indicated that it has become an arthritic shoulder. During these years I sought good medical advice. I had a first opinion, a second opinion, and a third opinion. Each doctor agreed that it was a severe condition. After much thought and prayer, I decided to have a total shoulder replacement with Dr. Michael Wirth in San Antonio, Texas. Dr. Wirth’s specialty is shoulder replacement. In fact, he only does shoulder replacements every Tuesday and every Thursday. His office is part of the University of Texas. He is training many medical students on orthopedics but again his specialty is shoulders, and more specifically total shoulder replacement. He is a fine Christian and an active member of Max Lucado’s Church.

I had the surgery on February 4, just a few weeks ago. Here’s what the surgery involved. The shoulder socket is made up of two major parts: the upper arm (more technically called the humerus) and the socket, located on the scapula. My layman’s explanation goes like this. (1) An incision is made on the front part of the shoulder. (2) Almost two inches of the upper arm (including the knobby ball) is cut off of the arm. It is replaced with a metal (often steel) ball and extension that runs within the humerus. (3) The scapula and socket is cleaned up. A newly developed plastic lining is placed inside of the socket. Before surgery, it was bone on bone. Now I have a steel ball nestled in a plastic-lined socket.

*** A few days after the surgery, I met again with Dr. Wirth. Here’s what he said . . . "Lareau, you must have an active group of praying friends. I sensed that when I initially met you. Also it was evident in times of consultation. But I especially observed it in the operating room. I can always tell the difference whether the patient is supported by praying friends or whether he has no prayerful support. So, Lareau, please say thanks to your praying friends. Tell them the doctor again was blessed to be working on a patient that is carried by the prayers of the patient’s intercessors." WOW . . . I get a chill whenever I think of what Dr. Wirth said. Indeed, prayer makes a huge difference.

I have just two questions for you.

1. Do you have a network of prayer partners? I hope so. Without it, your life and ministry is less that it could be.

2. Are you an intercessor for others?

There are many biblical texts that call us to intercessory prayer. Paul, in Colossians 4, gives the example of two individuals who believed in the power of intercession. Listen to what he says. . .

PAUL (Colossians 4:2-4)

Devote yourselves to prayer, being watchful and thankful. And pray for us, too, that God may open a door for our message, so that we may proclaim the mystery of Christ, for which I am in chains. Pray that I may proclaim it clearly, as I should. Paul depended on the prayers of God's people. He knew that he needed their prayers.

EPAPHRAS (Colossians 4:12-14)

Epaphras . . . is always wrestling in prayer for you . . . I vouch for him that he is working hard for you.

The one and only thing we know about Epaphras is that he was an intercessor. He intensely prayed for others. Do you have such a ministry for others? Can you think of any of your intercessors who really work hard for you in this ministry of intercession?

Be encouraged,

Lareau Lindquist

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